

RICE &
LARPENTEUR

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



3 CITIES. 1 NEIGHBORHOOD.

OUR SHARED VISION

The Rice & Larpenteur Area is a safe, engaging, and inviting neighborhood center that includes common spaces, a high-quality pedestrian environment, and robust reinvestment for the diverse people of the surrounding communities to live, conduct business, and play together.

WHO WE ARE:

The Rice & Larpenteur Alliance is a collaboration of the Cities of Maplewood, Roseville, Saint Paul, Ramsey County and the Saint Paul Area Chamber. We partner with local businesses, area residents, and vested partners to help draw attention and resources to the Rice & Larpenteur community.

OUR MISSION:

To build a culturally and economically robust Rice and Larpenteur gateway area by fostering renewed public and private-sector investment centered on and responsive to the needs of the diverse residents and businesses of the community.

OUR VALUES:

- **Diversity and Representation**
-The neighborhood's cultural diversity is its greatest strength. The Alliance will be an organization of leaders representative of our diverse community.
- **Non-Displacement**
- The Alliance's effort will be aimed at improving conditions for existing residents and businesses, and must not result in loss of affordability and gentrification.
- **Strengths-Based Approach**
- Rice & Larpenteur has many positive qualities and assets. All efforts by the Alliance will build upon and celebrate neighborhood strengths.

OUR COMMUNITY:

Rice and Larpenteur is a neighborhood at the intersection of three cities, bisected by two county roads. We are...

- Growing (~18K people)
- Diverse (67% people of color)
- Global (37.5% speaks a language other than English)
- Young (28% under 18)

*Based data from 2020 Decennial Census and 2024 American Community Survey for tracts 416.02, 422.01, 304, 305.





Dear Rice & Larpenteur Community,

Eight years after our shared vision plan was adopted, the neighborhood we love is finally receiving the attention and investment it deserves—support that can help make Rice & Larpenteur the safe, engaging, and welcoming place residents and businesses have long envisioned.

At the same time, many in our community are facing real hardship. The lasting impacts of COVID-19, social unrest, economic strain, and aggressive federal immigration enforcement have created fear and uncertainty for families and small businesses. These realities remind us that our work is not abstract—it directly affects the safety, dignity, and stability of our neighbors. The urgency of this moment is clear. Now is the time to double down and show that Rice & Larpenteur is more than two busy roads—it is the heart of an extraordinary place to live, work, and play.

That's why the Rice & Larpenteur Alliance matters now more than ever. As the unifying force in our community, the Alliance brings together residents, businesses, nonprofits, and government partners to advocate, organize, and take action. With limited funding and growing needs, your support is essential to sustaining this work and ensuring no part of our community is left behind.

We are deeply grateful to our Board of Directors—local residents, businesses, nonprofits, and government partners from Maplewood, Roseville, Saint Paul, and Ramsey County—who have dedicated countless hours to this work. We invite you to help keep the momentum going. Join us in building the future of the Rice & Larpenteur area, together.

Sincerely,



Kim O'Brien,
Executive Director



Maichee Xiong,
Community Engagement Manager

2025 COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Community In Bloom** at Lake McCarrons County Park in Roseville attracted hundreds of community members for a cookout and engagement activities.
- Awarded City of Saint Paul's **Commercial Corridor Organization Assistance Program (C-COAP)** to help with neighborhood marketing, events, and public art.
- Awarded 9 Community Champions at our **Annual Community Gathering** at Washington Tech Magnet School.
- The **RLA Youth Ambassador Program** empowered local high school students to play an active role in their communities.
- Hosted 2 **RLA Member Lunch and Learn** events with over 60 attendees for networking and information sharing.
- Ramsey County successfully completed **Rice Street Reconstruction** (Maryland to Wheelock) and hosted a celebratory Rice Street Construction Ribbon Cutting to mark the milestone with the neighborhood.
- Businesses were connected with **BizRecycling** grants, **Workforce Solutions**, **Open to Business**, and a range of additional grant and loan opportunities to support their growth and success.
- The **Summer Block Party** hosted in the MyThrift Store parking lot in Saint Paul, continues to grow. Sponsored by M Health Fairview, we celebrated with over 600 guests and live performances by CSE Hmong Dancers and The Blues Saloon house band.
- Business improvement grants from **St. Paul Neighborhood STAR Program** were awarded to support small business capital improvements.
- More than 40 neighbors collected litter at the annual **Spring Clean-Up** event.
- Through a Technical Assistance for Brownfields grant, updated the **Vision Plan Map** for 2025 and launched an **interactive story map** to encourage future investment and redevelopment in the Rice & Larpenteur neighborhood.
- The **RLA gateway sign and flags** have been officially installed at both the North and the South end of Rice Street, proudly welcoming all who enter the neighborhood.
- The **Winter Warm-Up** was sponsored by Xcel Energy and City of Maplewood. We enjoyed llamas, samples from local restaurants, student performances, and a winter wear clothing exchange.
- Launched our **RLA Membership Program** and **Board of Directors**, charting a path towards long-term community support and sustainability.
- Shared information and hosted a **'Know Your Rights for Business Owners'** training to help our community during unprecedented federal immigration enforcement.



