

BUILDING TOMORROW, TOGETHER >

MAPP STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031



**SCHOOL OF
ARCHITECTURE,
PLANNING & PRESERVATION**





At its heart, strategic planning is an act of belief—belief that the work we do matters, that the places we help create and protect shape human lives, and that our school has a meaningful role in that narrative.

The School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (MAPP) 2026 Strategic Plan offers a framework for our path forward. It represents the collective thinking of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. It was developed through genuine collaboration, and reflects what our community values most: innovative education grounded in real-world impact, research, and practice in service of the public good, and spaces—both physical and intellectual—where people can do their best work.

Through the initiatives and actions outlined in this plan, we will recommit to forward-thinking, interdisciplinary education that equips students for a rapidly changing world. We will pursue research and practice that addresses the pressing challenges facing housing, infrastructure, climate, and equity. We will invest in the people and spaces that guide the important work we do, including a plan to rename our school in a way that better communicates who we are and who we aspire to become.

As practitioners of the built environment, we are crafting more than beautiful places to live, work, and play—our work is instrumental in building environments that are just, sustainable, inclusive, and healthy for all. Our students will lead those efforts in the future. This plan is our commitment to preparing them for that task.

With gratitude for your partnership,

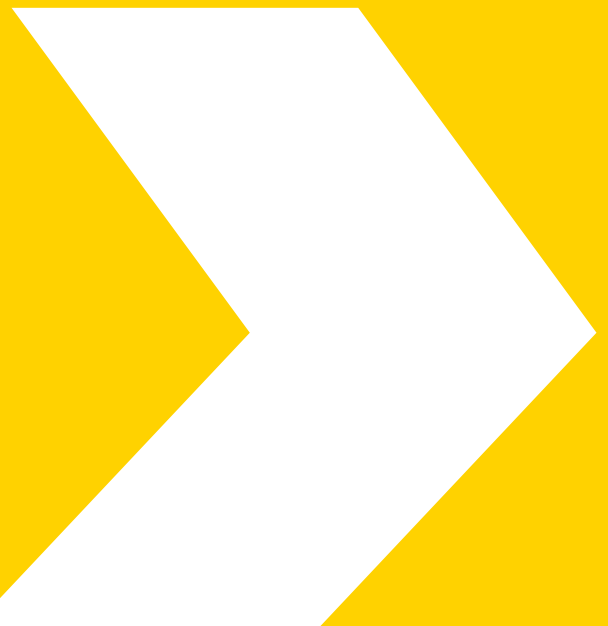
Dr. Dawn Jourdan, Dean
*University of Maryland School of Architecture,
Planning and Preservation*

MISSION

The University of Maryland School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation advances excellence in architectural design, urban planning, historic preservation, and real estate development education through diverse academic experiences and innovative faculty research and creative professions. We prepare students to craft well-designed, just, and resilient places.

VISION

Through experiential education, innovative research, and collaborative practice, we aspire to be a global leader in the allied disciplines of the built environment—empowering our community to confront the pressing and enduring challenges of our time.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES >



1. *We Lead in Forward-Thinking, Interdisciplinary Education*

We ignite lifelong learning as a force for innovation, leadership, and transformative impact within the built environment.

We catalyze cultural, environmental, and social change through a dynamic curriculum that emphasizes academic excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration, and hands-on learning in architecture, planning, preservation, and development. We prepare our students to succeed in a rapidly changing world through rigorous critical thinking and visionary problem solving, engaged communication and collaboration, and deep knowledge of both foundational pedagogy and emerging technologies and practices. We integrate research and practice to expand the boundaries of knowledge and shape the future of the built-environment professions.

GOALS:

➤ ***A. We expand and enhance learning, while instilling the enduring pedagogical foundations of the built environment disciplines.***

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Launch new minors and major programs across MAPP programs that ground student expertise in emergent technologies and pressing challenges, such as AI, climate crisis, and equitable development.
- Encourage redevelopment of existing and foundational courses to align with emerging theory, research, and best learning and practices.
- Integrate emerging technologies and methods across teaching, research, and practice.
- Establish partnerships with other research and fabrication spaces on campus. (For example: digital fabrication, artificial intelligence, virtual/augmented reality, HBIM, data-driven design, etc.)

➤ ***B. We provide students with diverse, interdisciplinary, project-based learning settings that model effective ways to address the challenges of our time. This occurs within our school, across the university, in surrounding communities, and beyond.***

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Ground curriculum in in-person teaching and experiential learning. Connect coursework with communities, projects, competitions, publications, and platforms in co-curricular and real-world professional settings. (For example: PALS, ULI competition, HUD competitions, Terraplan journal, etc.)
- Increase interdisciplinary studios, coursework and other opportunities. This may include new structures and strategies regarding Gen Ed courses, cross-offered electives, course scheduling for dual-degree pathways, and interdisciplinary studios.

- Leverage the campus' annual Learning Outcomes Assessment process for undergraduate curricula and the upcoming Graduate Learning Outcomes assessment process to reflect on and improve our current courses, to map skill development across the curriculum, and to identify any gaps in skill development.

➤ ***C. Develop program-specific strategic plans that align with the school's plan and cross-pollinate across programs, while addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within each program.***

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Programs write strategic plans through collaborative, inclusive processes within the first two years of the strategic planning timeline.

