

ABOUT SUBSCRIBE LOG IN



- HOME
- NEWS
- FEATURES
- COMMENTARY
- PUBLIC NOTICES
- PROJECT CENTER
- EVENTS
- BBC
- LAW

HOME > NEWS > SUSTAINABILITY > COLLEGE STUDENTS GIVE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN TIPS TO SPRINGFIELD

College students give sustainable design tips to Springfield

POSTED: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 05:43 PM PT
BY: Reed Jackson
Tags: Springfield, University of Oregon



As part of the University of Oregon's Sustainable City Year Program, students are helping the city of Springfield design and develop new and ongoing projects, such as a new library. (Rendering courtesy of University of Oregon)

University of Oregon students are helping the city of Springfield design and develop a number of projects, in conjunction with the Sustainable City Year Program. It's part of the university's Sustainable Cities Initiative to teach students about sustainable design by engaging them in city development.

In each of the past three years, the SCYP - through an application process - has selected one city in Oregon to assist with sustainability projects and goals. This year, Springfield was chosen.

"Students hunger for coursework that combines the theoretical with the applied," said **Chris Jones**, program manager for the Sustainable Cities Initiative. "They desperately want to contribute their work toward sustainability goals. Connecting their regular coursework to municipal projects is incredibly motivating and satisfying."

So far this year, more than 200 students from five academic departments have worked on projects with Springfield officials, addressing environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainability.

Students have rendered designs for a new elementary school, performed the city's first greenhouse gas inventory, proposed innovative bicycle transportation projects and developed urban design concepts for a former lumber mill.

Students with majors outside of architecture and design have been involved too. Some majoring in public relations, for example, were assigned to create press releases and written content about the regional wastewater system and its relation to Willamette River quality.

Each project gives students a glimpse of day-to-day activities and interactions their potential career paths would entail.

"It responds to a need that exists and isn't just speculative," said **Ian Korn**, an

MOST READ

- **Portland Building still controversial after 30 years**
- **Contractors voice concerns over rising diesel prices**
- **U.S. Custom House sells for \$4.74 million**
- **Check employees' criminal pasts at your own risk**
- **Portland Development Commission unalarmed by results of audit**

DJC Daily Journal of Commerce on Facebook

Like

652 people like **Daily Journal of Commerce**.

Ross	Kelsey	Anyeley	Matthew	ILyes
Andrew	Aaron	Sarah	Christina	Stacey

Facebook social plugin

architecture graduate student who participated in the program last fall. “We get a better feel for what our work life will be like, and they (city officials and local residents) can point out issues or ask questions we would have never thought of on our own.”

Springfield is using the program as a cost-efficient way to gain new perspectives on some ongoing projects. The city has to pay an “administrative cost” for each class that’s involved with a project, but according to **Courtney Griesel**, the city’s project manager for SCYP, the price is small compared to the return.

“It allows students and faculty who have been studying and reading about cutting-edge principles to contribute some creative and innovative ideas,” Griesel said. “We are always looking for ideas to improve current projects and step to new projects, and we were able to use the ideas from the partnership to help.”

Griesel added that typically seven groups of students work on a project simultaneously - much more manpower than the city usually has available.

In of their biggest efforts for the city so far, students examined the process to develop, finance and construct a **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design** silver-rated library building. They didn’t limit their ideas.

“There are so many things that a city planner who is worried about budget, time and public reaction would skip over because they don’t see it as feasible,” Korn said. “As students, we don’t have anyone to tell us, ‘No, you can’t do that.’ We can dream big.”

Although Griesel admitted that some of the ideas presented last term had to have “a dose of real” added to them before they could be considered, she said that most of the projects will move forward with at least some of the students’ recommendations.

Students enrolled in the program’s winter and spring term classes will be able to contribute to existing projects, like the library, and also develop their own with the city.

“Springfield benefits because they get our ideas - that’s what architecture students are best at,” Korn said. “We hope that we can inspire Springfield to dream big too.”



[< Ridgefield voters pass \\$47M school construction bond](#) [Defense Department leads the way for solar on federal lands >](#)
