

Springfield's experience

Springfield also picked projects linked to council goals. Projects this year include redevelopment of the 11-acre Wamart property in the Mohawk area with its 40,000 sq. ft. building that has been empty for about 10 years. Redevelopment of the site is considered a catalyst for the economic health of the area. Students in architecture, landscape architecture, transportation, urban planning, public relations, law, business and other disciplines are crafting proposals with the help and guidance of city staff, UO professors and even practicing architects and other professionals in the community. Wamart property owner Steven Yett is heavily involved in working with students on the project.

Congressman Peter DeFazio kicked off Springfield's SCYP back in September, saying the collaboration will bring residents, faculty, students and other strategic partners "to develop new approaches to projects involving bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning, redevelopment for some of the city's commercial and industrial sites, and preservation of the historic Dorris Ranch. I am looking forward to seeing the results of the students' work."

Piercy also lauds Springfield's SCYP, saying "We're thrilled that Springfield is doing the SCYP program. They've been so wary and now they are fully engaged. They have much to be proud of. Smaller communities around us are doing great things, too."

"I've been totally happy with SCI," says former Eugene city manager Vicki Elmer, who is lead professor in UO's Oregon Leadership in Sustainability graduate program and involved in the Springfield year. "It is always a challenge to get a good local client who will spend the time." She says Courtney Griesel, Springfield's management analyst in the city manager's office, is "amazing" and "awesome," and "she is totally committed to sustainability and getting us everything we need to do class prep."

How students benefit

EW talked to two students involved in SCYP, Hiroshi Kaneko of Portland and Lauren Schwartz of Ashland. Both were drawn to the program because of its interdisciplinary scope and its practical applications in the "real world" of work.

"It's been tremendous," says Kaneko, an architecture student. "I like what they are doing, bridging education with the community," he says. "Not all academics can be applied to real world situations."

Schwartz is an MBA candidate, a student in landscape architecture and graduate teaching fellow with SCI. Her involvement in the first SCYP in Gresham involved plans for an economically depressed neighborhood. She says her experience inspired her to pursue an MBA in sustainable

LAUREN SCHWARTZ AND HIROSHI KANEKO



PHOTO BY TRASK BEDORTHA

business practices. Last year in the Salem SCYP she worked on a proposal to partner Salem, which has excess wastewater treatment capacity, with SeSequential Biofuels, which has excess waste from processing restaurant grease into biofuels. The sludge can be "digested" to generate power from methane gas.

Why use students in city projects, other than the practical experience they gain? "Cities benefit because they don't have a lot of money available for redesigning parks, playgrounds, downtown areas, empty storefronts, parking lots, empty buildings," says Chris Jones. "So for a little bit of money, comparatively speaking, they get 400 really bright students descending on their town to help them come up with ideas, plans and proposals."

Jones says the student ideas are "vetted with the help of professors, city staff and other professionals and partners. We encourage the city staff and professionals to put some boundaries on the student work, but not too much." Jones adds that "students can explore a much wider range of alternatives than city staff typically can."

What is the future?

Is the UO's ground-breaking sustainability program in itself sustainable? Robert Liberty says it was difficult for Gresham, Salem and Springfield to come up with the money to participate in the SCYP, and "since then the fiscal outlook has worsened. What was hard then has become

even tougher today. Hence, some cities have sent us their regrets, despite their desire to participate."

Liberty says the \$250,000 cost of the program covers the mostly part-time salaries and administrative costs associated with managing such a large program involving hundreds of undergraduate and grad students. The cost next year also includes an independent evaluation of the program to make sure it is operating efficiently.

Liberty says he's had some encouraging conversations with staff at two cities in the Portland area. "We might have to adapt our one-city partnership model a bit (or not) to make it work," he says, "but I am hopeful and determined that our program will continue in the next academic year."

Looking ahead, Liberty says the program will need some supplementary funding, "probably philanthropic funding," to help bring the cost of participation down. "We believe it is important for the city to care enough to commit both money and staff time," he says. "It would be great if we could cover two-thirds to one-half of the costs from other sources, so that smaller, less affluent communities, like Coos Bay or Klamath Falls, could participate if they wanted to."

Meanwhile, free workshops at UO are being planned in April and June to accommodate out-of-state and out-of-country university faculty and others who want to learn how they might replicate SCYP in their own cities. **EW**

More information on SCI and SCYP can be found at sci.org.edu

HOW MANY EYES ARE ON EUGENE WEEKLY?
YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED & THE NUMBERS ARE GROWING!

114,047 READERS

EUGENE Weekly FREE EVERY THURSDAY!
NOW AVAILABLE IN 792 LOCATIONS IN THE VALLEY AND ON THE COAST

Sunrise
Asian Food Market

Largest Selection of Asian Groceries
Seaweed, rice, noodles, frozen products, deli, snacks, drinks, sauces, spices, produce, housewares, and more.

We carry groceries from Holland, India, Pakistan and Polynesia
Sushi & Asian deli take-out

Woodfield Station SHOPPING CENTER
29TH AVENUE

WILLAMETTE STREET
OAK STREET

★ Sunrise

www.sunriseasianfood.com
M-Th 9am-7pm • F 9am-8pm • Sa 9am-7pm • Su 10am-6pm
70 W. 29th Ave. Eugene • 541-343-3295

NOW OPEN

FALLING SKY BREWING

[FALLINGSKYBREWING.COM](http://fallingskybrewing.com)

Get in here!
1334 Oak Alley