

limiting attainment of these goals. The insights gained may help to guide future policy development and perhaps foster creativity.

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## CURA and IonE Launch Resilient Communities Project

CURA is partnering with the Institute on the Environment (IonE) this fall to launch the Resilient Communities Project (RCP), a pilot effort to better connect University of Minnesota resources with communities in Minnesota interested in sustainability. The effort is an initiative of the Graduate Sustainability Education Network, a group of faculty and staff who support graduate-education programs and courses for sustainability studies within the University.

RCP is designed to support one-year partnerships between a selected city in Minnesota and the University, and facilitate faculty-supervised course-based projects that meet city-identified sustainability needs. This model of community-university engagement provides the city partner with access to hundreds of students and faculty across a range of academic disciplines, from architecture, planning, and engineering to business, environmental sciences, and the humanities. Expertise related to all aspects of sustainability—including analysis, planning, design, implementation, and evaluation—is available. In addition, the program offers students real-world opportunities to apply their knowledge and training in service to the community, as well as to engage with students in other programs and fields of study.

"We're excited to be launching this groundbreaking community service and

education initiative at the University of Minnesota," said Carissa Schively Slotterback, RCP's faculty director and associate professor in the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs. "RCP responds to the needs and interests of communities, engages the expertise of faculty, and offers valuable opportunities to train the next generation of sustainability practitioners. The program offers a tremendous opportunity to build local and regional capacity for sustainability."

For this pilot year, RCP is partnering with the City of Minnetonka, a suburban community of 49,000 people in the Twin Cities west metropolitan area. According to Minnetonka City Manager Geralyn Barone, "The Resilient Communities Project is an excellent opportunity to partner with the University of Minnesota in completing some of the many projects that city council and staff have identified as important to maintaining Minnetonka's quality of life now and into the future. We look forward to seeing the results of the project, and hope it will provide students with a valuable learning experience."

City staff have identified 17 projects with which they would like University assistance, ranging from zoning for transit-oriented development, improving stormwater management, and inventorying trees in the community to supporting creation of

neighborhood associations, facilitating development of midpriced housing, and evaluating postdevelopment reactions to contentious development projects. RCP has matched about half of the projects with graduate courses from a range of departments being taught this fall at the University. Other projects will be matched with courses offered in the spring. At the conclusion of each semester, outcomes from each project will be documented in a final report and presentation to City staff.

If the fall-semester pilot proves successful, RCP expects to issue a request for proposals later this year to solicit proposals from cities interested in partnering with the University during the 2013–2014 academic year. Applicants would need to identify sustainability-related projects and staff who can serve as lead contact, and demonstrate support from senior staff and elected officials for participation in the program.

RCP is modeled on the Sustainable City Year Program ([sci.uoregon.edu/content/scy](http://sci.uoregon.edu/content/scy)), a highly successful cross-disciplinary program at the University of Oregon that supports one-year partnerships between a selected city and the University. For more information about RCP, visit [www.rcp.umn.edu](http://www.rcp.umn.edu) or find us on Twitter at @RCPumn.