

**Response to Comments, Findings of Fact,
and Record of Decision**

**Trott Brook North
Environmental Assessment Worksheet**



December 2021

RGU

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CITY OF RAMSEY

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- A. Written Comments Submitted to the City of Ramsey

INTRODUCTION

Trott Brook North is proposed on approximately 200.5 acres of land in the northern part of the City of Ramsey, Anoka County, Minnesota. The project will include up to 275 detached single-family homes and parkland with tree preservation. Site development will include installation of municipal sewer and water, mass grading, and stormwater management practices. The project will convert 93.57 acres of cropland and 25.29 acres of woodland to streets, homes, lawns, landscaping, and stormwater features. The balance of the site will preserve about 7 acres of trees 56 acres of wetland and about 10 acres of grassland. The project will also include dedication of a 21.9-acre public park.

An Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) was prepared pursuant to Minnesota Rules 4410.4300, Subp. 19.C. (Residential Development). The EAW and the respective comments have been reviewed in accordance with Minnesota Rules 4410.1700 to determine if the project has potential for significant environmental effects. This document includes responses to comments received by the City of Ramsey (City), the Findings of Fact supporting the decision, and the Record of Decision indicating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not necessary for this project.

EAW Notification, Distribution, and Comment Period

In accordance with Minnesota Rules 4410.1500, the EAW was completed and distributed to persons and agencies on the official Environmental Quality Board (EQB) distribution list. The notification was published in the EQB Monitor on September 28, 2021, initiating the 30-day public comment period. A public notice was published in the Anoka County Union Herald on October 1, 2021. The comment period ended on October 28, 2021.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

The City received written comment letters from eight agencies:

1. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR, October 28, 2021)
2. Metropolitan Council (MetC, October 28, 2021)
3. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA, October 26, 2021)
4. Anoka County Highway Division (ACHD, October 28, 2021)
5. Minnesota Office of the State Archeologist (MnOSA, September 30, 2021)
6. Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA, October 26, 2021)
7. Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT, October 7, 2021)
8. Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MnSHPO, October 27, 2021)

None of the comments recommended preparation of an EIS. The City of Ramsey did not receive comments from residents or individual members of the public.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

This document responds to comments on a letter-by-letter basis. It includes summaries of comments followed by responses. Comment letters are included in **Appendix A**. Responses to comments are generally confined to substantive issues that “address the accuracy and completeness of the material contained in the EAW, potential impacts that may warrant further investigation before the project is commenced, and the need for an EIS on the proposed project.” (MN Rules 4410.1600). Some comments included general remarks, recommendations, or permit requirements. Such comments are noted for the record.

Table 1. Comments Received from Agencies

Comment Number	EAW Content/ Section Number	Comment	Response
<i>Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – Melissa Collins, Regional Assessment Ecologist</i>			
1	6. Project Description	Page 3, Project Description. A projected start date of April 2022 would not allow sufficient time to address rare species concerns due to the necessity of surveying for rare plants at the appropriate time during the growing season.	A thorough botanical survey has been completed by Midwest Natural Resources and no rare plants or rare natural communities are located within the area directly affected by the proposed project. The project proponent acknowledges that additional rare species survey work will be completed in the spring of 2022 to supplement the DNR NHIS database.
2	9. Land Use	Page 7, Shorelands. Trott Brook is an impaired stream, therefore the DNR does not recommend increasing the amount of impervious surfaces currently allowed under the shoreland ordinance beyond the 25% impervious surfaces threshold. These residential lots are also directly adjacent to sensitive wetlands that could be impacted by additional stormwater pollutants, especially as the topography of the site slopes from north to south.	The project proponent and city are aware of the 25% impervious surfaces threshold within the shoreland limits. Upland buffer will be present between the back of the lots and the edge of Wetland 5.
3	11. Water Resources	Page 11, Table 5. Wetland 4 is DNR Public Water Wetland 02-0319-00W. Because the DNR has jurisdiction over activities that occur below the Ordinary High Water Level of DNR Public Water Wetland 02-0319-00W, the document should clearly state that DNR Public Water Wetland exists on the site and show its location on Figure 6.	Figure 6 has been revised (attached) to indicate Wetland 4 as a Public Water Wetland. Upland buffer will be present between the back of the lots and the edge of Wetland 4. No activities will occur below the OHWL.
4	11. Water Resources	Page 12, Groundwater. The presence of seeps indicates that there is a groundwater connection to the surface at various points throughout the project area. Observed water levels may not reflect normal conditions due to the drought experienced during 2021. Are the piezometers still in place in case further monitoring is necessary?	For seeps such as these, it is generally understood that the discharge is not immediately affected by seasonal climatic conditions. Any affect that 2021 drought conditions may have had on the source of seep hydrology is not expected to be observable until future years if at all. Three Piezometers installed onsite in July 2021 are still in place.
5	11. Water Resources	Page 15, Wastewater. The proposed plan to add up to 275 residential units would presumably add a comparable number of residential water softeners due to the water hardness levels of the City of Ramsey municipal water supply. Many Minnesota municipalities are wrestling with high chloride levels in their wastewater (See this recent study on sources of chloride in Minnesota). Chloride is one of the components of salt, which is used in forms such as sodium chloride (table salt), calcium chloride and magnesium chloride (road salts). Sodium chloride is commonly used in home water softeners and by water treatment plants to treat “hard” water. Minnesota generally has groundwater with high levels of calcium and magnesium that must be removed through softening in order to improve taste and prevent lime scale buildup in appliances, pipes and water fixtures. The majority of home water softeners use sodium chloride (NaCl) in a softening process that replaces calcium and magnesium ions with sodium, while the chloride ions are discharged in the wastewater and eventually end up in the environment. Each community needs to determine which tool is appropriate for their situation. This factsheet suggests ways for homeowners to optimize their water softener salt use, while this link provides resources for cities and examples of how other communities in Minnesota are addressing their high chloride levels. We suggest that as this development moves forward, the City of Ramsey consider what strategies can be used to minimize chloride use.	The City is aware of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Chloride Management Plan outlining salt reduction practices. (https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw11-06ff.pdf). Chloride reduction strategies will be considered to the extent practicable.
6	11. Water Resources	Page 16, Pre-Construction Site Runoff. It is unclear if any of the project area is currently tile drained, and how that may alter site hydrology if removed.	The site is not tile drained.
7	11. Water Resources	Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. Due to the potential groundwater connection near the surface, the installation of large infiltration basins has the potential to impact wetland hydrology. Further review of hydrologic site conditions is recommended in order to avoid impacting seepage wetlands within the project area.	The potential effect of development, including infiltration basins, on the hydrology of the seepage wetlands is being evaluated and will be discussed during the WCA Wetland Replacement Plan review process.
8	11. Water Resources	Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The DNR recommends that water from stormwater features be used as to irrigate landscaping if feasible.	Comment noted. The project proponent is assessing the potential to reuse stormwater for irrigation.
9	11. Water Resources	Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The DNR recommends using native seed mixes in stormwater features and native plants in landscaping to the greatest degree possible in order to provide pollinator habitat.	Comment noted.
10	11. Water Resources	Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The planned increase in impervious surfaces will also increase the amount of road salt used in the project area. Chloride released into local lakes and streams does not break down, and instead accumulates in the environment, potentially reaching levels that are toxic to aquatic wildlife and plants. Consider promoting local business and city participation in the Smart Salting Training offered through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. There are a variety of classes available for road applicators, sidewalk applicators, and property managers. More information and resources can be found at this website. Many winter maintenance staff who have attended the Smart Salting training — both from cities and counties and from private companies — have used their knowledge to reduce salt use and save money for their organizations. We also encourage cities and counties to provide public outreach to reduce the overuse of chloride. Here are some educational resources for residents as well as a sample ordinance regarding chloride use.	The City is aware of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Chloride Management Plan outlining salt reduction practices (https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw11-06ff.pdf). Chloride reduction strategies will be considered to the extent practicable.

