Final Abstract

Final Report Approved on March 16, 2026

M.L. 2021 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2025

Project Title: Highbanks Ravine Bat Hibernaculum Project

Project Manager: Emma Larson

Affiliation: City of St. Cloud

Mailing Address: 1201 7th Street South

City/State/Zip: St. Cloud, MN 56301

Phone: (320) 255-7226

E-mail: emma.larson@ci.stcloud.mn.us

Website: https://www.ci.stcloud.mn.us/

Funding Source:

Fiscal Year:

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09t and M.L. 2024, Chp. Sec. 2, Subd. 18

Appropriation Amount: $825,000

Amount Spent: $773,832

Amount Remaining: $51,168

Sound bite of Project Outcomes and Results

The Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project successfully stabilized eroding slopes, reduced sediment runoff to the Mississippi River, and secured a 30-inch sewer main. By diverting 125 acres of stormwater from the aging infrastructure, the initiative restored a vital bat hibernaculum and strengthened the ravine's long-term environmental and structural integrity.

Overall Project Outcome and Results

Located on the west bank of the Mississippi River in St. Cloud, the Highbanks Ravine is a 690-foot-long, 40-foot-deep landform with steep 1:1.5 banks. It is bordered by private residences and apartments within the historic downtown and university district.

The ravine's inlet, a 1900s brick-and-mortar structure, originally drained a small lake and watershed. Prior to the project, it received runoff from 125 acres of residential, commercial, and St. Cloud State University lands. Escalating rainfall and urban density have increased flow velocities, causing severe erosion and threatening a protected MN DNR bat hibernaculum. These turbulent flows also risk transporting debris that could damage a critical 30-inch trunk sewer main near the river outlet.

To address these risks, a collaborative team of City staff, engineering consultants, and emergency managers designed a project to reroute stormwater around the ravine to existing downstream outlets. This initiative goals were:

- Stabilize the ravine to protect adjacent properties.
- Preserve the integrity and longevity of the bat hibernaculum.
- Ensure property access during construction.

First identified as a concern in 2009 by residents reporting slope instability, the project represents 15 years of planning, inspections, and multi-agency coordination to secure funding. This effort ultimately protects the Mississippi River, local infrastructure, and critical wildlife habitats.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The project team has presented several times of this project, from initial design, funding through completion including the Central States Water Environment Association Annual Meeting as well as hosting tours from the Minnesota Water Shed Managers. The area within the ravine is more open, and has reduced the trespassing and illegal dumping.

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

M.L. 2021 Approved Final Report

General Information

Date: April 13, 2026

ID Number: 2021-363

Staff Lead: Michael Varien

Project Title: Highbanks Ravine Bat Hibernaculum Project

Project Budget: $825,000

Project Manager Information

Name: Emma Larson

Organization: City of St. Cloud

Office Telephone: (320) 255-7226

Email: emma.larson@ci.stcloud.mn.us

Web Address: https://www.ci.stcloud.mn.us/

Project Reporting

Final Report Approved: March 16, 2026

Reporting Status: Project Completed & Additional Update Approved

Date of Last Action: March 16, 2026

Project Completion: June 30, 2025

Legal Information

Legal Citation: M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 6, Sec. 2, Subd. 09t and M.L. 2024, Chp. Sec. 2, Subd. 18

Appropriation Language: $825,000 the first year is from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources for an agreement with the city of St. Cloud to reroute and upgrade an existing stormwater system in the Highbanks Ravine area to improve an existing bat hibernaculum, reduce erosion, and create additional green space for wildlife habitat.and (a) The availability of the appropriations for the following projects is extended to June 30, 2025: (21) Laws 2021, First Special Session chapter 6, article 6, section 2, subdivision 9, paragraph (t), Highbanks Ravine Bat Hibernaculum Project;

Appropriation End Date: June 30, 2025

Narrative

Project Summary: The City of St. Cloud will be rerouting and upgrading their existing stormwater system in the Highbanks Ravine area working with the DNR to preserve an existing bat hibernaculum.

