



Rice Street Visioning and Reconstruction

Preliminary Design + Final Design Phase

Public Engagement Plan

August 2022



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Introduction

Project Snapshot

Project Name	Rice Street Reconstruction Project
Project area	Pennsylvania Avenue and Wheelock Parkway in St. Paul through final design
Schedule	<i>Preliminary design:</i> August 2022-March 2023 <i>Final Design:</i> March 2023-December 2023 <i>Pre-construction:</i> January 2024-June 2024 <i>Construction:</i> 2024 and beyond
Contracted phases of engagement	Preliminary design, final design, pre-construction
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perform equitable public and stakeholder engagement to inform a publicly supported final design for Rice Street• Work with the public and stakeholder to prepare for construction
Website	https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transit/future-road-construction-projects/rice-street-visioning-study

Project overview

Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul are working to define a community-driven vision for Rice Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and Wheelock Parkway. From 2019-2022, the project team completed a study with extensive input from the community, which resulted in a recommended concept. From August 2022-June 2024, the project team will be working with the community once again to refine the recommended concept and develop a construction staging plan.

The study team will seek to engage and gather input from all residents, workers, students, and other community members of the study area through an inclusive and accessible process. This includes a number of approaches which will connect directly with people in the community and provide them with a range of options for providing feedback. This dialogue between the community and the project team will deliver a successful project with a solution that was constructed by the very people who live and utilize the study area. It will also be used to inform other actions and implementation by agency partners working along the corridor. This may include work on public realm and placemaking, community and economic development, public health and safety, or other topics covered through the Rice Street Visioning Study.

Engagement is scheduled to take place from August 2022 to June 2024.



Project goals

- Promote economic growth and community investment while maintaining and providing business opportunities.
- Create an inviting environment.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
- Maintain and augment transit service.
- Continue to increase vehicle safety.

Engagement goals

- Ensuring that the information related to the project is made available to the public in a timely, clear, and effective manner
- Ensuring that public questions and concerns are heard
- Maintaining and strengthening the relationship between Ramsey County, the project team, and project stakeholders
- Coordinating effectively with other plans and projects along the corridor, including transit
- Gathering feedback on the recommended concept to inform the final concept
- Coordinating with the public to develop construction staging plans

Messaging

A carefully crafted message will aid in gathering information from the public in an efficient and effective manner. Key overall messages to the public include that this project:

- Builds upon an open and inclusive community process that listens and responds to residents, businesses, and other stakeholders
- Benefits the community through the development of a corridor serving many modes of transportation
- Addresses the need for reconstruction, including existing issues with safety, aesthetics, and substandard conditions
- Addresses the opportunity to make the road is safer, more functional, and more attractive
- Accommodates Metro Transit's plan for its G Line BRT project along the corridor that brings high-quality service for local transit riders
- Complements existing investments in local businesses, institutions, and residences, and promotes more investment and positive change in the surrounding community
- Has availability of project resources and contacts to answer questions during construction, including:
 - The project website (currently <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transit/future-road-construction-projects/rice-street-visioning-study>)
 - The project contact email (nicklaus.fischer@co.ramsey.mn.us)
 - The project phone number: Nick Fischer, 651-266-7119



Key stakeholders and project team

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are all invested members in a project. Each type of stakeholder brings certain concerns and ideas to the table. Our job will be to incorporate the various visions and ideas of these stakeholders and use them to build a common solution that respects all stakeholders.

Check out **Appendix A** for a list of stakeholders and tools.

Project Management Team

A project management team has been established to provide decision-making and frequent oversight of the entire project. Members include representatives from:


- Ramsey County
- City of Saint Paul
- Metro Transit
- Consultant team

Partner Agencies

- Capitol Region Watershed District
- MnDOT
- Metropolitan Council

Key Community Groups and Institutions

- Frogtown Neighborhood Association
- Hmong American Partnership
- In Progress
- Keystone Community Services
- NeighborWorks Home Partners
- North End Business Association
- North End Development Team
- North End Neighborhood Organization
- Rice Street Library
- St. Paul Parks & Recreation
- Washington Technology Magnet School
- Wellstone Elementary School
- Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition
- North End Community Foundation
- Friends of the North End
- Asian Economic Development Association
- Saint Paul Historic Preservation Commission