Table 1. Comments Received from Agencies

Comment Number	EAW Content/ Section Number	Comment	Response
11	11. Water Resources	Page 20, Surface Waters. The EAW states that buffers will protect wetlands, but it is unclear what type and width of wetland buffers will be used throughout the development. The DNR recommends that native upland vegetation be used for wetland buffers as opposed to lawn or turf that might be managed with fertilizer and pesticides. It is unclear from design plans where the wetland buffers will be located.	Wetland buffers will be a minimum of 16.5-ft in width adjacent to all wetland boundaries. Wetland buffers will be outside of home lot boundaries. A native seed mix will be used to re-vegetate disturbed buffer areas.
12	11. Water Resources	Page 20, Other Surface Waters. Please note that it is possible that a DNR Water Appropriation Permit could be necessary for the re-routing or pumping of water during the construction of the pedestrian bridge over Trott Brook.	Comment acknowledged.
13	11. Water Resources	Page 20, Other Surface Waters. There should be a 100 foot setback from the Ordinary High Water (OHW) level of Trott Brook. No clear cutting is allowed in that area, but it is difficult to see in the proposed site plan where the setback is located. Additionally, on Concept Plan (Appendix A) of the EAW under Site Data, it notes, "a portion of the site falls within 300' shoreland overlay from the top of bank of Trott Brook." This should be clearly shown on the map. Shoreland Overlay Limit is identified as a symbol in the legend however the boundary should also be shown on the Concept Plan.	No clear cutting of trees within 100-ft of the OHWL of Trott Brook will occur. The concept plan has been revised (attached) to clearly show the top of the creek bank (OHWL) and the shoreland overlay limit.
14	13. Fish, Wildlife, Plant Communities and Sensitive Ecological Resources	<p>Page 23, Rare Species, State. The DNR concurs that there is habitat for the state-threatened Blanding's turtle within the project area. Please coordinate with Regional Nongame Wildlife Specialist, Erica Hoaglund (Erica.Hoaglund@state.mn.us) on the need for an avoidance plan to limit impacts to this protected species. We appreciate that the development will use surmountable curbs. In addition to the BMP's mentioned in the EAW, the following mitigation measures are required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type 3 wetlands occur in the project area and could provide habitat for the threatened Blanding's turtle. In order to avoid potential impacts, these wetlands should not be dredged, deepened, filled, or converted. Avoid working in these wetlands during the winter because of their potential as overwintering habitat for the Blanding's turtle. • New roads should not be installed where they bisect wetlands or between closely spaced wetland features if possible. MN DNR and partner Data has shown these are the areas with the greatest concentration of road mortality for wildlife species including turtles. If impossible to avoid, contact Erica Hoaglund (Nongame Wildlife Specialist) for BMPs. • Distribute the attached Blanding's flyer to contractors working in the area and report any sightings to Erica Hoaglund. • Due to entanglement issues with small animals, use of erosion control blankets shall be limited to 'bio-netting' or 'natural netting' types, and specifically not products containing plastic mesh netting or other plastic components. These are Category 3N or 4N in the 2016 & 2018 MnDOT Standards Specifications for Construction. Also be aware that hydro-mulch products may contain small synthetic (plastic) fibers to aid in its matrix strength. These loose fibers could potentially re-suspend and make their way into Public Waters. As such, please review mulch products and do not allow any materials with synthetic (plastic) fiber additives in areas that drain to Public Waters. 	<p>The project does not involve permanent dredging, deepening, filling or conversion of Type 3 wetlands.</p> <p>Wetland 7 will be bisected for a roadway crossing. This wetland impact is unavoidable per the sequencing argument included in the wetland replacement plan application. The area of bisected wetland is Type 1 & 2 wet meadow. The DNR will be contacted for appropriate BMPs.</p> <p>The project proponent will distribute the Blanding's turtle flyer to contractors working in the area and report sightings to the MN DNR.</p> <p>The project proponent will use Category 3N or 4N natural fibers where erosion control blankets are needed.</p>
15	13. Fish, Wildlife, Plant Communities and Sensitive Ecological Resources	<p>Page 23, Rare Species, State; Appendix E. The DNR has reviewed the Rare Plant Survey Report included in Appendix E and verified the identification of plant specimens for the St. Lawrence grapefern (<i>Sceptridium rugulosum</i>, state listed as a species of special concern). We agree with surveyor recommendations that a follow up survey in spring of 2022 should be conducted to further document the presence of protected state-listed species within the area highlighted in the survey report.</p> <p>Based on the survey and habitat assessment, it appears that there may be DNR Native Plant Communities (NPC) present that may qualify as Rare Natural Communities (RNC) under WCA. If Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) rules are applicable and a replacement plan is required, any potential concerns related to WCA Rules 8420.0515 subp. 3 must be addressed prior to the approval of a replacement plan; therefore, until any RNC concerns are resolved, approval of a replacement plan must not proceed. WCA TEP members have been notified of this decision.</p> <p>In addition to recommending additional surveys for rare species, we recommend that wetland plant communities should be classified to type, and if rare communities (S1 – S3) are present, the condition rank should be determined, to help in determine if rare natural communities are present. Please note that it is the responsibility of the proposer to obtain the data necessary for the DNR to make a determination on the presence of an RNC.</p> <p>We also appreciate the detailed information provided in the report regarding the potential for a calcareous fen onsite, however we cannot adequately determine that the area is not a calcareous fen at this time. An additional site visit(s) and further discussion is needed with DNR Wetlands Coordinator, Jennie Skancke, and DNR Hydrologist, Keylor Andrews.</p>	<p>A field meeting was held with the project proponent, proponent's consultant, TEP members, and DNR staff on November 10, 2021. The area identified by DNR staff for spring 2022 rare species survey was limited to within the southwest portion of Wetland 5, which is outside of the project grading limits.</p> <p>Midwest Natural Resources (MNR) has provided information regarding their assessment of potential RNCs within the boundary of Wetland 5 to DNR for review. MNR is working with the DNR to produce a map of the communities and their condition rank.</p> <p>After the spring 2022 plant survey, MNR will work with the DNR to assess the potential presence of a calcareous fen within delineated wetland adjacent to Trott Brook. The wetland is being avoided by project development activities.</p> <p>The project proponent acknowledges that WCA Rules 8420.0515 subp. 3 must be satisfied prior to the approval of a replacement plan.</p>

