



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

Waterford Township

G-MHCG-2507-30805 | \$295,000 | MN Historical and Cultural

Waterford Bridge Preservation – Project Completion

Status

Granted:Active

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Program Organization: Waterford Township

Project Director: Elizabeth Wheeler

Authorized Officer: Brett Stadler

Additional Project Staff: Steven Wheeler

Applicant County: Dakota

Applicant Organization Type: Local/Regional Government

Governance/Board Members:

Brett Stadler - Supervisor/Chair and Authorized Officer, Frank Wergin - Supervisor, Bobby Nelson - Supervisor, Tom Davis - Town Clerk, Elizabeth Wheeler - Deputy Town Clerk and Project Director, Erin Johnson - Town Treasurer, Steven Wheeler - Deputy Town Treasurer and Additional Project Staff

Is this a cooperative project?

Select Yes or No.

No

Data Collection

The information provided is intended to help MNHS gain a deeper understanding of your community and must be completed on each application submitted for both small and large round cycles. MNHS will utilize it for grant fund reporting and to continue understanding and revising the program needs accordingly. Where applicable, please provide demographic information relevant to the applicant organization and proposed project. The answers are not reviewed (seen) by the Historic Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC).

	Do current staff, volunteers, or board members identify as:	In the past 5 years, has your organization offered programming/ services specifically for:
Default Entry (Leave Checked)	✓	✓
American Indian, Indigenous, or Alaska Native		
Central Asian, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or Asian American		
Black, African, or African American		
Hispanic or Latino		
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		
Middle Eastern or North African		
White/Caucasian	✓	
LGBTQIA+		
Individuals with Disabilities	✓	
Military Veterans/Active Duty		
Located in a rural area	✓	
Located in a low median household income county	✓	
Unknown		
	please specify	please specify
Other	People without access to a personal vehicle	

Does the applicant organization have a plan to ensure community and broad demographic representation of its leadership, staff, and volunteers?

Select One: Not at this time

▼ Click on arrow to view the contact information we have on file

CURRENT ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION ON FILE

Organization Name:	Waterford Township
Street Address:	P.O. Box 531
Street Address 2:	
City:	Northfield
State:	Minnesota
Postal Code:	55057
Organization Phone:	507-261-3235
Project Director:	Elizabeth Wheeler

Project Director Email:	deputyclerk1948@gmail.com
Authorized Officer:	Brett Stadler
Authorized Officer Email:	brett.stadler@gmail.com

The Organization or Contact Information needs to be updated: Yes

	Organization and Contact Information
Organization Name	
Street Address	
Street Address 2	
City	
State	
Postal Code	
Organization Phone	
Project Director	
Project Director Email	
Authorized Officer	
Authorized Officer Email	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title (Be descriptive and succinct):

Waterford Bridge Preservation - Project Completion

*** Brief Project Summary (REQUIRED TO SAVE):**

Work includes hiring qualified professionals to preserve, reconstruct and restore the historic Waterford Bridge to full completion, providing a vital connection on the Mill Towns State Trail.

Geographic Focus of Project: Dakota, Goodhue, Rice

Could any items related to this application be considered "culturally sensitive objects"? These objects could be items used in a spiritual ceremony or other ritual, or funerary objects or human remains. They can be of any cultural origin.

Select Yes or No. (If unsure, select Yes.): No

Is this proposed project based on or a continuation of an already funded project? Select Yes or No

Select Yes or No: Yes

If so, please briefly describe the previous grant project and its status. :

In 2017, Waterford Township was awarded a grant through the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Program to create pre-development construction plans and specifications for the rehabilitation of the Waterford Bridge. Plans, specifications, and cost estimates were used to determine the scope of work for construction, as described in this grant application. In 2019, Waterford Township was awarded a grant through the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Program for Phase I of the restoration rehabilitation project which was completed in 2021. In 2021, Waterford Township was awarded a grant through Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Program to complete truss strengthening on the bridge; this grant had to be turned back due to inability to secure contractors to perform the work within the project budget due to high inflation and supply chain issues. In 2025, Dakota County was awarded \$2,295,000 in grant funding through the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to contribute towards truss strengthening and deck replacement. With funding proposed in this grant application, the full project can be completed, and the bridge will be open for full use to the public.

Does this project involve a structure that is listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places?

