

THE SCHOOL OF CITIES INTRODUCES
GRADUATE MULTIDISCIPLINARY URBAN PROJECT
JPG2150H SPECIAL TOPICS:
IMPLEMENTING THE
MISSING MIDDLE

CLASS DETAILS

INSTRUCTOR Karen Chapple, Professor of Geography and Planning; Director, School of Cities

CLASS TIME Friday 12pm-3pm

About half of Toronto and much of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) consists of a “yellowbelt” of single-family detached homes protected by restrictive zoning rules. With three million new residents projected for 2046, and a housing affordability crisis already in full swing, the region faces a pivotal decision point: can the GTA’s municipalities open up their neighbourhoods in a way that is equitable and sustainable but also politically and economically viable? Urban designers have advocated infill development in the form of a “missing middle” of multiplexes and mid-size apartments, but the municipalities have been slow to adopt and implement these ideas.

In this pilot research workshop, we will examine this issue of implementation through the lens of multiple disciplines, in recognition that adding new density is a complex and “wicked” problem. Together, we will think through issues of physical and financial feasibility, infrastructure gaps, regulatory barriers, socio-economic and displacement impacts, political and messaging strategies, and cultural considerations, linking theory to practice. Guest speakers across disciplines at U of T will help us build a framework for analysis, while practitioner experts from urban designers to developers to politicians will weigh in on the challenges. In our analysis, we will pay particular attention to how the region can grow in a just way that disrupts patterns of segregation, exclusion, racism, and inequality. Our laboratory will be the GTA; we will work with the City of Toronto and four or five surrounding municipalities such as Mississauga and Brampton in order to develop an understanding of implementation challenges in a variety of contexts.

Course Objectives

1. To reconceptualize planning issues from a multi-disciplinary perspective;
2. To train students to work in interdisciplinary teams;
3. To explore the range of strategies, tactics, plans, and policies engaged by the wide array of stakeholders in densification;
4. To devise actionable and just solutions to barriers encountered in different urban and suburban contexts;
5. To understand theoretical frameworks in light of approaches manifest on the ground; and
6. To connect the university community to stakeholders across the region.

Applications due November 22nd!
Apply at tinyurl.com/SofCCourse

For additional information and details about the class, please contact Katherine at katherine.danks@utoronto.ca

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