Summary

The Sustainable Cities Partnership (SCP) at Western Washington University (Western) is accepting applications from potential partners for the academic year beginning September 2017. The selected partner will benefit from thousands of hours of effort by Western students and faculty, from a variety of disciplines, working to advance the city's sustainability projects. The partner city must support the effort through staff time and the payment of a fee. The selection process is competitive, and the deadline for applications is **March 17, 2017**.

Overview of Program

SCP is a yearlong partnership between Western and a partner community in Northwest Washington. The program engages Western's students and faculty on sustainability and livability projects chosen in collaboration with the partner. The SCP faculty and students work through a variety of studio and service-learning courses, thus providing students with experience tackling the community's real-world projects. Many courses/projects will involve fieldwork, so a partner community will typically be within a 1.5 hour drive of Bellingham. Students bring energy, enthusiasm, and innovative approaches to difficult, persistent problems. SCP's primary value derives from collaborations resulting in on-the-ground impact and forward movement for a community ready to transition to a more sustainable and livable future. The Association of Washington Cities (AWC) collaborates with Western in the operation of SCP, helping to solicit partner cities and to communicate the value of this effort to elected and appointed municipal officials throughout the state. AWC can help with the ongoing communication needs of the partner community and can help draw upon resources and skills of other entities in the region.

Potential SCP Projects

The concept of sustainability applies not only to municipalities of all sizes, but also to a broad spectrum of disciplines. *Urban planning* is a discipline with a clear relationship to sustainability, and Western has years of experience collaborating with the City of Bellingham on urban projects. Our Urban Transitions Studio course has developed concepts for Bellingham since 2010 in the areas of planning and transportation. But many other disciplines taught at Western also relate to sustainability, as seen in the list below

- *Urban Planning.* Land use planning for neighborhood/district. Redevelopment planning. Transit-oriented planning. Open space planning. Transportation modal connectivity. Incorporation of principles of sustainability into land use plans. Incorporation of methods of disaster reduction into long range plans. Development of municipal code.

- *Spatial Analysis.* Development of GIS datasets either from existing datasets or from GPS-based field data. Analysis of datasets (land cover, land use, critical areas buffers, etc.) Facility inventory (e.g., stormwater system) and mapping.

- *Environmental Policy.* Investigation of issues related to environmental justice (e.g., noise or air pollution impacts correlated to social and economic class), food justice.

- *Sociology /Anthropology.* Exploration of cultural issues via surveys, interviews, other methods. What are a community's attitudes regarding sustainability? Why does a given ethnic group not take advantage of a particular program? What are the needs of a subset of the city's population?

- *Communications/Journalism.* Development of materials for a public relations campaign (including survey research that underpins a campaign). Development of a video/film promoting a topic/program.

- *Computer science.* Development of both user- and server-side portions of web-based database application that handles a specific need (e.g., reservations and fee collection for park facilities). Development of a mobile app (e.g., routes and times for a transit system).

- *Marketing.* Use of data for program analysis or development (e.g., Is there a market for a swimming pool? Where should a new park be built?). Can include focus groups/surveys/ethnographic studies, in addition to analysis of existing data.

- *Community Health/Recreation.* Analyze health of a population; gain an understanding of health dynamics. Promote health equity through advocacy. Analyze community assets/opportunities/barriers to improve recreation service provision to marginalized communities.

- *Environmental Science.* Ecosystem restoration planning. Environmental impact assessment.

- *Design.* Wayfinding signage. Interpretive signage.

- *Energy.* Analysis of carbon footprint of an operation center or a geographic region. Analysis of building retrofit opportunities. Lifecycle net energy analysis.

We've mentioned examples of projects possible within each discipline, but applicants should generalize from those examples, thinking first of the issues/problems facing the community, and then imagining how a given discipline/course could be brought to bear. Also, multiple disciplines/courses can focus upon a single issue—e.g., a spatial analysis course can interact with a land use planning course; a sociology course that conducts a community survey can interact with a journalism course that designs a public relations campaign.

In an appendix, find a list of the projects now underway in the City of Edmonds (SCP's partner for the ongoing '16 – '17 inaugural year), as well as ones completed by a similar program that's been operating for several years at the University of Oregon. The lists show the diverse ways in which a university can assist a city in the achievement of its goals, and it might help you develop project concepts that could be included in your application.

Proposing Projects
Partners are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposed projects with SCP during preparation of the application—this interaction helps produce a project list that best matches Western's capacity with the partner's goals. Successful development of a project list is a dialogue that includes: (1) the partner proposes a list of projects; (2) SCP and the partner discuss modifications to the proposed projects to match the projects' scopes and scales with availability and interest of Western courses and faculty; and (3) SCP suggests additional projects, based on the university's capacity, that could meet the partner's sustainability and livability goals. We suspect that you are unfamiliar with the wide range of university faculty expertise available, so we encourage you to think creatively when developing project ideas.

