

## UMore Park Update – June 2013

**UMore Park.** The University of Minnesota Outreach, Research and Education (UMore) Park is a 5,000-acre site 25 miles southeast of the Twin Cities at the suburban-rural interface in Dakota County. It is among the largest contiguous properties in the United States that is owned by a land-grant university. The vision to build a mixed-use community at UMore Park, a 30-year endeavor, was affirmed by the University Board of Regents in December 2006. Work based on the concept master plan for future development is under way.

### AUAR public meeting set for June 24

The City of Rosemount is on schedule to complete the Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) this fall and will hold a public meeting at the Rosemount Community Center on June 24, 2013 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. to inform and seek input from citizens. The public meeting is held in conjunction with a 30-day public comment period – June 10 through July 10 – when organizations, agencies and citizens may review and comment on the draft AUAR document. The State of Minnesota process, led by the City in partnership with Empire Township and the University of Minnesota identifies ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental impacts on the 5,000-acre UMore Park property by assessing four scenarios for mixed-use development with up to 34,000 residents over approximately 30-years. Topics addressed in the AUAR include wildlife and ecological resources, storm water management, water supply, sanitary sewer, traffic, air and noise, geologic hazards, land use, pollutants, and sensitive resources. Adoption of the AUAR by the City of Rosemount is tentatively scheduled for September 2013. Visit the City of Rosemount website [www.ci.rosemount.mn.us](http://www.ci.rosemount.mn.us) to view the draft AUAR, submit comments, and find details about the public meeting. The draft AUAR is also available for review at the Rosemount City Hall, 2875 West 145<sup>th</sup> Street, Rosemount, MN 55068.

### Sand and gravel mining preparations under way

Areas of UMore Park are currently being prepared for mining. Current activities include grading and construction of berms that offer separation between mining activities and public areas. Preparation of the Ancillary Use Facilities is also under way. The facilities will include concrete production, asphalt production, precast products manufacturing, and processing of raw aggregate materials. The mining permits for Dakota Aggregates LLC were approved and adopted by the Rosemount City Council in December 2012. Following preparations, first phase mining is scheduled to begin this summer.

### AUAR presented at September American Planning Association conference

The City of Rosemount has been invited to make a presentation on the UMore Park Alternative Urban Areawide Review at the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association 2013 Upper Midwest Planners Conference in Rochester, Minnesota, on September 19. The theme of the conference, “Operation: Plan! Prioritizing Community Vitals” will emphasize how communities are tackling planning needs in a new era.

### Student research and engagement

More than 100 students participated in UMore Park related classes, capstones and projects during the academic year. Select projects are available to view at [www.umorepark.umn.edu/research/projects/projectrepository/](http://www.umorepark.umn.edu/research/projects/projectrepository/).

**Integrated landscape design.** A focus on potential short-term and long-term projects that could integrate the boundaries of the Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) campus with the adjacent UMore Park property as it develops over time could offer benefits through landscape and design. Working with DCTC representatives and others during Spring semester, a Landscape Architecture graduate student analyzed options that DCTC could consider to enhance its landscape, including establishing an arboretum on campus. Near-term options included creative parking lot designs, vegetated pathways to enhance pedestrian experience, storm water management through rain gardens, variations in pavement and surface treatments as well as community gardens. The student also emphasized the longer-term opportunities for recreational areas and connected trails that can be envisioned as the UMore Park property is developed over time.

**A model of wellbeing.** Undergraduate students in the Ecosystems of Wellbeing course through the Center for Spirituality and Healing developed a model for community wellbeing using the vision for UMore Park as a baseline. Students reflected on individual health choices, studied how built environments affect wellbeing, and analyzed case studies and design concepts as a foundation for developing a local model.



**Stormwater Management.** Through analyzing pre-settlement hydrology conditions on the UMore Park site, a graduate student in the College of Design determined elements of a sustainable water cycle that could inform future development activities on the property. The student addressed use of dry swales to manage storm water at commercial and multi-family residences, native plantings and rainwater catchments, and rain gardens along roadways. Reusing and infiltrating rainwater on a site could reduce pollution and deliver needed infiltration to replenish ground water sources

**Sustainable neighborhoods.** In an effort to document innovative approaches to inform sustainable development, undergraduate students in the Contemporary Sustainable Neighborhoods course researched sustainable community precedents, identified design patterns, as well as marketing, development and legal strategies that can be applied to future neighborhoods and inform work at UMore Park.

**Brownfield redevelopment.** Students in a spring capstone course on Environmental Law studied the treatment of the legal and practical issues surrounding the redevelopment of brownfield properties. Students toured the UMore Park property as a backdrop to their analyses of the former Gopher Ordnance Works, a World War II federal facility for the production of smokeless gun powder, and the role of brownfield development patterns, environmental issues, land use planning and regional governance.

## **Board of Regents appoint new UMore Development LLC Community Governor**

Julie Kimble, Vice President, General Manager and Global Team Leader at Johnson Controls, was appointed to the UMore Development LLC Board of Governors by the Board of Regents on June 14. Kimble fills the seat of Community Governor Peggy Lucas, following her appointment to the Board of Regents in March 2013.

## **Priority projects identified through Resilient Communities proposal**

The City of Rosemount is pursuing opportunities to complete projects developed through their proposal to the University of Minnesota's Resilient Communities Project (RCP). While the City was not selected as the 2013-2014 RCP Community Partner, the UMore Park team and the City staff saw the RCP proposal development process as a way to engage a broad range of community partners around mutual goals – especially sustainability and economic development – as planning for future development proceeds. The issues addressed in the proposal included multi-generational housing, civic engagement and volunteerism, recreational planning for children's interactions with nature, wetlands restoration, storm water management, alternative sources of energy, eco-business park, oral histories of community members, and urban agriculture, among others. The City will pursue the set of defined projects as resources and time permit.

## **Vermillion Highlands Updates**

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**Vermillion Highlands: A Research Recreation and Wildlife Management Area** lies adjacent and to the south of the UMore Park property. Established in 2006 by the Minnesota State Legislature, the 2,840-acre property is jointly managed by the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in conjunction with Dakota County and Empire Township.

**Recreation and wildlife management.** Visit [www.vermillionhighlands.umn.edu](http://www.vermillionhighlands.umn.edu) for information and updates on recreation and hunting activities at Vermillion Highlands, including:

- Lone Rock Trail is now open for horseback riding and hiking. There are no fees required to access the Trail. Operating times are from sunrise to sunset with the exception of a 10:00 a.m opening time during the month of October. Information on expanded access points is available on the website.
- A limited number of permits are available for deer hunting on the Vermillion Highlands property this fall. The application deadline for archery hunt is August 15; the shotgun and muzzleloader hunt deadline is September 5. Visit the website for information on fall 2013 hunting application instructions and season dates.

**Prairie restoration continues.** Six areas of Vermillion Highlands totaling 350 acres are under prairie restoration in addition to 100 acres of prairie in the Conservation Reserve Program. The goal is to restore areas to historical, pre-settlement vegetation. A wide variety of seeds are used including native plants that are taller and more winter hardy to provide optimal cover for ground-nesting birds. A diverse wildflower mix increases the number of insects that can provide food for birds and other species. The wildflower and prairie flowers are expected to be in peak bloom during July and August.