Select Yes or No. Yes

HISTORIC PROPERTY INFORMATION

Property Name:	Bridge L3275
City:	Waterford Township
Address:	Canada Avenue W over Cannon River
Zip:	55057
Property Location County:	Dakota
NR Number:	10000580
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places:	Yes
This property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places:	No

Project Impact

To help reviewers gain a deeper understanding of how your proposed project will impact community groups within your service area, please respond to the following question. Where applicable, please indicate the relevant demographic information for the proposed project by checking the corresponding box. Please note that your responses will be reviewed by the Historic Resources Advisory Committee

(HRAC) for large requests. **IMPORTANT:** Applicants must answer this question for each application submitted, including requests for the small rounds.

	If funds are awarded, would the proposed project directly impact/involve one or more of the following community group(s) - (check only those that apply to the proposed project):
Default Entry (leave checked)	✓
American Indian, Indigenous, or Alaska Native	✓
Central Asian, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, or Asian American	✓
Black, African, or African American	✓
Hispanic or Latino	✓
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	✓
Middle Eastern or North African	✓
White/Caucasian	✓
LGBTQIA+	✓
Individuals with Disabilities	✓
Military Veterans/Active Duty	✓
Located in a rural area	✓
Located in a low median household income county	✓
Unknown	
	please specify
Other	

IMPORTANT: For the items checked above, the Application Narratives section should include specific details outlining your strategies and plans for community involvement and/or the intended impact.

BUDGET INFORMATION

Small request: \$20,000 and less: No

Mid/large request: greater than \$20,000: Yes

GRANT BUDGET (Applicant View)

Budget Item	Amount Requested	Grant Amount	Amend Grant Amount	Match
1. Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TLCP) Test & Mobilization	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$49,120.00
2. Structural Steel (materials and labor to install)	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$538,480.00
3. Rivet Replacement (materials and labor to install)	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$165,200.00
4. Lead Substances Collection & Disposal	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$66,000.00
5. Organic Zinc - Rich Paint System, Old + Shop (materials and labor)	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00		\$191,525.00
6. Traffic Control				\$2,000.00
7. Deck Removal and Replacement	\$10,530.00	\$10,530.00		\$351,566.00
8. Railing Fabrication and Installation	\$112,470.00	\$112,470.00		
9. Plaque Installation	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00		\$3,000.00
10. Engineering to Prepare Bid Package				\$25,000.00
11. Contingency for Unknowns and Inflation	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00		\$800,916.48
12. Construction Administration				\$165,189.10
	Total: \$295,000.00	Total: \$295,000.00	Total	Total: \$2,357,996.58

*** Amount Requested (REQUIRED TO SAVE. USE TOTAL FROM ABOVE):** \$295,000.00

Match Offered (USE TOTAL FROM ABOVE): \$2,358,996.58

How were above figures determined?

The estimated budget is based on professional bridge preservation experience and cost comparison with similar projects for completion of plans, specifications and estimates for historic bridge rehabilitation. The estimate is based on 2025 pricing to closely reflect current construction bid pricing, accounting for a recent rise in costs of both labor and materials. The costs also include a 6.0% yearly inflation adjustment. A contingency budget of 10% been included to account for unknown repairs that may be

revealed once construction commences as well as unpredictability of construction bid prices. Construction administration fees are calculated at an hourly rate for professional administrative and engineering services, with hours approximated to the anticipated work to be performed. All construction administration hours are accounted for as an in-kind match as professional service hours provided by Waterford Township and Dakota County staff. Prevailing wage was used to estimate labor costs related to construction.

Match Description:

The match for the project is \$2,358K (\$2,357,996.58). This is a combination of \$30,000 cash match from Waterford Township, \$2,295,000 awarded by LCCMR in 2025 to be used towards truss strengthening and deck replacement, and \$33,000.00 in-kind professional services provided by Waterford Township and Dakota County Staff.

The LCCMR award is a portion of a larger project in partnership between Waterford Township, Dakota County, and the MnDNR to rehabilitate the Waterford Bridge, develop a MnDNR Cannon River boat launch at the southern bridge approach, and protect and restore natural resources along the Cannon River. The Dudley family, who's great-great uncle Christopher Boulder donated the land for the original Waterford Bridge construction in 1909, has shown continued support for this project by donating three acres for the MnDNR boat launch.

The in-kind match will be professional services provided by staff salaries (including fringe benefits) that represent actual work that will occur on the project. These activities will not include general administration of Waterford Township or Dakota County. A total of 270 in-kind professional service hours of work will be used as a project match.