Table 1. Comments Received from Agencies

Comment Number	EAW Content/ Section Number	Comment	Response
16	16. Air	Page 28, Dust Control. If water for dust control is taken from streams, wetlands, or lakes in volumes that exceed 10,000 gallons per day, or one million gallons per year, then a DNR Water Appropriation Permit will be required.	Comment noted.
17	16. Air	Page 28, Dust and Odors. Please do not use products that contain chloride in areas that drain to Public Waters.	Comment noted.
Metropolitan Council, Angela R Torres, Manager, Local Planning Assistance			
1	8. Permits and Approvals	<p>Item 8 accurately details that a Comprehensive Plan Amendment which includes a Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) boundary adjustment is required for this development. However, Item 9 incorrectly states that the entire site is guided as Low Density Residential (LDR) (3-4 units per acre) in the City’s 2040 Plan. Most of the site is within the MUSA and guided as LDR; however, the southwestern portion of the site (near 168th Avenue NW) is not within the MUSA and therefore not guided with the LDR land use, which reflects sewered development. Item 9 should be revised to clearly state this.</p> <p>Item 9 also states that the development is below the required minimum density of the LDR land use (3-4 units per acre). If the development is planned for a residential density of 2.2 units per acre, as the EAW states, this density is inconsistent with the LDR land use and therefore inconsistent with the City’s 2040 Plan. This reduction in density, which will reduce the City’s overall residential density to at or just below 3 units per acre, may constitute underutilization of the regional wastewater system. Underutilization of the wastewater system is a regional system conformance issue.</p> <p>For information, the Metropolitan Council calculates density based on net acreage. Net acreage does not include land covered by wetlands, water bodies, public parks and trails, public open space, arterial road rights-of-way, and other undevelopable acres identified in or protected by local ordinances such as steep slopes. More information can be found in the Local Planning Handbook on net residential density calculations (https://metrocouncil.org/Handbook/Files/Resources/Fact-Sheet/LAND-USE/Net-Residential-Density.aspx#:~:text=HOW%20DO%20WE%20CALCULATE%20NET,dividing%20by%20the%20net%20acreage).</p>	<p>With this response to comments, the correction that the very southwestern portion of the site is guided as Rural Developing is noted and is now part of the EAW record.</p> <p>The City and proponent are aware that the proposed plan does not meet the minimum density requirement of 3-4 units per acre and is inconsistent within the current district designation of LDR. The City is considering re-districting of the site and options for meeting Met Council density and wastewater system requirements within the City overall.</p>
2	9. Land Use	<p>Item 9 – Land Use (Todd Graham, 651-602-1322)</p> <p>The EAW discusses a new subdivision with 275 single family homes; also 81 acres of wetland, grassland, and park. According to the City, the land is mostly guided for low-density residential.</p> <p>The EAW states: “The Comprehensive Plan requires Low-Density Residential to develop at densities of 3-4 units per acre. The proposed project could not meet that density requirement while also meeting the city minimum lot size requirements. Therefore, the net density of the site, after factoring out open space, is 2.2 lots/acre.” If a city ordinance or zoning conflicts with the approved comprehensive plan, the ordinance or zoning should be revised to be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The zoning solution stated by the city is vague and should be clarified. At minimum density, a site this size should accommodate 350 homes.</p>	<p>The City and proponent are aware that the proposed plan does not meet the minimum density requirement of 3-4 units per acre and is inconsistent within the current district designation of LDR. The City is considering re-districting of the site and options for meeting Met Council density and wastewater system requirements within the City overall.</p>
3	12. Contamination/ Hazardous Materials/ Wastes	<p>Item 12 - Contamination/Hazardous Materials/Wastes. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)</p> <p>The EAW states: “Identify measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects from the generation/storage of hazardous waste including source reduction and recycling.” Council staff recommend adding the following hazardous waste mitigation measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select home construction materials for their non-toxic, low-VOC, recyclable, reusable, and biodegradable qualities. 	<p>Comment noted.</p>
4	13. Fish, Wildlife, Plant Communities and Sensitive Ecological Resources (Rare Features)	<p>Item 13 - Fish, Wildlife, Plant Communities and Sensitive Ecological Resources (Rare Features). (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)</p> <p>Council staff recommend the following mitigating action for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade soil and select vegetation for landscaping that is native, edible, draught-tolerant, and provides habitat to known endangered and sensitive wildlife and habitat species that have historically lived in the area mentioned in the EAW including Blanding’s turtles (<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>), St. Lawrence grapefern (<i>Sceptridium rugulosum</i>), and rusty patched bumble bee (<i>Bombus affinis</i>). 	<p>Comment noted and will be considered.</p>

Table 1. Comments Received from Agencies

Comment Number	EAW Content/ Section Number	Comment	Response
5	16. Air	<p>Item 16 - Air. Stationary source emissions. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212) Council staff recommend adding the following source to the list titled “For the proposed project, GHG emissions both during construction and after full build out are expected to result from”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded emissions associated with construction materials including, but not limited to timber, wiring and piping materials, aluminum, steel, shingles, glass, concrete, asphalt, transportation of materials, with particular focus on materials sourced outside of Minnesota and the United States. <p>Council staff recommend adding the following to the list titled “Mitigation and adaptation measures could help the project lessen the impacts of GHG emissions”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally sourcing materials; Sourcing recycling and reused materials; Orient homes to be south-facing; Construct homes with overhangs to block direct sunlight exposure to south-facing windows during the summer months; Site the planting of new trees to provide future shading to homes during summer months. 	With this response to comments, these Metropolitan Council recommendations are noted and are now part of the EAW record.
6	19. Cumulative Potential Effects	<p>Item 19 - Cumulative Potential Effects. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212) Council staff recommend adding the following as potential mitigation methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orient new home siting and overhang design with the sun and horizon to maximize solar energy gain during the winter, and minimize solar energy gain in the summer. Select the preservation of mature trees on individual lots for their ability to shade new homes in the summer, and allow solar insolation in the winter. Build all homes solar-ready, geo-thermal, and/or EV-ready for seamless installation should future residents desire. Solicit the developer and Connexus Energy to integrate a community solar garden into the development to serve new energy demand needs 	With this response to comments, these Metropolitan Council recommendations are noted and are now part of the EAW record.
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Karen Kromar, Project Manager			
1	14. Historic Properties	We have completed our review of the project information, including the report Phase I Archaeological Survey of Trott Brook Property in Ramsey, Anoka County, Minnesota (July 8, 2021) as prepared by Nienow Cultural Consultants. According to the report, three archaeological sites were identified during the field investigations, sites 21AN0197, 21AN0198, and 21AN0199. We agree with the consultant’s recommendation that these sites are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, we conclude that there are no properties listed in the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and no significant archaeological properties located in the area that will be affected by this project.	Comment acknowledged.
2	14. Historic Properties	Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36 CFR § 800. If this project is considered for federal financial assistance, or requires a federal permit or license, then review and consultation with our office will need to be initiated by the lead federal agency. Be advised that comments and recommendations provided by our office for this state-level review may differ from findings and determinations made by the federal agency as part of review and consultation under Section 106.	Comment acknowledged.
Anoka County Highway Department, Jack Forslund, Transportation Planner			
1	18. Transportation	ACHD Planning Section Comments Section 18. Transportation. On page 31 it is stated: “There are no improvement projects planned for the study area roadways and none were assumed for the No-Build or Build conditions.” While this is technically true, there are major improvements planned for US 10, which is located approximately 3 miles south of the development.	Future major improvements for US10 are noted.
2	General	Beginning in 2022, construction will begin on the conversion of several at-grade intersections into grade-separated interchanges. These improvements will effectively extend the freeway section of US 10 by four miles, from Fair oak Avenue in Anoka to CSAH 83 (Armstrong Blvd. NW) in Ramsey.	Comment noted.
3	General	With the US 10 improvements, we are anticipating a change in travel patterns on several county roadways, including CSAH 56 (Ramsey Blvd. NW) and CSAH 57 (Sunfish Lake Blvd. NW). Each of these roadways intersect with CSAH 5 (Nowthen Blvd. NW) south of the Trott Brook Crossing development. Considering the US 10 improvements, we (ACHD) have just started a traffic analysis to identify potential impacts to CSAH 5 and its major intersections including CSAHs 56, 57, and 175th Avenue NW. While these projects may not directly impact the operation of the transportation system immediately adjacent to the development, we think that this information should be provided in the EAW.	With this response to comments, this information is now part of the EAW record.

Table 1. Comments Received from Agencies

Comment Number	EAW Content/ Section Number	Comment	Response
4	General	<p>ACHD Traffic Section Comments Listed below are comments from our Traffic Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently 60 feet of ROW west of centerline, which should be sufficient for future reconstruction purposes. • There is currently a SB RTL and a NB bypass lane in place. After discussion with Engineering, we think that it would be better to put a NB LTL in and remove the NB bypass lane. Specifically, with the larger number of housing units being developed, a LTL would be the safer option than the bypass lane in place. • A trail construction that would connect to the trail just south of this property would be very beneficial especially with the elementary school at 170th Avenue NW. • County Ditch #51 runs through the south part of the property line, and this ditch may not be altered without first submitting detailed plans to the appropriate agencies and obtaining their permission as well as permission from the County Engineer. 	<p>Concur; will convert by-pass lane to LTL.</p> <p>A trail section is planned that will connect with the Regional Trail. The trail will cross County Ditch #51/Trott Brook. No work will occur within Trott Brook without the appropriate permits.</p>
5	General	<p>ACHD Design Section Comments Reiterating from what was mentioned above in the Traffic comments, a dedicated NB left turn lane being installed in place of the existing NB bypass lane on CSAH 5 would be preferred for safety, especially with only two accesses in and out of this large development.</p> <p>The comments in the traffic report on the future 2040 condition of the intersection of Ramsey Blvd and Nowthen Blvd by are noted.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Also see above.</p>
<p><i>Minnesota Department of Administration State Archaeologist, Jennifer Tworzyanski, Assistant to the State Archaeologist</i></p>			
1	14. Historic Properties	<p>Thank you for the chance to review the Trott Brook Crossing EAW document. The phase I archaeological reconnaissance survey report included in the EAW appears to be sufficient and conform to contemporary archaeological practices, and I agree with the recommendation that no further work is necessary. However, I wanted to let you know for future reference that archaeological data is considered protected, therefore, in any public document that deals with archaeological data locational information should be obscured and site forms should be omitted. If you ever have any questions about what information to share or not share, please feel free to contact me or a colleague here at the OSA and we will be happy to assist you.</p>	<p>This comment has been noted and will be forwarded to the project archaeological contractor.</p>
<p><i>Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Steve Roos, Environmental Planner</i></p>			
1	General	<p>The Minnesota Department of Agriculture appreciates the opportunity to review the Trott Brook Crossing EAW. While the proposed project does impact agricultural land, we recognize that the involved parcels are within the city limits of Ramsey, do not involve agricultural preserves, and that the project complies with the intent of the city's most recent comprehensive plan. Therefore, we have no comments to make on the EAW. Thanks again for the opportunity.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p><i>Minnesota Department of Transportation, Cameron Muhic, Senior Planner</i></p>			
1	18. Transportation	<p>The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has reviewed the plans and has no comments, as we anticipate the proposed project should have little or no impact on MnDOT's highway system.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