Kazoua Kong-Thao

Chief Administration Officer of Community School of Excellence

“ Partnering with RLA has reinforced the importance of community-centered leadership. It has deepened our understanding that student success is directly connected to strong neighborhood partnerships, cultural affirmation, and shared responsibility. This collaboration has encouraged us to think beyond traditional school boundaries and more intentionally align our work with community needs and assets. ”



Noelle Bakken

City of Roseville / Resident

“ A standout moment for me was the 2025 community gathering, when early fears about immigration enforcement and mass deportations were beginning to arise, and the organization proudly made a statement about how our immigrant neighbors make our community great and are so important to us. I was able to get my first stack of “know your rights” cards at that meeting, and I’ve carried those with me every single day since. It’s more important than ever for public sector organizations to be vocal about standing up for the rights of vulnerable communities, whether they are immigrant communities or other underrecognized groups, and I’m proud of the way RLA has been doing that consistently. ”



Juan Vazquez

Business Owner of Cancun Mexican Grill & Cantina

“ I value the strong sense of belonging—being part of something larger than just a business on a busy street. My business has benefited from having a trusted advocate that helps channel our concerns to local political and community leaders. RLA has also served as a resource hub for local businesses and has helped us build stronger connections with the surrounding community. ”



GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTORS



GRANTS



ANNUAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mayor Marylee Abrams, City of Maplewood
- Abdihamid Badri, City of Saint Paul (ex-officio)
- Noelle Bakken, Events Chair
- Golden DeAngelo, Neighborhood Livability Chair
- Blake Downing, Finance Chair
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- Commissioner Kelly Miller, Ramsey County (ex-officio)
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- Johnny Opara, JO Companies
- Danette Parr, City of Maplewood (ex-officio)
- Francisco Ramirez, M Health Fairview
- Mayor Dan Roe, City of Roseville
- Juan Vazquez, Cancun Mexican Grill & Cantina
- Rachel Weiker, City of Saint Paul (ex-officio)



The Rice & Larpenteur Alliance would like to thank our 2025 donors! The **Rice & Larpenteur Alliance** is funded primarily through a contract with the **Cities of Maplewood, Roseville, and Saint Paul** and supplemented through philanthropic, municipal, individual, and corporate giving. The organization is staffed and supported through fiscal sponsorship with the St Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and St Paul Area Chamber Foundation.

INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE MEMBERS

- AE Sign Systems
- Alicia Garcia
- Allie Chiropractic
- American National Bank
- Amy Brendmoen
- Andrea Caldwell
- Asia Fusion Kitchen
- Be Smart for Kids
- Betty McCollum for Congress
- Bolton & Menk, Inc.
- C.A. Ellis & Associates LLC
- Cancun Mexican Grill & Cantina
- Capitol Region Watershed District
- Caribou
- City of Maplewood
- City of Roseville
- City of Saint Paul
- Community School of Excellence
- Dan Edgerton
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- Gloria Johnson
- Hamernick's Flooring Solutions
- Jason Etten
- JO Companies
- Kathleen Murphy
- Keystone Community Services
- Kim O'Brien
- Kraus-Anderson
- La Delicious Bread
- League of Women Voters Roseville Area
- Luis Mendoza
- M Health Fairview (Fairview Health Services)
- Mariah Quick
- Maplewood Public Safety
- Mary Jo McGuire
- Mayor Dan Roe
- Mayor Marylee Abrams
- McCarron Lake Chiropractic
- McCarron's Pub and Grill
- Meredith Wardlaw
- Metro Transit
- Minnesota Consortium of Community Developers
- MORE Services
- Namaste Brows and Boutique
- Nanny's Jamaican Kitchen
- Noelle Bakken
- North End Laundry
- OWC Farmers Market
- Ramsey and Washington County Recycling and Energy
- Ramsey County Critical Corridors Grant Program
- Ramsey County Environmental Health
- Ramsey County Social Services
- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
- Rebuilding Together Minnesota
- Roseville Fire
- Roseville Police
- Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation Management Improvement Fund Program
- Saint Paul Commercial Corridor Organization Assistance Program
- Saint Paul Neighborhood STAR Program
- Saint Paul Police Department
- Saint Paul Public Library / Mobile Library
- Saint Paul Public Schools
- Saint Paul Regional Water Services
- Sayed Shahbaz Shah
- Shawn Wiski
- St Paul Parks and Recreation (North Dale Rec Center)
- St. Paul Minneapolis Alumni Chapter - Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity
- Storehouse Grocers
- Sara Fohrenkamm (Frooriginals)
- Thai Street Market
- The Blues Saloon
- The Maplewood Parks Dept
- The Wool Room
- Trista Martinson
- Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity
- Washington Technology Magnet School
- Councilmember Wayne Groff
- Xcel Energy





STAY IN TOUCH

Sign-up for newsletters
at riceandlarpenteur.com

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