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

A brick and mortar storm sewer, also known as the bat cave, is a bat hibernaculum protected by a DNR easement. The brick and mortar storm sewer outlet is the entrance used by bats to enter the bat cave. The City has been working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for guidance regarding the regulations associated with the bat hibernaculum easement that protects the brick and mortar storm sewer. The DNR completed bat surveys of the hibernaculum, in 1992, 2012 and 2016, all surveys were completed by Gerda Nordqust with the DNR. The oldest recorded bat in Minnesota was surveyed within this particular bat hibernaculum. After the 2016 survey, Ms. Nordquist indicated that "there is evidence that the tunnel floods to the top which would be detrimental to any bats roosting there". This flooding is caused by stormwater flow during rain events. During a conference call with the DNR on September 11, 2017 the DNR indicated a decrease bat population due to stormwater presence in the bat cave. The DNR would require improvements to the bat hibernaculum and they would like to see all drainage removed from the bat hibernaculum to create a better and more favorable habitat for the bats.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

Extending the primary storm sewer before it enters the bat cave by re-routing it around the ravine and out of the bat cave, would eliminate 98% of the stormwater flow through the ravine and eliminate 100% of the stormwater flow within the bat cave. Stormwater flow and surges through the ravine cause significant erosion, creating a sediment island at the mouth of the ravine, and turbulent discharges to the Mississippi River during heavy rains. Rerouting of the storm sewer would address bat hibernaculum concerns, these erosion issues, and looming impacts to adjacent properties and a downstream 30-inch sanitary sewer that crosses the ravine. The new storm sewer route would be located within City owned right-of-way. Filling of an adjacent deep and dangerous depression will also help improve safety in the area, improve conditions for bats, and provide for a natural green space for wildlife habitat. Trash and debris management will include removal and disposal of the trash and debris within the ravine and provide education for the surrounding property owners to help prevent future trash dumping. Overland flow management will be provided by working with property owners to re-route yard drains, down drains and roof drains to city roads and

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

Installation of a new storm sewer within City owned right of way to re-route stormwater flow away from the bat hibernaculum and around the ravine (See Attached Visual). This will address all the identified issues, including preservation and enhancement of the bat hibernaculum, erosion within the channel and associated impacts to adjacent properties and structures, and protection of the sanitary sewer main. To address ongoing erosion from existing failures and to protect the ravine against the remaining stormwater flow from a 12-inch storm sewer outlet and overland discharges, the ravine channel and the toe and bank failures will be stabilized.

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Watershed(s): Mississippi River - St. Cloud

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Region(s): Central

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Engineering Design and Construction Administration

Activity Budget: $150,000

Activity Description:
The engineer will be responsible for project design, project administration, plans/specifications, bidding documents, survey, staking, onsite observation, permitting, material staking and public meetings/communications.
Project scope includes the rerouting of stormwater drainage flow, around a 1900's era brick and mortar stormdrain and from a higher eroded and dangerous ravine. Stormwater will be intercepted upstream of the brick and mortar structure, and will be rerouted in newly installed storm mains along two residential City streets, and discharging to the Mississippi River through an upgraded existing outlet structure. Removing a significant portion of stormwater flow, if not all, from the brick and mortar structure (locally referred to as the Bat Cave), will enable the potential return on a bat population that previously inhabited the structure, which the MNDNR has indicated they are very interested in. Recent bat surveys have indicated a significantly reduced bat population, which is considered to be a result of the flooding of the cave during intensive rainfall events.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Project Design Start	August 31, 2021
Project Design Completed	November 30, 2021
Publish, Recieve and Open Bids, and award project	May 31, 2022
Design Review and Cost Review	March 31, 2023
Republish for bids, Open Bids and Award Project	June 30, 2023