FINDINGS OF FACT

Project Description

Proposed Project

Trott Brook North is proposed on approximately 200.5 acres of land in the northern part of the City of Ramsey, Anoka County, Minnesota. The project will include up to 275 detached single-family homes and parkland with tree preservation. Site development will include installation of municipal sewer and water, mass grading, and stormwater management practices. The project will convert 93.57 acres of cropland and 25.29 acres of woodland to streets, homes, lawns, landscaping, and stormwater features. The balance of the site will preserve about 7 acres of trees 56 acres of wetland and about 10 acres of grassland. The project will also include dedication of a 21.9-acre public park.

Site Description and Existing Conditions

The project area is about 47% cropland and 27% wetland. The site includes sandy soils, 40 feet of topographic relief, with flat to moderate slopes. The southeast portion of the project site abuts Trott Brook.

Decision Regarding the Potential for Significant Environmental Effects

Minnesota Rules 4410.1700, Subp. 7 lists four criteria that shall be considered in deciding whether a project has the potential for significant environmental effects. Those criteria and the City's findings are presented below.

A. Type, Extent, and Reversibility of Environmental Effects

Minnesota Rules 4410.1700 Subp. 7 (A) indicates the first factor that the City must consider is the "type, extent, and reversibility of environmental effects." The City's findings are set forth below.

1. **Cover Types.** The project will convert 93.57 acres of cropland and 25.29 acres of woodland to streets, homes, lawns, landscaping, and stormwater features. The balance of the site will preserve about 7 acres of trees 56 acres of wetland and about 10 acres of grassland. The project will also include dedication of a 21.9-acre public park.
2. **Shorelands and Floodplains.** The project area includes shoreland and floodplain on the southern portion, adjacent to Trott Brook. The shoreland overlay district extends 300 feet from the edge of the bank of the river channel of Trott Brook, or to the landward extent of the floodplain (whichever is greater).
3. **Land Use.** The proposed project is compatible with surrounding land uses and will comply with the R-1 zoning requirements. One parcel within the project area will be rezoned to R1 MUSA. The proposed plan does not meet the minimum density requirement of 3-4 units per acre and is inconsistent within the current district designation of LDR. The City is considering re-districting of the site and options for meeting Met Council density and wastewater system requirements within the City overall.
4. **Geology and Soils.** Residential development grading is expected to affect about 115 acres of land and involve movement of 400,000 to 500,000 cubic yards of soil to construct streets, residential building pads, and stormwater features.

5. **Water Quality.** Compliance with multiple stormwater requirements will minimize and mitigate potential adverse effects on receiving waters. Project construction will add about 36.32 acres of impervious surface to the site, consisting of streets, homes, and driveways. Stormwater rate and volume controls will limit increases in runoff volume and associated pollutant transport. Stormwater and infiltration basins are expected to mitigate potential adverse effects on water quality.
6. **Wetlands and Surface Waters.** The project area contains several wetlands and contains a portion of Trott Brook on the south side. The project is estimated to include less than 2 acres of wetland impacts. Impacts to wetlands will be required to be reviewed in compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act and mitigation will be required at an appropriate ratio. A pedestrian bridge is proposed over Trott Brook but will not impede watercraft usage within Trott Brook.
7. **Wastewater.** The project is expected to produce normal domestic wastewater that will be typical of residential developments. The proposed project does not raise wastewater conveyance or treatment capacity concerns.
8. **Hazardous Materials.** About 47% of the project area has been in agricultural use since at least the 1930s and the remaining area is comprised of wetlands, woodland, and grassland. The site is not known to include environmental hazards. The agricultural land use history suggests low potential for environmental contamination.
9. **Ecological Resources.** Project development will convert about 93.57 acres of cropland and 25.29 acres of woodland to streets, homes, lawns, landscaping, and stormwater features. The balance of the site will include about 7.37 acres of tree preservation, creation of 17.03 acres of stormwater basins, dedicated wetland buffers adjacent to wetlands, and 21.9 acres of land for a public park. The project may affect the number and type of wildlife species in the area, but changes in wildlife abundance are not expected to be regionally significant.
10. **Historic Resources.** An archaeological field survey results did not recommend the site eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and did not recommend any further archeological work.
11. **Visual Resources.** There are no scenic views or vistas on or adjacent to the project area. Substantial effects on visual resources are not anticipated in conjunction with project development.
12. **Air.** The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board is working on integrating greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment into environmental review. GHG are expected to result from home heating, travel, and other activities. Mitigation and adaptation measures can help reduce GHG and climate change impacts.
13. **Noise.** The project is expected to minimize disturbances caused by construction noise and conform to Minnesota noise rules and standards.
14. **Transportation.** The Traffic Impact Study recommended measures to reduce traffic delay, but it did not raise safety concerns.

B. Cumulative Potential Effects

Minnesota Rules 4410.1700 Subp. 7 (B) indicates the second factor the City must consider is “whether the cumulative potential effect is significant; whether the contribution from the project is significant when

viewed in connection with other contributions to the cumulative potential effect; the degree to which the project complies with approved mitigation measures specifically designed to address the cumulative potential effect; and the efforts of the proposer to minimize the contributions from the project.” The City’s findings are set forth below.

Projects typically combine to produce cumulative effects on municipal resources like public water supply and wastewater treatment. The City of Ramsey has planned for growth and increased capacity to address these cumulative effects. The proposed project will implement approved mitigation measures and be consistent with land use policies for areas served by municipal sewer and water.

Cumulative effects of suburban development on natural resources may include the loss of agricultural land and the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat. Surface water runoff from the project area will infiltrate into the soil or be treated in ponds prior to discharge to downstream waters. Stormwater regulations administered by multiple agencies and BMPs for water quality protection are expected to minimize cumulative effects of post-development runoff on downstream waters.

C. Extent to Which the Environmental Effects are Subject to Mitigation

Minnesota Rules 4410.1700 Subp. 7 (C) indicates the third factor the City must consider is the “extent to which the environmental effects are subject to mitigation by ongoing public regulatory authority.” The City’s findings are set forth below.

Environmental effects on cover types, water quality, and traffic are subject to additional approvals and/or mitigation through requirements of local, state, and federal regulations, ordinances, management plans, and permitting processes. The following permits and approvals are required for the project addressed under the EAW. These permitting and approval processes will provide additional opportunity to require mitigation.

Potential environmental effects associated with this project will be mitigated in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. The City of Ramsey therefore finds that potential environmental effects of the project are less than significant and “subject to mitigation by ongoing public regulatory authority.”

Table 2. Permits and Approvals

Unit of Government	Type of Application	Status
City of Ramsey	EIS Need Decision	Submitted
	Comprehensive Plan Amendment	To be applied for
	Zoning Amendment	Applied for
	Preliminary Plat Approval	Applied for
	Final Plat Approval	To be applied for
	Grading Permit	To be applied for
	Building Permit	To be applied for
	MUSA Expansion	To be applied for
	Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Approval	To be applied for
	Municipal Water Connection Permit	To be applied for
	Sanitary Sewer Connection Permit	To be applied for
	Variance	To be applied for, if needed

Table 2. Permits and Approvals

Unit of Government	Type of Application	Status
Lower Rum River WMO	Wetland Boundary and Type Approval	Approved
Lower Rum River WMO	Watershed Permit	To be applied for
Lower Rum River WMO	Wetland Fill Permit	Applied for
Minnesota Department of Health	Watermain Extension Approval	To be applied for
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Public Waters Work Permit	To be applied for
	Water Appropriation Permit	To be applied for
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency	Sanitary Sewer Extension Approval	To be applied for
	NPDES/SDS General Permit	To be applied for
	Section 401 Certification	To be applied for
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland Delineation Concurrence	Submitted
	Approved Jurisdictional Determination	Approved
	Wetland or Water Resource Impact Permit	N/A

D. Extent to Which Environmental Effects can be Anticipated and Controlled

Minnesota Rules 4410.1700 Subp. 7 (D) indicates the final factor the City must consider is the “extent to which environmental effects can be anticipated and controlled as a result of other environmental studies undertaken by public agencies or the project proposer, including other EISs.” The City’s findings are set forth below.

