

TO: Mayor and Common Council
FROM: RLU General Manager Aaby, Consulting Engineer Van Gilder, and Community Services Director Siebert
FOR: Council Meeting of January 13, 2026
Subject: Set February 10, 2026 as the Public Hearing date for the 2026 Phipps Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue Project & Resolution 26-02, A Preliminary Resolution Declaring Intent to Levy Special Assessments Under Municipal Police Power Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 66.0703

A. Background:

During the summer of 2026, Rice Lake Utilities is planning to replace water mains, sewer mains, and utility services on Phipps Avenue (from Allen Street to Messenger Street) and Wisconsin Avenue (from Newton Street to Stout Street).

During its regular meeting of February 13, 2025, Rice Lake Utilities approved a “Supplemental Letter Agreement” (SLA) with its engineering consultant, SEH, for the design of the improvements, preparation of an engineering report for the levying of special assessments, etc.

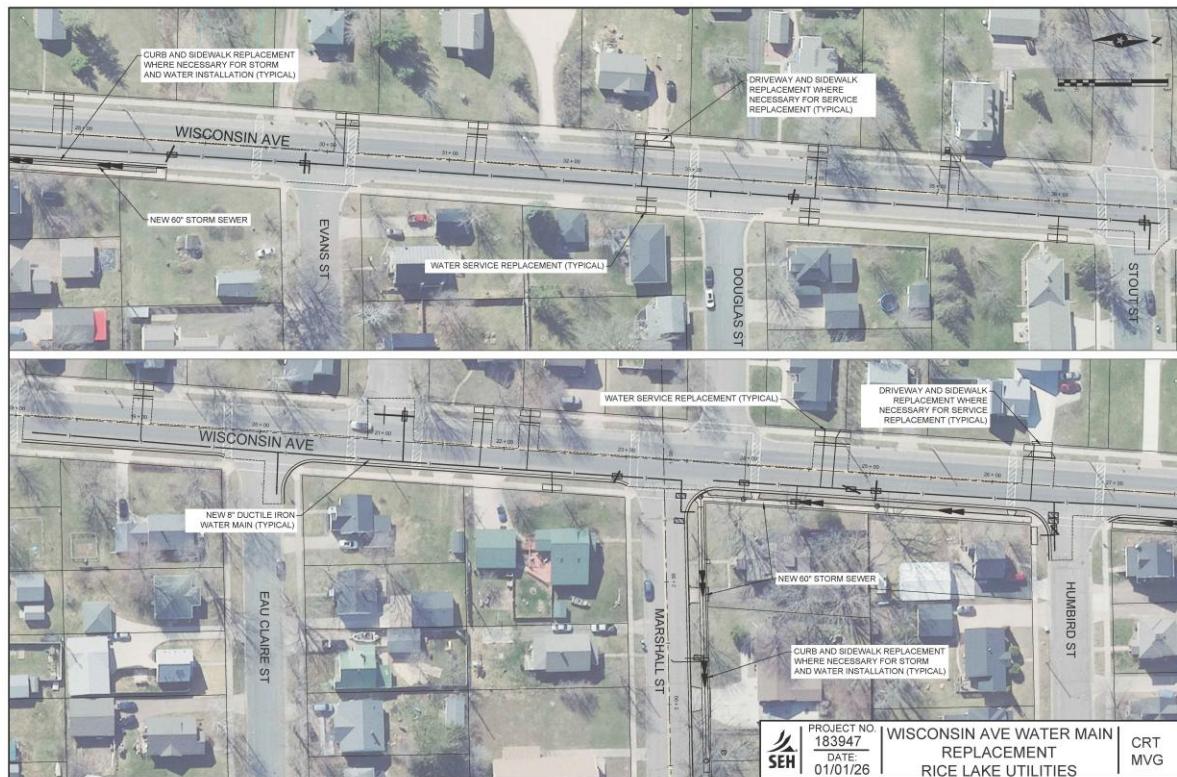
The project is being conducted with cooperation between the City General (CSD Department) and Rice Lake Utilities, with RLU taking the lead on project administration. The City has budgeted for asphalt replacement on Phipps Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue and will contribute the asphalt paving costs for the project like Ann Street in 2025. Accordingly, the remainder of the project costs will be funded by RLU, special assessments to the benefiting property owners, and also partially funded by WDNR grant monies that have been secured by RLU.

An illustration of the project’s scope is shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1 – Phipps Avenue Concept Plan



Figure 2 – Wisconsin Avenue Concept Plan



The planned utility upgrades include replacing the undersized water mains with 8-inch ductile iron water mains on both streets, as well as replacing the existing sanitary sewer main on Phipps Avenue. Utility improvements also include the installation of new hydrants and water valves on both streets, along with replacement of the existing water and sewer service piping up to the street right-of-way on both streets. Roadway repairs will consist of replacement of affected curb, sidewalk and pavement surfaces, including full width street/curb removal and replacement on Phipps Avenue.

B. Issue:

The task before the Council is to consider, as a part of the consent agenda, (1) adopting “Resolution 26-02, a Preliminary Resolution Declaring Intent to Levy Special Assessments Under Municipal Police Power Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §66.0703” and (2) setting February 10, 2026, to conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed assessments.

C. Analysis:

The Council must adopt Resolution 26-02 (included as Attachment 1) for the special assessment process to begin. In addition, the Council is being asked to set February 10, 2026, as the date for the statutorily required public hearing. Figure 3 contains a partial project schedule of key events for this project. The schedule shown in Figure 3 indicates that there will be two “public information meetings” (PIM’s) in addition to the public hearing before the Council. The PIM’s are not required by State statutes; rather, are a provision of the City’s “Special Assessment Policy” dated March 9, 2010.