

# CITIES AND SUSTAINABILITY

An interdisciplinary discussion of urban environmental issues and solutions

## *Introduction*

### **Opening Remarks**

12:30

Bethany Fowler, Rice Environmental Society President

### **Keynote Presentation**

Bill Fulton, Kinder Institute for Urban Research Director

## *Houston Flooding*

### **The Story of Water in Houston: A Liquid Asset**

1:00

Rives Taylor, Professor of Architecture

Since the founding of Houston along the Bayou system, this city has been shaped by the challenges and benefits of water coursing through its natural and man-made infrastructure. We will review the current evolution and challenges to the city and how an era of climate change plays on the discussion.

### **Flood Alleviation**

Dylan Dickens, Undergraduate Anthropology and Policy Studies

Working with a Houston Action Research Team (HART), Dylan has been working to alleviate street-level flooding with sustainable park practices. He is using GIS to identify through rainfall and 311 calls which parks get hit the worst with flooding, and he is collaborating with consultants and designers to build features that help alleviate this flooding.

## *Green Spaces*

### **Pros and Cons of Parks Worldwide**

1:30

Geneva Vest, Undergraduate Sociology

Parks have the potential to be either beneficial or deleterious for a city. Geneva will draw on Houston and cities she studied while abroad to give an overview of current trends in parks and impacts.

## **Rewilding Rice University's Greenspace**

Cassidy Johnson, Professor of Biosciences

Historically, the efforts of conservation biologists have focused on large landscapes; however, new emphasis is being placed on urban conservation. University campuses are great venues for rewilding efforts. The Rice Gully Natural Area at Rice University currently supports a host of native plants and animals; however, a more concerted effort to reestablish the historic, coastal prairie landscape, would further increase its value as an urban habitat.

## *Living Sustainably*

### **Transit and Sustainable Cities**

2:00

Christof Spieler, Lecturer in Architecture and Engineering

Buses and trains use less energy and take up less land than cars, and they support more livable cities. How can we plan and build transit to make it more useful? And how can we build cities that make transit a better option for more people?

### **Green Living: Sustainable Design for Residential Colleges**

Monica Charletta, Undergraduate Biosciences and Environmental Studies

Creative sustainable design methods are generating effective results in buildings and on campuses across the world, but how can Rice take advantage of these techniques on its own campus? Explore basic case studies and concepts that can transform Rice into a leader in sustainable living while also preserving the live/work/play balance that its residential colleges are known for.

### **Urban Agriculture**

Joe Novak, Professor of Biosciences

Urban agriculture has reemerged as an important movement in the U.S. This presentation will describe some of the different types of urban agriculture programs in the U.S. and the people leading the movement.

### **Closing Remarks**

Avery Jordan, Rice Environmental Society Treasurer