Waterford Township staff include Elizabeth Wheeler, the Project Director, who will be tasked with managing the grant and associated construction administration as it pertains to grant reporting, communication with the Township Board and the broader community, and contract negotiation. Elizabeth will contribute approximately 70 hours of professional services towards the project with an hourly rate of \$100.

Steven Wheeler, Deputy Treasurer, will provide construction administration as it pertains to construction activities, monitoring construction work, coordinating inspections and communication with contractors. Steven was appointed to manage road and bridge improvement projects for Waterford Township by the Township Board from 2019 to 2025. He will provide approximately 40 hours of in-kind professional services towards the project with a value equivalent to a rate of \$100 per hour.

Lil Leatham, Senior Planner with Dakota County will provide in-kind professional services to assist with grant administration, reporting, and contract negotiations. Lil will provide approximately 70 hours of in-kind professional services towards the project with a value equivalent to a rate of \$125 per hour.

Todd Howard, Civil Engineer with Dakota County, will provide in-kind professional services, serving as the Project Engineer and technical advisor for the duration of the project. Todd will provide direction to Steven Wheeler. Todd will contribute approximately 90 hours of in-kind professional services towards the project with an hourly rate of \$150.

APPLICATION NARRATIVES

Project Description:

This grant request will fund full completion of the Waterford Bridge rehabilitation. This project is based on detailed plans and specifications prepared specifically for the purpose of restoring the bridge to its original beauty and functionality. The goal of the project is to rehabilitate the Waterford Bridge to be structurally sound and functional as a bicycle and pedestrian bridge, while preserving and maintaining the historical character and structure of the original design.

The scope of work for this grant application will focus on full completion of the bridge rehabilitation, starting with gusset plate strengthening repairs. Strengthening the truss will increase the bridge's load carrying capacity and allow heavier equipment to travel on the truss during later phases of the rehabilitation. As components of the bridge are restored throughout the full project, lead paint will be removed, and organic zinc paint will be applied. The project includes replacement of the concrete deck, installation of a new railing, and reconstruction of the historic plaque. The entirety of this scope of work will be on the bridge structure and ground disturbing activities are not anticipated.

The requested funding will allow the full restoration of the bridge in one project. This represents a significant overall project cost saving exceeding \$120,000 when compared to the cost of a phased approach. Areas of savings in completing the full restoration include mobilization, railing construction, and lead-paint containment, disposal, and testing.

Originally constructed in 1909 as a paved trail, Waterford Bridge carried horses, buggies, farm implements, and early automobiles, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists across the Cannon River in rural Waterford Township in south-central Dakota County. With the construction of a parallel vehicle bridge in 2014, Waterford Bridge was converted to serve pedestrians and bicyclists. In 2018, the bridge was closed upon the advice of engineers due to safety concerns related to the structure. Waterford Bridge consists of a 140-ft, steel, riveted and bolted, Camelback truss on concrete abutments.

Until the early 1900s in Minnesota, many bridges were designed by private bridge contractors. Thrift in design was commonplace, leading to many bridge failures. In the spring of 1909, the Dakota County Board demanded improved road and bridge construction within the county and voted to appropriate \$2,500 towards half the cost of construction for "a new bridge [over the Cannon River] in the...Town of Waterford." Waterford Township used those funds to award a construction contract for the project to the Hennepin Bridge Company of Minneapolis. To meet the County Board's higher standards for construction, Dakota County engineer Charles A. Forbes created Waterford Bridge's rigid-connected bridge design.

The virtues of pinned versus riveted connections for steel through trusses were a subject of debate for American engineers throughout the late 1800s. Pinned trusses were easier to design and erect, but riveted trusses were sturdier and more durable. The advent of economical and portable field-riveting equipment between 1900 and 1910 eventually tipped the scales in favor of riveted trusses, although it took time for field riveting to establish its reliability. Most rigid-connected through truss bridges from this era rely on riveting alone. The Waterford Bridge features several bolted connections, most notably the bolts connecting the floor beams to the trusses. This was not a common practice in Minnesota and is viewed as an intermediate evolutionary step between pinned construction and riveted construction.

