

Scott, Ramsey counties to tap U of M expertise to gain resilience

Elizabeth Dunbar · Minneapolis · May 6, 2018

Education

A stormwater retention pond in the city of Ramsey has become a big draw over the years, with an adjacent amphitheater for summer concerts and green space for recreation. But The Draw, as it's appropriately named, also has a problem: ugly algae.

Figuring out [options for dealing with the algae \(http://rcp.umn.edu/2017/10/17/managing-storm-water-sustainably-through-better-engineering/\)](http://rcp.umn.edu/2017/10/17/managing-storm-water-sustainably-through-better-engineering/) was one of 21 projects University of Minnesota students and faculty took on over the past year as part of the university's Resilient Communities Project. Ramsey city officials celebrated the work on Friday and said they will implement as many ideas as they can.

"The data and the information that the students and everyone else have brought forward is going to be applied in many different ways," said John LeTourneau, Ramsey's acting mayor. "We're really trying to introduce as many ways as we can to create innovation."

Cities are being forced to adapt to climate change and demographic changes while also dealing with other challenges, such as water quality and aging infrastructure.

Next year, the Resilient Communities Project will work with Scott and Ramsey counties. Other communities that have completed the program include Minnetonka, North Saint Paul, Rosemount, Carver County and Brooklyn Park.

The collaboration is aimed at creating a sustainable future by helping cities and counties tackle environmental, housing and transportation issues. The idea is to strengthen all the systems within a community so that they can thrive no matter what challenges get thrown their way in the future.

Mike Greco, who directs the project, said working with Ramsey gave participants a chance to interact with both urban and rural perspectives. One of the projects focused on land use and how to position Highway 10 in Ramsey as the "gateway to greater Minnesota."

"It was really a mix of urban and rural, and it's a rapidly growing community," he said. "That presented a unique opportunity for students who might not be familiar with communities that are more on the edge of the Twin Cities metropolitan area."

The algae project for The Draw also ended up being useful to city officials. They plan to try out a few of the solutions university environmental engineering students proposed starting this summer.

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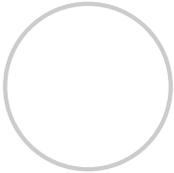
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