1. The proposed project design, plans, EAW, related studies, and mitigation measures apply knowledge, approaches, standards, and best management practices gained from previous experience and projects that have, in general, successfully mitigated potential offsite environmental effects.
2. The EAW, in conjunction with this document, contains or references the known studies that provide information or guidance regarding environmental effects that can be anticipated and controlled.
3. Other projects studied under environmental reviews in Minnesota have included studies and mitigation measures comparable to those included in this EAW.
4. There are no elements of the project that pose the potential for significant environmental effects that cannot be addressed by the project design, assessment, permitting and development processes and by ensuring conformance with regional and local plans.
5. The environmental effects of this development can be anticipated and controlled by the City’s development application process and other regulatory processes.
6. Considering the results of environmental review and permitting processes for similar projects, the City of Ramsey finds that the environmental effects of the project can be adequately anticipated and controlled.

Based on the EAW, comments received, responses to comments, and criteria above, the City of Ramsey finds that Trott Brook North does not have the potential for significant environmental effects and does not require the preparation of an EIS.

RECORD OF DECISION

Based on the EAW, the response to comments, and the Findings of Fact, the City of Ramsey, the RGU for this environmental review, concludes the following:

1. The EAW was prepared in compliance with the procedures of the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act and Minnesota Rules, Parts 4410.1000 to 4410.1700;
2. The EAW satisfactorily addressed the issues for which existing information could have been reasonably obtained;
3. Based on the criteria established in Minnesota Rules 4410.1700, the project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects;
4. The City makes a “Negative Declaration;” and
5. **An EIS is not required.**

Councilmember _____ introduced the following resolution and moved for its adoption:

RESOLUTION #21-347

**RESOLUTION DETERMINING THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)
IS NOT NECESSARY FOR TROTT BROOK NORTH**

WHEREAS, TEG Land Holdings, LLC, dba Twin Cities Land Development (previously Sotarra), hereafter referred to as “Developer”, properly applied for Preliminary Plat approval of the property located in the City of Ramsey legally described in Exhibit A (the ‘Subject Property’);

WHEREAS, Minnesota Rules 4410.4300, Subp. 19.C, requires that an EAW be prepared for this project; and

WHEREAS, the EAW was publicly noticed in the EQB Monitor, commencing the 30-day public comment period; and

WHEREAS, the EAW was distributed with City Council authorization and the comment period was properly noticed and held from September 28, 2021 to October 28, 2021 and ended at 4:30 pm; and

WHEREAS, copies of the EAW were distributed to all persons and agencies on the official Environmental Quality Board (EQB) distribution list and other interested parties and hard copies were made available to the public at City Hall; and

WHEREAS, the City, through its consultant, WSB, accepted and responded to all comments; and

WHEREAS, none of the comments received recommended preparation of an EIS, and none suggested that the project had the potential to cause significant environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, the City Council determined an EIS is not necessary on December 14, 2021.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAMSEY, ANOKA COUNTY, STATE OF MINNESOTA, as follows:

1. That the Ramsey City Council hereby determines that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required for Trott Brook Crossing based on the following:
 - a. The EAW was prepared in compliance with the procedures of the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act and Minnesota Rules, Parts 4410.1000 to 4410.1700 (2015),
 - b. The EAW satisfactorily addressed the environmental issues for which existing information could have been reasonably obtained,
 - c. Based on the criteria established in Minnesota Rules 4410.1700, the project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects,
 - d. The City makes a “Negative Declaration,”
 - e. The City adopts the Response to Comments, Findings of Fact, and Record of Decision for Environmental Assessment Worksheet (Record of Decision) and directs the Community Development Director to maintain the Record of Decision and to distribute it in accordance with the EQB rules.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilmember _____, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

and the following abstained:

and the following were absent:

whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted by the Ramsey City Council this 14th day of December, 2021.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Exhibit A

Parcel A:

That part of the West Half of the Northwest ¼ of Section 10, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of Section 10, Township 32, Range 25; thence Easterly on said Section line 80 rods; thence Southerly parallel with the West line of said Section to Trott Brook; thence Westerly along the channel of said Brook to where the West line of said Section crosses the same; thence Northerly along said line to the place of beginning. EXCEPTING THEREFROM the following described parcel:

That portion of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of said Section 10; thence North 89 degrees 23 minutes 47 seconds East along the North line of said Section 10, a distance of 481.77 feet to the point of beginning; thence continue North 89 degrees 23 minutes 47 seconds East along said North line of Section 10, a distance of 480.09 feet; thence South 00 degrees 34 minutes 09 seconds East parallel with the West line of said Section 10, a distance of 707.31 feet; thence North 83 degrees 29 minutes 51 seconds West, a distance of 483.67 feet; thence North 00 degrees 34 minutes 09 seconds West parallel with said West line, a distance of 657.59 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel B:

That part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota, described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter; thence running South 32 rods; thence running Easterly on a line which intersects the North boundary line of said Section 10 at the Quarter Section Corner; thence West on said North boundary line 80 rods to the point of commencement.

Parcel C:

The South Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 9, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota, excepting therefrom the following: The South 467 feet of the West 467 feet of the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 9, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota, as measured along the South and West lines thereof.

Parcel D:

The Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 9, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota, excepting therefrom the following: That part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 9, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota, which lies South of the following described line: Commencing at the Southwest corner of said Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter; thence on an assumed bearing of North 01 degrees 04 minutes 00 seconds East a distance of 218.43 feet to the point of beginning of the line to be described; thence North 71 degrees 20 minutes 50 seconds East, a distance of 809.12 feet; thence North 63 degrees 21 minutes 30 seconds East, a distance of 602.88 feet to the East line of said Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter and there terminating.

Parcel E:

That portion of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 10, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of said Section 10; thence North 89 degrees 23 minutes 47 seconds East along the North line of said Section 10, a distance of 481.77 feet to the point of beginning; thence continue North 89 degrees 23 minutes 47 seconds East along said North line of Section 10, a distance of 480.09 feet; thence South 00 degrees 34 minutes 09 seconds East parallel with the West line of said Section 10, a distance of 707.31 feet; thence North 83 degrees 29 minutes 51 seconds West, a distance of 483.67 feet; thence North 00 degrees 34 minutes 09 seconds West parallel with said West line, a distance of 657.59 feet to the point of beginning.

