



February 28, 2025

Chair John Koznick, House Transportation Committee
Minnesota State Capitol 123
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

Re: Support for ReConnect Rondo

Chair Koznick and House Transportation Committee Members,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to HF 494 and ask lawmakers to reject the proposed funding prohibition on ReConnect Rondo and activities related to a Rondo Land Bridge on Interstate 94.

For more than 15 years, Rondo residents have led the work to create a bold, community-driven vision to repair the harm caused by the construction of I-94. This project is the result of years of community leadership, planning, and bi-partisan partnerships to create a model for how infrastructure investments can be used to restore what was lost while creating new opportunities for the future.

ReConnect Rondo's vision has earned local, state, and national recognition, including from the White House, for its innovative approach to community restoration, economic development, and transportation solutions. A project feasibility study concludes that a Rondo Land Bridge could generate up to 576 housing units, 13 acres of park and open space, a business incubator hub or market-place, and up to \$4.2 million in annual property tax revenue to local units of government. The project is important to not only the City of Saint Paul, but also the State of Minnesota as it has it will create hundreds of permanent jobs and serve as a hub for 21st-century careers in tech, engineering, and clean energy—while also providing pathways into traditional skilled trades like plumbing, electrical, and construction.

The Rondo Land Bridge will directly address the social, economic, and environmental harms caused by I-94, making it eligible for the same federal and state transportation funding as any other infrastructure project in Minnesota.

HF 494 threatens to undo years of trust-building and community-centered planning. Prohibiting funding for ReConnect Rondo would send the message that communities working with jurisdictional stakeholders and legislatures to right historical wrongs are not worthy of investment.



I urge you to reject HF 494 and stand with the Rondo community in their vision to reclaim, reconnect, and revitalize their neighborhood—building a stronger future not just for Rondo, but for the entire region.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Russ Stark
Chief Resilience Officer