Today, the Waterford Bridge represents one of the earliest extant rigid-connected bridges in Minnesota. Moreover, it is the only known metal through-truss bridge in Minnesota featuring bolted connections. As a unique structure of historical engineering significance, the structure was entered in the National Register of Historic Places in 2010.

Today, funding is requested to hire a professional team of contractors to fully complete the rehabilitation of the bridge. Construction documents developed in 2019 specify the techniques to be used by qualified and experienced bridge rehabilitation contractors to ensure that rehabilitation work will meet SOI Standards. The work will be sensitive to the historic materials to ensure the structure's character-defining features and the historic fabric will be retained. The character-defining features include: 1) the design and construction of a camelback through truss, an increasingly rare bridge type, 2) use of rivets and panel point connections, and 3) early use of bolted connections, notably connecting the floor beams to the trusses. The Grant Managers will work closely with the contracted team to ensure the proposed work and specifications meet the SOI and structural standards.

The Waterford Bridge is a vital connection to the history of the community and is loved by people who continue to seek connections to the Cannon River and to the surrounding area. The continuation of full preservation of the bridge will ensure that future generations are able to appreciate the bridge's unique engineering significance and will once again allow the bridge to serve as an active recreational connection to and over the Cannon River and to nearby communities.

Please select the need and rationale that best fits your project from one of the following:

Need and Rationale (select one): This project addresses strong demand from the public.

Need and Rationale:

The historic Waterford Bridge is vital to the history of Waterford and loved by those whom the bridge represents a connection to the Wild and Scenic Cannon River. The full rehabilitation of the bridge will ensure future generations can appreciate its unique engineering significance and recreational connections between the river and its surrounding communities, including a destination along the Mill Towns State Trail (MTST) and connection to the future MnDNR water access and trailhead at the southern approach. Construction of the MTST connecting Northfield to the southern approach of the Waterford Bridge is currently underway and anticipated to be open to the public in the fall of 2026. The Waterford Bridge is an essential river crossing link to complete the remaining 22 miles of the 95-mile trail network connecting Mankato to Red Wing, which includes the MTST, the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail, and the Cannon Valley Trail. This is a unique opportunity to repurpose a historic bridge, restored in its original setting, as a bicycle and pedestrian crossing.

The crossing is recognized as an important community landmark, and residents have made significant efforts to save the bridge from deterioration. When scour threatened to undermine the bridge's abutments in the early 1980s, residents raised funds to stabilize the substructure. A successful fundraising effort was repeated in 2011 with a social media campaign resulting in a historic preservation grant awarded to remove and replace the cracked southeast wing wall.

In 2014, a National Trust grant was used to replace the deteriorating southeast abutment and a team of professional engineers prepared a management plan titled Bridge L3275 Local Historic Bridge Report. This plan was requested by MnDOT as part of a comprehensive study performed for historic bridges in Minnesota not owned by MnDOT and provided valuable information about the history and current condition.

Grant funds were again secured in 2017 to hire engineers and historians to determine preservation needs, develop reconstruction designs and prepare plans and specifications. During the inspection, engineers determined that the bridge was significantly compromised in terms of load carrying capacity; elements were in poor condition with spalling concrete, surface rust on steel truss members, and deteriorating deck components. Deemed unsafe, the bridge was closed to the public in 2018.

In 2019, a team of engineers completed a construction plan detailing full restoration of the bridge. The plan addressed the concerns of the 2014 management plan following the SOI Standards. The specifications and cost estimates included in this construction plan were used to determine the scope of work for this grant application.

With proper repair and rehabilitation, the Waterford Bridge will once again serve as a significant historical and engineering landmark for the Township, the County and the State. This unique and historically progressive structure has served the community for over a century. Full preservation will allow the bridge to once again serve generations to come, this time as a recreational connection across the Cannon River for pedestrians, bicyclists, and small recreational vehicles.

Work Plan and Timetable:

Project Plan to Complete Bridge Preservation

The requested funding will allow completion of the full project to be bid and constructed as one project, realizing significant timeline efficiencies and associated cost savings (rather than phasing the project over multiple years). This approach to the scope of work will result in efficiencies in mobilization, traffic control, lead paint removal, and application of organic zinc paint. The Waterford Bridge will become fully operational and rehabilitated in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards in 2027, providing a compelling destination for visitors along the Mill Towns State Trail. The Mill Towns State Trail will be completed to the southern bridge approach in fall of 2025 and the adjacent MnDNR water access and trailhead will be completed in 2026.

