



Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council

Guiding the Future of Transportation for the Twin Ports Area

November 10, 2023

James T. Foldesi
Public Works Director/Highway Engineer
St. Louis County Public Works Department
4787 Midway Rd, Duluth, MN 55811

RE: Support for RAISE Grant Application for Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) Corridor Project

Dear Mr. Foldesi,

On behalf of the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council (MIC), I am writing to express our strong support for the County's RAISE grant application for the Rice Lake Rd (CSAH 4) Corridor Project.

As this this area's designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the MIC conducts transportation planning with the overall purpose of improving the safety and functionality of the transportation network for all users and modes. Rice Lake Road is a regionally significant roadway within the MIC planning area that not only serves as a key commuter and truck route for the Duluth metro area, but also connects to the nationally strategic East Iron Range in northeast Minnesota. Robust and meaningful public engagement has been conducted since 2017 in the development of this project.

Our community-supported long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan, *Sustainable Choices 2045*, includes multiple goals and objectives that will be addressed by this project. Specifically, it will support the efficient movement of both people and freight; improve safety for all modes of transportation; provide access to and connection between key population and employment centers; and stimulate local and regional economic development. Planned single-lane roundabouts on Rice Lake Road at the intersections of West Calvary Road and Martin Road are well-supported by the findings of technical Intersection Control Evaluations conducted by the MIC in 2013 and by the County in 2022.

We therefore strongly support St. Louis County's application for this project. The award of a RAISE grant would provide a meaningful investment of federal and local funds that will contribute to the attainment of our federally-required safety performance measures, prior planning recommendations and multimodal transportation system goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Chicka".

Ron Chicka, AICP
MIC Director

Cc: Wayne Boucher, MN Board Co-chair
Nick Baker, WI Board Co-chair

221 West
First Street
Duluth, MN
55802

218-529-7541

www.dsmic.org

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