Activity 2: Project Construction

Activity Budget: $675,000

Activity Description:
Project construction includes rerouting and extending the existing stormwater system (See Attached Visual). General contractor will be responsible for all aspects of the project including, sewer pipes, stormwater structures, connections to the current systems, pipe rerouting, yard drain corrections, erosion and sediment control, ravine stabilization and flow management.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Construction Start	June 30, 2022
Construction/Project Completed	November 30, 2023

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
General Contractor	General Contractor Hired Through A Competitive Bidding Process	Responsible For All Aspects Of The Project Construction	Yes
Consulting Engineer	Engineer Hired Through A Qualifications Process	Project Management/Project Design/Construction Administration	Yes
Andrew Horten	US Fish and Wildlife	Project Oversight/Bat Expert	No
Rich Baker	DNR	Project Oversight/Bat Expert	No
FEMA Staff	FEMA	Funder	No

Dissemination

Describe your plans for dissemination, presentation, documentation, or sharing of data, results, samples, physical collections, and other products and how they will follow ENRTF Acknowledgement Requirements and Guidelines.
Description:
The City has regular project meetings. Documentation of these meetings are developed in the form of meeting minutes that are saved for use at City Council meetings or other public information events. . All council meetings are public and reports discussed are available to the general public.

The Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) will be acknowledged through use of the trust fund logo or attribution language on project print and electronic media, publications, signage, and other communications per the ENRTF Acknowledgement Guidelines.

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?
The City of St. Cloud will continue to partner with the DNR and the US Wildlife to be ensure that the bat hibernaculum is maintained on an annual basis for at least twenty years in order to preserve this endangered species. The City is committed to operating and maintaining the storm sewer system in the Highbanks Ravine area for the system's useful life. The City will include funds in their annual budgets to cover these O&M costs. All construction related to this project will be completed to minimize the impacts to the area environment.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
Personnel										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Contracts and Services										
SEH Engineering Firm	Professional or Technical Service Contract	The Engineering Firm Will Be Responsible For Project Design, Bidding and Construction Administration				4		$150,000	$148,666	$1,334
General Contractor Hired Through a Competitive Bidding Process	Professional or Technical Service Contract	General Contractor Will be Responsible For All Aspects of Project Construction Activities				-		$675,000	$625,166	$49,834
							Sub Total	**$825,000**	**$773,832**	**$51,168**
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Capital Equipment										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Acquisitions and Stewardship										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Travel In Minnesota										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**

Travel Outside Minnesota										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Printing and Publication										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
Other Expenses										
							Sub Total	**-**	**-**	**-**
							Grand Total	**$825,000**	**$773,832**	**$51,168**

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	$ Amount	$ Amount Spent	$ Amount Remaining
State						
Cash	Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. ML 2024, Ch. X, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd.	LSOHC funds will be used for a significant portion of the Ravine Rehabilition Project for protection of the river from sediment through stabilization of the ravine, and removal of stormwater flow through the area. The ravine itself is an important habitat for bats emerging from hibernation. The forested floodplain habitat of the ravine bottom provides areas of rest and/or a food source immediately outside the hibernaculum. Funding is currently pending, per legislative approval.	Pending	$2,300,000	-	$2,300,000
			State Sub Total	**$2,300,000**	**-**	**$2,300,000**
Non-State						
Cash	FEMA.A-HMGP-DR4390-STCLOUCI-002.	FEMA grant funds will be used for the rerouting of stormwater away from the ravine to an established outfall downstream. The depth of the stormdrain in the area will mean complete utility replacement and road re-surfacing. Funding current approved with an end date of March 4, 2025.	Secured	$2,897,303	-	$2,897,303
			Non State Sub Total	**$2,897,303**	**-**	**$2,897,303**
			Funds Total	**$5,197,303**	**-**	**$5,197,303**

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: 9dd5d70c-03a.pdf

Alternate Text for Visual Component

The Visual shows the project site and work that will be completed....