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- African Economic Development Solutions
 - Others to be identified through the process

General users

- Neighborhood residents
- Property and business owners
- Workers and customers at businesses
- People driving
- People walking
- People biking
- People using transit and transit operators
- People with accessibility needs
- Emergency services
- Local students and youth
- Delivery and courier services
- Garbage disposal services
- Commercial vehicle operators

Elected officials

- Ramsey County – District 3 Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo and District 5 Commissioner Rafael Ortega
- Saint Paul Mayor – Melvin Carter
- Saint Paul City Council – Ward 5 Council member Amy Brendmoen and Ward 1 Council member Russel Balenger
- MN House of Representatives - District 65A Representative Rena Moran, District 65B Representative Carlos Mariani, District 66B Representative John Lesch
- MN Senate - District 65 Senator Sandra Pappas, District 66 Senator John Marty
- US House of Representatives - District 4 Representative Betty McCollum
- Metropolitan Council Member - District 14 Council member Kris Fredson

Others

- Faith communities
- Social gathering spots
- Cultural groups and networks
- Local and statewide advocacy groups (e.g., people with disabilities)


Project Team

The consultant team working on this project consists of three firms: Bolton & Menk, 4RM+ULA, and Forecast Public Art. While responsibilities will overlap somewhat during the course of the study, the primary roles of each firm include:

- Bolton & Menk – overall project management, digital and online engagement
- 4RM+ULA – open house and community meetings
- Forecast Public Art – pop up engagement and creative outreach

See the table below for contact information. One unique feature of this engagement approach is the use of a community liaisons. The way they will be used in this process (and managed by the team) is still to be determined.

Name	Organization	Role	Phone/Email
Nick Fischer	Ramsey County	County design project engineer	651-266-7119 nicklaus.fischer@co.ramsey.mn.us
Allison Winters	Ramsey County	County communications	651-401-5703 allison.winters@co.ramsey.mn.us
Aaron Warford	Bolton & Menk	Project Manager	651-503-5700 aaron.warford@bolton-menk.com
Scott McBride	Bolton & Menk	Agency Liaison	612-210-6781 scott.mcbride@bolton-menk.com
Haila Maze	Bolton & Menk	Engagement Lead	651-434-5743 Haila.maze@bolton-menk.com
Lyssa Washington	4RM+ULA	Community engagement specialist	651-292-0106 lyssa@4rmula.com
Nathan Johnson	4RM+ULA	Community engagement advisor	651-292-0106 nathan@4rmula.com
Nicole Krause	Bolton & Menk	Engagement communications Specialist	612-619-6284 Nicole.krause@bolton-menk.com
Jen Krava	Forecast Public Art	Community engagement advisor – arts-focused	651-641-1128 EXT 111 jenk@forecastpublicart.org
Hawona Sullivan Janzen	Forecast Public Art	Community engagement specialist – arts-focused	612-386-5268 hawona@forecastpublicart.org



Witt Siasoco	Forecast Public Art	Community engagement specialist – arts-focused	612-207-3312 witt.siasoco@gmail.com
Bob Lunning	Forecast Public Art	Community engagement specialist – arts-focused	651-587-5567 bob@forecastpublicart.org

Engagement timeline and tools

Engagement will include both digital and in-person engagement activities to help inform a final design and construction plan that reflects the present and future needs of the community. The project team will aim to create a new roadway that meets current design standards and improves the area for people walking, biking, driving, and rolling.

Public engagement will take place in three main phases:

Preliminary Design	Final Design	Pre-Construction
<i>Review and refine concept</i>	<i>Share and promote final concept</i>	<i>Raise awareness for construction</i>
August 2022-March 2023	March 2023-December 2023	January 2024-June 2024
2 open houses	1 open house	1 open house
3 pop-ups	3 pop-ups	

Tools

Open Houses (4)


Our team will coordinate, prepare for, and staff four public open house meetings at key points during the planning process. The meetings will be interactive, highly visual, and provide meaningful opportunities to provide input. We will manage promotions, logistics, material formatting and production, staffing, and event summaries. We will work closely with Ransey County to determine the best open house format. Advertisement for these events will be covered through postcard, email, and social media advertisement.

