



RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PROJECT

What is the Resilient Communities Project?

The Resilient Communities Project (RCP) is a cross-disciplinary program at the University of Minnesota whose mission is to connect communities in Minnesota with University faculty and students to advance local sustainability and resilience through collaborative, course-based projects. Ultimately, RCP strives to

- build local capacity to address community sustainability and resilience issues
- train students to be future sustainability practitioners in their fields
- produce case studies, tool kits, and other resources that advance sustainability and resilience practice at the community scale

How does RCP work?

Each academic year, RCP selects a partner community (typically a city, county, or tribal government) through a competitive process. RCP collaborates with the selected community to identify between 5 and 25 projects—based on community-identified environmental, social, and economic issues and needs—that will advance local sustainability and resilience. Then, RCP serves as a matchmaker, strategically connecting the community’s projects with existing U of MN courses that can provide appropriate research or technical assistance.

Staff and stakeholders from our partner communities work closely with faculty and students to provide local knowledge and deeper insight into the issues, ensuring the work students undertake is relevant to the community context. Outcomes from each University course are documented in a final report and presentation at the conclusion of the semester. Project results are shared with the community, and disseminated through RCP’s website for use by other communities.

What are the benefits to communities of collaborating with RCP?

- Efficient access to thousands of hours of student research and technical assistance from any academic department at the U of MN
- An infusion of energy and creativity to spark innovation and get “stuck” projects moving forward
- Opportunities to test new ideas and make data-driven decisions
- Visibility as a leader in advancing sustainability and resilience in Minnesota
- Opportunities to network with young professionals entering the workforce



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RCP-SCOTT COUNTY PROJECTS, 2018-2019



During the 2018-2019 academic year, RCP is collaborating with Scott County on 14 community-identified projects that will engage dozens of University

of Minnesota courses and hundreds of students to provide information, ideas, and new perspectives that help to advance local resilience and sustainability.

Creating a Community Land Trust in Scott County

Investigate the feasibility of a community land trust to promote homeownership for lower-income households

Investigating Alternative Methods for Property Assessment

Identify alternatives to in-person home inspections that ensure both accurate property assessments and tax fairness among property owners

Creating an Edible Landscape

Explore the feasibility of and develop a plan for a "food forest" or other edible landscape project on publicly owned land

Managing Next Generation Household Waste

Analyze current use of hazardous household waste facilities in the county, as well as future waste-generation trends, to inform planning for household waste management

Fostering Employer-Assisted Workforce Housing

Investigate the effectiveness of employer-assisted housing in attracting and retaining a workforce, and identify business sectors in the county that would benefit from an EAH initiative

Promoting Active Living in Scott County

Evaluate how current county and municipal policies and practices support or hinder active living, and identify assets, gaps, barriers, and opportunities for promoting active living

Increasing Landlord Participation in Rental-Assistance Programs

Identify barriers to property owner and manager participation in rental-assistance programs, and develop a marketing strategy to encourage greater participation in the future

Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

Investigate potential impacts of connected and autonomous vehicles on land use and transportation in suburban and rural environments, and the role of local government in managing this relationship

Improving Mobility through Rideshare/Ownershare Options

Explore potential rideshare and ownershare approaches to providing mobility for residents without regular access to automobiles

Measuring Costs of Services for Rural Land Uses

Conduct a study that compares tax revenues generated vs. cost of public services provided for Agricultural Preservation, Rural Residential, and Rural Commercial/Industrial land use categories

Evaluating Eminent Domain Settlements for Highway Projects

Investigate how changes to state eminent domain law have impacted the cost and administrative settlement rates for local highway projects and identify a process that better balances land-owner and tax-payer interests

Open Self-Serve Library Feasibility Assessment

Explore resident interest in, and operational requirements for, an "open library" facility in the Scott County Library system

Diversifying Agricultural Land with Perennial Crops

Investigate the potential for perennial food crops that provide both environmental benefits and economic return for farmers

Integrating Early Childhood Data

Conduct an inventory of existing early childhood learning programs and development outcomes data, and provide recommendations for multi-system data integration to enhance developmental progress

*For more information about these projects or Scott County, contact
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