Board Resolution or Letter

Title	File
Resolution	b61c7a62-4ed.pdf
Background Check Form	a02a70a5-d17.pdf

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
Support Letter	867aa7e0-ad9.pdf
Project Overview Maps	eee6a6db-bd7.pdf
Excerpt of Plans for LCCMR reporting	954d2760-65a.pdf
Bat Cave Structural Inspection Report	303d609e-50f.pdf
Residential Communications 1	0b121c09-afc.pdf
Commercial Property Owner Contact 1	21975eb2-c4d.pdf
240311 City Council Item. Award Phase 1 Construction	8a8eed11-3dd.pdf
April 2024 Project Update	55040143-d51.pdf
Project Photos	c13a2475-dbc.pdf
Project Photos	09721a41-5f3.pdf
Project Photos	815414ff-db6.pdf
Project Photos	02675e67-647.pdf
MN Flood Plain Managers Tour	6acdf020-1e3.pdf
Signage	aff991fa-cbc.pdf

Media Links

Title	Link
Plans and Specs Feb 2024	https://sehincazure-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/aryan_sehinc_com/ErwR0QoY-kNNgLU9hhxJNCwBIDmD58g3dUfaJ2gkqsv9nQ?e=meDeAG
April 2024 Project Update	https://ci.stcloud.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/26343/Project-Update-No-3---April-2024?bidId=

Difference between Proposal and Work Plan

Describe changes from Proposal to Work Plan Stage

Budgets for Activities 1&2 have been adjusted to reflect the $825,000 award. Other funds have been adjusted. Dissemination category has been added. Hibernaculum spelling corrected in the title.

Additional Acknowledgements and Conditions:

The following are acknowledgements and conditions beyond those already included in the above workplan:

Do you understand and acknowledge the ENRTF repayment requirements if the use of capital equipment changes?

N/A

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

N/A

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Work Plan Amendments

Amendment ID	Request Type	Changes made on the following pages	Explanation & justification for Amendment Request (word limit 75)	Date Submitted	Approved	Date of LCCMR Action
1	Amendment Request	• Budget - Professional / Technical Contracts	The City has retained SEH for engineering services for design, bidding and construction administration. SEH has a solid record and is familiar with the City of St. Cloud and construction procedures.	August 3, 2022	Yes	September 8, 2022
2	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Lisa Vollbrecht (lisa.vollbrecht@ci.stcloud.mn.us) New Manager: Emma Larson (Emma.Larson@ci.stcloud.mn.us)	Organizational Change	February 16, 2023	Yes	February 16, 2023
3	Amendment Request	• Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Dissemination • Attachments	As requested by LCCMR staff, reporting has been updated to reflect the needs of the LCRMR. Some minor changes made to the workplan to reflect recent changes and delays due to price increases.	March 3, 2023	Yes	March 6, 2023
4	Amendment Request	• Activities and Milestones • Attachments	Additional information regarding Bat Cave components, design, MNDNR approval, and concerns. Additional information regarding the pursuit of funding through the bonding bill. Additional milestones added to Activity 1 to reflect recent updates.	March 8, 2023	Yes	March 17, 2023
5	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Emma Larson (Emma.Larson@ci.stcloud.mn.us) New Manager: Lisa Vollbrecht (lisa.vollbrecht@ci.stcloud.mn.us)	PM Out At Moment LCCMR Staff Change PM	November 7, 2023	Yes	November 7, 2023
6	Amendment Request	• Project Collaborators - Project Manager Info • Narrative • Other • Budget - Non-ENRTF Funds Contributed	Additional funding is pending the current legislative session. LSOHC is recommending funding $2.3M to be available in August 2024. Funding is secured from FEMA and LCCMR.	March 14, 2024	Yes	April 10, 2024

