



Public Involvement Summary

Rice Lake Road Corridor Project

January 12, 2024

Project Overview

St. Louis County is requesting \$25 million in RAISE funds to create a multimodal gateway for the City of Rice Lake, Minnesota through the reconstruction of roadways, the improvement of intersections, and the construction of new multimodal trails. The Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) Corridor Project is a cooperative effort led by St. Louis County with the City of Rice Lake. Project goals include:

- Improve traffic safety for all transportation users at key intersections by utilizing proven safety countermeasures.
- Reduce traffic congestion and associated carbon emissions.
- Preserve the public's previous investment in the function of Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) as a Minor Arterial.
- Create a roadway corridor that invites development resulting in new housing and jobs.
- Manage access through proven access management strategies including the creation of a new city street network.
- Support traffic calming to create an environment that is welcoming to all transportation users.
- Incorporate accessibility for active transportation users.

Goals

This project sought to engage the public in unique ways to meet the project goals.

- Ensure that project information is made available to the public in a clear, and effective manner.
- Gather meaningful feedback from stakeholders to develop a community-supported recommendation.
- Ensure that stakeholder questions and concerns are heard and addressed.
- Document the progress and effectiveness of the communications plan.



Timeline

Public and stakeholder engagement was done throughout the three phases of the project:

- Phase 1: Spring 2023 - Seek input to identify issues and opportunities
- Phase 2: Summer 2023 - Present draft plan to the public and seek feedback
- Phase 3: Winter 2024 – Hold public open house to present the final plan

Methods of Engagement

Following is a summary of the engagement strategies used for the Rice Lake Road Corridor Project

In 2023, the County conducted an extensive engagement process. That included:

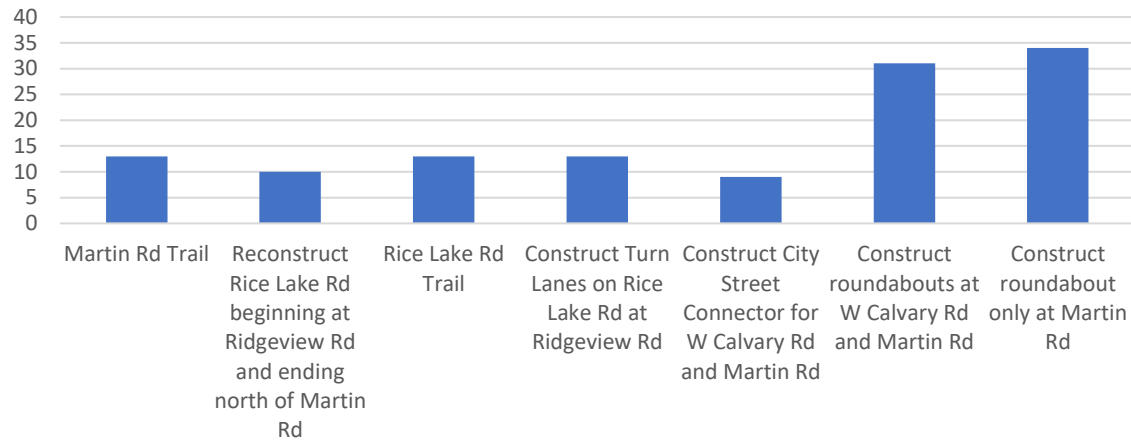
1. Several newsletters/articles sent to various groups
2. Frequent social media posts
3. Project page on the County's website
4. Table tents at area restaurants
5. Several mailings
6. Meetings with project partners and stakeholders from area governments
7. Meetings with significant property owners and stakeholder groups to understand their long-term plans
 - a. Duluth Airport
 - b. APEX
 - c. Minnesota Power
 - d. 148th Fighter Wing
 - e. Cirrus
 - f. Kwik Trip
 - g. Northland Constructors
 - h. Boomtown
8. Two public open houses at Rice Lake City Hall
9. One pop up at National Night Out event
10. Interactive comment map on the website

What we heard: General Public

St. Louis County asked, "What are your top priorities for the proposed improvements?" at the public meeting held Thursday September 21, 2023. The citizens were given 3 pom-poms to select their top 3 priorities. The top priority with 34 votes was to construct a roundabout only at Martin Road with a close second with 31 votes to construct roundabouts at W Calvary Rd and Martin Rd.