The following work plan assumes grant funding for will be available January 1, 2026. All dates are approximate and subject to change per weather and site conditions. Tasks within the work plan may overlap to accommodate for specific conditions throughout the construction process.

Work Plan

1/1/2026 to 3/31/2026:

Pre-Letting Activities

- o Set up accounting to process grant funds for funding
- o Prepare project documents for project letting
- o Section 138 review and approval

4/1/2026 to 5/1/2026:

Bid Project and Award Contract to Contractor.

- o To include advertising of project, review of bids and award of contract
- o Quarterly assessment of work accomplished

5/1/2026 to 6/30/2026:

- Pre-Construction Activities.
 - o To include preconstruction meeting, contractor submission of proposed materials and project work plans/submittals (temporary bridge support, etc.), contractor preparation of concrete mockups, and owner selection of materials and finishes to be incorporated into the project
 - Upon completion of pre-construction approvals, contractor will be approved to proceed with mobilization and construction work

7/1/2026 to 4/30/2027 (subtasks with milestones and quarterly assessments of work accomplished)

- Truss Strengthening:
 - o Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TLCP) Test & Mobilization
 - 10% completion
 - o Structural Steel Installation
 - 40% milestone at completion
 - o Rivet Replacement
 - 60% milestone at completion
 - o Lead Paint Removal, Collection, and Disposal
 - 80% milestone at completion
 - o Painting of Structural Components (replaced and repaired in this phase)
 - 100% milestone at completion
- Deck Replacement:
 - o Removal of the existing bridge deck.
 - 30% at completion
 - o Complete replacement of the bridge deck.
 - 85% at completion
 - o Repainting of tops of floor beams.
 - 100% at completion
- Painting, Railing and Plaque:
 - o Full paint system applied to the entire truss.
 - 60% at completion
 - o Fabrication of railing (off-site) and installation.
 - 95% at completion
 - o Installation of historic plaque.
 - 100% at completion

4/30/2027 - 6/1/2027:

- 100% Project Closeout
 - o To include final project walkthrough, completion of punch list items, contractor final submittals, and final payment to contractor
- Prepare & Submit Final Project Report to MNHS
- o Completion of all grant contract requirements

Project Personnel:

Project Engineers

Required Qualifications: The project engineers will be Professional Engineers licensed in the state of Minnesota and will have experience with historic bridge rehabilitation. The ideal engineer will have experience with rehabilitation of steel truss structures, including historic truss repair and selection of in-kind materials. The project engineers will follow and be well versed in applicable MnDOT guidelines for historic bridge rehabilitation as well as the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation. The project engineer will have primary responsibility for coordinating with contractors performing construction work, ensuring that plans and specifications are followed, as well as verifying that completed work demonstrates high quality craftsmanship and meets the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation. All completed work must meet the safety and load capacity measures in accordance with the current LRFD Bridge Design Specifications. The project engineer will work with the Grant Managers to complete the project. Todd Howard, a construction engineer with the Dakota County Transportation Department, will fulfil a portion of this role as in-kind match from Dakota County.

Bridge Construction Contractor

Required Qualifications: Demonstrated experience and proper insurance to work with concrete, steel, and historic bridge construction per the project plans and specifications.

Applicant Staff/Personnel

Waterford Township appoints the Deputy Township Clerk to act as the contact person via either e-mail or phone thus avoiding any potential open meeting violations. Administrative work will be done by the Deputy Township Clerk, and the Deputy Township Clerk will serve as the Project Director. The Project Director will also serve as the Co-Grant Manager, alongside another township and county staff members. Any decisions needed by the Township Supervisors will be placed on the meeting agenda for a motion and/or resolution. Township communication and action will be coordinated through the Township Clerk. Dakota County will provide project engineering services. Township staff serving as Project Director and Grant Managers will fulfil roles as an in-kind match from Waterford Township.