		• Attachments	Currently working through funding extensions with FEMA and LCCMR.			
7	Project Manager	Previous Manager: Lisa Vollbrecht (lisa.vollbrecht@ci.stcloud.mn.us) New Manager: Emma Larson (emma.larson@ci.stcloud.mn.us)	Staffing changes at the city-LCCMR Technical Change	February 28, 2024	Yes	February 28, 2024
8	Completion Date	Previous Completion Date: 06/30/2024 New Completion Date: 06/30/2025; Governor Approved on 04/15/2024	Delay of initial timeline was due to overbudget bids, related to material availability and COVID related expenditures. Project design was re-visited and revised, a new timeline developed, and project put out for public bid, with opening on 2/20/2024. Bids within range of engineer's estimate are going to City Council for award on 3/11/2024. Construction will begin in Spring 2024, with substantial completion in Fall 2024. Final completion including landscaping in Spring.	March 7, 2024	Yes	May 21, 2024

Additional Status Update Reporting

Additional Status Update December 23, 2025

Date Submitted: December 23, 2025

Date Approved: February 18, 2026

Overall Update
The Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project is substantially complete, with all public stormwater flows successfully removed from the ravine and the historic “bat cave.” Stormwater that previously surged through the bat cave has been permanently eliminated, allowing the cave to remain dry and stable during runoff events and providing the conditions necessary for the re-establishment of a viable bat hibernaculum.

Significant trash and debris were removed throughout the ravine corridor, and targeted stabilization measures were implemented along the ravine banks from 3rd Avenue through to the Mississippi River. These improvements reduced active erosion and restored the structural integrity of the ravine slopes. Native vegetation has begun to emerge and is expected to become increasingly established over the summer months. As vegetation matures and root systems develop, continued natural stabilization of the ravine slopes is anticipated over time, further enhancing long-term slope stability, water quality protection, and habitat restoration.

Activity 1
This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
Project team meetings continued throughout the project. The project team has appropriately displayed the ENTRF logo where applicable.
The Project leadership hosted a walking tour of approximately 100 (per website attendee listing) Flood Plain Managers at the Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project site on November 12, 2025. Tour materials that were handed out as a overview are attached. The Project team received excellent feedback from tour attendees and made good network connections for future, similar projects.
Project Sign was developed and designed to meet State requirements. Two signs have been ordered, for two locations along the project corridor, however have not yet been installed. Signs will be installed in Spring 2026.

Status Update Reporting

Final Status Update August 14, 2025

Date Submitted: December 23, 2025

Date Approved: February 18, 2026

Overall Update
The Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project is substantially complete, with all public stormwater flows successfully removed from the ravine and the historic “bat cave.” Stormwater that previously surged through the bat cave has been permanently eliminated, allowing the cave to remain dry and stable during runoff events and providing the conditions necessary for the re-establishment of a viable bat hibernaculum.

Significant trash and debris were removed throughout the ravine corridor, and targeted stabilization measures were implemented along the ravine banks from 3rd Avenue through to the Mississippi River. These improvements reduced active erosion and restored the structural integrity of the ravine slopes. Native vegetation has begun to emerge and is expected to become increasingly established over the summer months. As vegetation matures and root systems develop, continued natural stabilization of the ravine slopes is anticipated over time, further enhancing long-term slope stability, water quality protection, and habitat restoration.

Activity 1
This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
Construction of the Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project is substantially complete. The project included rerouting and extending the existing public stormwater system to permanently remove stormwater flows from the ravine and the historic “bat cave”/ brick and mortar storm sewer. These improvements eliminated stormwater surging through the ravine corridor, reducing erosion, protecting downstream infrastructure, and restoring conditions suitable for bat hibernaculum re-establishment.

All aspects of construction were completed under the responsibility of the general contractors. Work included installation of new sewer pipes and stormwater structures, connections to existing systems, rerouting of stormwater piping, correction of yard drain connections, and implementation of erosion and sediment control measures. In addition, ravine stabilization and flow management improvements were completed from 3rd Avenue to the Mississippi River, along with removal of accumulated debris and refuse.

Vegetation has begun to establish within the ravine, and continued growth is expected throughout the summer season. As vegetation matures, long-term stabilization of the ravine slopes is anticipated, supporting sustained erosion control, environmental restoration, and infrastructure protection.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
Project team meetings continued throughout the project. The project team has appropriately displayed the ENTRF logo where applicable.
The Project leadership hosted a walking tour of approximately 100 (per website attendee listing) Flood Plain Managers at the Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project site on November 12, 2025. Tour materials that were handed out as a overview are attached. The Project team received excellent feedback from tour attendees and made good network connections for future, similar projects.

