

City of Russell

Drinking Water | Wastewater | Storm & Sewer Improvements



The City of Russell has faced **multiple watermain breaks** over the past year, leading to the closure of entire city blocks for repairs. One of their watermains is made of **asbestos pipe**, which poses significant health risks if it breaks or leaks. Additionally, the city has experienced frequent **sanitary sewer backups, with homeowners reporting wastewater in their basements**. The main sewer lift station, an open-pit design, experienced a major issue in 2017 when an overflow discharge of **13,000 gallons of wastewater soaked into the ground**.

Project Affordability

- The population of Russell is 348.
- Median household income is \$56,094, and 25.8% of children in Russell live in poverty.
- As part of this project, the city will establish a reserve/replacement account.
- Current monthly utility costs in Russell average \$100/month and could increase an additional \$104/month without bonding assistance.
- Introduced SF 838
- Introduced HF 612



Wastewater Discharge

Funded • Completed

Phase 1 Project Scope

Phase 1 utility work totaled \$9.8 million and was completed fall of 2024. It has been funded and includes:

- New main lift station
- New 50,000 Gallon Water Tower
- Installation of PVC watermain, gate valves, hydrants, and a new storm sewer pipe
- Rehabilitating three existing lift stations
- Street restoration all streets that are affected by utility replacement.

Funds Needed

Phases 2 Project Scope

Phase 2 utility work will total \$13.1 million and will begin once funding is secured. This project includes:

- Addition of watermain looping to eliminate stagnant water- PPL Rank 578
- New water valves for safer maintenance
- Improvements to sewer collection system to help eliminate infiltration and inflow- PPL Rank 578
- Addition of storm pond & improvements to remaining streets, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and driveways



Why Your Support Matters Now

Russell knows this final project will improve the quality of life, health, safety, and well-being for the residents and visitors to their community. The City of Russell is respectfully requesting **\$4.0 million** in Minnesota Legislative Bonding towards Utilities and Street Reconstruction Activities related to Phase 2 of their infrastructure improvements project.

This Document can be made available
in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 612

02/13/2025 Authored by Swedzinski
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Capital Investment

1 1 A bill for an act
1 2 relating to capital investment; appropriating money for improvements to water
1 3 and sewer infrastructure and street reconstruction in the city of Russell; authorizing
1 4 the sale and issuance of state bonds.

1 5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1 6 Section 1. **RUSSELL; WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND STREET**
1 7 **RECONSTRUCTION.**

1 8 Subdivision 1. **Appropriation.** \$4,000,000 is appropriated from the bond proceeds fund
1 9 to the Public Facilities Authority for a grant to the city of Russell to design, construct, and
1 10 equip the replacement of aging and failing municipal infrastructure. This appropriation
1 11 includes money for improvements to and replacement of a water distribution system, a
1 12 sanitary sewer system, and storm sewer system infrastructure, and reconstruction of city
1 13 streets.

1 14 Subd. 2. **Bond sale.** To provide the money appropriated in this section from the bond
1 15 proceeds fund, the commissioner of management and budget shall sell and issue bonds of
1 16 the state in an amount up to \$4,000,000 in the manner, upon the terms, and with the effect
1 17 prescribed by Minnesota Statutes, sections 16A.631 to 16A.675, and by the Minnesota
1 18 Constitution, article XI, sections 4 to 7.

1 19 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

RESOLUTION NO.2025-2

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RUSSELL, MN. SUPPORTING THE
REQUEST FOR STATE BONDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

WHEREAS the City of Russell, understands that drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure systems are important for the health and safety of its residents, and

WHEREAS the City of Russell recognizes that the existing drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure systems are inadequate to meet the existing and future needs of the community, and

WHEREAS the City of Russell approves and supports the efforts to predesign, design, and construct drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure improvements that will accommodate current and future needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Russell hereby requests State Bonding to make these utility infrastructure improvements.

Passed and Adopted by the Council on this 14th day of January 2025.

CITY OF RUSSELL, MINNESOTA

_____

By: Hilary Buchert

Mayor

ATTEST: _____

By: Laurie Millner

City Clerk/Treasurer



LYON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

607 West Main Street
Marshall, MN 56258

November 9, 2023

City of Russell
106 River St.
PO Box 357
Russell, MN 56169

Dear City of Russell,

On October 17, 2023, the Lyon County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve this letter in support of the city's efforts to obtain funding for infrastructure improvements. The Lyon County Board believes investment in improving infrastructure is crucial for the prosperity and well-being of its residents and the county as a whole.

