

TO: Community Partners and Interested Parties  
FROM: Dr. Zenia Kotval, Program Director, Urban and Regional Planning Program  
SUBJECT: Practicum Opportunity for the Spring Semester (January-April 2025)

---

The MSU Urban and Regional Planning program requires graduating undergraduate and graduate students to complete a capstone course designed to address real world planning issues. Titled the "Urban and Regional Planning Practicum," this course integrates a student's educational training in planning with the real-world challenges of developing and preparing a professional planning project with selected community partners. Practicum is considered a student-led, faculty-guided learning experience and seeks to bridge the transition from classroom learning to professional practice for emerging planning professionals.

As an accredited program, we must meet certain learning objectives set forth by the Planning Accreditation Board. Practicum projects must allow for the following learning objectives:

#### **Planning Process and Engagement**

- Planning process and community and stakeholder engagement
- Plan creation and implementation
- Methods of design and intervention to understand and influence the future

#### **Analytical Skills and Tools**

- Research and critical analysis skills for preparing and conducting research
- Quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, analysis, and forecasting
- Methods of geo-spatial analysis, mapping and data visualization

#### **Professional and Communication Skills**

- Ability to work in teams and with professionals in allied fields
- Professional leadership in the planning context
- Written, oral, and graphic communication

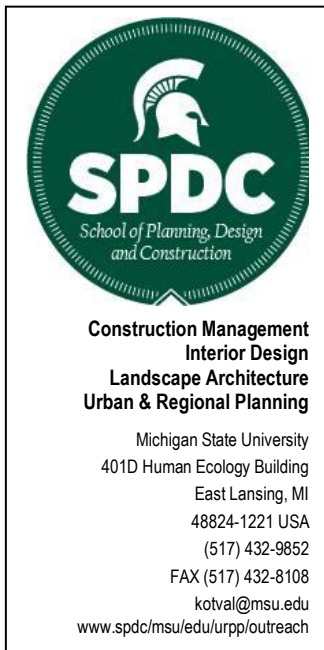
We are currently soliciting planning studies from potential community partners for students to work on during their final semester beginning the first week of January. If you are interested in submitting a proposal for practicum, please complete the attached two-page request form and send it to [kotval@msu.edu](mailto:kotval@msu.edu) by **November 25**. Projects will be chosen based on quality, variety, and appropriateness for the class.

*If your project is selected for Practicum, we require every project to have a community contact that is familiar with the project in detail and interested in the planning process and the outcomes of the course. Clients are expected to play an integral role in the development of the scope of work with the student team in January, make themselves available to the students on an as-needed basis, provide timely and constructive criticism and feedback on draft reports, and **are required to attend the final presentation on campus from 9am to 12:30pm on April 25. This is a 3.5 hour commitment.***

As the number of projects we are able to accept depends on the number of students registered for the course, we are unable to guarantee project acceptance until the beginning of the semester in January. We will, however, make preliminary selections by **December 15**.

Your interest in participating in this program is appreciated. Should you have any questions regarding this solicitation or your possible participation, please do not hesitate to contact Zenia Kotval at [kotval@msu.edu](mailto:kotval@msu.edu).

For examples of previous Practicum projects, please visit our website at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/urban-collaborators/Practical-Engagement/>



## MSU PLANNING PRACTICUM REQUEST FORM

Please return your completed application via email attachment to [kotval@msu.edu](mailto:kotval@msu.edu) by November 25.

This form is intended to help the MSU Urban and Regional Planning (URP) Program to serve your community's needs better. We will use this information to match Urban Planning student interests/ skills with the specific needs of the community requesting services.

Your Organization's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person for this Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

**A. General Description** (Please describe your project in brief – *Attach no more than 2 pages for project goals, expected outcomes and final deliverables*)

### B. Community Timeline

Do you believe the project can be completed in one semester (13 weeks): ( ) Yes ( ) No

If no, please explain? \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Scale of Project** – What is the scale of the community service project? (Check only one)

( ) Parcel/ Site

( ) Neighborhood

( ) District

( ) Town/ City

( ) County

**D. Project Development**

What is the current development phase of the community project? If project has not begun, please indicate at what phase URP would become involved. (*Using your best judgment*) (Check only one)

- Defining the Project
- Inventory and Analysis
- Design/ Plan Phase
- Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Project Support**

What types of support can you lend to the project? (Check all that apply)

- Working space for students
- On-site access to computers, phones, copy services and other work-related supplies
- Access to project-specific data and information (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Mentoring students, providing project guidance and acting as a resource
- Networking for students to gain access to reports and local resources
- Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**F. Funding**

**Practicum projects require a minimum contribution of \$3,500.** This contribution is not project-based and goes toward supporting the entire Practicum Course. There will not be any itemized invoices for Practicum projects. If you do not have the required funds, you might qualify for a match from the REI program ([www.reicenter.org/](http://www.reicenter.org/)).

How much is the community able to contribute toward the project?

- \$1500-\$2500 (REI match (\$1,000-2,500) required)\*  \$3,500;  \$4,000;  \$4,500 ;  \$5,000
- Other Amount (Please specify amount)\* \_\_\_\_\_

Practicum projects are highly subsidized by funds made available through MSU Extension and the Regional Economic Initiative (REI). These partners allow us to keep required community contributions between \$3,500- \$5,000. Practicum clients are expected to participate in the final presentation and a one-day REI Summit or Extension event sometime in the following Fall Semester (August-October).

Are you willing to participate in an REI or Extension activity and present your experience and project findings?

- Yes
- No

**\* Please fill out the next page if you do not have a minimum of \$3,500 to support Practicum and need additional REI support.**

## **Regional Economic Innovation (REI)**

The MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) at the MSU Center for Community and Economic Development is building a new economic development ecosystem by leveraging higher education assets to support the creation and application of innovative economic development strategies that promise to yield high-growth entrepreneurship and job creation throughout the state of Michigan. Please access the REI website at <https://reicenter.org>.

If you have questions regarding REI and their support, please contact Ms. Mary ZumBrunnen at [zumbrun1@msu.edu](mailto:zumbrun1@msu.edu) or Ms. Jenan Jondy at [jondyjen@msu.edu](mailto:jondyjen@msu.edu).

### **Would you like to apply to participate in the MSU EDA University Center for Regional Economic Innovation (REI) program ([www.reicenter.org](http://www.reicenter.org))?**

- Yes, Requested Amount of Financial Support \_\_\_\_\_
- No, not at this time

#### **Project Impacts**

REI support is targeting projects that focus on the EDA/REI priorities of creating more equitable communities through supporting:

- **Resiliency Planning**
- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Communication Infrastructure**
- **Circular Economies**
- **Financial Resiliency**

*If your project qualifies for any of these impacts please explain how in a few sentences:*

**Please return your completed application** via email attachment to [kotval@msu.edu](mailto:kotval@msu.edu) by **November 25**.