

## Designing Livable Cities

### Knowledge is a two-way street

*Connecting cities and the wealth of campus*

More than 100 UW-Madison faculty, staff, and graduate students shared university-community connections at the Livable Cities Symposium, co-sponsored by GHI in May. The symposium recognized that cities face pressing challenges—aging infrastructures, growing populations, shifting demographics, and a changing climate— that will impact health.

“The design of a built environment can require use of ‘a gallon of gas to get a gallon of milk,’ or it can offer choices for improving health and the environment,” said GHI/Nelson Institute Assistant Scientist Jason Vargo. “Design is one of the most effective ... and equitable approaches for promoting healthy behaviors.” UW researchers are helping cities clean up their water, reduce air pollution, build microgrids, and more. Vargo is a key Livable Cities organizer.

[Read more.](#)



### Cities and nature

Eduardo Santana-Castellon (PhD '00 CALS) is building collaboration between UW-Madison and the Universidad de Guadalajara to establish an environmental science museum in Mexico. The museum will show how cities depend on nature to survive. Santana, an adjunct professor in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, professor in Guadalajara, and long-time collaborator with GHI Associate Director Lori DiPrete Brown, hopes to connect students, teachers, researchers, and citizens in environmental awareness through water, land, climate, and urban issues.

*“To make it on this planet, we’re going to have to adopt urbanism to help us minimize our environmental impact ... You can’t have everyone living on a single plot of land with a yard and a tree. You need some sort of denser organization.”*

— Jason Vargo,  
GHI assistant scientist  
on Smithsonian.com