

County State Aid Highway 54 Safety Improvements and Multimodal Connectivity Project **PROJECT READINESS**

FY 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program



Project Name: County State Aid Highway 54 Safety Improvements and Multimodal Connectivity Project

Project Type: Rural Capital

Future Eligible Project Costs : \$35,365,038

2024 RAISE Funds Requested: \$25,000,000

Primary Contact:

Imran Ahmed, Senior Projects Manager
Dakota County Transportation Department
1955 Galaxie Avenue, 3rd Floor, Apple Valley, MN
952-891-7991 | Imran.Ahmed@co.dakota.mn.us

Supporting Information can be found at:

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/dakota-county-54/>





County State Aid Highway 54 Safety Improvements and Multimodal Connectivity Project

Submitted by Dakota County, Minnesota

FY 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (**RAISE**) Program

CONTENTS

PROJECT READINESS 1

 PROJECT SCHEDULE.1

 ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT.1

 TECHNICAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT2

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS. 2

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 PROJECT SCHEDULE.1

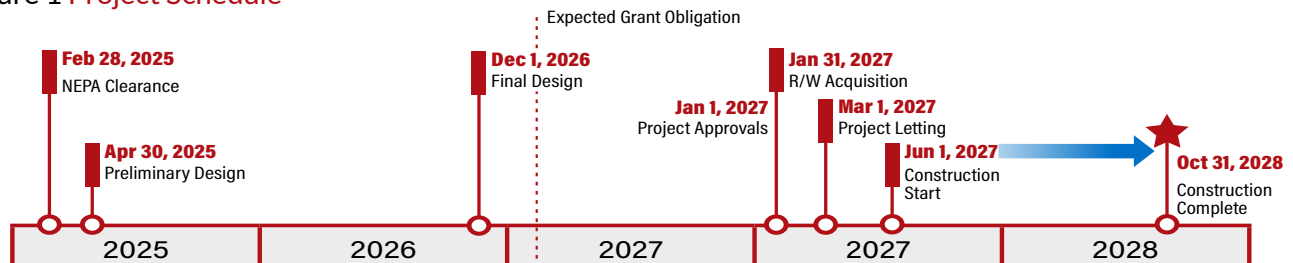
PROJECT READINESS

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Dakota county has recently initiated the preparation of preliminary design plans and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental document for the County State Aid Highway 54 Safety Improvements and Multimodal Connectivity Project (herein referred to as the Project). Project planning activities include stakeholder and public engagement, data collection, cultural resources and wetland investigation, geotechnical investigation, traffic analysis, environmental assessment and documentation, preliminary design including utility identification, hydraulics and drainage design, geometric layout, and right of way identification and mapping. The completion of preliminary design and NEPA environmental document is expected to be completed by April 2025.

All property and right-of-way (ROW) acquisition will be completed in accordance with 49 CFR Part 24 and other Federal regulations by January 2027. Dakota County has an experienced ROW acquisition staff who have been actively involved in the project development process. The County anticipates construction will begin by June 2027 and be completed by October 2028. Figure 1 shows the [project schedule](#).

Figure 1 Project Schedule



*Project obligation deadline for FY 2024 funds is September 30, 2028.

For capital construction projects, obligation occurs generally after the applicant has satisfied applicable administrative requirements, including transportation planning and environmental review requirements.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Dakota County guarantees that all necessary activities will be completed to allow FY24 RAISE funds to be obligated sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline (September 30, 2028). As of Fall 2023, the Project is programmed in Dakota County's approved [2024-2028 Transportation Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP) as Project No. 54-011. The County released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the preliminary engineering design and NEPA environmental document phase in February 2024, with an estimated date of completion as April 2025.

Required Approvals

Dakota County has a history of completing projects on time and within budget. The Project is expected to achieve all approvals necessary to begin construction by June 2027.

Environmental Permits and Reviews

The Project will proceed through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental document process, starting with a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. The intent would be to create a Phase I environmental document sufficient to allow Dakota County to seek sources of funding for environmental clean-up if an environmental problem is suspected and continue with the appropriate level of environmental review document. At the federal level, the Project is expected to require a Categorical Exclusion (CatEx). The Project may additionally require an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) to comply with State of Minnesota environmental review (MEPA), if the Project exceeds certain thresholds identified in Minnesota Rules 4410. This will be determined as the Project progresses through additional investigation and development during the environmental evaluation.

The County understands the positive regional implications of the Project and the public benefit it produces. The vision

for the Project focuses on utilizing the existing right-of-way, owned by Dakota County, to serve the various users of the corridor (pedestrians, bicyclists, business owners, residents, visitors, hunters, and vehicular traffic). Once the final geometric configuration is determined, right-of-way acquisition will proceed, and this process is not expected to present risk to complete the project. The Project will maintain access to business and residents throughout the construction phase and will minimally disrupt communities, thereby maintaining community cohesion.

State and Local Approvals

There is a broad base of state and local support for the project, as shown by the [Letters of Support](#) submitted for this application. All required State and Local approvals will be obtained prior to construction.

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Dakota County has worked with the Tribal Council of the Prairie Island Indian Community and other local partners to ensure that early collaboration and proactive mitigation measures will minimize risk and manage impacts, if any. The County continues to maintain these relationships and is confident in the successful implementation of the Project.

TECHNICAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

Dakota County has extensive experience with procuring and developing transportation improvement projects using federally awarded funds. In the last three years, Dakota County and its partners have procured six federal grants used to increase efficiency and safety on the regional roads and trails system. Additionally, Dakota County received federal funds through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Regional Solicitation, which are competitive funding programs in Minnesota that invest federal funds into local transportation projects. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, Dakota County complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 49 CFR Part 21 (Department of Transportation Regulations for the Implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), Buy America provisions, ADA regulations, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR), and related statutes and regulations.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Links to supporting documents are included throughout this narrative. All supporting documents and the RAISE grant application narrative are available to view at the following webpage:

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/dakota-county-54/>