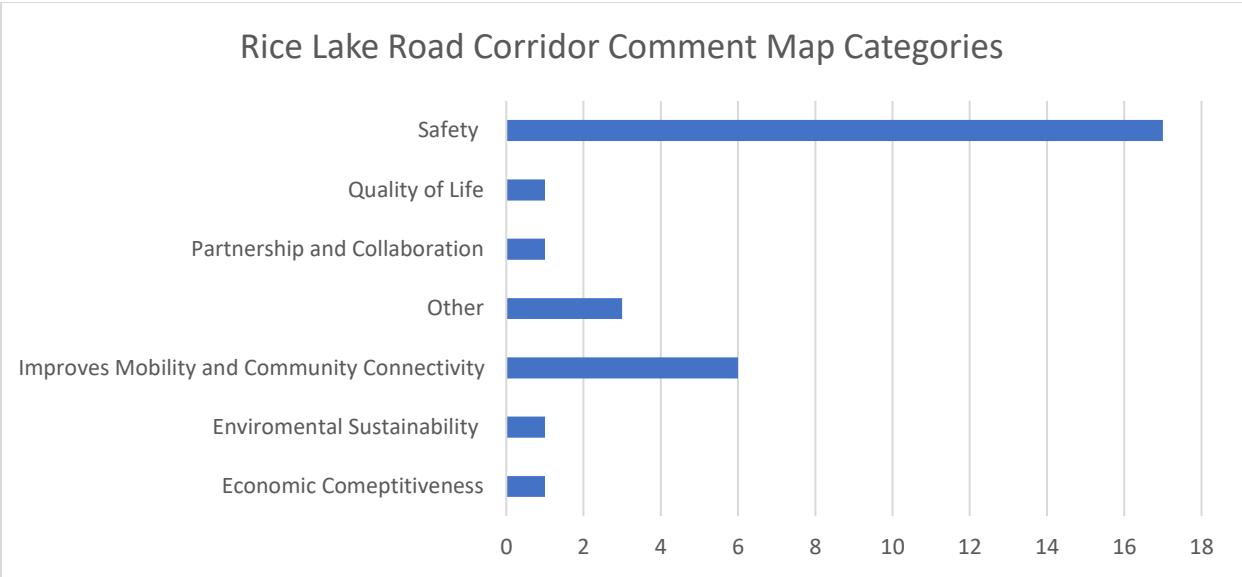


Rice Lake Rd Corridor Project Public Meeting Thursday, September 21, 2023



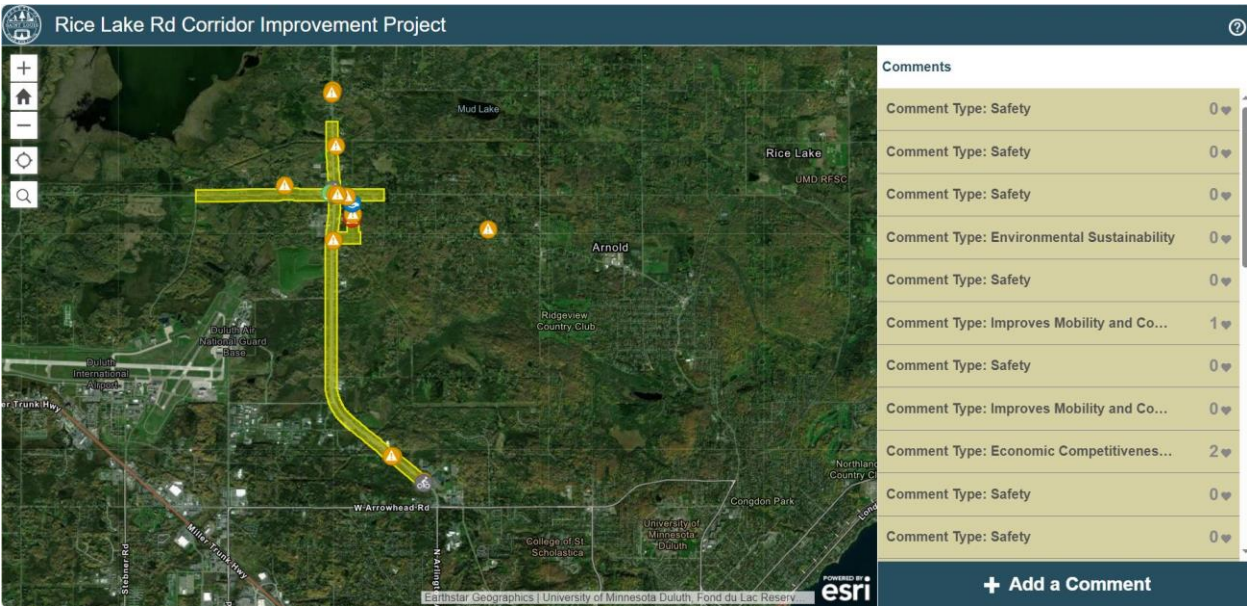
When placing a comment/concern on the Rice Lake Road Corridor comment map located on the project website, respondents choose a category that best described their comment. In total we had 30 responses with the top category chosen as safety showing this is a high priority.