Water, sewer, power and transportation infrastructure is vital for maintaining a high quality of life in Southwest Minnesota. These services provide for the health, welfare and safety of its residents. It is imperative that these structures remain maintained and replaced when the useful life ends.

Lyon County is committed to the City of Russell maintaining its high quality of life for its residents, improving its infrastructure to provide for future growth and economic development and fully supports the City's efforts in obtaining funding for these improvements.

On Behalf of the Lyon County Board of Commissioners,

Loren Stomberg
Lyon County Administrator



**Lyon-Lincoln
Electric Cooperative**

PO Box 639 • Tyler, MN 56178-0639
Telephone: (507) 247-5505 • (800) 927-6276
Fax: (507) 247-5508

September 20, 2023

Representative Chris Swedzinski
245 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: House Investment Committee – Letter of Support for the City of Russell Infrastructure Improvements
Including Drinking Water, Wastewater, Stormwater

Dear Representative Swedzinski,

The City of Russell is taking steps to apply for funding from the State of Minnesota to help fund infrastructure improvements to their drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.

The improvements to the drinking water system include a looping water main to help eliminate stagnant water within the distribution system. New valves will also be added to allow for easier shutdown during maintenance, eliminating disruptions to non-impacted areas of the city. An existing water main is an asbestos pipe, which is extremely dangerous if it were to break or leak.

The improvements to the wastewater system will extend the sanitary sewer collection system to include the two new housing developments and will repair sections of the collection system that are failing. There have been sanitary sewer backups in homes all throughout the city over the years that have resulted in some homeowners having wastewater in their basements. In 2017, 13,000 gallons of wastewater overflowed and soaked into the ground.

The stormwater system would add a new pond by the new water tower and be used for an industrial park area and allow for stormwater storage and detention time. Other ponding issues around the city will also be addressed.


Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative serves the City of Russell with electric energy and proudly counts the citizens of Russell as cooperative members. Our mission is not only to provide reliable electricity, but also other needed services to enhance the quality of life in our rural communities. We believe this project and the benefits they will provide will help do just that. Therefore, we support the City of Russell in this application.

Sincerely,

Timothy O'Leary
General Manager
Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Lyon-Lincoln Electric Cooperative is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

211 South Harth Ave. | P.O. Box 227
Madison, SD 57042-0227

Telephone: (605) 256-4536
Fax: (605) 256-8058

September 29, 2023

Representative Chris Swedzinski
95 University Ave W
245 State Office Bldg
St Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Swedzinski:

I am writing in support of the infrastructure plans and projects the City of Russell is undertaking. As the wholesale electrical power supplier for the community, we fully support their efforts to improve their community and attract new growth.

A primary cooperative value that East River Electric stands for is our Commitment to Community. We support our employees' involvements in their communities, as well as local community activities where we are able. However, we go a step further through a joint economic development loan fund that is owned by our cooperative members for the purpose of enhancing local community viability. This infrastructure project will open opportunities for growth and development for Russell and we look forward to assisting the community with those opportunities that will come, once these infrastructure improvements are able to be completed.

Having adequate and inviting infrastructure able to accommodate manageable growth will greatly enhance their marketability for expanded workforce housing, as well as attracting core businesses that can support a growing community with basic, vital needs. We stand ready to assist the City of Russell in carrying out their plans for growth and development to ensure a strong community for their current and future residents. This infrastructure project will be key in the initiation of those plans and we look forward to the development and completion of these needed infrastructure improvements.

A stronger community means a stronger electric cooperative utility system serving all of the residents and businesses, both inside and outside of the City of Russell. We look forward to the mutual benefits this project will bring to the existing and future residents/businesses and to us as a utility infrastructure supplier for this region.

East River Electric strongly supports the City of Russell in their quest to make these needed improvements to their infrastructure and thank you for consideration of approval for the funds greatly needed for this projected to become reality.

Sincerely,



Mike Jaspers, Business Development Director for East River Electric Power Cooperative

Hello,

My name is Cassy Struthers and I run a daycare in Russell. I am writing today to tell you how important new water, sewer and streets are for the town I live in and for my business. New water and sewer in Russell is way overdue. Without healthy water and sewer, I cannot run my business. I take care of young children for a living so you can imagine how often I use water and sewer a day. Without keeping them healthy and safe through clean water and sewer, I lose my job. Parents will discontinue to bring their kids who I love to me for their care while they are at work if I am not able to keep them healthy due to drinking water, etc. With that being said, this project is a must. However, if we don't get financial help from our state, myself and many other daycares in this town, will either not be able to afford our water and sewer bill or will have to raise our daycare rates in order to help pay for our water and sewer bill. Daycare is already expensive enough for families. Raising their rates so I can pay my water and sewer bill is not an option where I am concerned. Because if I raise my rates because of that, my families will leave because they won't be able to afford to bring their kids to me. If I leave my daycare rates the same and our city bill could possibly triple, I won't be able to keep my daycare open because I won't be able to make enough money to live off of my daycare income. Please help us keep our water and sewer bills affordable by bonding the City of Russell.