- Open House 1: Draft concept review, Fall 2022
- Open House 2: Refined concept review, Late fall/early winter 2022
- Open House 3: Final concept review, Summer 2023
- Open House 4: Construction schedule and staging, Spring 2024

Community liaisons

This project continues the former commitment to investing in the project and community through artist liaisons. This approach brings not only unmatched authenticity and effectiveness in reaching a diverse population, but also empathy for both the joys and challenges of life in this place—and creativity for unexpected changes (like a pandemic). We will build on the trust and networks they helped develop to go further and make more connections. In particular, we're looking forward to opportunities to deploy the eye-catching Rice Street Receiver art cart constructed last year.

Neighborhood and business meetings (6)



Our team will coordinate, attend, and facilitate up to six meetings with identified residents, property owners or managers, business owners, and/or other interest groups to address and resolve specific concerns and issues. Our team will draw on previous contacts from the Phase 1 focus groups to promote the neighborhood meetings. The timing, agenda, and format of these meetings will be designed to best accommodate the stakeholders, including any needs for translation services.

Pop-ups (6)

Our team will have up to six pop-up engagement activities at selected community events or activity centers. The focus of these engagements will be on people and groups who are less likely to attend public open houses. They will be scheduled around events that draw broad participation. The event will be coordinated with the project phase to ensure that input gathered is meaningful to project development.

Business outreach (ongoing)

Our team will identify business outreach opportunities throughout the project to share design details, construction staging, and gather feedback. We will work with our existing business connections to identify the best venues and times to connect with impacted businesses.

Project newsletter (4)

The project newsletter provides an opportunity to inform the public of current project status and upcoming activities. This will be developed monthly or as needed during the process. The team will produce four draft newsletters for the project. The newsletter will present the need for the project, the latest information regarding the project, layout, results of past meetings, and the project schedule. They may also be used as invitations to the public open house meetings.

Project website, GovDelivery, and Social Media (ongoing)


Our team will provide content for the project website, social media posts, and emails. This will include providing content to update the project website at key times during the project development, corresponding with the release of project newsletters. Communications will be consistent with Ramsey County standards for branding and plain language, and all materials will be ADA compliant.

Translation services

The team shall assume translation services, preferably service providers located along the corridor, for public engagement efforts. The efforts shall include but not be limited to project open house invites, project open houses, project newsletters, project webpage information, surveys and other items as determined by the project team. The team shall assume translation into Spanish, Hmong and Karen. The team shall assume two additional language translations to be determined through the public engagement process.

Project Videos (2)

Our team will create two videos during the project. Our team will complete aerial photography and videos of the project corridor for preparation of visualizations, enhanced layout images, and 3D animations. Our team will utilize aerial images to prepare a full-corridor fly-thru visualization of final



concept. We will also create a construction staging video that can be used to promote the construction timeframe.

Engagement Summary Report

The team will produce a final report that synthesizes the feedback, comments, and questions we heard throughout our engagement. Our team will create an infographic that summarizes the engagement that can be shared with stakeholders and the community.

Other communication tools

A variety of tools will be used to get the word out about the project and opportunities for engagement. Tools used during this process may include:

- Flyers, postcards, fact sheets, and other collateral
- Media advisories and press releases
- Information shared to parents through schools
- Bus stop postings (pending Metro Transit approval)
- Materials at library and park buildings
- Updates distributed to neighborhood and business association networks
- Signage along the corridor (subject to approval)
- Joint communications with project partners (City, Metro Transit, etc.)