During development of your application, SCP staff can be reached by email at SCP@wwu.edu or at 360-650-3824 (Office Hours: 8:00 – 11:30, Mon – Fri)

An SCP partner should have the staff and funding capacity to support at least nine *selected* projects, but an application should include a list of at least 15 *proposed* projects, since not all projects will be suitable for matching with university courses. An individual project's timeline must not exceed nine months and should ideally be compatible with Western's three 11-week academic terms: fall (September- December), winter (January-March), and spring (April-June).

NOTE: Partners may collaborate with neighboring entities (e.g. cities, counties, special purpose districts, NGOs, business or professional organizations, private funders, or research or educational institutions) to formulate projects and share costs.

Upon selection of the partner, SCP and the community will develop a scope of work for each project, detailing the problem statement, potential directions for student exploration, expected outcomes, deliverables, activities, and the corresponding budget.

Benefits of SCP to the Partner:
SCP provides numerous benefits for the partner. The partner can expect:

- Concept plans and designs that can energize staff and community members around projects tied to partner goals. Students can explore and innovate in directions that are sometimes unavailable to partner staff or consultants due to constrained project budgets or political conditions.

- A high rate of return on investment, with thousands of hours of student work on projects.

- Increased energy and enthusiasm among residents and partner staff, and greater support from residents for proposed solutions, through student outreach in your area.

- Robust proposals that can spark community and staff discussions, increase the breadth of conversations around projects, as well as help to get "stuck" projects moving.

- Increased publicity and an improved reputation as a forward- thinking, sustainable organization. SCP project results can help you clarify, understand, and apply sustainability and livability principles.

- An interdisciplinary group of faculty experts with first-hand knowledge of innovative research and practices.

- Interested students, with on-the-ground knowledge of your area, who may serve as candidates for future internships and staff positions.

- Students often turn out to be informal ambassadors for the partner, describing their successful collaborations with the partner in presentations, community meetings, future academic courses, and job interviews.

- A student journalist who will generate press releases, project reports, human-interest stories, and related content for your local media and our news outlets. The regular, positive press coverage will help to frame your organization to your constituents as progressive and forward thinking.

Expected Cost to a Partner Community: Fee, Staff Involvement
The fee for participation in SCP is designed to recover *direct* program costs—no indirect charges are included. The cost therefore varies based on the number of projects, number of academic courses, and level of student activity in each course. Typically, the average cost of a single course working on a single project is about $7,000. With that as a guideline, the partner should expect to pay roughly $65,000 to support a yearlong program including 9 projects, $85,000 to support a program of 12 projects, etc. We know that budgets are tight; at programs elsewhere in the U.S., cities have collaborated with other groups, including special purpose districts, private developers, and chambers of commerce, in order to defray costs.

Services covered by the fee include coordination support from SCP staff; student and faculty site visits to the city; compilation, printing, and distribution of high-quality final reports; publicity and hosting of events; student-created materials for display; coordination of contact with media (utilizing Western's Office of Communications); and electronic versions of reports produced by students (which will also be permanently availed via Western's libraries).

A key element of a successful program is partner involvement—SCP projects will be successful only with significant staff participation. Such participation falls into three categories:

- The partner must have a program champion, preferably a person with sufficient seniority to direct and motivate staff to actively engage in the partnership.

- For *each* chosen project, the partner must identify a specific person to serve as the Point of Contact (POC) for SCP faculty and students. During the academic quarter in which a project is ongoing, the POC spends as much as one full day every two weeks (i.e., 0.1 FTE) preparing background materials, accompanying students on site visits, and participating in reviews and presentations of student work. Also, before the start of the academic year, the POC needs to compile and provide relevant documents, such as existing concept plans, vision documents, architectural renderings, computer-aided drawings, GIS maps and layers, community datasets, and aerial photographs.

- The partner must also identify a staff person who will be its program coordinator, serving as main liaison between the city and SCP. The coordinator should be involved enough in each project to know the staff and faculty involved and to understand the project's scope and current status. The coordinator's time commitment will vary based upon the number of projects—at Edmonds, coordination of a program involving 12 courses working on 11 city projects requires about one day every two weeks (0.1 FTE) of the coordinator's time.

Application Components

Your application should be emailed to SCP@wwu.edu and should include the following:

Organization Information. Provide the community's name and the name and contact information (e-mail, phone, mailing address, department, and staff role) of the primary contact person for your application. Please include a list of co-applicant organizations (if any) and briefly describe their roles in the partnership.

Project Summary List. Provide a list of your proposed projects. This summary should describe each project in a short paragraph, including the project's sustainability impacts and the designated staff POC for the project.