After summarizing the comments from the comment map, most residents are in favor of the roundabout saying: “Put in a roundabout.”, “I’m glad a stoplight is NOT being considered at intersection of Rice Lake & Martin Rd. Right turn on red from Martin Rd - with goes [cars] going 55 mph would be a disaster. Roundabout would hopefully solve the traffic backups.”, “A roundabout is a great option to both reduce backups and create a safer intersection. I strongly support this option”.

A concern that a few respondents showed was the reason for a “bike path” on Rice Lake Rd. They said: “Why have a bike lane out to here? No "destination" and the shoulder are already very smooth and wide along this stretch.”, “No real destination once you are past Boomtown.”.



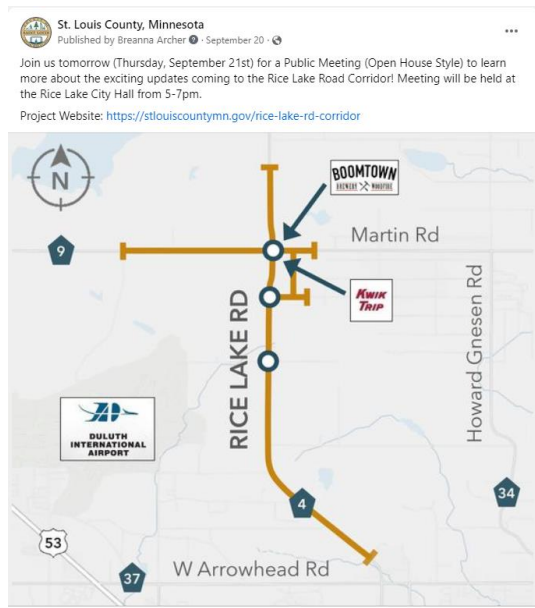
What we heard: Business Stakeholders

In addition to receiving comments from the public, St. Louis County held meetings with key business stakeholders to hear their feedback about the project. There was a lot of discussion about the use of roundabouts. How to use a roundabout properly, safety of them, plowing them, and intermixing trucks (semis) and residential traffic. The businesses were also asked if there were any known future development plans that could affect the design of this project. A few of the businesses were able to let the project team know of expansions of their current businesses.

How we are using what we heard

The project team has taken notes during all public and business stakeholder meetings and used those notes to revise the design plan as needed.

Attachment 1: Sample Communications



JOIN THE DISCUSSION

RICE LAKE RD CORRIDOR Improvement Project





Overview of the Project

- Reconstruct Rice Lake Rd to improve traffic flow by constructing roundabouts at W Calvary Rd and Martin Rd.
- Construct pedestrian/bicycle trails along Rice Lake Rd and Martin Rd.
- Construct a new city street to connect W Calvary Rd and Martin Rd.
- Incorporate access management along Rice Lake Rd to support future economic development.

