

# Neha Soni AICP, LEED AP (ND & BD+C), CNU-A

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## LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, ACCREDITATIONS

American Institute of Certified Planner – AICP (APA)  
Pursuing Architecture License – Practice Management passed (NCARB/AIA)  
LEED Building Design + Construction – LEED AP BD+C (USGBC)  
LEED Neighborhood Development – LEED AP ND (USGBC)  
Congress for the New Urbanism – CNU-A (CNU)  
Licensed Architect, India – Council of Architecture (CoA)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Epstein Architecture, Engineering & Construction, Chicago, IL (Aug. 2022 – Present)

### Senior Planner – Urban Designer

Working at an intersection of Urban Design/Architecture and Transportation Planning/Engineering.

#### Selected Projects/Clients:

Big Marsh Park East Side Neighborhood Connectivity Plan, Southside Chicago  
Jasper Street Great Streets Great Neighborhoods Plan, Decatur IL  
RTA Interagency Signage Map Information Design, Chicago Region  
Urban Design Guidance for a Mixed-use Modular High-rise, Seattle WA

SSC Regional Planning Commission/MPO, Springfield, IL (Jan. 2011 – Aug. 2022)

### Associate Planner – Urban Designer

Designed streetscapes, intersection redevelopment, corridor plans, transit centers, and detailed sub-area plans. Initiated projects from site analysis, program development, and concept alternatives to the final design. Tasks included research and analysis, area programming, site planning, landscape design, urban design prototypes, GIS mapping, zoning analysis, and design review for feasibility studies. Assisted active transportation plans for bike, ped, and multi-use trail networks and complete streets. Facilitated inter-agency coordination for policy documents and progress meetings.

#### Initiatives – Urban Design and Sustainability:

Urban design input to technical and non-technical tasks in the planning process.  
Developed design strategies to incorporate sustainability criteria in projects and plans.

#### Presentations – Speaker (public engagement, conferences/webinars):

Prepared PowerPoint presentations illustrating design concepts, maps, charts, diagrams. Facilitated public participation meetings with diverse audiences at local, state, and national levels. Presented projects as a panel speaker at conferences and webinars.

#### Selected Design Projects:

#### [Transit Oriented Development \(Project Leader\) – Nominated for APA IL Awards](#)

Design Idea: Thinking beyond transit, Transit oriented development for bridging the divide.  
Deliverable: Master plan design from concept to final drawings, built-form and building prototypes, 3D massing, site design, landscape and streetscape design, context specific architectural design for the multimodal center, rendered perspectives, preparation of PowerPoint and public presentations.

**Publications:** Illinois Times newspaper cover story, special mention in numerous local news stories

**Presentations (Speaker):** Illinois Association of Regional Councils (ILARC) annual meeting, Downtown Springfield Inc. (DSI) public presentation, Citizens Club of Springfield public presentation, FHWA TIFIA workshop presentation, AIA SDAT (Sustainable Design Assessment Team) presentation, state & local communities engagement meetings.

#### [Corridor Development Design \(Project Leader\) – A sustainability rating tool by FHWA](#)

Design Idea: Demonstrating sustainability in transportation planning and corridor development.  
Deliverable: Master plan design from concept to final drawings using criteria of INVEST prospectively, project rating analysis based on a sustainability scale, 3D renderings and detailed design sketches, PowerPoint preparation and public presentation.

**Publications:** FHWA Sustainable Highways website - Project posted as a case study of INVEST

**Presentations (Speaker):** Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization National Conference 2013, Portland (OR), IDOT Fall Planning Conference 2015, Chicago (IL), FHWA (INVEST) Sustainable Highways National Webinar, 2013

## EDUCATION

### Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.)

(1999 – 2004)  
(Distinction with 2<sup>nd</sup> rank – GPA 3.68/4.0), Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU), India

### Master of Architecture in Urban Design (MAUD)

(2004 – 2006)  
(Honors), Centre for Environmental Planning & Technology University (CEPT), India

### MSc. Urban Development/ International Planning

(2008 – 2009)  
The Bartlett – Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College London (UCL), London, UK

### Master coursework - Architecture Practice

(2016 – 2017)  
Southern Illinois University (SIU), Carbondale, Illinois, US

## DESIGN TOOLS

AutoCAD, Adobe Creative Suite, ArcGIS, SketchUp, MS Office, Revit, Word  
Press/Square Space, Hand-drawn Sketches (2D/3D), Procreate Digital Sketches

## PUBLICATIONS (Blogs)

[Our MPO Story of INVEST 'A Sustainability Tool'](#) – Chicago Build Expo (ambassador for diversity in construction), UrbDeZine Chicago blog  
[Can we first fix our Viewing Lens?](#) – The Urban Vision

## STARTUP (Volunteer)

Ideation/strategic lead, events host/organizer, website/graphic designer

## Urban Design (sub-area) – General/Comprehensive Plans

Main Street revitalization design concept, public square/plaza design for place-making, zoning reform concept through the proposed master plan, riverfront development design proposal, historic preservation and adaptive reuse of buildings into mixed-use and flex spaces and multifamily housing element concepts.

