

# Building Complete Streets to Serve the Red Lake Reservation and Beyond

Red Lake Indian Reservation, Red Lake Minnesota



## PROJECT READINESS

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

**Project Name** Building Complete Streets to Serve the Red Lake Reservation and Beyond

**Project Type** Rural Capital Project

**Future Eligible Project Costs** \$25,401,464

**FY 2024 RAISE Funds Requested** \$25,000,000

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**Supporting Information can be found at:**

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/fy24-red-lake-raise/>



# Building Complete Streets to Serve the Red Lake Reservation and Beyond

Red Lake Indian Reservation, Red Lake Minnesota

FY 2024 REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) PROGRAM

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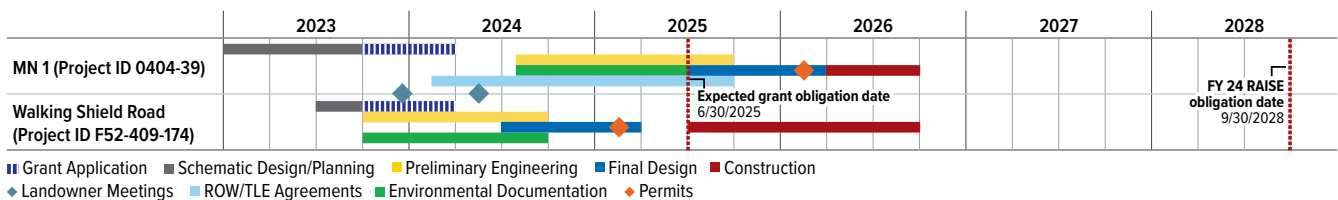
# PROJECT READINESS

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Building Complete Streets to Serve the Red Lake Reservation and Beyond project has been in the works since 2016 and has steadily maintained momentum in achieving all major milestones per the Project schedule. Project planning activities including schematic design, public engagement, traffic analysis, environmental documentation, and preliminary design have been ongoing and preconstruction activities are expected to be complete for Walking Shield Road in early 2025 and by spring 2026 for MN 1.

### Project Schedule

A project schedule identifying major project milestones is presented below. All planning, agreements, permitting, review periods, and approvals have been considered.



Red Lake Engineering and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) guarantees that all necessary preconstruction activities will be completed to allow FY 2024 RAISE funds to be obligated sufficiently in advance of the statutory deadline (September 30, 2028). The Project has a planned obligation date of June 30, 2025.

Additional breakdown of the project schedule and required elements are listed below. For Walking Shield Road, an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required and in progress.

### Schematic, Preliminary, and Final Design Contracts

Schematic design for Walking Shield Road was completed in July 2023. ([Delivery Order No. 2023-001-Project No. F52-409-174](#)). Four schematic renderings of alternate intersection options of Nebish Road (I.S. 18), Redby Nebish Road (I.S. 40) and Walking Shield Road (I.S. 174) were prepared. These renderings served to develop an alignment file for the corridor and explore intersection concepts to consider. These concepts included:

- 4 Way Stop
- Roundabout
- North Realignment
- South Realignment

Preliminary design and preparation of the environmental assessment for Walking Shield Road began in November 2023 ([Delivery Order No. 23-02](#)). The contract outlines scheduled completion dates for the project as follows:

### Completion of Environmental Documents/ROW: August 2, 2024

- Wetland Delineation/Report for new portion: December 31, 2023
- Right-of-Way Documents for new alignment: February 2, 2024
- Recheck of Wetlands incl. in original delineation: July 26, 2024
- Preliminary Environmental Assessment (EA): February 16, 2024
- Final Environmental Assessment (EA): August 2, 2024

### Preliminary Design of Preferred Alignment: September 6, 2024

- Soil Borings: February 23, 2024
- Soil Report: March 15, 2024
- 30% Alignment, Profile, Typical Sections, Cross Sections, Estimate: September 6, 2024

## Final Design: March 14, 2025

- **60%** including alignment, profile, x-section, Drainage structures, roundabout layout, Quantities, estimate. November 1, 2024
- **90%** including alignment, profile, x-sections, Drainage structures, roundabout design, Lighting, SEQ, details, erosion control, quantity Tabulations, specifications, estimate. January 17, 2025
- **100%** including alignment, profile, x-sections, Drainage structures, roundabout design, Lighting, SEQ, details, erosion control, quantity Tabulations, specifications, estimate, project Manual with special provisions ready for bidding, PDF and CAD/XML file for staking. March 14, 2025

The NEPA class of action for MN 1 is anticipated to be a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX).