Project Sign was developed and designed to meet State requirements. Two signs have been ordered, for two locations along the project corridor, however have not yet been installed. Signs will be installed in Spring 2026.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2025

Date Submitted: December 23, 2025

Date Approved: February 18, 2026

Overall Update
The Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project is substantially complete, with all public stormwater flows successfully removed from the ravine and the historic “bat cave.” Stormwater that previously surged through the bat cave has been permanently eliminated, allowing the cave to remain dry and stable during runoff events and providing the conditions necessary for the re-establishment of a viable bat hibernaculum.

Significant trash and debris were removed throughout the ravine corridor, and targeted stabilization measures were implemented along the ravine banks from 3rd Avenue through to the Mississippi River. These improvements reduced active erosion and restored the structural integrity of the ravine slopes. Native vegetation has begun to emerge and is expected to become increasingly established over the summer months. As vegetation matures and root systems develop, continued natural stabilization of the ravine slopes is anticipated over time, further enhancing long-term slope stability, water quality protection, and habitat restoration.

Activity 1
This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
This activity was previously marked complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
Project team meetings continued throughout the project. The project team has appropriately displayed the ENTRF logo where applicable.
The Project leadership hosted a walking tour of approximately 100 (per website attendee listing) Flood Plain Managers at the Highbanks Ravine Stabilization Project site on November 12, 2025. Tour materials that were handed out as a overview are attached. The Project team received excellent feedback from tour attendees and made good network connections for future, similar projects.
Project Sign was developed and designed to meet State requirements. Two signs have been ordered, for two locations along the project corridor, however have not yet been installed. Signs will be installed in Spring 2026.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update December 1, 2024

Date Submitted: February 17, 2025

Date Approved: June 2, 2025

Overall Update
Work for phase 1 and phase 2 are substantially complete.

Activity 1
Project design and engineering oversight of construction by SEH is substantially complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Activity 2
Construction is substantially complete.
(This activity marked as complete as of this status update)

Dissemination
Project team continues to share information at City Council, in monthly reports to City Administration and on the website as needed for the projected. Project area residents also received newsletters and updates throughout.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2024

Date Submitted: June 10, 2024

Date Approved: August 22, 2024

Overall Update
Site work began in Spring 2024 including clearing and grubbing and utilities removals and relocations. The Contractor has continued to be responsive and works well with the project team. The river bank has been opened up and staff inspect regularly to ensure all erosion protections are in place.

Activity 1
Engineering Design and Construction Administration: SEH continue to work as the project engineer and have continued with construction site oversight. Inspector(s) are onsite daily and work well with the contractor. Weekly progress meetings are held onsite to ensure continued open communication between all parties. Phase 1 construction was awarded to Landwehr Construction as low bid.

Activity 2
Project Construction: Construction has continued, even with the increased rain in May and early June. The site has been well maintained and managed.

Dissemination
https://ci.stcloud.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/26343/Project-Update-No-3---April-2024?bidId=

The City continued to communicate with the public and residents using various methods, including phone calls and email when applicable. The latest update is at the link above.
The Newman Center, one primarily impacted facility/ church have been attending the weekly update meetings and have developed a good working relationship.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update December 1, 2023

Date Submitted: March 14, 2024

Date Approved: April 10, 2024

Overall Update
Update as of revised update (3/7/2024):
Project design was split into two phases to more efficiently fund the project. The project was split into two phases of construction so that we could bid the storm pipe separately to get better cost and better schedule. Phase 1 bids were opened on 2/20/2024 and apparent low bid will be awarded for construction in March. The Phase 2 plans are being finalized and will be completed by the end of March. Phase 2 will be bid this spring / early summer with construction this summer / fall. Both Phase 1 & Phase 2 make up the entire approved project. It is split for bidding and construction only for costs savings and schedule efficiencies.

