University of Minnesota
Resilient Communities Project

Towards an Institute for Sustainable Maryland

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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

1. Grassroots organizing

RCP advanced by grassroots Sustainability Faculty Network
Offered legitimacy, quick start, + ready supply of faculty
RCP approach

2

Entrepreneurial funding model

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

3 Long-term institutional strategy

Cut across funding, disciplinary, + collegiate boundaries

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

Innovation in sustainability education – more *integrated*, more *real world*, more than just *environment*
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, tailor knowledge to context + users
Insights

Tremendous need + excitement among communities
Visibility, energy, long-term relationship, body of work

Partners become future leaders, experts, models
Test new ideas, tailor to context
Thank you!

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