

"Applying cutting-edge research to real life problems is still pretty rare in contemporary urban development. Either the academics are too theoretical or the challenges cities face are too mundane. Professor Igor Vojnovic's GEO 453 course on Metropolitan Environments has carefully and effectively walked the line, and at the Michigan Suburbs Alliance we've found the results to be both intellectually intriguing and pragmatically useful. Students look at the daily issues residents face in declining urban environments, like how they get from home to work or how easy it is to get fresh food, and then apply research and analytical tools that help turn emotional hardships into policy solutions. Leveraging complex data and urban planning tools, Professor Vojnovic's teams give practitioners an important look at systemic interventions into what often appear to be intractable problems."

Conan Smith  
Washtenaw County Commissioner  
Executive Director, Michigan Suburbs Alliance

"Meridian Township is a local Michigan community on the doorstep of MSU, in the midst of an evolution from a largely suburban community to a vibrant thriving walkable one. Over the last 10 years the Department of Geography's Metropolitan Environments class taught by Igor Vojnovic has helped our elected officials, neighborhood residents, developers and builders see new possibilities in urban design with mixed-use developments. Today, mixed-use type development is one of the most popular options in the community. We are reinventing ourselves and appreciate the creativity young college students bring to the table."

Julie Brixie  
Meridian Township Treasurer 2008, 2012  
Capital Area Transportation Authority Board  
Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board  
Friends of Meridian Township Pathways

"The students in GEO 453 displayed a high level of creativity in terms of architectural design, aesthetic and building typology which was equally well-matched by practical considerations regarding functional layouts, building uses and cost considerations. It was clear that the students had a variety of different backgrounds and that they worked very well together to develop their ideas for our redevelopment opportunity. As a result, the quality of the final projects were outstanding and exceeded our expectations. "

Lori Mullins  
Community and Economic Development Administrator,  
City of East Lansing