Parcel F:

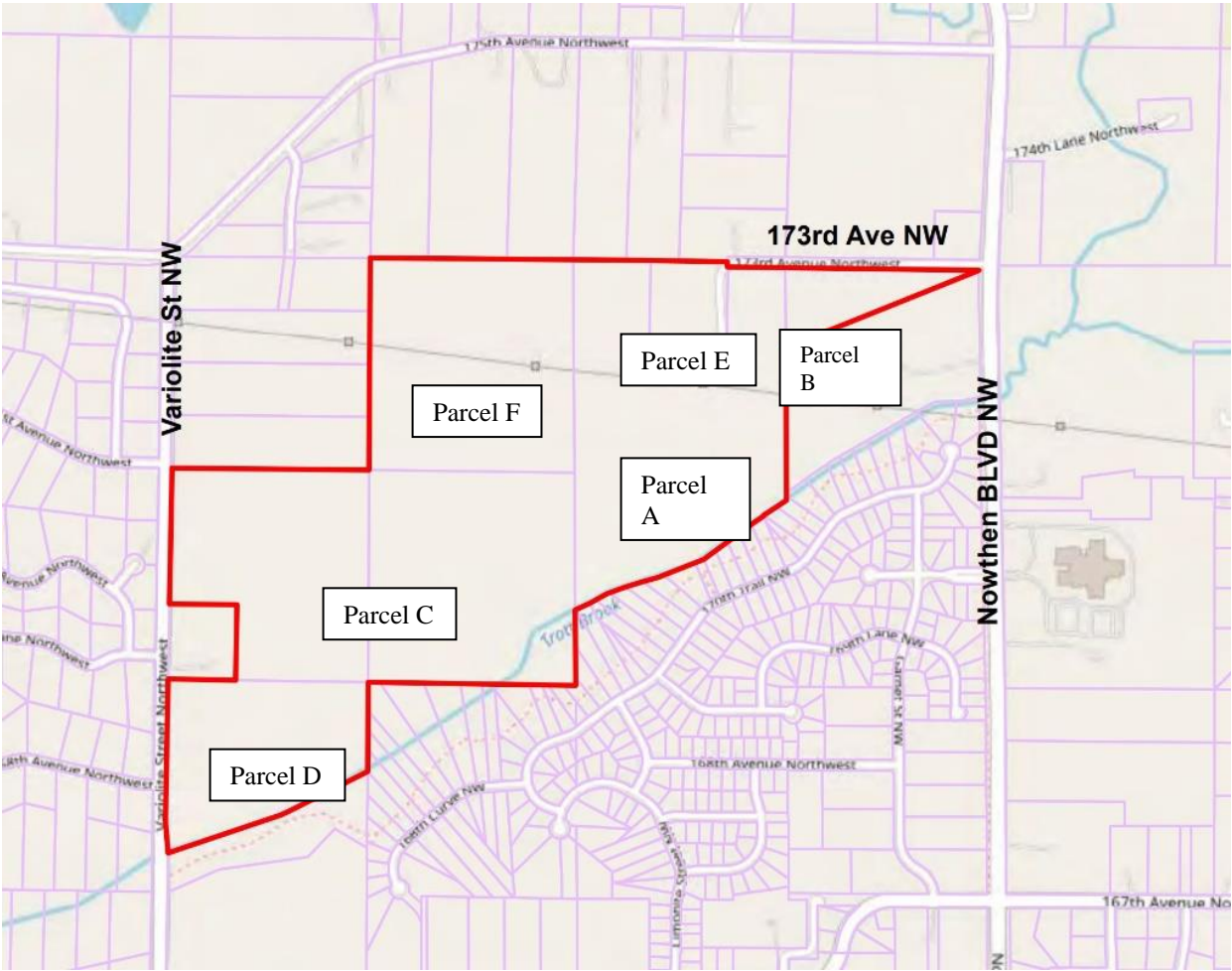
The Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NE 1/4 of NE 1/4) of Section 9, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota.

Together with an easement for driveway purposes over the South 33 feet of the Southeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 4, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota.

Together with an easement for driveway purposes over the South 66 feet of the West 330 feet of the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 3, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota.

Together with an easement for driveway purposes over the East 66 feet of the West 396 feet of the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 3, Township 32, Range 25, Anoka County, Minnesota.

Abstract property.



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Appendix A
Written Comments Submitted to the City of Ramsey

Record of Decision
Trott Brook North EAW

Division of Ecological and Water Resources
Region 3 Headquarters
1200 Warner Road
Saint Paul, MN 55106

Transmitted by Email

October 28, 2021

Bruce Westby
City Engineer
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

Dear Bruce Westby,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Trott Brook Crossing EAW. The DNR respectfully submits the following comments for your consideration:

1. Page 3, Project Description. A projected start date of April 2022 would not allow sufficient time to address rare species concerns due to the necessity of surveying for rare plants at the appropriate time during the growing season.
2. Page 7, Shorelands. Trott Brook is an impaired stream, therefore the DNR does not recommend increasing the amount of impervious surfaces currently allowed under the shoreland ordinance beyond the 25% impervious surfaces threshold. These residential lots are also directly adjacent to sensitive wetlands that could be impacted by additional stormwater pollutants, especially as the topography of the site slopes from north to south.
3. Page 11, Table 5. Wetland 4 is DNR Public Water Wetland 02-0319-00W. Because the DNR has jurisdiction over activities that occur below the Ordinary High Water Level of DNR Public Water Wetland 02-0319-00W, the document should clearly state that DNR Public Water Wetland exists on the site and show its location on Figure 6.
4. Page 12, Groundwater. The presence of seeps indicates that there is a groundwater connection to the surface at various points throughout the project area. Observed water levels may not reflect normal conditions due to the drought experienced during 2021. Are the piezometers still in place in case further monitoring is necessary?
5. Page 15, Wastewater. The proposed plan to add up to 275 residential units would presumably add a comparable number of residential water softeners due to the water hardness levels of the City of Ramsey municipal water supply. Many Minnesota municipalities are wrestling with high chloride levels in their wastewater (See this recent [study](#) on sources of chloride in

Minnesota). Chloride is one of the components of salt, which is used in forms such as sodium chloride (table salt), calcium chloride and magnesium chloride (road salts). Sodium chloride is commonly used in home water softeners and by water treatment plants to treat “hard” water. Minnesota generally has groundwater with high levels of calcium and magnesium that must be removed through softening in order to improve taste and prevent lime scale buildup in appliances, pipes and water fixtures. The majority of home water softeners use sodium chloride (NaCl) in a softening process that replaces calcium and magnesium ions with sodium, while the chloride ions are discharged in the wastewater and eventually end up in the environment.

Each community needs to determine which tool is appropriate for their situation. This [factsheet](#) suggests ways for homeowners to optimize their water softener salt use, while this [link](#) provides resources for cities and examples of how other communities in Minnesota are addressing their high chloride levels. We suggest that as this development moves forward, the City of Ramsey consider what strategies can be used to minimize chloride use.

6. Page 16, Pre-Construction Site Runoff. It is unclear if any of the project area is currently tile drained, and how that may alter site hydrology if removed.
7. Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. Due to the potential groundwater connection near the surface, the installation of large infiltration basins has the potential to impact wetland hydrology. Further review of hydrologic site conditions is recommended in order to avoid impacting seepage wetlands within the project area.
8. Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The DNR recommends that water from stormwater features be used as to irrigate landscaping if feasible.
9. Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The DNR recommends using native seed mixes in stormwater features and native plants in landscaping to the greatest degree possible in order to provide pollinator habitat.
10. Page 16, Post Construction Runoff. The planned increase in impervious surfaces will also increase the amount of road salt used in the project area. Chloride released into local lakes and streams does not break down, and instead accumulates in the environment, potentially reaching levels that are toxic to aquatic wildlife and plants. Consider promoting local business and city participation in the Smart Salting Training offered through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. There are a variety of classes available for road applicators, sidewalk applicators, and property managers. More information and resources can be found at this [website](#). Many winter maintenance staff who have attended the Smart Salting training — both from cities and counties and from private companies — have used their knowledge to reduce salt use and save money for their organizations.

We also encourage cities and counties to provide public outreach to reduce the overuse of chloride. Here are some [educational resources](#) for residents as well as a [sample ordinance](#) regarding chloride use.

11. Page 20, Surface Waters. The EAW states that buffers will protect wetlands, but it is unclear what type and width of wetland buffers will be used throughout the development. The DNR recommends that native upland vegetation be used for wetland buffers as opposed to lawn or turf that might be managed with fertilizer and pesticides. It is unclear from design plans where the wetland buffers will be located.