## Transportation Planning & Design

North Grand Streetscape Improvement project, MLK Intersection Redevelopment, Bus Shelter Design, Bike and Pedestrian planning and right-of-way design options, Trails and Greenways network amenities study.

## Architectural Design

Adaptive reuse of an existing old Ice House as a Route 66 Heritage Museum – Designed and presented architectural concept drawings for plans, sections and elevations for feasibility studies.

## ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN/WORK EXPERIENCE – Private Clients

GHD Global Pty. Ltd. (AE Firm), Doha, Qatar (2006 – 2007)

### Architect – Concept Design Team, Architecture Group Marketing Section

Designed and assisted master plans, case studies research, urban design concepts and sketches, street hierarchy, open space structure, built form massing, landscape contour details, infrastructure and site planning and detail plans.

**Selected Project:** [Cultural Village \(Urban Design & Planning\)](#) – New residential development over 99ha with 235 villas reflecting the Arabian heritage and vernacular architecture that included a retail complex, theatres, a resort, and an air-conditioned outdoor public plaza.

**Other Projects:** Mannai Colony Development Project (Rebuilding staff accommodations), Palace for Sheikh Thani at farm property, Ali Bin Ali Golf Course Compound Development, Aspire (Sports city project), Qatar Airways Hotel, Mall at Abu Hamour, Multipurpose Hall.

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN/WORK EXPERIENCE – Private Clients

Pent House Terrace Garden, Single-family House – Landscape design as an extension of a house in nature.

## ACADEMIC TEACHING EXPERIENCE (2021)

Guest Lecture at Kennesaw State University, Department of Civil & Construction Engineering, GA. [Urban Design & Transportation Planning lecture](#) delivered to Transportation Engineering students.

## ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS (Academic)

### [Campus Planning – School of Micro-finance for Women \(Architecture Thesis\)](#)

An institutional campus design included research units, teaching units, and workshops for women with an on-site housing for students, faculty and staff. Library as a focal point of the campus, courtyard typology of buildings with colonnade hallways as a response to the hot tropical climate providing natural ventilation for indoor-outdoor spaces.

### [Multifamily Housing Project \(150 units\)](#)

A prototype module with diverse housing types to create social inclusivity. Multiple square footage unit areas with studio/1-3 bed condominiums with balcony options in a single multistory building.

Riverside Resort – Recreational project with outdoor landscape design at riverfront development.

Multiplex Mall – Entertainment and retail project exploring indoor public space and façade design.

Museum & Art Gallery – Space planning and architectural design for exhibits and public art displays.

Single-family Residence – A luxury house with landscape design connecting indoor-outdoor spaces.

## URBAN DESIGN PROJECTS (Academic)

### [Railway Station Area Redevelopment – Transit Design \(Urban Design Thesis\)](#)

Rail and Bus station area redevelopment connecting multi-modal transit center with surrounding urban fabric. Place making of Placemaking with mixed-use development and walkable streetscape design.

### [Urban Extension – Urban Agriculture as a tool to design expanding urban boundaries](#)

Envisioning urban fringe areas with ecological sensitivity and environmental approach.

## AWARDS & INTERNATIONAL STUDIOS

### Commonwealth Shared Scholarship Scheme (CSSS) Award, UCL, London, U.K. (2008)

Department for International Development (DFID); Commonwealth Scholarship Commission (British Government) & University College London (UCL)

(One of two students chosen internationally for full scholarship)

### The Global Studio – University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada (2006)

The Global Studio Scholarship and CEPT Scholarship funded participant

(One of 60 students selected internationally)

The Global Studio – An International Educational Program (UN Millennium Development Project)

Greater Vancouver Regional Charrette (Sustainability by Design – Envision Vancouver 2020)

The United Nations World Urban Forum III (UN-HABITAT event)

### Asia Link – International Joint Studio Project, Karachi, Pakistan (2005)

Urban Transformation (Urban Design) Studio Participant

### [Project – Revitalizing neighborhood spaces in the old city of Karachi](#)

Design Idea: Incremental improvement to lead future transformational change. Deliverable: Master plan, building typologies, massing studies, streetscape, public square design, Presentation of schematic design and preliminary strategies to local communities & stakeholders.