Thank you,

Cassy Struthers

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cassy Struthers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Hello,

My name is Kim Hook and I have been a daycare provider here in Russell for almost 30 years.

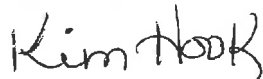
I am writing today regarding how important it is for new water, sewer and streets for our town and my business! These new upgrades are way overdue! Without healthy water and sewer, I cannot run my business.

I take care of young children for a living and as you can imagine, I use a lot of water and sewer daily. It is of utmost importance for the health and safety of my daycare children with clean water and sewer or I will lose my job! Parents will discontinue bringing their children, whom I love, to my home if I am unable to provide safe drinking water, etc.

This project is a must for my business and for the residents of Russell! If we don't get the financial help from our state, me and other daycares in town will either not be able to afford our water and sewer bill or will have to raise our rates to help pay for the bill. Things are expensive enough for everyone already so raising my rates to pay for my water and sewer bill is not an option for me. If my rates go up, my families will leave as they won't be able to afford their daycare bill. If our city bill could possibly triple and my rates stay the same, I will have to close my daycare as I won't be able to make enough money to live off my daycare income.

Please help us keep our water and sewer bills affordable by bonding the City of Russell!

Thank You!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Hook". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Kim Hook

Hello,

My name is Liz Swift and I own Country Canine Dog Grooming in Russell. I am writing today to tell you how important new water, sewer and streets are for the town I live in and for my business. New water and sewer are way overdue. Without healthy water and sewer, I cannot run my business. I use water and sewer all day long to run my business of grooming dogs. Without healthy, safe and clean water and sewer, my business will fail. My customers will discontinue bringing their dogs to me if I can't do my job with clean water and sewer. With that being said, this project is a must. However, if we don't get financial help from our state, I will either not be able to afford our water and sewer bill or will have to raise my grooming rates in order to help pay for our water and sewer bill. Raising rates so I can pay my water and sewer bill is not an option where I am concerned. Because if I raise my rates because of that, customers will go elsewhere. If I leave my rates the same and our city bill could possibly triple, I won't be able to keep my business open because I won't be able to make enough money to live off of my grooming business income. We are trying to grow our town. If our water and sewer rates are unaffordable, this town will not grow but deplete.

Please help us keep our water and sewer bills affordable by bonding the City of Russell.

Thank you,


Liz Swift

April 19, 2023

Representative Chris Swedzinski
245 State Office Bldg
St. Paul, MN 55155

I am submitting this letter in support of the current planned infrastructure improvements in the City of Russell, MN. These infrastructure improvements are necessary for our planned housing development with the City of Russell.

Russell is an ideal location for additional housing based on it's proximity to a regional center and lack of move-in-ready housing for residents. While the city has already invested in single family owner-occupied and rental housing rehabilitation, along with a planned multi-family housing rehabilitation project, there is still a need for more. The city lacks new construction to not only attract new residents, but to accommodate the growing needs of aging residents who want to remain in their community.

Without the necessary city infrastructure in place, we are unable to move forward with our planned development that would not only increase city tax base, but also alleviate the current housing shortage in your district. Please support the City of Russell and their request for Legislative Appropriation Funding for their necessary infrastructure improvement project.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Klukas", written in a cursive style.

Alan Klukas



TE Underground, LLC

293 N Tyler St
Tyler, MN 56178

Invoice

Date	Invoice #
3/13/2023	5460

Bill To
City of Russell 106 River Street Russell, MN 56169

P.O. No.	Terms	Project
	Net 30	

Quantity	Description	Rate	Amount
5	Excavator Service Hours - emergency water leak 3/7/23	185.00	925.00
3	skid loader hours	120.00	360.00
1	Gravel Delivered by load - 2	475.00	475.00
1	Donnie's rock	1,550.00	1,550.00
3	Dump truck driver labor removing materials	120.00	360.00
5	Labor Rate 3 guys	120.00	600.00
1	6" repair clamp stainless steel	350.00	350.00
		Total	\$4,620.00