➤ ***D. Provide students with opportunities to recognize our place in and serve our local, regional, national, and global communities.***

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Expand resources within and beyond our school to increase student access to opportunities, including connections with UMD colleges and departments across campus.
- Expand education abroad opportunities through increased support for student scholarships and by establishing and promoting the pathways for students to participate in programs with existing Maryland partners. Increase global learning opportunities to bring global perspectives to students on campus.
- Support sustainable growth and impact of PALS and similar regional, cross-disciplinary and hands-on, client-based coursework.



2. We Advance the Public Good Through Excellence in Research and Practice

Design excellence and well-considered places are fundamental to the public good and are the lenses through which our school community engages with today's grand challenges. It is the responsibility of our school to not simply participate in this work, but to lead in research and practice in the service of humanity and in pursuit of transformative change. Our community of students, alumni, staff, and faculty works across disciplines to reimagine and strengthen civic infrastructure, design and develop meaningful spaces, preserve tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and respond boldly to the evolving social, environmental, and economic needs of communities at scales ranging from the local to the global.

GOALS:

➤ **A. Pursue research, practical, and design excellence in creative work and applied project settings.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Identify opportunities for local, regional, and national projects, competitions, and awards that engage faculty and students, hone new skills, and share their work with external audiences.
- Explore and establish MAPP-level Grand Challenges grant and/or Do Good Institute programming/grants.
- Support faculty interest in project-based work with course development time and co-teaching opportunities.

➤ **B. Pursue research and project work across disciplines that address the grand challenges facing the built environment. Some of these areas of research and impact include: housing, infrastructure, decarbonization, and sustainable design.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Host an annual research day where current and former students, employers, faculty, and staff converge to learn about the ongoing scholarship within the school.
- Engage students at the undergraduate level in research and project work. Establish a pipeline for student/faculty exchange and collaboration through Office of Undergraduate Research programs. (For example: theses, RISE program, capstones, field school, GRAs, studio classes, etc.)
- Build interdisciplinary research expertise on topics focused on access, affordability, and sustainability. Outcomes may include new initiatives within existing centers and institutes and/or new labs, clinics, and networks.
- Incorporate resilience and decarbonization technologies, systems, and building craft teaching into design studios and undergraduate curriculum.

➤ **C. Develop sustaining partnerships at the local, state, and regional level to anchor and align our project-based work and nurture professional development.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Inventory work undertaken with external partners in the last five years to build on existing relationships and project work.
- Disseminate community-engaged and regional work to campus partners, alumni, and the public in a manner that demonstrates the implications of our findings to policy and practice through stories, social media, media outreach, conferences, community meetings, and presentations.
- Cultivate more student engagement with state and federal partners through lecture/crit opportunities, PALS, internship opportunities, and career fairs.





3. We Invest in People and Spaces

We strategically invest in the development and success of our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and broader network through innovative programming, inspiring coursework, meaningful advising, and transformative mentorship. We amplify our achievements in research, practice, and teaching, to the university and beyond. It takes resources to grow and thrive; state-of-the-art, inspiring physical environments are one of the most important resources we can provide to our MAPP community on campus.

GOALS:

➤ **A. Develop a holistic identity for MAPP that brings physical space and branding together to clearly communicate MAPP's mission and vision. Offer engaging physical infrastructure that supports interdisciplinary learning, technological advancement, and healthy work environments. Develop updated branding and identity that is easy to understand for broad audiences, from campus stakeholders to prospective students to future employers.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Invest in the expansion and renovation of spaces to learn and work. Preserve and support investments in physical building amenities through thoughtful maintenance schedules, budgeting, staffing, and by promoting an overall sense of ownership.
- Rename the school through the work of a committee of students, faculty, staff, alumni and university stakeholders, with the help of a consultant.
- Ensure dedicated interdisciplinary learning and flexible workspaces for students in real estate, urban planning, and historic preservation in the design of the renovations and the new building.

➤ **B. Prepare students to compete in a dynamic employment environment.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Reinforce verbal presentation and professional communication in each program as fundamental professional competencies.
- Provide high-quality, meaningful networking opportunities for students to interact with professionals in the field.
- Leverage industry professionals, particularly alumni, in meaningful engagement to share professional

perspectives. These opportunities might include interdisciplinary workshops, curriculum reviews, and career pathway partnerships.

➤ **C. Develop and build a world-class faculty and staff; amplify the school's work.**

METRICS & SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Establish a funding pipeline to provide professional development for faculty and staff.
- Create mentorship and learning opportunities within MAPP, focusing on pathways for faculty to increase publications and submissions to peer-review processes.
- Increase funding and staffing support for expanded communications and outreach through social media, publications, and publicity.
- Situate MAPP's research and creative work within broader conversations. Platforms may include: Grand Challenges salon series; public-facing student journals; visiting experts program; media and external communications.



➤ ***D. Foster an engaging social structure to energize students, provide a sense of belonging for faculty and staff, engage alumni and draw external people to our network, and recruit new students to join us.***

METRIC OR SPECIFIC ACTION:

- Improve coordination, promotion, and support of schoolwide events. (For example, interdisciplinary lecture series, programming that brings students from different disciplines together, etc.)
- Create a method to engage students with the leadership team.
- Create more opportunities for social connection and organic, in-person collaboration within the faculty/staff community.
- Develop new opportunities to engage alumni through seasonal events, professional development opportunities, participation in studios/capstones/projects, fieldtrips, and study abroad excursions. Cultivate a pipeline of advocates, mentors, and donors to the school by engaging alumni early and often.
- Expand efforts to create community among the student body, including promoting and synchronizing student organizations, funding student initiatives, improving onboarding for transfer students, and launching an upper-class mentorship program for students, staff, and faculty.





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