12. Page 20, Other Surface Waters. Please note that it is possible that a DNR Water Appropriation Permit could be necessary for the re-routing or pumping of water during the construction of the pedestrian bridge over Trott Brook.
13. Page 20, Other Surface Waters. There should be a 100 foot setback from the Ordinary High Water (OHW) level of Trott Brook. No clear cutting is allowed in that area, but it is difficult to see in the proposed site plan where the setback is located. Additionally, on Concept Plan (Appendix A) of the EAW under Site Data, it notes, “a portion of the site falls within 300’ shoreland overlay from the top of bank of Trott Brook.” This should be clearly shown on the map. Shoreland Overlay Limit is identified as a symbol in the legend however the boundary should also be shown on the Concept Plan.
14. Page 23, Rare Species, State. The DNR concurs that there is habitat for the state-threatened Blanding’s turtle within the project area. Please coordinate with Regional Nongame Wildlife Specialist, Erica Hoaglund (Erica.Hoaglund@state.mn.us) on the need for an avoidance plan to limit impacts to this protected species. We appreciate that the development will use surmountable curbs. In addition to the BMP’s mentioned in the EAW, **the following mitigation measures are required:**
- Type 3 wetlands occur in the project area and could provide habitat for the threatened Blanding’s turtle. In order to avoid potential impacts, these wetlands should not be dredged, deepened, filled, or converted. Avoid working in these wetlands during the winter because of their potential as overwintering habitat for the Blanding’s turtle.
 - New roads should not be installed where they bisect wetlands or between closely spaced wetland features if possible. MN DNR and partner Data has shown these are the areas with the greatest concentration of road mortality for wildlife species including turtles. If impossible to avoid, contact Erica Hoaglund (Nongame Wildlife Specialist) for BMPs.
 - Distribute the attached Blanding’s flyer to contractors working in the area and report any sightings to Erica Hoaglund.
 - Due to entanglement issues with small animals, use of erosion control blankets shall be limited to ‘bio-netting’ or ‘natural netting’ types, and specifically not products containing plastic mesh netting or other plastic components. These are Category 3N or 4N in the 2016 & 2018 MnDOT Standards Specifications for Construction. Also be aware that hydro-mulch products may contain small synthetic (plastic) fibers to aid in its matrix strength. These loose fibers could potentially re-suspend and make their way into Public Waters. As such, please review mulch products and do not allow any materials with synthetic (plastic) fiber additives in areas that drain to Public Waters.
15. Page 23, Rare Species, State; Appendix E. The DNR has reviewed the Rare Plant Survey Report included in Appendix E and verified the identification of plant specimens for the St. Lawrence grapefern (*Sceptridium rugulosum*, state listed as a species of special concern). We agree with surveyor recommendations that a follow up survey in spring of 2022 should be conducted to further document the presence of protected state-listed species within the area highlighted in the survey report.

Based on the survey and habitat assessment, it appears that there may be DNR Native Plant Communities (NPC) present that may qualify as [Rare Natural Communities \(RNC\) under WCA](#). If

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) rules are applicable and a replacement plan is required, any potential concerns related to [WCA Rules 8420.0515 subp. 3](#) must be addressed prior to the approval of a replacement plan; therefore, until any RNC concerns are resolved, approval of a replacement plan must not proceed. WCA TEP members have been notified of this decision.

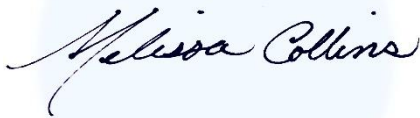
In addition to recommending additional surveys for rare species, we recommend that wetland plant communities should be classified to type, and if rare communities (S1 – S3) are present, the condition rank should be determined, to help in determine if rare natural communities are present. Please note that it is the responsibility of the proposer to obtain the data necessary for the DNR to make a determination on the presence of an RNC.

We also appreciate the detailed information provided in the report regarding the potential for a calcareous fen onsite, however we cannot adequately determine that the area is not a calcareous fen at this time. An additional site visit(s) and further discussion is needed with DNR Wetlands Coordinator, Jennie Skancke, and DNR Hydrologist, Keylor Andrews.

16. Page 28, Dust Control. If water for dust control is taken from streams, wetlands, or lakes in volumes that exceed 10,000 gallons per day, or one million gallons per year, then a DNR Water Appropriation Permit will be required.
17. Page 28, Dust and Odors. Please do not use products that contain chloride in areas that drain to Public Waters.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review this document. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Collins". The signature is written in black ink on a light blue rectangular background.

Melissa Collins
Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist | Ecological and Water Resources
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
1200 Warner Road
St. Paul, MN 55106
Phone: 651-259-5755
Email: melissa.collins@state.mn.us

CC: Tracey Rust, Sotarra LLC

Equal Opportunity Employer

October 28, 2021

Bruce Westby, City Engineer
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

RE: City of Ramsey Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) – Trott Brook Crossing Project
Metropolitan Council Review No. 22692-1
Metropolitan Council District No. 9

Dear Bruce Westby:

The Metropolitan Council received the EAW for the Trott Brook Crossing project in Ramsey on September 27, 2021. The proposed development Trott Brook Crossing is proposed on approximately 200.5 acres of land in the northern portion of the City of Ramsey, Anoka County, north of Trott Brook, east of Nowthen Blvd NW. The project will include as many as 275 single-family homes and parkland with tree preservation. Site development will include installation of municipal sewer and water, mass grading, and stormwater management practices.

Council staff review finds that the EAW appears complete with respect to regional concerns and an EIS is not necessary for regional purposes. However, the project as proposed raises potential issues of conformance with the regional wastewater system and consistency with regional land use policy. In addition, the EAW contains some inaccuracies that should be corrected prior to finalizing the document.

POTENTIAL SYSTEM CONFORMANCE AND REGIONAL POLICY INCONSISTENCY:

Item 9 – Land Use (Eric Wojchik, 651-602-1330)

Item 8 accurately details that a Comprehensive Plan Amendment which includes a Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) boundary adjustment is required for this development. However, Item 9 incorrectly states that the entire site is guided as Low Density Residential (LDR) (3-4 units per acre) in the City's 2040 Plan. Most of the site is within the MUSA and guided as LDR; however, the southwestern portion of the site (near 168th Avenue NW) is not within the MUSA and therefore not guided with the LDR land use, which reflects sewered development. Item 9 should be revised to clearly state this.

Item 9 also states that the development is below the required minimum density of the LDR land use (3-4 units per acre). If the development is planned for a residential density of 2.2 units per acre, as the EAW states, this density is inconsistent with the LDR land use and therefore inconsistent with the City's 2040 Plan. This reduction in density, which will reduce the City's overall residential density to at or just below 3 units per acre, may constitute underutilization of the regional wastewater system. Underutilization of the wastewater system is a regional system conformance issue.

For information, the Metropolitan Council calculates density based on net acreage. Net acreage does not include land covered by wetlands, water bodies, public parks and trails, public open space, arterial road rights-of-way, and other undevelopable acres identified in or protected by local ordinances such as steep slopes. More information can be found in the Local Planning Handbook on net residential density calculations (<https://metro council.org/Handbook/Files/Resources/Fact-Sheet/LAND-USE/Net-Residential-Density.aspx#:~:text=HOW%20DO%20WE%20CALCULATE%20NET,dividing%20by%20the%20net%20acreage>).

ADVISORY COMMENTS

In addition, we offer the following advisory comments for your consideration.

Item 9 – Land Use (Todd Graham, 651-602-1322)

The EAW discusses a new subdivision with 275 single family homes; also 81 acres of wetland, grassland, and park. According to the City, the land is mostly guided for low-density residential.

The EAW states: “The Comprehensive Plan requires Low-Density Residential to develop at densities of 3-4 units per acre. The proposed project could not meet that density requirement while also meeting the city minimum lot size requirements. Therefore, the net density of the site, after factoring out open space, is 2.2 lots/acre.” If a city ordinance or zoning conflicts with the approved comprehensive plan, the ordinance or zoning should be revised to be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The zoning solution stated by the City is vague and should be clarified. At minimum density, a site this size should accommodate 350 homes.

Item 12 - Contamination/Hazardous Materials/Wastes. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)

The EAW states: “Identify measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse effects from the generation/storage of hazardous waste including source reduction and recycling.” Council staff recommend adding the following hazardous waste mitigation measure:

- Select home construction materials for their non-toxic, low-VOC, recyclable, reusable, and biodegradable qualities.

Item 13 - Fish, Wildlife, Plant Communities and Sensitive Ecological Resources (Rare Features). (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)

Council staff recommend the following mitigating action for consideration:

- Grade soil and select vegetation for landscaping that is native, edible, draught-tolerant, and provides habitat to known endangered and sensitive wildlife and habitat species that have historically lived in the area mentioned in the EAW including Blanding’s turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*), St. Lawrence grapefern (*Sceptridium rugulosum*), and rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*).

