

Resilient Communities Project–Carver County 2015–2016 Partnership

The mission of the Resilient Communities Project is to connect communities in Minnesota with the wide-ranging expertise of University of Minnesota faculty and students to address pressing local issues in ways that advance sustainability and resilience.



During the 2015–2016 academic year, RCP collaborated with Carver County and its partner organizations and agencies on 30 community-identified projects. These projects were matched with 50 courses spanning 22 departments across 8 colleges at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campuses, engaging more than 350 students in meaningful real-world projects, and providing Carver County with information, ideas, and new perspectives on local sustainability and resilience issues.

Environmental Stewardship

Alternative Energy Development and Regulation	Identified best policies and practices to accommodate and encourage high-quality solar energy projects while protecting community interests
Chaska Solar Fields	Assessed the suitability of various local school sites for a solar energy demonstration project
Storm Water Reuse and Best Management Practices	Evaluated the efficacy of best management practices for storm water reuse and contaminant load reduction to conserve potable water and improve water quality
Watertown Whitewater Park Concept	Investigated the feasibility of removing or restructuring a dam on the Crow River to enhance fish habitat and create a whitewater recreation attraction

Housing Opportunity

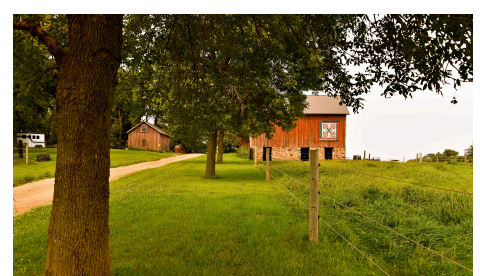
Barriers to Affordable Housing Development	Identified local policies and practices that inhibit development of affordable housing; designed an affordable housing development for a CDA-owned site in Waconia
Housing Improvement Areas Needs Assessment	Evaluated the need for and feasibility of HIAs to preserve and improve the condition of naturally occurring affordable housing in Carver County
Expanding Community Land Trusts in Carver County	Explored policies, marketing strategies, and outreach tools to promote the community land trust model to the public, developers, city staff, and elected officials
Watertown Residential Marketing Campaign	Developed a marketing strategy and framework to attract first-time home buyers, empty nesters, and businesses to the City of Watertown

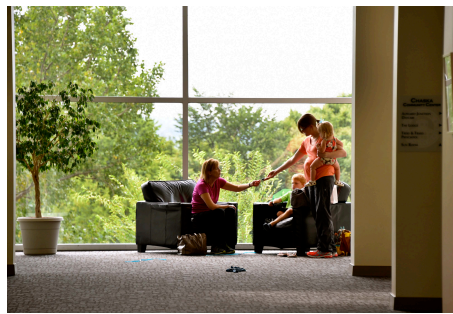
Alternative Transportation

Victoria Trail Way Finding Signage Plan	Developed a trail way finding strategy and designs for trail signage to promote consistent user experiences for trail users in and around the City of Victoria
Chaska Safe Routes to School	Recommended improvements to the Chaska Community Center/ISD 112 School complex on Hwy 41 and Engler Boulevard to enhance bike and pedestrian access
SouthWest Transit Park and Ride Bike and Pedestrian Facilities	Assessed the pedestrian and bike environment near SouthWest Transit park-and-ride facilities and identified improvements to increase bike and pedestrian access
Marketing Transit Sustainability	Developed marketing strategies and materials to promote the sustainability benefits of using SouthWest Transit's services

Community History and Identity

Victoria Eco-Tourism Marketing Plan	Created a marketing strategy to promote tourism that leverages the agricultural resources and natural amenities located in Victoria and Eastern Carver County
Historic Andrew Peterson Farmstead	Informed planning and historic preservation efforts on the Andrew Peterson Farmstead to maximize the site's potential as an historic attraction





Community Engagement and Education

Victoria Water Conservation and Education	Developed a water conservation and education program to reduce outdoor water use for lawn irrigation in the City of Victoria
Downtown Waconia Water Quality Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices	Developed an education and marketing strategy to encourage Waconia residents to implement best-management practices to improve water quality in Lake Waconia
Engaging Carver County Latino Residents	Identified strategies for Carver County and local government to engage Latinos in the county around parks and rec, health, and education services and programming
Assessing Adult-Learner Needs	Assessed the needs of manufacturing businesses in Carver County related to adult literacy and technology skills of entry-level employees

Human Services

School-Based Mental Health Program	Identified school-based mental health models, programs, and best practices for potential adoption in Norwood Youth America's Central School District
Childhood Maltreatment	Analyzed the incidence and impact of adverse childhood experiences in the County, and identified strategies to build resilience and support families to reduce the incidence of childhood maltreatment
Mobile Home Parks Needs Assessment	Assessed mobile home community residents' perceptions of their health needs and their knowledge of available County public health programs and services
Offender Employment Infrastructure Development	Investigated programs, strategies, and best practices for supporting the reentry into the workforce of recently released offenders

Effective and Efficient Administration

Measuring Innovation	Identified strategies for tracking and evaluating the impacts and outcomes of Carver County's continuous improvement and innovation programs
Victoria Firefighter Recruitment, Retention, and Staffing	Investigated strategies for recruiting volunteer firefighters, as well as models for reorganizing the City of Victoria's Fire Department to meet increased service needs as the city's population grows
Field-Deployment of GIS Tools in Watertown	Assisted City of Watertown staff to determine how GIS tools available from the Carver County GIS Office can be employed in the field to increase staff efficiency
Watertown Sustainable Turf Maintenance Practices	Recommended best turf-management practices for maintaining athletic playing field surfaces in order to limit adverse environmental impacts, decrease maintenance costs, and meet growing demand for recreational fields
Aquatic Invasive Species Management Program Evaluation	Identified evaluation approaches and methodologies to measure the effectiveness of and impacts of Carver County's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program

For more information, contact:

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Resilient Communities Project

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