

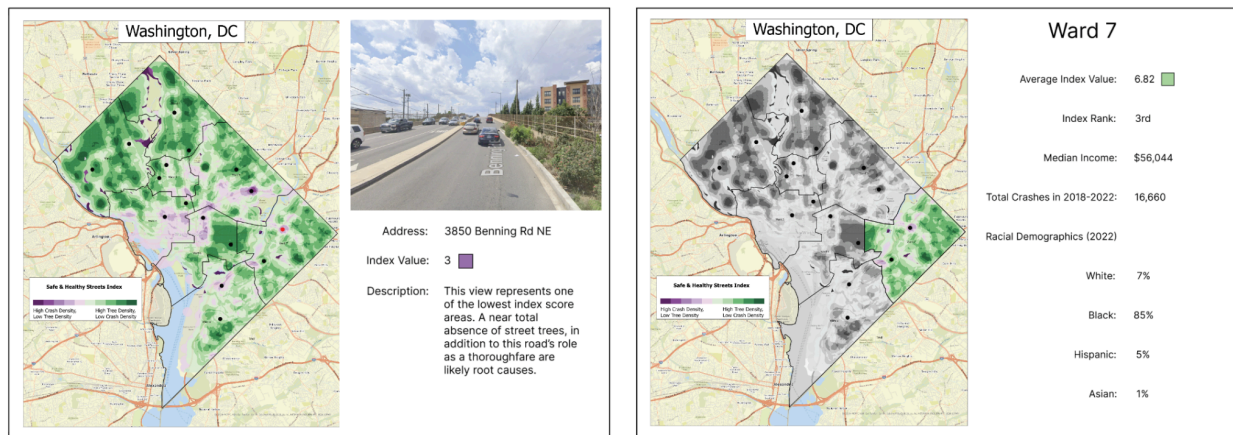
## URP550: Planning Representation & Communication

Instructor: Matthew Wizinsky ([mwizinsk@umich.edu](mailto:mwizinsk@umich.edu))

### Course Description

The purpose of this course is to sharpen students' visual communication and interaction design skills, serving as a basis for designing participatory research tools, publications, and interactive visualizations. Lectures and workshops provide skills in visual communication foundations and industry-standard design tools. These will be applied to assignments consisting of information visualization, public engagement, experiential scenarios, and both digital and physical artifacts. Students are encouraged to bring their own interests into the coursework, including research topics, data, and methods. The course is intended for students without any design background.

Coursework will provide foundational skills in visual communication, color theory, typography, two-dimensional composition, and interaction design. Skill-based workshops will introduce students to design tools and workflows, including **Figma** for interactive prototyping, **Adobe InDesign** for publication design, and **Google SketchUp** for three-dimensional modeling. Skills and techniques will be applied to assignments consisting of information visualization, public engagement, experiential scenarios, and digital/physical artifacts.



Calvin Blackburn (2025), Interactive Map of Auto Crash to Tree Density Index, Washington D.C.

### Student Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate foundational visual communication principles, including typography, typographic systems, use of color as information, information hierarchy, and two-dimensional composition
- Demonstrate capacity to produce rapid prototypes, conduct user testing, and synthesize testing insights into revised outputs
- Present tested and validated design proposals for communication artifacts related to urban planning
- Foundational design literacy: the capacity to constructively critique visual communications and indicate opportunities for improved legibility, comprehension, and usability of designed artifacts and interfaces
- Gain foundational skills in industry-standard design tools, including Adobe InDesign, Figma, and SketchUp