

URBAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD RECOVERY: ALIGNING FOOD SECURITY AND RESILIENCE

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PROJECT – RCP 40

About the Partner

Ramsey County, one of the original counties of the Minnesota Territory, was established on October 27, 1849. Located in the heart of the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area, Ramsey County is predominantly urban in character. It is Minnesota's smallest and most densely populated county, spanning 170 square miles. More than 550,000 Minnesotans make their home in Ramsey, and it is the second-most populous county in the state, with about 10 percent of Minnesota's residents. It is also one of the most demographically diverse. Ramsey County communities are nationally known as attractive, livable places rich in history, culture, and opportunity.



Project Description

The State of Minnesota's 2022 [Climate Action Framework](#) identifies urban agriculture as a key investment "to reduce emissions from transport of goods," as well as "promote economic vitality and provide underserved communities with access to healthy, fresh food, and economic opportunities." Ramsey County's 2022 Food Security Needs Assessment identified urban agriculture as a strong, community-led priority for the County to address food insecurity. Since then the county has developed and adopted the [Food Security Strategic Plan](#) and integrated that plan into the broader [Climate Equity Action Plan](#). Two Food Security Coordinators are leading the charge to move this work forward, focusing on activities that can be implemented over the next two years.

To support this work, Ramsey County would like assistance understanding how best to engage, encourage, and support municipalities in the county to implement systems and policy changes that expand access to land for urban agriculture, amend zoning to allow for urban agricultural uses, and otherwise support residents and community groups interested in pursuing urban agriculture. Additionally, Ramsey County would like assistance identifying strategic partnerships, policies, and procedural changes to improve food waste and recovery in the county. The ultimate product from this effort will be the development of a multipronged approach to guide engagement with local city administrators, community groups, and other key stakeholders to expand urban agriculture throughout Ramsey County.



Resilient Communities Project

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Key Issues, Questions, and Ideas for Students to Explore

1. What background research or information would help support urban agriculture initiatives in Ramsey County?
2. What strategies would help support urban agriculture at a municipal (city) level?
3. What are related urban agriculture efforts (e.g., landscaping alternatives, food organizations) that could be leveraged?
4. Are there grants or funding sources available to support urban agriculture initiatives, whether public or private?
5. What opportunities exist to introduce urban agriculture features into new and existing parks and open spaces in Ramsey County?

How Student Work Will Build Community Resilience

In a recent Ramsey County Food Security Needs Assessment, community members asked for better access to space to grow their own food. Student research will help Ramsey County create a framework to guide urban agricultural expansion, which will build community resilience by addressing food sovereignty and insecurity, expanding economic vitality, fostering social cohesion and community spirit, and combating the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities. The county's most food-insecure residents are predominantly from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds and face challenges in accessing affordable, healthy foods in their communities.

Potential Partners or Stakeholders

- Cities in Ramsey County
- Local nonprofits, community development organizations, and passionate community members
- Race and Health Equity Liaisons
- Research and Evaluation Expert
- Environmental Health & Climate Planner

Existing Plans and Reports

- Ramsey County, [Food Security Needs Assessment \(2022\)](#)
- Ramsey County, [Food Security Strategic Plan \(2024\)](#)
- GreenStep Cities, [Best Practice No. 27: Strengthen Local Food Production and Access](#)

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