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October 1, 2014

Re: City of Ramsey Review Comments – Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). Upon completing our review, the City of Ramsey offers the following comments for your consideration.

During our review the City did not identify anything in the draft 2040 TPP that significantly conflicts with the goals of the City. However, we feel the draft TPP may not accurately reflect growth forecasts for the area, and that the draft TPP does not focus enough on addressing project needs in the northwest metro, including projects needed on the U.S. Highway 10 corridor through the City of Ramsey to supplement existing conditions, current studies, and the Northstar Commuter Rail.

While the City understands the importance of investing in all modes of transportation, we feel the demand for infrastructure supporting the different modes varies significantly based on location and population densities. Due to our location in suburban Anoka County, we are focusing much of our transportation priorities on motorized modes of transportation, especially highways and freight. When considering that 75% of all intercity freight is moved by trucks on highways, we believe it is in the best interests of the City to place a higher priority on highways and freight to better support the region's economic sustainability. Until we are able to reduce congestion on Highway 10 to attract more employers to the City and the surrounding areas, the need for additional improvements to support non-motorized modes of transportation will be less than the need for improvements to support motorized vehicles.

The City of Ramsey has three primary regional transportation priorities as follows, which are listed below in order of priority.

1. U.S. Highway 10
2. State Highway 47
3. Future Mississippi River crossing between Ramsey and Dayton

The City's top regional transportation priority is to increase mobility and safety on Highway 10. In support of this goal, the City is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and Anoka County to replace the existing at-grade intersection at Highway 10 and Anoka County State Aid Highway 83/Armstrong Boulevard with a grade-separated interchange. The City is also participating in the current Highway 10 Access Planning Study through the

cities of Anoka and Ramsey, including partnering with the City of Anoka, Anoka County, and MnDOT to prioritize and implement the numerous incremental small-scale improvement projects identified by the study to achieve more than 90% of the safety benefits at less than 50% of a full freeway conversion, the original vision for this corridor of Highway 10. And considering that much of this corridor of Highway 10 operates at Level of Service F during peak periods, implementing the identified incremental projects will significantly improve mobility and safety, and also benefit economic development in the region.

On a related note, we wish to thank the Metropolitan Council for supporting the Highway 10 Access Planning Study. However, we would like to encourage the Metropolitan Council and MnDOT to continue long-term planning and design efforts to provide future capacity improvements along this corridor of Highway 10. Again, we believe such improvements are necessary to support the region's economic sustainability.

The City's second regional transportation priority is to improve congestion and safety on Highway 47. In considering origins and destinations of many of Ramsey's future growth areas, it will become increasingly important to improve congestion and safety on Highway 47. The City is updating our transportation plan to support this goal, but it will take a partnership of the cities of Anoka and Ramsey, Anoka County, MnDOT, and the Metropolitan Council to address this difficult yet important transportation priority.

The City's third regional transportation priority is a future Mississippi River crossing to create a connection to the City of Dayton. Due to anticipated future growth, coupled with existing congestion on the river crossings on either side including the U.S. Highway 169 river crossing in the cities of Anoka and Champlin, and the Highway 101 river crossing in the cities of Otsego and Elk River, it will be important for the success of the area and the region from the perspective of affordable housing, life-cycle housing, economic development, and the inter-related connections between them all, to eliminate this existing barrier and allow for the creation of un-tapped economic development potential.

To help ensure that our regional transportation priorities (Highway 10, Highway 47, and a future Mississippi River crossing) can be achieved, continued coordination will be required between the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT, Anoka County, and the City of Ramsey. By properly aligning our plans in relation to these priorities, external funding can be more easily obtained.

The City of Ramsey is encouraged to see that the Highway 10 and Anoka County State Aid Highway 83/Armstrong Boulevard interchange project is identified in the draft TPP, as is the Highway 10 Access Planning Study. We were also encouraged to see the future Mississippi River crossing between Daytona and Ramsey discussed and supported in the draft TPP.

The City is also encouraged to see the draft TPP recognizes the issue of the growing number of trains carrying oil from the Bakken oil fields through the Twin Cities area. This is resulting in an increasing number of delays for the Northstar line, which has a station in Ramsey, and is a growing cause of concern for the City due to the safety concerns associated with the high volatility of the oil in the event of a derailment. Our local fire and police departments have also had to complete additional training to prepare for such an event.

The City of Ramsey appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft 2040 TPP and hopes that the Metropolitan Council will continue to work with the City to address our concerns with infrastructure capacity, mobility and safety. Please note that our concerns with the population forecasts are not about our future land use vision, but rather how that vision relates to current infrastructure capacity, as well as future infrastructure investments and funding opportunities.

If you have any questions on these comments please feel free to call me at 763-433-9825, or email me at bwestby@cityoframsey.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bruce Westby".

Bruce Westby, P.E.
City Engineer

C: Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator
Tim Gladhill, Community Development Director