## Non-Federal Local Match

MnDOT will provide the local match funds of \$401,464 through Local Partnership Program (LPP) set aside dollars in 2026. The LPP was created to provide statewide transportation partnership opportunities with local agencies and construct highway improvements that are mutually beneficial at locations that are not currently programmed on state highways. The vision for this program aligns with strategic directions documented in One Minnesota, [Minnesota GO 50-Year Vision for Transportation](#), and [MnDOT's 5-Year Strategic Operating Plan \(PDF\)](#).

If, for any reason, the Local Partnership Program (LPP) funding dollars weren't available, MnDOT would apply for [IIJA Discretionary Grant Match Program](#), which provides \$216.4 million in general funds to grant recipients that have directly received a federal discretionary award for a transportation-related purpose under IIJA.

## Agreements and Partnerships

As referenced in the Project Budget section, MN 1 is included in the District 2 Project for Years 2028-2033 of the 10-Year CHIP as ID# 27. MN 1 received the highest project selection score of the nine projects highlighted in District 2 in 2031. However, for a variety of reasons including reaching "poor" pavement conditions by Year 2027, the project is proposed for advancement. Schematic design is complete and serves as the basis for cost

estimating. The project is beginning its preliminary engineering phase in first quarter 2024.

Walking Shield Road would be constructed fully with FY 2024 RAISE dollars and no local match dollars are required for this segment. Walking Shield Road preliminary design and environmental assessment is currently underway and will be completed in fall of 2024. Following an approved environmental document, final design plans will be prepared and completed in the first quarter of 2025. As mentioned previously, Red Lake Nation will lead survey, design, and project delivery allowing for a seamless transition into construction should FY 2024 RAISE funding be secured. The project has had one public engagement activity to date, held in December 2023 and project updates continue to be provided on the Red Lake Nation Engineering web page and [Facebook](#) page.

On July 13, 2016, Red Lake Tribal Roads staff met with MnDOT to initiate the MN 1 project. Red Lake Nation will lead survey, design, and project delivery. Red Lake has [collaborated](#) with MnDOT on several previous projects ([previous example along MN 1](#)) and these Draft Agreements between the Tribe and MnDOT for preliminary engineering, environmental documentation, final design (not part of the FY 2024 RAISE application) are currently being developed so the project can meet 2025 and 2026 construction per the project schedule.

In 2023, three graduate students and their capstone professor from the University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Planning collaborated with members of the Red Lake Nation and MnDOT staff to help the Tribe plan for the future of the community and its transportation system. Through this effort and collaboration, [Planning for Redby's Future – Improving the Highway 1 Corridor and Developing a Land Use Inventory](#) was published in May 2023 outlining the need to increase livability throughout Redby's downtown area by addressing safety needs along MN 1. This document and outreach serves as the basis for many of the design features that are planned for the Project. This Project is further supported by the 2015-2019 Long Range Transportation Plan, and the [Red Lake Nation – Land Use and Transportation Plan Update](#).



## ENVIRONMENTAL RISK ASSESSMENT

### Required Approvals

[MnDOT Contract Number 1055910](#) defines the Specifications, Duties, and scope of work to complete surveys and final design for MN 1. The contract outlines 95 percent final design package completed and submitted in January 2026. Prior to that time, A Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) Determination (short form) will be needed for MN 1. Categorical exclusions are types of projects that normally do not have a significant effect on the human environment and, therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement normally is required. The Short Form CATEX is used for non-complex projects. The Short Form primarily uses “check-boxes” with little or no writing involved unless certain thresholds are reached requiring additional process and/or documentation in order for the project to be processed as a CATEX.

Approval of the environmental assessment for Walking Shield Road will be required. Details of the agreement can be found [here](#).

### Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Contamination was found near the site of a since torn-down gas station within the settlement of Redby during the construction of a bridge over the Mud River in 2012. The contaminated materials found during this project are assumed to have originated from an oil-like substance that was placed on the roadway prior to pavement for dust control. The project limits for the project being proposed in this application extends into the same contaminated materials section. As such, there is a \$750,000 contingency in the estimate for mitigation and removal of contamination.

Additionally, since this project is taking place on a federally recognized reservation, there will also need to be an agreement between MnDOT and the Tribe for an easement through the urban section of Redby to construct the proposed urban section of roadway. While MnDOT constructs and maintains MN 1 through the Red Lake Reservation by Permitted Easement, MnDOT does not own the Right of Way on the Red Lake Reservation.

Finally, there will need to be extensive access management done throughout the urban section in Redby prior to the urban reconstruction taking place. There are currently no existing entrances in place to public facilities to limit the entrance of vehicles which poses significant risks to pedestrians walking nearby. Staff from Red Lake Tribal Roads will need to meet with business owners to develop the locations for entrances to accommodate the businesses while also evaluating pedestrian crossing locations.

## TECHNICAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

### Experience Managing Grants and Delivering Projects of Similar Scope

Red Lake Nation has experience implementing federally funded transportation projects and completing transportation projects with similar scope. Recent examples of the innovative collaboration process between Red Lake Engineering and MnDOT are well documented on the MN 1 corridor through [MnDOT Agreement #1036284](#).



Red Lake Nation and MnDOT have demonstrated a history in working together and recently delivered a project together on this corridor. The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians is a federally recognized Indian tribe with sovereignty over its territory and has an interest in preserving and protecting its political, economic, and cultural rights and heritage. The Band desires to have full involvement in this transportation infrastructure project.

Through the recently delivered project on MN 1, the Band and MnDOT entered into MnDOT Agreement #1036284 to outline roles and responsibilities. The MN 1 project

references an example of successfully delivering a project of similar scope and complexity.

A similar agreement will be followed for this Project. Red Lake Engineering will serve in multiple roles, including administration and day to day construction management. MnDOT will support Red Lake Engineering in this endeavor and as mentioned previously, has an [innovative collaboration process](#) in place. [Red Lake Builders](#) is a company owned by the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians, founded in 1976, with a focus on creating jobs, supporting local economies through good paying jobs, and giving back to the communities they serve.

### Adhering to Project Schedule and Minimizing Project Risks

Red Lake Engineering is prepared to deliver the Project in accordance with the project schedule. Additional analysis of project readiness factors is provided below, but in summary, Red Lake Engineering assesses minimal project delivery risks for the following reasons:

- Red Lake Engineering and their consultant are substantially through the Project's preliminary engineering phase for Walking Shield Road. Design and environmental work completed to-date lowers uncertainty around scope, impact, and cost. Schematic designs are completed, and preliminary design is underway. The preliminary environmental assessment (EA) is completed with the final EA anticipated on August 2, 2024.
- Walking Shield Road will require no right-of-way acquisitions or negotiations. For MN 1, the project limits are established and fall almost exclusively in MnDOT right-of-way. Only two private parcels were identified for impact and impacted landowners have been notified. Negotiations are underway.
- Detailed cost estimates have been prepared based on final schematic design which accounts for appropriate contingency and inflation levels to midpoint date of construction which lowers the uncertainty in project costs.
- The Project is noncontroversial and supported by project partners and Red Lake Nation residents. Social media updates are provided on the Red Lake Nation Engineering [Facebook](#) page and residents are continually encouraged to participate in the planning and engineering process.

### Project Planning

The MN 1 Reconstruction Project is identified in the MnDOT 10-Year Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP), and 2024-2033 MnDOT District CHIP. Walking Shield Road has been identified as a priority project in the [2024-2028 Tribal Transportation Improvement Plan](#) and listed in the Red Lake Long Range Transportation Plan and Red Lake Transportation Safety Plan.

### Federal Regulations

The Project will comply with all applicable Federal requirements including but not limited to Buy America provisions, ADA regulations, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, and/or the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.