This project was initially bid in 2022, however bids were too much above engineers estimate to make the project viable. Elevated bids were attributed to COVID delays, staff shortages, material delays and unavailability, and inflation. City staff and engineers revisited design to add cost saving measures, as well as reviewing pipe materials for more cost-effective options, as well as continuing to research additional funding. In 2023, the City successfully applied for LSHOC funding.

Activity 1
As of report revision date of 3/7/2024: Significant engineering design has been completed, and will be completed with the 100% design of Phase 2, expected by the end of March 2024. Phase 1 of Construction was put out to bid, and bids were publicly opened.

Activity 2
As of report revision date of 3/7/2024: Project construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2024, with staking as soon as April 2024. Engineer of record on this project is expected to be awarded a construction services contract at the March 11, 2024 City Council meeting, along with the award of the contract for low bid.

Dissemination
As of report revision date of 3/7/2024:
Homeowners, residents and commercial entities have been notified of the apparent low bid and the plan to accept the bid at the March 11 Council meeting. Engineers attended a meeting at a neighboring/ impacted facility (Newman Center) to answer questions and concerns. Utilities have been notified of the pending construction and are scheduling to complete pre-requisite work prior to project construction.
A newsletter mailing list is being developed.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2023

Date Submitted: June 9, 2023

Date Approved: June 28, 2023

Overall Update
Currently the project continues to be stalled due to lack of funding to meet the increased construction costs.
Staff have continued to pursue cost saving measures and looking into additional funding.

Activity 1
Staff continue to be stalled on design and cost review. Without additional funding secured, the project cannot be bid.

Activity 2
Project construction is on hold.

Dissemination
The project team continue to share information about the project and the need for it to be completed with all interested parties and local and state politicians.

Additional Status Update Reporting

Additional Status Update March 20, 2023

Date Submitted: March 20, 2023

Date Approved: March 23, 2023

Overall Update
3/20/2023: Only updated a budget number.

Activity 1
3/20/2023: Only updated a budget number.

Activity 2
3/20/2023: Only updated a budget number.

Dissemination
3/20/2023: Only updated a budget number.

Additional Status Update Reporting

Additional Status Update March 8, 2023

Date Submitted: March 8, 2023

Date Approved: March 17, 2023

Overall Update
The project team continues to work on design 'tweaks' for cost saving measures and are reviewing options for a change in pipe material for the stormwater main - concrete prices continue to rise throughout the region and the nation and alternative materials may help reduce the overall cost of the project to a more feasible level.
Project team members are also working with lobbying personnel on getting this project short comings (difference between currently secured funding and current engineers estimate of 2023 cost) added to the bonding bill that was not passed in 2022.

Activity 1
A structural inspection of the Bat Cave was completed on 5/26/2021. The inspection report (uploaded) concluded that the cave in good to fair condition. The report recommends filling gaps in the mortar within the ceiling, tuckpointing. The MNDNR has since commented back to the City that no tuckpointing or repairs to the mortar will be allowed/ approved due to the reduction in bat habitat that would result. Options reviewed and suggested include the addition of purpose made bat habitat placed within the cave, which was not approved by DNR representatives. Without tuckpointing within the cave, slope stabilization and filling on the west side of 3rd Ave S, will not be possible. This will not affect the overall project in regards to the rerouting of the stormwater flow and subsequent utility and road work, but will reduce the overall impact to the community and residents.
Bids received in May 2022 were too over budget for the project to be viable. Project team reviewed and made cost saving changes.
Project team has requested assistance of City Mayor in lobbying for this project to be included with the late passage of the bonding bill.

Activity 2
No further update at this time (3/8/2023).