> Example project summary: `Plan and design environmentally friendly redevelopment of a public housing site in a way that integrates an adjacent housing complex, a sustainable stormwater management system, infill development, and the community at large. Staff contact: Jane Doe, Planning Manager. Sustainability impact: economic development, active transportation, and water quality.`

Letters of Support. Include letters of support from the city mayor / manager, the city / county council, the council and mayor / manager of co-applicant organizations (if any), and other funding partners, where applicable. If you have a sustainability action plan, strategic plan, or other adopted document showing the partner's commitment to sustainability, you should include or reference this document in your application.

Appendix with Project Details. Provide details for each project in an appendix. We suggest including a map showing the project site (if applicable), a narrative description of the project's goals, sustainability issues addressed by the project, specific problems that students may be able to address, and suggested deliverables from the SCP courses. Also include information about the staff involved in the project, potential funding sources, and the role of partner organizations (if any).

Application Evaluation Criteria

SCP will evaluate applications based on the following criteria:

- *Top-Level Support:* Mayor / Executive and elected officials indicate willingness to direct staff to provide resources, devote time, and participate in SCP projects.

- *Sustainability:* Projects include specific sustainability goals, such as (but not limited to) reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fostering active transportation, improving social equity, increasing housing density/mix, improving urban form, reducing energy use, or redeveloping existing structures or sites.

- *Financial Support:* The partner's cost for SCP will range from $65,000 to $85,000 to support 9 to 12 projects. While we do not ask for a formal commitment of funds at this time, it would be helpful to include a statement in your application indicating expected sources of funding.

- *Real Impact:* Projects directly relate to your goals and will have a measurable positive impact on the community. Describe how you will measure the success of SCP projects and monitor progress after the year is over.

- *Academic Calendar and Logistics:* Projects are compatible with the Western academic calendar of three 11-week terms. Some projects may be complex enough to involve multiple courses over two or three terms. For partners more than 1.5 hours travel time from Bellingham, describe any special arrangements to address issues of collaboration and coordination.

- *Faculty Match:* Projects must be within the capability of SCP faculty and students. SCP will identify faculty who are able and willing to carry out projects based on curricular and research needs and interests. Coordinating with SCP as you develop your project list will help ensure a strong faculty match.

- *External Organization Support:* Projects that involve other organizations, such as transportation districts, school districts, nonprofit organizations, business or professional organizations, or research or educational institutions, should indicate how these partnerships would function.

Contact Information for Edmonds, WA

The coordinator for SCP's ongoing program with the City of Edmonds has offered to answer questions about their experience to-date with SCP.

- City of Edmonds: Rob Chave, Planning Manager.
  (425) 771-0220 ext.1332, Rob.Chave@edmondswa.gov

Timeline: Application Process

January 4, 2017: SCP opens the application process that will lead to selection of a partner for the 2017 – 2018 academic year. Read the packet and develop initial questions/thoughts to bring to an information session.

2nd Week of January, 2017: SCP will host two info sessions, allowing potential partners to receive additional information about the program and to engage in Q & A. The <u>north</u> session will be held on Western's campus in Viking Union room 462B at 10:00 a.m. on January 12. The <u>south</u> session will be held at Marysville City Hall at 10:00 a.m. on January 11. Driving directions can be found on the SCP website.

January 4 to March 17, 2017: SCP staff available by phone, by email, and in person to discuss potential projects with applicants. SCP office hours are 8:00 to 11:30, Monday through Friday. Applicants are strongly encouraged to interact with SCP during the development of an application. SCP staff are also available for presentations to stakeholders at the city (e.g., city council, potential co-applicant entities).

March 17, 2017: Applications due to SCP. An electronic version should be emailed to SCP@wwu.edu

Timeline: SCP '17 – '18 Program

April 7, 2017: Partner chosen. SCP and the partner will coordinate media to announce the selection.

April-June 2017: SCP and the partner decide settle upon the group of projects/courses to be included in the program. SCP and partner develop and sign a master contract.

Summer 2017: SCP and the partner develop detailed scope of work documents (which become appendices to the master contract) for each fall-quarter project/course. SCP staff and faculty meet with partner staff and local professionals. City staff provide background information and documents for projects.

October 2017: SCP kick-off event. Fall term classes work on SCP projects.

Winter 2018: Winter term classes work on SCP projects. Fall term written reports delivered to the partner.

Spring 2018: Spring term classes work on SCP projects. Winter term written reports delivered to the partner.

May 2018: SCP 2017-18 wrap-up celebration, hand-off to the 2018-19 partner.

Summer 2018: Spring term written reports delivered to the partner

Additional Information

For additional information about SCP and this application process, please refer to SCP's web site, www.wwu.edu/scp