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Access Press Staff

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Counties are Part of Partnership with UMN

The University of Minnesota's Resilient Communities Project (RCP) has announced that Ramsey County and Scott County have been selected as its community partners for the 2018–2019 academic year. Due to both finalists' strong proposals, it marks the first time in its six-year history the program will assist two partners in a given year.

RCP, housed within the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, seeks to connect students' innovation, ingenuity, and fresh perspectives with local government agencies to learn about their needs, conduct research and develop solutions. In the coming months, staff will define the scope and purpose of individual projects before matching them with courses offered at the University in fall 2018 and spring 2019.

"We're very excited about our upcoming collaborations with Scott and Ramsey Counties," said RCP's Director Mike Greco. "Each community brings to the table a unique set of issues and projects. Working with staff, residents, and other partners in these communities will provide U of M students with incredible experiential learning opportunities, while increasing each county's capacity to remain resilient in the face of rapid economic, social, and environmental changes."

Ramsey County's proposal identified up to 18 potential projects, including improving access to county service facilities, removing transportation barriers to employment, increasing housing stability and building resilience among youth and vulnerable populations.

"The RCP partnership is a wonderful opportunity for our organization to advance and align our strategic priorities and goals of well-being, prosperity, opportunity and accountability," said Ramsey County Manager Julie Kleinschmidt. "This program will allow us to collaboratively develop innovative strategies that prepare Ramsey County for future growth in community resiliency and sustainability and support our vision of a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive. Our staff are very excited to partner with U of M students to establish the framework for programs and initiatives that will directly benefit our residents for several years to come." Scott County's proposal identified 14 potential projects, including planning for autonomous vehicles.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for Scott County to have access to the resources and cutting-edge research the University of Minnesota can share," said Scott County Board Chair Tom Wolf. "This partnership will allow us to examine policy, project, and program initiatives—identified by our community—in a well-defined and collaborative way."

Beginning in September, the University and counties will collaborate on more than a dozen multidisciplinary projects to advance resilience and sustainability. (Source: Ramsey County)