Procurement Process to Acquire Services

Waterford Township, with supporting assistance from Dakota County, will submit a formal request for proposal (RFP) and conduct a bidding and/or consultant selection process to acquire construction services for the preservation work. The formal solicitation process will follow the processes outlined by the Minnesota Historical Society as indicated in the grant application instructions. Engineering services are not expected to exceed \$25,000. Construction services are expected to exceed \$20,000, therefore a formal notice and bidding process will be conducted. The Project Director will prepare and release an RFP. Notification of the RFP will be posted on the Township's website and in local newspapers, after which, a direct-mail solicitation to vendors who may be capable and available to respond will be shared. The Project Director will create a list of criteria to be used to select the winning proposal and facilitate awarding of the bid and contract negotiations. Bid selection will be based on best value, and all requirements for this selection method will be clearly set forth in bid instructions. It is assumed that prevailing wage rules will apply to contractors awarded construction work under this project. Prevailing wage rules have been accounted for in the project budget. The Project Director will be responsible for record keeping and facilitating support documentation of the procurement process.

Have you already selected the proposed grant-funded vendor, consultant, and/or contractor?

Select Yes or No.

No

Provide estimates for the following. If none, enter "0":

Estimate the number of project hours worked by newly hired staff to be paid for with grant funds

Enter number:

0

Estimate the number of project hours worked by existing part-time staff to be paid for with grant funds.

Enter number:

0

Estimate the number of people (vendors/consultants/contractors) who will work on the project (non staff).

Enter number:

7

Enduring Value:

The Waterford Bridge is vital to the history of Waterford and loved by people for whom the bridge represents a connection to the Wild and Scenic Cannon River and to the surrounding area. The completion of the project will ensure future generations are able to appreciate its unique engineering significance and provide recreational connections between the Cannon River and its surrounding communities, including a destination along the Mill Towns State Trail (MTST) and adjacent MnDNR water access and trailhead. Completing the project will allow the bridge to serve as a destination for people of all ages and abilities to experience the history of the Township and to enjoy the Cannon River and its wildlife, whether as pedestrians, bicyclists, or small vehicle users, as a year-round attraction for generations to come.

Waterford Bridge will immediately become an attractive destination and key link for travelers on the MTST, supporting the connection between Northfield and Lake Byllesby Regional Park. The MTST legislative authorization requires that the State Trail starts at Faribault Junction and the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail and extends through the towns of Faribault, Dundas, Northfield, Waterford, and Randolph to the Cannon Valley Trail in Cannon Falls. The rehabilitation will complete an enjoyable 6-mile trail loop between Northfield and Waterford for pedestrians and bicyclists, building a tourist presence in the region and contributing to the future of active living in multiple communities, including the Carleton College campus. The bridge will complement the future MnDNR water access and trailhead, to be completed in 2026, along with native landscape restoration along the shore of the Cannon River and surrounding upland areas.

Visitors to the Waterford Bridge, users of the MTST and people recreating along the Cannon River may come from destinations beyond the immediate area. Canoeing and fishing on the Cannon River are both very popular activities, especially for Hmong and Hispanic families, as well as with young people of all backgrounds and trail-based recreation is extremely popular across the state.

There are few dedicated outdoor areas for recreation between Northfield and Cannon Falls. The MTST, MnDNR water access and trailhead, and the link provided by the completed Waterford Bridge will connect recreational sites, while providing an opportunity for people of all abilities to experience recreation within a rural setting. Trail use, river access, and visits to the Waterford Bridge are free to the public, and recreational activities are relatively low-in cost for equipment or gear needed. Per MnDNR requirements and the rehabilitation design, the trail, water access, trailhead and bridge will be ADA accessible and welcoming for people living with disabilities and older adults.

Waterford Bridge has provided a river-focused amenity and historic symbolic identity for the Township for over 100 years. Spanning one of the most beautiful areas of the Cannon River, the bridge offers visitors opportunities to experience a bridge from a bygone era, while connecting communities along the River Corridor. This project will rehabilitate and secure this amenity in perpetuity for future generations.

Sustainability:

Complete preservation of the Waterford Bridge will improve the structural and functional capacity, retain important historic fabric and integrity, and allow Waterford Township to focus on ongoing bridge maintenance at a much lower expense and lower risk of injury for maintenance workers. Maintenance activities are estimated to range between \$3-4,000 per year. Once the bridge is restored, this amount will need to be either budgeted through the Township or fundraised with potential for volunteer opportunities. Regular maintenance includes cleaning the ends of abutments and bearings, cleaning debris from the bottom chord and vines from trusses. After rehabilitation of the deck surface is complete, maintenance of deck sealant joints and cracks will be an ongoing activity to be included in annual budget programming.

Dakota County will continue to inspect the bridge on a biennial basis. Any recommended repair work identified by inspectors will be addressed immediately through the Township or the County.