Join us for a Public Meeting

- Rice Lake City Hall
4107 W Beyer Rd, Duluth, MN
- Tuesday, September 21, 2023
- 5 - 7 PM

YOUR PARTICIPATION MATTERS!

Visit the website below or scan the QR code to add a suggestion to the comment map and find out more ways you can get involved!

<https://stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>



SCAN ME





PROJECT AREA

St. Louis County Public Works
lundv@stlouiscountymn.gov | 218-625-3873




News Release

Public Works Department • Richard H. Hansen Transportation & Public Works Complex
4787 Midway Road, Duluth, MN 55811 • Phone: (218) 625-3830

James T. Foldesi, P.E.
Public Works Director/Highway Engineer

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 19, 2023

MEDIA CONTACT: Victor Lund, Traffic Engineer
218-625-3873
lundv@stlouiscountymn.gov

Open house to provide updates on Rice Lake Road Corridor planning

St. Louis County Public Works continues to develop plans and get public feedback on proposed improvements to the Rice Lake Road corridor, from Ridgeview Road to north of Martin Road in Rice Lake. County engineers are hosting an open house to provide an update on plans and hear from interested citizens. The open house will be Thursday, Sept. 21, 5-7 p.m., at Rice Lake City Hall, 4107 W. Beyer Road.

Engineers have been studying this section of roadway for several years, noting the concentration of new and planned development, the expected growth in the city and corresponding traffic volumes, and safety and delay concerns at several intersections. Working with the City of Rice Lake, they have developed recommendations to improve traffic operations and safety while preserving the function of Rice Lake Road. The goal is to create a commercial corridor that invites development while also managing access, and that incorporates accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Proposed improvements include:

- Reconstruct Rice Lake Road from Ridgeview Road to approximately 2/3 mile north of Martin Road.
- Construct single-lane roundabouts on Rice Lake Road at the intersections of West Calvary Road and Martin Road.
- Construct left-turn and right-turn lanes on Rice Lake Road at the intersection of Ridgeview Road.
- Construct a new city street to connect West Calvary Road and Martin Road.
- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle trail along Rice Lake Road from Technology Drive to approximately 1/3 mile north of Martin Road.
- Construct a pedestrian/bicycle trail along Martin Road between Stebner Road and Stavenger Road.

Anyone who lives in or travels through this area is encouraged to get involved by attending the meeting or providing input through the county's project website. More information can be found online at stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor.

RICE LAKE RD CORRIDOR Improvement Project





PROJECT AREA

<https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>

RICE LAKE RD CORRIDOR Improvement Project



Your Participation Matters!

Scan the QR code or visit the project website URL to learn more about the project and how you can get involved.

Join us for a Public Meeting

- Rice Lake City Hall
4107 W Beyer Rd
Duluth, MN 55803
- Sept 21st, 2023
- 5-7 PM

<https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>



SCAN ME

St. Louis County, Minnesota Sponsored · 44

Rice Lake Rd Corridor Project! Come to the Public Meeting!

<https://stlouiscountymn.gov/r...>
Rice Lake Rd Corridor Project [Learn more](#)

20 23 comments 10 shares

St. Louis County, Minnesota created an event.
 Published by Breanna Archer · Just now · 6

THU, NOV 16 AT 5 PM
Rice Lake Rd Corridor Improvement Project 2nd Public Meeting
 Duluth, MN
 1 Going · 0 Interested

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

RICE LAKE RD CORRIDOR Improvement Project

SAINT LOUIS COUNTY MINNESOTA

Public Works
 4787 Midway Road
 Duluth, MN 55811

Join us for a Public Meeting

Rice Lake City Hall
 4107 W Beyer Rd, Duluth, MN

Thursday, November 16, 2023

5 PM

Questions? Contact
 Vic Lund 218-625-3873 vlundv@stlouiscountymn.gov

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****ECRWSS EDDM****
 POSTAL CUSTOMER

The project team will share the final project layout and estimated cost that will be used to apply for Federal funding. Come and see the next steps for this project and how you can help make this project a reality. Visit the website below or scan the QR code to review more about this project!

SCAN ME!

<https://stlouiscountymn.gov/rice-lake-rd-corridor>