

## MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY

Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at [aprilsnyder@umn.edu](mailto:aprilsnyder@umn.edu). Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

<b>Date of Report Submission:</b>	January 2, 2014
<b>Project Title:</b>	Workshops: Local Climate Impacts & Developing Questions and Answers for Local Government

### Project Context & Purpose

***Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.***

The project proposed to answer the question: *“How will a changing climate impact the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area and what information do municipal, county and , regional government decision-makers need to inform decision making that builds resiliency and adaption to climate changes?”*

Project funding was used to organize and facilitate a regional dialogue between researchers from many different disciplines (climate science, natural resources, civil engineering, economics, urban design and planning and more) and local government staff and officials to explore the latest science on down-scaled climate models and projections about future impacts. This took the form of a workshop with the goal of making local decision-makers more aware of the latest science on impacts and also developing specific questions that can be posed to researchers to help local governments make better decisions about policy and infrastructure.

The event took place on May 22, 2013 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. Over 70 (?) attendees attended the event, representing government staff from Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the Metropolitan Council, state agencies and researchers and faculty from a variety of fields.

## Work Completed

*Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.*

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the City of Minneapolis along with the University of Minnesota, the University of Michigan and the Science Museum of Minnesota hosted a workshop for local governments to build knowledge around expected climate change impacts on urban communities in the Twin Cities. The workshop goals were to:

- Connect local government staff with the latest information on climate change history and future projections.
- Understand questions that local governments have about climate trends and potential impacts and vulnerabilities.
- Connect local government staff with research professionals to advance applied research and meet local needs.

The day began presentations on historical and current climate trends in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metro region. This overview included observed temperatures in the region over the last 70 years and related shifting plant hardiness zones, trends in precipitation levels and snowfall, extreme weather occurrences, and drought. Based on these trends, the Twin Cities region can expect to see the following changes to its climate in the coming years: warmer average temperatures, warmer low diurnal and winter temperatures, shorter winters, more total precipitation and more severe precipitation events. The key potential impacts of these changes are in the areas of public health and infrastructure damage.

With those historical trends and projections in mind, attendees generated a series of discussion topics for breakout sessions to apply the climate data to local decision-making. The group identified eight different topic areas for discussion: energy, stormwater, infrastructure, food & agriculture, health, ecosystems, mitigation and adaptation, and education and outreach. In two 45-minute breakout session, the groups came up with a series of key issues and research questions in each of these areas.

The morning concluded with a panel of climate resource providers, including: Kelly Muellman, MN Department of Health; Paul Moss, MN Pollution Control Agency; and Brent Schleck, Minnesota Sea Grant. These agencies and organizations shared resources that could be of use to cities in climate adaptation planning. The day concluded with a summary of key takeaways from the event and next steps going forward.

A full summary of the event, along with presentations and results can be found at the City of Minneapolis Sustainability [Climate Adaptation & Resiliency page](#).

## Partnerships & Collaborations

*Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.*

In developing this proposal, City of Minneapolis Sustainability staff worked with the Institute on the Environment, the Science Museum of Minnesota, the City of Saint Paul, the Metropolitan Council and the Center for Climate Research at the University of Wisconsin Madison. Staff and researchers from the Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments, the Graham Institute, and the Great Lakes Adaptation Assessment for Cities at the University of Michigan were instrumental in helping to facilitate the workshops.

The workshops themselves helped to connect representatives from a number of local governments, educational institutions, state agencies, and non-profits. Attendees included representatives from:

- Local governments:
  - City of Minneapolis: Health Department, Public Works, Community Planning and Economic Development, Sustainability, Neighborhood/Community Relations, Property Services, Emergency Management
  - Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board
  - City of Saint Paul: Energy Management, Environmental Policy, Public Works, Emergency Management, Water Resources, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development, Building Inspections
  - Metropolitan Council
  - Hennepin County: Emergency Management, Public Health, Environmental Services
  - Ramsey County: Building Operations, Energy and Sustainability, Property Management
  - Suburban cities: Oakdale, Shoreview, White Bear Lake, Woodbury
  - Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
  
- State Agencies: Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
  
- Educational Institutions:
  - University of Minnesota: Institute on the Environment; Department of Soil, Water and Climate; Humphrey School of Public Affairs; Computer Science and Engineering; Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering; Geography, Environment, and Society;
  - University of Michigan: Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA), Graham Institute, Great Lakes Adaptation Assessment for Cities
  - Macalester College
  - Minnesota Sea Grant
  
- Non-profits: Environmental Initiative, Will Steger Foundation, Science Museum of Minnesota, Twin Cities Public Television, Greater Saint Paul Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)

## Project Outcomes

*Please provide a summary of the outcomes of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.*

There was a general consensus from attendees that local governments are willing and interested in working on this issue, but there is a need for more resources to support it. Attendees also recognized the need for more public education and engagement on this issue, to encourage people to recognize the problem and take action.

The workshops were helpful in identifying specific questions, impacts and needs for local governments in the areas of climate adaptation and resilience. Attendees were encouraged to bring these conversations and issues to their professional networks, to broaden the discussion of climate change adaptation. A list of resources for climate data, adaptation planning, trainings and potential funding opportunities was compiled from the workshops.

Since the workshops, Minneapolis staff have attended several additional conferences and forums on climate adaptation and urban heat island. In the fall of 2013 Minneapolis and Saint Paul both applied for a Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities grant, referencing the workshop outcomes and continuing conversations with other city departments about existing programs and assets as well as additional needs for resilience and adaptation planning. This issue continues to be a consideration and focus area for city planning and sustainability initiatives, and the workshops built a foundation of capacity, knowledge and resources from which to continue this work within and across local governments in the region.

Since the workshop, the Metropolitan Council has adopted policy statements for their new regional planning initiative, Thrive MSP 2040, specifically identifying climate adaptation as a lens through which to view the Council's future work. The Science Museum of Minnesota has also hosted the first annual Minnesota Climate Adaptation Conference, which built on the themes and topics identified during the May 22<sup>nd</sup> event.

Attached are the summaries, survey responses and resources from the workshop.