Through the construction efforts, this project will support and provide craft trade jobs to the local economy. It is estimated that 7 or more construction / trade positions will be created over the course of the construction efforts, which includes the use of general contractors and specialty subcontractors with experience in historic concrete restoration and metal fabrication.

To date, the community of Waterford Township and the larger regional community has worked collectively to keep the Waterford Bridge extant. Multiple campaigns over the last few decades have demonstrated the power of stewardship and commitment of a small community to come together for a common cause. Carleton College, the Mill Towns Joint Powers Board, the City of Northfield, the MN Department of Natural Resources, and the Friends of the Mill Town Trail have expressed their support for preservation and repairs to this bridge. When Waterford Township received the National Trust for Historic Preservation grant of \$95,000 (2011), the Township matched \$60,000 plus interest to complete the repair of the southeast abutment, with widespread community support. With the award of \$106,800 in grant funding (2017) to complete the bridge rehabilitation plans and specifications in 2019, the Township matched with \$7,500 and in-kind volunteer hours valued at over \$27,000. The 2019 award of a Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant provided \$342,318 in funding for the first phase of the rehabilitation project. This amount was matched by \$52,500 of in-kind professional services. When the rise in market prices for materials and labor in 2021 created a deficit in funding to complete Phase I, a collaborative effort from Dakota County, Friends of the Mill Towns Trail and Waterford Township provided gap funding in the amount of \$131,500 to ensure that the project could be completed. To complete the project in 2027 as requested in this application, \$2,295,000 has been secured through an LCCMR grant, the Township has committed \$30,000 in cash donation towards the project, and in-kind volunteer hours valued at over \$33,000 have been committed by the Township and Dakota County.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

MEASURABLE IMPACTS AND INDICATORS

Term	Expected Impact	Progress Indicator
Short Term	All phases of construction are bid, awarded, and implemented with no adverse effect to the bridge's historic character-defining features, design, and materials.	Final scope of work for is signed off by the Grant Managers. Final construction work satisfies the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and meets criteria of grant. The Bridge is open for use, is structurally sound, and fully rehabilitated.
Intermediate Term	Bridge is completely opened to the public for recreational use by pedestrians, bicyclists and snowmobiles, providing a continuous trail connection and opportunity for people to engage in active living while connecting to the Canon River.	Increased use is measured by inclusion of the bridge in future community events, group bike rides and increase in number of users over time (to be evaluated on an annual basis through trail counting efforts). Visitors and users of the bridge and adjacent trail are reflective of the demographics of the three-county area. The bridge continues to serve as a historic icon for the township and surrounding rural community.
Long Term	Educational, economic, environmental benefits to the community from retention of historic bridge. Continued community use of historic bridge, meeting necessary engineering and safety requirements.	Structure remains in place, in good condition and open for bicycles and pedestrians to serve as a visible example of Minnesota's Engineering Heritage. Improvement in bridge's Sufficiency Rating measuring its structural and functional adequacy; extension of

		bridge's expected lifespan. The bridge continues to serve as a historic landmark and identifying characteristic for the Township of Waterford, as well as a destination along the statewide trail network. Visitors and users of the bridge and adjacent trail continue to be reflective of the demographics of the three-county area.
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PUBLIC INFORMATION

After the Minnesota Historical Society has either approved or denied a grant program application, the application record, which includes attachments, is accessible to the public upon request except for trade secret data as defined and classified in Minnesota Statute Section 13.37.

APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

REQUEST DOCUMENTS		
	Waterford 30805 exec.pdf _Agreements Added by Carolyn Veeseer-Egbide at 12:16 PM on March 10, 2026	
	IMPACT ON POPULATION_Waterford Bridge_9.12.2025.pdf Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:48 PM on September 12, 2025	
	WORK PLAN AND BUDGET_Waterford Bridge 2025.pdf Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:07 PM on September 12, 2025	
	SPECIFICATIONS_BR L3275_05.2019.pdf Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:07 PM on September 12, 2025	
	SOW FORM_BR3275_09.10.2025.pdf Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:07 PM on September 12, 2025	
	SITE AND CONTEXT MAP_Waterford Bridge_9.10.2025.pdf Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:06 PM on September 12, 2025	
	RESOLUTION_WATERFORD TOWNSHIP_9.11.2025.pdf	

Added by Elizabeth Wheeler at 1:06 PM on September 12, 2025



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