# Resilient Communities Project–City of Minnetonka
# 2012–2013 Partnership

*The mission of the Resilient Communities Project is to connect communities in Minnesota with the wide-ranging expertise of University of Minnesota faculty and students to address pressing local issues in ways that advance sustainability and resilience.*

During the 2012–2013 academic year, RCP partnered with the City of Minnetonka, a fully developed suburb in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, on 14 community-identified projects. These projects were matched with 25 courses spanning 12 departments across 8 academic colleges at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus, engaging more than 200 students.
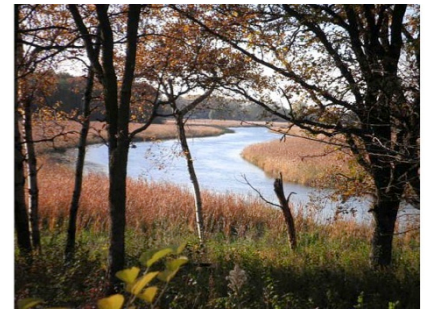
| Housing | |
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| Density and Housing Options Study | Identified existing policies that inhibit affordable and mid-priced housing, as well as strategies to encourage a more diverse range of housing options |
| Housing and Aging in Place | Investigated opportunities to help residents age in place through a broader range of housing options, more compact urban design, better transportation options, and improved access to social services and other assistance |
| Mid-Priced Housing Market Analysis | Conducted a GIS analysis to determine where residential "market leakage" to other communities is occurring for mid-priced housing that appeals to empty-nesters looking to downsize or young families who desire move-up housing |
| Housing Program Evaluation | Evaluated an existing housing rehabilitation program for low- to medium-income residents to determine why the program is underused, and provided recommendations to improve program promotion, administration, and logistics |
| **Environment** | |
| Storm Water and Illicit Discharge Regulation | Conducted an audit of storm water discharge ordinances, and provided recommendations for strengthening regulations and streamlining permitting process |
| Water Management at Ridgedale Mall | Analyzed Ridgedale Mall redevelopment site and identified specific interventions for reducing storm water runoff and surface water pollution |
| Water and Energy Conservation | Developed education and outreach strategies to assist businesses in the community to address water and energy conservation through operations and site management |
| Water Resources Prioritization Plan | Modeled leaf litter nutrient inputs and nutrient and chloride surface transport within four priority watersheds, and developed a prioritization plan to guide future investments to preserve and restore water quality |
| Green Roofs and Rooftop Gardens | Conducted an ethnographic analysis to understand perceptions among residents, developers, and community about green roofs, and recommended innovative best practices for implementing green roofs in a northern climate and suburban context |

| Civic Engagement | |
|---|---|
| Neighborhood Identities and Resident Engagement | Recommended strategies for strengthening social ties and community by augmenting existing social networks among residents rather than pursuing creation of geographically-defined neighborhood associations |
| **Land Use and Development** | |
| Post-Development Critique | Revisited three controversial past developments to evaluate project outcomes, and recommended strategies to improve the public input process to ensure the needs and concerns of both developers and residents are being considered |
| Conservation Development Standards | Created a conservation development scorecard to encourage sustainable developments that protect natural environmental features, preserve open space, protect natural habitats for wildlife, and maintain rural character |
| Parking and Land Use | Reviewed existing parking regulations, computed average parking demand, and recommended innovative parking management strategies to reduce excess parking |
| **Transportation** | |
| * Transportation Demand Management Policy | Reviewed TDM ordinances and best practices in comparable suburban communities nationwide and recommended an innovative two-phase TDM policy to reduce peak-hour demand |
| Transit-Oriented Development on the Southwest Light-Rail Transit Line | Developed detailed policy-oriented case studies of TOD districts in similar cities, recommended model districts for proposed future station areas and transit hubs in Minnetonka, and recommended guidelines for the city's financial and policy role in future redevelopment projects in these locations |

*\* Received the annual "Best Student Project" award from the Minnesota chapter of the American Planning Association*

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**Resilient Communities Project**

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**Driven to Discover**℠

*RCP is a program of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota*