Resilient Communities Project–Ramsey County
2018–2019 Partnership

The mission of the Resilient Communities Project is to connect local government agencies in Minnesota with U of M students and faculty to advance community resilience and student learning through collaborative, course-based projects.

RAMSEY COUNTY   RCP

During the 2018–2019 academic year, RCP partnered with Ramsey County on **14 community-identified projects**. These projects were matched with **22 courses** spanning **16 academic departments** at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campuses—offering **180 students** the opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills to real community needs and opportunities, and providing Ramsey County with information, ideas, and new perspectives on local sustainability, livability, and resilience issues.

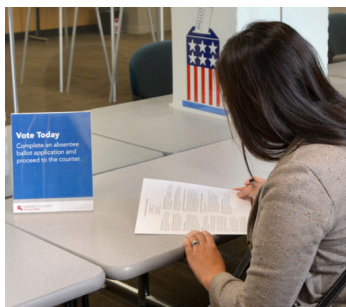| **Community Health and Safety**	
Building Community Resilience to Emergencies among Vulnerable Populations	Identified indicators of social vulnerability and resilience; created a Social Vulnerability Index, showing areas of high and moderate social vulnerability; identified and mapped access to critical community infrastructure such as power, water, and sewer, as well as medical facilities, schools, places of worship, markets, and other gathering places.
Culturally-Appropriate Crisis Interventions	Researched successful crisis intervention programs and strategies for the Karen and other underserved communities nationally; investigated family-oriented perceptions of mental health and wellness within the Minnesota Karen community, with the goal of shifting service delivery to align with the strengths and needs of Karen families.
Integrating Health and Justice: An Evaluation of Health Needs in Ramsey County's Justice System	Analyzed data from the Adult Detention Center (ADC) to better understand the health needs of individuals at the facility, propose strategies and interventions to reduce the prevalence of unmet health needs, and improve outcomes for detainees.
Transportation and Housing	
Removing Transportation Barriers to Employment Opportunities for Workforce Solutions (WFS)Program Participants	Conducted a needs and barriers assessment regarding transportation through interviews with suburban employers facing challenges recruiting and retaining employees; conducted an origin-destination analysis to identify mismatches between unemployed workers and job vacancies; created an accessibility index for Ramsey County employers, identifying potential transportation barriers and accessibility issues.
Stability Starts with a Place Called Home	Assessed county and shelter staff's shared understanding regarding the purpose of family shelter in Ramsey County; analyzed the impact of current policies on the length of time families are in shelter, the experience families have in shelter, the reasons families exit shelter, and where families exit to; and provided policy recommendations to maximize the scarce resource of family shelter space.
GIS as a Communication Tool: Designing and Developing a Construction Map	Designed a data model, data-presentation methodology, and prototype web-mapping application using the County's enterprise geodatabase and ArcGIS Online to improve coordination among city and county public works departments of road construction and maintenance projects included in their respective five-year plans.
Energy and Climate Change	
Exploring the Use of the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Program for Multifamily Buildings	Researched successful national case studies of multifamily projects that have used PACE funding; investigated potential barriers to the use of the PACE program for multifamily residential projects in Minnesota, as well as possible incentives or other mechanisms to encourage use of PACE for affordable housing developments.
Opportunities for City and County Collaboration on Climate Resiliency	Explored strategies and policies County departments can use to incorporate climate resilience and adaptation strategies into their programming, operations, and budgeting; inventoried energy and climate initiatives among cities in Ramsey County; identified ideas for how collaboration among the County and cities could accelerate progress on energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Environmental Stewardship

Innovative Storm Water Management Practices for the Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Project	Explored context-appropriate storm water management techniques that could enhance the aesthetics and recreational value of the areas surrounding the Rush Line, a future bus rapid transit line that will provide all-day, high-frequency transit service in Ramsey County between Saint Paul and White Bear Lake.
Making Connections: Reducing Food Waste While Improving Food Security	Investigated strategies for reducing food waste and diverting edible food to sources where it can be distributed for human consumption.
Evaluating the Impact of the Environmental Response Fund (ERF) in Ramsey County	Evaluated the broader economic impacts of ERF-funded projects in terms of public and private investment leveraged, tax revenue generated, and jobs and housing units generated; recommended strategies to improve program outcomes.

Inclusive and Meaningful Community Engagement

Empowering Citizens to Vote	Identified strategies to increase youth voter turnout in Ward 1 Precinct 9 in the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul, which has experienced lower-than-average election turnout compared to the rest of the state among voters aged 18–24.
Exploring Attitudes Toward a Modern Street Car Line along West 7th Street	Interviewed business owners along West 7th Street in St. Paul to better understand concerns regarding planning, construction, and operation of the Riverview Corridor streetcar line; generated design concepts for station areas and adjacent neighborhoods to address concerns about loss of on-street parking, disruption to businesses, pedestrian/bike safety, aesthetics, noise, and long-term impacts on affordability of housing and commercial-retail space along the corridor.
Putting Residents First: Accessibility of County Service Facilities	Analyzed public transit access to 25 Ramsey County service facilities, and recommended preferred relocation areas based on higher client density and transit accessibility.

Visit https://z.umn.edu/rcp-rc to view reports from each project, as well as news items about the RCP–Ramsey County partnership.

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Resilient Communities Project

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