

**Contacts:**

Mike Greco, Resilient Communities Project, [mgreco@umn.edu](mailto:mgreco@umn.edu), 612-625-7501;  
Nick Koktavy, Carver County Projects and Communications Manager,  
[nkoktavy@co.carver.mn.us](mailto:nkoktavy@co.carver.mn.us), 952-361-1797

**U of M Resilient Communities Project partners with Carver County to advance community sustainability**

MINNEAPOLIS / ST. PAUL (03/16/2015) — The University of Minnesota’s Resilient Communities Project (RCP) is pleased to announce that Carver County has been selected as its partner community for the 2015–2016 academic year. The partnership will bring the expertise of the University and hundreds of graduate and professional students to sustainability-related projects identified by Carver County and its partners, which include the Carver County Community Development Agency, SouthWest Transit, Independent School District 112, and the Cities of Victoria, Chaska, and Watertown.

“Carver County and its partners are very pleased to be selected for this partnership with the University of Minnesota,” said Carver County Board Chair Randy Maluchnik. “The County’s proposal leverages long-standing relationships between partner agencies and communities in Carver County to address diverse challenges that result from the growth we are experiencing. The results University of Minnesota students will produce through this partnership will benefit our community for years to come.”

RCP organizes yearlong partnerships between the University of Minnesota and Minnesota communities. Each academic year, RCP chooses a city or county partner through a competitive request-for-proposal process, helps identify potential projects based on community-identified sustainability issues and needs, and matches those project needs with University of Minnesota courses.

The partnership provides the community with access to students from a wide range of programs and disciplines—from architecture, planning and engineering to business, environmental sciences and the humanities. Through work with RCP, the community is able to enhance its own capacity to advance sustainability. Students who participate in RCP projects benefit from real-world opportunities to apply their knowledge and training and bring energy, enthusiasm and innovative approaches to address local issues.

“We’re very excited about our upcoming partnership with Carver County,” said RCP director and Humphrey School of Public Affairs associate professor Carissa Schively Slotterback. “The enthusiasm of staff from the County and its partner cities and organizations as well as their clear commitment to advancing sustainability and resilience will ensure a productive and enjoyable collaboration that will benefit Carver County and provide community-engaged learning opportunities for University of Minnesota students.”

Carver County's winning proposal identifies 34 potential projects, including enhancing bike and pedestrian facilities near park-and-ride locations, creating safe routes to schools, providing school-based mental health programs, developing alternative energy sources, evaluating stormwater reuse opportunities, developing employment opportunities for ex-offenders, assessing the needs of adult learners, expanding school readiness and early childhood programs for high-risk populations, engaging with new immigrant groups and communities of color, crafting an eco-tourism marketing plan, exploring opportunities for preservation of a historic farmstead, and evaluating the County's aquatic invasive species program.

Over the next few months, staff from RCP and from Carver County and its partners will begin to define the scope of the individual projects and match them with courses offered at the University in fall 2015 and spring 2016. RCP program manager Mike Greco will administer the partnership on behalf of the University, and Carver County planner Nate Kabat will coordinate the County's participation in the program.

RCP is an initiative of the Sustainability Faculty Network at the University of Minnesota, with funding and administrative support provided by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. To learn more, visit [rcp.umn.edu](http://rcp.umn.edu).

##

**About the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs:** The University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) connects the resources of the University of Minnesota with the interests and needs of urban communities and the region. CURA pursues its urban and regional mission by facilitating and supporting connections between state and local governments, neighborhoods, and nonprofit organizations, and relevant resources at the University, including faculty and students from appropriate campuses, colleges, centers or departments. Learn more at [cura.umn.edu](http://cura.umn.edu).

**About Carver County:** Carver County is located in the southwest corner of the Twin Cities metro region. With a 2013 estimated population 95,463, Carver County is consistently among the fastest growing in the state. The County Board has defined Carver County's mission as follows, "To meet the service requirements and special needs of our residents in a fiscally responsible and caring way. We will plan the County's growth to preserve its uniqueness and will encourage rural and urban compatibility. We will protect our history while planning for a dynamic future." Learn more at [www.co.carver.mn.us](http://www.co.carver.mn.us).