Dissemination
No further update at this time (3/8/2023)

Status Update Reporting

Status Update December 1, 2022

Date Submitted: March 3, 2023

Date Approved: March 6, 2023

Overall Update
Design was completed in early 2022,to enable bidding for the 2022 construction season. Design included engineering plans and specs development, meeting with residents and institutions impacted, survey and construction easement attainment.
Bids in spring 2022 were high (low bid was $600,000 over engineers estimate and high bid was $$3.5M over) and construction could not begin in 2022. The project team worked on cost cutting options in 2022 and are now awaiting the outcome of the bonding bill to learn if this project shortfall could be included.

Activity 1
Milestone 1: Project design started - 8/31/2021 - complete. This project was designed by SEH Engineers, who will also be the engineers for construction management and inspections.
Milestone 2: Project design completed - 11/30/2021 - complete. Note- project design was revisited both in winter 2021 and spring 2022 due to the rising construction and materials costs.
Milestone 3: Construction complete - 11/30/2023 - not complete. Construction has not begun due to the high bids and the need to secure additional funding.

Permits and Reviews:
MDH have approved the plans and specs as it related to water main replacement.
MNDNR - Public Waters Work Permit received.

Easements and Right of Entry - SEH worked on the easements for both temporary construction and the one small permanent utility easement that will be required for this project.

Design was complete before bidding in Spring 2022. Overview attached.

Activity 2
Milestone 1: Construction started 6/30/2022 - not complete. Construction delayed.
Milestone 2: Award bid: 5/31/2023 - not complete. All bids rejected.
Milestone 3: Construction Complete: 11/30/2023. Not complete.

Construction has not begun on this project. Team members are working on cost saving measures, as well as attempting to secure additional funding.

Dissemination
A Public Meeting was held in October 2021, after which right of entry forms were handed out to be returned. Design over multiple years has enabled significant input from the residents and owners, SCSU and the Newman Center (church) that are all impacted. Some accommodations could be made to ease the impact, such as easy communication to residents incase of utility interruptions, rearranging of parking stalls and curbs for institutions etc.
The project team has also met with the MNDNR regarding the bat habitat and the outfall and river bank to the Mississippi River.
Through, communications with residents and owners has continued, mainly by one on one meetings or phone calls as requested.

Status Update Reporting

Status Update June 1, 2022

Date Submitted: March 3, 2023

Date Approved: March 6, 2023

Overall Update

Installation of a new storm sewer – the project is designed to take flow away from the brick and motar sewer (known as the 'bat cave') that currently takes flow from a large area of the City and directs it to the Highbanks Ravine, which is private property, to the Mississippi River.

Preservation of the bat habitat – previous bat studies have indicated the presence of bats in the bat cave, however more recent inspections have no identified bats, and this is thought to be because of the intermittent flooding caused by the stormwater flows during and after storms. Rerouting of this water will enable bats to once again inhabit this area.

Stormwater flow from over 100 acres, that flows through the bat cave at significant velocity has significantly eroded the banks of the ravine it travels to the Mississippi. Solids and debris is carried into the River as pollutants, and the property owners have noted the deterioration and loss of their property. Once flow is rerouted around the bat cave, and therefore out of the ravine, stabilization of the ravine banks will be completed.

Activity 1

Project design and bidding phase are complete. All needed permits have been acquired; MPCA, DNR, Army Corps of Engineers, and MPCA. Right of Way easements have been obtained.

A public meeting was held on October 7, 2021 for the neighborhood and adjacent property owners. Fifteen people attended the meeting and there was positive support for the project.

Construction Administration is not complete. The bids came in significantly overbudget. Currently working with contractor to save money and/or looking for additional funding. Met with a funding specialist at SEH. Reviewed the project scope with funding specialist. SEH has been researching additional options and staff are currently determining the possibility of getting this project need added to the bonding bill.

A utility meeting was held in December 2022, with the intent of attempting construction in 2023.

The project is ~$1,600,000 short. The project budget was established in 2019 prior to the COVID outbreak. FEMA funds were secured first and LCCMR second. Material prices and availability are of significant concern to this project viability.

Activity 2

The project has not started construction phase.

Dissemination

No activity