



# Saint Louis County

Public Works Department • Richard H. Hansen Transportation & Public Works Complex  
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**James T. Foldesi, P.E.**  
Public Works Director/  
Highway Engineer

Date: 2/28/2023

To: Representative Klevorn

Re: HF 1231 support

Dear Representative Klevorn,

Please accept this letter as formal support for HF 1231 and its ability to aid in funding the re-monumentation and maintenance of the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) in St. Louis County and throughout Minnesota.

St. Louis County is the largest county east of the Mississippi and larger than three states. We are tasked with maintaining over 20,000 PLSS corners, of which, 11,500 have documented locations. We are also one of the few counties in the state that have an active PLSS remonumentation program. We have dedicated professional survey staff that completes this work, as well as a contract program that is helping us accelerate our PLSS restoration efforts. Since 2013 we have dedicated \$2.1 million dollars to our contract program and restored over 1300 monuments. Prior to our contract program, we estimated it would take over 50 years to complete restoration of the PLSS in St. Louis County. At our current pace of restoration, it will take at least 20 years for us to complete our restoration.

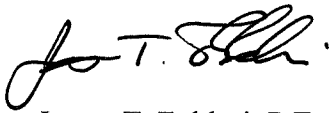
Our restoration efforts have reaped immediate rewards. Our auditors and assessor's office utilize the restored positions to update parcel data to accurately calculate and collect property taxes. Our Land and Minerals department utilizes this information to properly manage timber sales, resolve trespasses and determine mineral royalties on tax forfeited and school trust lands. Our highway engineers utilize these positions to efficiently acquire public right-of-way and maintain county roads and highways. And most importantly, the constituents of our county can be assured in the location of the PLSS allowing a survey to be completed in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Unfortunately, St. Louis County is the exception and not the rule when it comes to PLSS remonumentation. Rural counties which do not have the funding capacity to support PLSS remonumentation have not been able to maintain their PLSS. They do not have dedicated staff to restore the PLSS.

This proposed funding will help maintain Minnesota's very first infrastructure and serves as the essential framework for property ownership, maps, parcels, roadways, GIS systems and more. Without this properly maintained network of PLSS corner monuments, there is an increased risk of property disputes, inequitable taxation, disagreements about resource rights, confusion over easement locations, and unnecessary expenditures by private citizens and local governments. The PLSS is the foundation for determining the location of every property description, including private, governmental, and business in Minnesota.

I encourage you to vote for HF 1231 and allow Minnesota counties to jump start a PLSS restoration program that will reap benefits to future generations. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James T. Foldesi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a trailing flourish.

James T. Foldesi, P.E.  
St. Louis County  
Public Works Director/Highway Engineer