Style guide, document submittals, and review process

Ramsey County branding and ADA accessibility

All materials will follow Ramsey County's Style Guide and meet ADA compliance. Ramsey County will be responsible for providing any county templates or assets for these materials. You can view the style guide here:

http://www.ramseybrand.com/uploads/1/0/1/3/101390932/brand_guidelines_01.14.21.pdf

With the advent of COVID-19, the importance of accessible online communications has increased even further than it was already. In recognition of this, this plan acknowledges the need to ensure content is accessible under Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Text on website and in attachments is accessible to screen readers
- Writing using plain language
- Clear and legible fonts with high contrast from background
- Ensuring high color contrast in graphics between foreground and background
- Maps clearly labeled and consistent, with contrasting layers
- Images including alternative text describing content
- Videos include captions, audio descriptions, and compliant video player
- Accessible website format, such as Ramsey County's main site
- Accessible features in any linked documents, including PDFs

In addition to ADA accessibility, it is the goal of the project to provide access to people of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This may include:

- Accessible online text that can be accessed by online translation services
- Alternative contact information for people who do not have internet access
- Contact information available for people who need translation or interpretation services
- Interpretation services and multilingual staff at in-person events, where possible
- Visual elements (graphics, videos, etc.) that are understandable across languages
- Creative and culturally appropriate outreach that encourages engagement


Consultant and County responsibilities

Responsibilities of the consultant team includes the following:

- Developing and modifying the public engagement plan and accompanying schedule
- Creating and updating materials for meetings, events, and public distribution.
- Logistics, preparation, and staffing of public engagement activities
- Documenting and reporting on engagement results

In addition to overall project management and oversight, the role of Ramsey County in the engagement process will include:

- Materials review and approval prior to distribution for public input
- Coordinating the schedule of public engagement events

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- Updating the project website
 - Sending emails via GovDelivery
 - Social media updates via County channels
 - Meeting participation as needed
 - Media advisory and press release distribution
 - Reimbursement for mailing postage, media buys, and other promotional materials

Document review

Documents will be sent to the client via email with an assumed 1-week review time. Standard items will be sent for review via email. Large packages of files will be sent through SharePoint.

- Documents will be submitted with an assumed 1- week review time
- Documents will be sent to Nick and Allison with a cc of Haila, Lyssa, Hawona, and Jen



Engagement tracking

A spreadsheet will be used to track attendance and other information related to public events (open houses, meetings, etc.). A separate spreadsheet will be used to track project inquiries and responses. At the end of each engagement phase, Bolton & Menk will provide an engagement summary report.

Appendix A: Public and agency engagement table

Meeting/Activity	Attendees/Audience	Purpose	Timing
Project Management Team (PMT)	Ramsey County City of St. Paul Metro Transit Consultant staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project coordination/direction Manage process and budget Discuss status and deliverables 	Monthly, total of 25
Agency Meetings	City Council District councils Agencies (state, regional, local) PMT representation Consultant staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination on permits, approvals, and other forms of consent Information sharing on project 	Up to 12 meetings, and additional coordination as needed
Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)	County and city elected and appointed officials and management PMT representation Consultant staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with decision making around activities and issues Provide recommendations to the project team 	Total of 4 meetings, with quarterly updates electronically
Neighborhood and business group meetings	Residents Businesses PMT representation Consultant staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share general information Engage the public and receive input to inform project and construction staging 	Up to 6 meetings
Public Open Houses	PMT representation Stakeholders Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft concept review, Fall 2022 Refined concept review, Late fall/early winter 2022 Final concept review, Summer 2023 Construction schedule and staging, Spring 2024 	Total of 4
Pop-up events	Public, particularly underrepresented groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share general information Engage the public and receive input to inform project and construction staging 	Up to 6
Business Outreach	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk through specific concerns Advise on construction staging 	As needed
Newsletter	Public and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on project need, status, results from past meetings, project schedule Invitations to open houses 	Total of 4 in advance of open houses
Website	Available online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General updates and information 	At project milestones

Meeting/Activity	Attendees/Audience	Purpose	Timing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of study materials and resources Opportunities to engage online 	
Informational videos	Available at meetings and online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final design Construction staging 	Total of 2
Social media	Available online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other approved platforms 	At project milestones
Interactive project map and survey	Available online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share project design and receive feedback on design elements 	At open house 1 milestone
Translation services	Populations that speak a language other than English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach to communities that speak Spanish, Hmong, Karen, and two additional languages to be determined 	At project milestones and as needed
Community liaisons	Underrepresented communities in the study area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build connections to community groups, particularly those not typically involved Provide information to and gather input from targeted groups 	To be determined based on their role