The Santa Rosa Neighborhood Heritage Mapping Project is a neighborhood-based community mapping program we are conducting over the next year and a half in the city of Santa Rosa, California. The project is designed as a broad-based community engagement program that works with the city’s existing neighborhoods to create an interactive digital map of sites, places and stories important to the people who live there. We will deliver the map as part of the commemoration of the city’s sesquicentennial celebrations in September, 2018.

Santa Rosa is a place with many diverse neighborhoods, and each has its own stories to tell. Celebrating the 150th anniversary of the city’s founding gives us an opportunity to document all those stories, and use them to create a single, shared map of this place we all call “home”. Some of those neighborhood stories are about the earliest days of the city’s history. Others are about people, places, and events that make up the city today. Some city neighborhoods are old; some are brand new. This project wants them all. Whether you’ve been here for generations, or just moved in last week, chances are you have a Santa Rosa story to tell about the special places in your neighborhood. This project provides an easily accessible online platform for us to talk about the city places we share, while also documenting the rich and varied “sense of place” across the city’s different neighborhoods.

We are a team of faculty and students from Sonoma State University. The project director is Dr. Margaret Purser, (SSU Anthropology Department). Other SSU campus partners include Dr. Ali Kooshesh of the Computer Science Department and Dr. Matthew Clark of the Geography Department. We also have community partners, including the Historical Society of Santa Rosa, the Sonoma County History Museum, and the Sonoma County History and Genealogy Library. But we are always looking for more, so if you’d like to be part of the project, please let us know! The project has received generous support and access to city map data from the Santa Rosa City GIS Office. We’ve also been supported by research grants from the SSU School of Social Sciences, and the SSU RSCAP Summer Research Fellowship program.