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New model for University – Community Collaboration

Resilient Communities Project connects U of MN + communities to advance sustainability and resilience

1-year community partnership – RCP as matchmaker
Match community projects with U of MN graduate courses
The stats – Year 1

Pilot partnership with City of Minnetonka

14 projects connected with 25 courses in 8 colleges + over 150 students

RFP to select Year 2 partner – 7 proposals, 200+ projects, local contributions $20k-$160k

College of Continuing Education
College of Design
College of Education & Human Development
College of Food, Agriculture, & Natural Resource Sciences
College of Liberal Arts
College of Science & Engineering
Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Law School
The stats – Year 2

Partnership with City of North St. Paul

21 projects connected with ~30 courses

Broader range of projects, courses, + colleges

Growing visibility
North St. Paul Projects

Live/work housing
Living streets and capital improvements
Green energy initiative
Neighborhood identities
Fiber optic network development
Community identity and branding
Downtown revitalization strategies
Civic engagement and communication
Environmental education
 Redevelopment-ready community
Public art and public history
Master redevelopment plan
Silver Lake trail connection
Community gardens and local food
Staff development and retention
Development of underutilized parcels
Aging in place
Energy conservation initiative
Emerald ash borer management plan
Bulk waste pick-up program evaluation
Documenting the RCP-North St. Paul partnership

U of MN Departments

Housing Studies
Civil Engineering
Law School
Landscape Architecture
Communication Studies
Sociology
Liberal Studies
Graphic Design
Gerontology
Journalism
Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering
Architecture
Org Leadership, Policy and Development
Urban and Regional Planning
Public Policy
Environmental Education (UMD)
Environmental Science, Policy and Mgt
Forestry
Agronomy
Social Work
Recreation Resources Management
RCP approach

Grassroots organizing

RCP advanced by grassroots Sustainability Faculty Network

Offered legitimacy, quick start, + ready supply of faculty
RCP approach

Entrepreneurial funding model

Limited support from community - $40k in year 2
Staff (1.25 FTE) + funding ($20k) from 2 research/outreach centers
Cultivating university, foundation, + agency funding
Currently unaffiliated
RCP approach

Long-term institutional strategy

Cut across funding, disciplinary, + collegiate boundaries

Positioning in public engagement – more integrated, more collaborative, more advocacy

Exemplify urban land grant mission
Building Capacity

More than an objective matchmaker, **building the practice of sustainability**

**Students**

Apply disciplinary knowledge to critical challenges, explore sustainability in “real world”

**Faculty**

Connect disciplinary knowledge to sustainability, explore tailored solutions

**Communities**

*Partner*: Position community for the future, draw on collaborative resources

*Others*: Explore innovative community-based practice
Insights

Each application of the model is different

Universities can evolve

  Work around the challenges, engage the innovators, prove the model

Students bring passion, creativity, + expertise

  Expectation of engagement
Insights

Tremendous need + excitement among communities

Visibility, energy, long-term relationship, body of work

Planners know how to do this work

Community connections, collaborative, multi-disciplinary, engagement at our core
Thank you!

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