

Resilient Communities Project Partners with Rosemount to Advance Community Sustainability

The University of Minnesota's Resilient Communities Project (RCP) is pleased to announce that the city of Rosemount has been selected as its partner community for the 2014–2015 academic year. The partnership will bring the expertise of hundreds of graduate students and the University to sustainability-related projects identified by Rosemount city staff and community partners.

"As we plan for Rosemount's future, it's a top goal of the City Council to work toward the community's environmental, financial, and cultural health," said Rosemount Mayor Bill Droste. "It will be a great advantage to consult with the University of Minnesota on ways to make Rosemount a more sustainable community for our growing and diverse population."

RCP organizes yearlong partnerships between the University of Minnesota and Minnesota communities. Each academic year, RCP chooses a community partner through a competitive request-for-proposal process, helps identify potential projects based on community-identified sustainability issues and needs, and matches the community's project needs with University of Minnesota courses.

The partnership provides the community with access to students from a wide range of programs and disciplines—from architecture, planning and engineering to business, environmental sciences and the humanities. Through work with RCP, the community is able to enhance its own capacity to advance sustainability. Students who participate in RCP projects benefit from real-world opportunities to apply their knowledge and training and bring energy, enthusiasm and innovative approaches to address local issues.

"We are looking forward to working with Rosemount as our next community partner," said RCP director and Humphrey School of Public Affairs associate professor Carissa Schively Slotterback. "The City's proposal showed a clear commitment to advancing



Photo courtesy City of Rosemount

sustainability and resilience and outlined a wide range of projects that will provide tremendous community-engaged learning opportunities for University of Minnesota students."

Rosemount's winning proposal identifies 40 projects for which the city would like assistance, including affordable and multigenerational housing, neighborhood and resident engagement, recreational programming for youth, services for new immigrant communities, open space restoration, turf management, community gardens, public art, employee wellness and staffing, alternative and renewable energy, climate adaptation, energy and water conservation, storm water management, business clustering and economic development, green business parks, and transportation planning.

Staff from RCP and Rosemount will begin working this spring to define the scope of the projects and match them with courses offered at the University in fall 2014 and spring 2015. RCP program manager Mike Greco will administer the partnership on behalf of the University, and Rosemount community development director Kim Lindquist will coordinate the city's participation in the program.

Rosemount will be the third community to work with the RCP program.

The program was launched during the 2013–2014 school year, when RCP worked with Minnetonka on 14 projects that engaged 25 classes and more than 200 students across eight colleges at the University of Minnesota. Student work helped Minnetonka advance initiatives to reduce phosphorous and sediment pollution in local lakes and rivers, evaluate and improve local housing assistance programs, plan for transit-oriented development around future light-rail stations, reduce traffic congestion, and increase engagement with local residents. Currently, RCP is concluding its academic year partnership with North St. Paul, which has matched 17 projects with more than 40 courses and 300 students. Projects have ranged from implementing a "living streets" policy and creating environmental education programming for local parks to helping residents age in place and promoting redevelopment and pedestrian improvements in the downtown business district.

RCP is an initiative of the Sustainability Faculty Network at the University of Minnesota, with funding and administrative support provided by CURA and the Institute on the Environment. To learn more, visit rcp.umn.edu.