

Michael Stepniak
stepniak.michael@gmail.com
michaeldstepniak.com

Education

Parsons School of Design | The New School
Master of Science, Design and Urban Ecologies
August 2014 – June 2016

Wayne State University
Bachelor of Arts, Urban Studies
September 2010 – June 2012

Washtenaw Community College
Associate in Arts, Liberal Arts
January 2009 - August 2010

Work Experiences

Michigan Suburbs Alliance
Retrofit Construction Management Assistant
February 2013 – September 2013

Conducted extensive research on NSP3 regulations, created template for incorporation of 501(c)(2) nonprofit title holding corporation, worked closely with Wayne County officials on the Green Anchors program, in which post-war housing stock in Southgate, MI is retrofitted with green technology and transformed into affordable housing, researched housing stock to gain SHPO clearance.

Michigan Suburbs Alliance
Univercities Policy Research Intern
May 2011 – August 2011

Worked under the City Administrator in City Hall in Southgate, MI, engaged in project-oriented research with a focus on regionalism and service sharing among Downriver municipalities, cross-municipal policy research and analysis in areas including zoning, union negotiations, health care, and assessing and mapping services.

Projects

The Public in Motion

October 2017 – Present

The Public Motion is an ongoing collaboration between myself and a small team of software developers. Our aims are to facilitate access and amplify the voice of the public in matters of design of public space and public transit in Detroit. We are creating digital and analogue interfaces for public input and public use, and means of collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

Urban Thinkers Campus NYC

October 2015

Under the guidance of William Morrish, students of Infrastructure for the New Social Compact at The New School engaged with the Urban Thinkers Campus, an initiative of the World Urban Campaign and UN Habitat to discuss, propose and gather ideas for Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda. Out of 29 Urban Thinkers Campuses world-wide, New York was one of only two held in the U.S. We recorded speakers and discussions, using audio recording devices and whiteboards while interacting with speakers and participants. Each individual wrote observations, analysis and recommendations in essay form, which were then compiled into a single document and submitted to Habitat for consideration.

Selected Paper Presentations

Masters Thesis Presentation

May 2016

Advisor: William Morrish

An Intermunicipal Neighborhood: Building Bridges Across Borders in Metropolitan Detroit Parsons School of Design | The New School

A big-picture, interdisciplinary analysis of the city-suburb divide in Metro Detroit that zooms in on the 8 Mile Road border between the city proper and Eastpointe, with a design proposal for a community-based process for change. Methods: interviews, data-gathering, data-normalization, GIS analysis and historical research.

Community Maps GIS/Open Data Initiative

May 2016

A presentation of a functional open data portal, built for community-sourced data, with emphasis on both qualitative and quantitative data in Metro Detroit. The site is currently undergoing a redesign to improve usability.

Selected Presentations

Millennial Mayors Congress | Detroit

August 2011

Presentation summing up experiences, achievements and knowledge gained through the Univercities internship program while working for the Michigan Suburbs Alliance to the Millennial Mayors Congress.

Southgate City Council | Southgate, MI

August 2011

Presentation to the City Council of Southgate about working in city hall, followed by a Q & A session with council members and members of the public.

Selected Publications

Detroit Idea Factory

October 2011 – Present

I started writing this blog as an undergraduate in Urban Studies at Wayne State. I have used it over the years to explore ideas in urban design and policy, and as a means of staying engaged with urban issues. Issues discussed include transit, history, development, gentrification, regionalism and history.

2015 Bushwick Gazette | Parsons School of Design

August 2015

Advisor: Gabriela Rendon

The Bushwick Gazette is a tool for residents and activists in the struggle for affordable housing in Brooklyn, NY. The Gazette was researched, written and designed by the 2014 – 2015 Design and Urban Ecologies studio cohort under Gabriela Rendon. It includes a history of the neighborhood, explanations of zoning ordinances and rezoning and land use (ULURP) legal processes, analysis of NYC administration plans to address the housing crisis, and an introduction to new housing models as alternative solutions with a focus on Community Land Trusts. The cohort conducted a parcel survey on foot, of every vacant structure, vacant lot, parking lot (both formal and informal), NYPD and NYC-owned parcel, industrial conversion and luxury development in Bushwick. We presented our findings in a workshop to community members and housing activists.

Inside Southgate | MetroMode

August 2011

An inside look at the workings of City Hall in Southgate, MI from the perspective of a policy research intern. The article focuses on the unromantic and yet somehow passionate nature of public service, and the little things that must be done to keep small city running.

Technical Skills

HTML/CSS	Basic knowledge of coding languages for writing websites.
QGIS	Open Source alternative to ArcGIS, creating basemaps, shapefiles, transforming data into visuals, normalizing data.
Carto	Online mapping site that hosts data and creates interactive maps.
Leaflet	JavaScript Library for online interactive maps, working in conjunction with Carto, Open Street Map and Mapbox.
Mapbox	Online custom map software, can be used in conjunction with QGIS and Leaflet to create custom online interactive maps.
Adobe	InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop and analogous open source software, such as Scribd, Inkscape and GIMP.
Microsoft	Microsoft Office Suite and analogous open source software, such as Libre Office and Open Office
Wordpress	Basic knowledge of Wordpress and blogging.