Item 16 - Air. Stationary source emissions. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)

Council staff recommend adding the following source to the list titled “For the proposed project, GHG emissions both during construction and after full build out are expected to result from”:

- Embedded emissions associated with construction materials including, but not limited to timber, wiring and piping materials, aluminum, steel, shingles, glass, concrete, asphalt, transportation of materials, with particular focus on materials sourced outside of Minnesota and the United States.

Council staff recommend adding the following to the list titled “Mitigation and adaptation measures could help the project lessen the impacts of GHG emissions”:

- Locally sourcing materials; Sourcing recycling and reused materials; Orient homes to be south-facing; Construct homes with overhangs to block direct sunlight exposure to south-facing windows during the summer months; Site the planting of new trees to provide future shading to homes during summer months.

Item 19 - Cumulative Potential Effects. (Cameran J. Bailey, 651-602-1212)

Council staff recommend adding the following as potential mitigation methods:

- Orient new home siting and overhang design with the sun and horizon to maximize solar energy gain during the winter and minimize solar energy gain in the summer.
- Select the preservation of mature trees on individual lots for their ability to shade new homes in the summer and allow solar insolation in the winter.
- Build all homes solar-ready, geo-thermal, and/or EV-ready for seamless installation should future residents desire.
- Solicit the developer and Connexus Energy to integrate a community solar garden into the development to serve new energy demand needs.

In order to implement this development proposal, the City will need to have a comprehensive plan amendment. As proposed, the amendment is not likely to be favorably reviewed by the Council. Please contact staff for further discussion. You can contact Cameran J. Bailey, Principal Reviewer, at 651-602-1212 or via email at cameran.bailey@metc.state.mn.us. As always, you can also contact your Sector Representative, Eric Wojchik, at 651-602-1330 or via email at eric.wojchik@metc.state.mn.us.

Sincerely,



Angela R. Torres, Manager
Local Planning Assistance

CC: Tod Sherman, Development Reviews Coordinator, MnDOT - Metro Division
Raymond Zeran, Metropolitan Council District 9
Eric Wojchik, Sector Representative
Cameran J. Bailey, Principal Reviewer
Reviews Coordinator

N:\CommDev\LPA\Communities\Ramsey\Letters\Ramsey 2021_EAW_Trott Brook Crossing 22692-1.docx

October 26, 2021

Bruce Westby
City Engineer
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive Northwest
Ramsey, MN 55303

RE: Trott Brook Crossing Environmental Assessment Worksheet

Dear Bruce Westby:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the Trott Brook Crossing project (Project) in the City of Ramsey, Anoka County, Minnesota. The Project consists of a new residential development. Regarding matters for which the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has regulatory responsibility or other interests, the MPCA staff has the following comments for your consideration.

Permits and Approvals Required (Item 8)

Although there are less than 2 acres of permanent wetland impacts, Item 8 should still include the MPCA Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification as a required permit. For further information about the 401 Water Quality Certification process, please contact Jim Brist at 651-757-2245 or jim.brist@state.mn.us.

Water Resources (Item 11)

- The EAW indicates that the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the Project will be submitted to MPCA for review and approval prior to obtaining National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System (NPDES/SDS) Construction Stormwater Permit (CSW Permit) coverage due to disturbing more than 50 acres and the ability to discharge to an impaired water. Due to the water impairment, the SWPPP will need to include the requirement to stabilize inactively worked soils within 7 days to temporarily or permanently ceasing soil disturbing activity on any portion of the site. A temporary sediment basin will be required where 5 or more acres of land drain to a common location.
- The Project must also avoid soil disturbance within 50 feet of existing buffers to wetlands on the site unless necessary to complete the construction. If the 50 foot buffer must be encroached, then redundant (double) downgradient sediment controls must be installed to protect these water bodies. The requirement must be included in the SWPPP for the Project.
- The EAW indicates that infiltration basins will be utilized to reduce stormwater volume for 1 inch of stormwater runoff. However, the EAW also discusses use of stormwater ponds meeting National Urban Runoff Program pond requirements which are not recognized by the CSW Permit. It is important to note that stormwater management should be achieved in upland areas and that no wetlands on the site maybe be utilized for stormwater runoff without going first going through the wetland mitigation process.

- The cumulative effects portion of the EAW discusses the effects of the increased development in the area in relation to climate change and increased runoff and heat island effects, but does not indicate ways the development can help offset those impacts. The Project is located adjacent to flood plain and has the potential to increase flood risk to the area. It is strongly advised the Project proposer incorporate green stormwater infrastructure practices to help offset the effects of increased rainfall and potential flooding impacts along with the heat island effects of increasing development. The Project will be converting 25 acres of woodland to development with 7 acres of tree avoidance. It is advised that mature trees are preserved to the greatest extent possible or that trees are replaced on the site to reduce runoff, heat island effects and building energy use. The Project can maximize infiltration with the use of green space planted to native vegetation and reduce the amount of impervious surfaces through construction of narrower streets and use of pervious pavements. These efforts will also reduce or eliminate the need for salt application in winter, which is a major water pollutant in urban areas. The Project proposer should consider tree islands or native planting bump outs along streets to capture street runoff at its source in addition to designated stormwater basins to further reduce stormwater runoff and flood risk. Please direct questions regarding CSW Permit requirements to Roberta Getman at 507-206-2629 or roberta.getman@state.mn.us.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Project. Please provide your specific responses to our comments and notice of decision on the need for an Environmental Impact Statement. Please be aware that this letter does not constitute approval by the MPCA of any or all elements of the Project for the purpose of pending or future permit action(s) by the MPCA. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Project proposer to secure any required permits and to comply with any requisite permit conditions. If you have any questions concerning our review of this EAW, please contact me by email at karen.kromar@state.mn.us or by telephone at 651-757-2508.

Sincerely,

Karen Kromar

This document has been electronically signed.

Karen Kromar
Project Manager
Environmental Review Unit
Resource Management and Assistance Division

KK/JB/RG:vs

cc: Dan Card, MPCA, St. Paul
Jim Brist, MPCA, St. Paul
Roberta Getman, MPCA, Rochester

Alison Harwood

From: Muhic, P Cameron (DOT) <cameron.muhic@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 3:14 PM
To: Bruce Westby
Cc: Sherman, Tod (DOT); Kratz, David (DOT); Elvin, David (DOT)
Subject: Trott Brook Crossing Project EAW

Dear Mr. Westby,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the **Trott Brook Crossing Project EAW**.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has reviewed the plans and has no comments, as we anticipate the proposed project should have little or no impact on MnDOT's highway system.

Cordially,

Cameron Muhic
Senior Planner
MnDOT Metro District
651-234-7797
Cameron.Muhic@state.mn.us



Anoka County

TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

Highway

October 28, 2021

Bruce Westby, P.E.
City Engineer
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

Re: Trott Brook Crossing EAW Comments

Mr. Westby,

The following comments are in regard to the Environment Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the Trott Brook Crossing development generally located southwest of the intersection of CSAH 5 (Nowthen Blvd. NW) and 175th Avenue NW in the City of Ramsey.

Anoka County has received and reviewed the EAW, and we offer the following comments regarding the document:

ACHD Planning Section Comments

Section 18. Transportation. On page 31 it is stated: “There are no improvement projects planned for the study area roadways and none were assumed for the No-Build or Build conditions.” While this is technically true, there are major improvements planned for US 10, which is located approximately 3 miles south of the development.

Beginning in 2022, construction will begin on the conversion of several at-grade intersections into grade-separated interchanges. These improvements will effectively extend the freeway section of US 10 by four miles, from Fairoak Avenue in Anoka to CSAH 83 (Armstrong Blvd. NW) in Ramsey.

With the US 10 improvements, we are anticipating a change in travel patterns on several county roadways, including CSAH 56 (Ramsey Blvd. NW) and CSAH 57 (Sunfish Lake Blvd. NW). Each of these roadways intersect with CSAH 5 (Nowthen Blvd. NW) south of the Trott Brook Crossing development. Considering the US 10 improvements, we (ACHD) have just started a traffic analysis to identify potential impacts to CSAH 5 and its major intersections including CSAHs 56, 57, and 175th Avenue NW. While these projects may not directly impact the operation of the transportation system immediately adjacent to the development, we think that this information should be provided in the EAW.

If you have questions on the comments from the Planning Section, please contact:

Jack Forslund, ACHD Transportation Planner

Jack.forslund@co.anoka.m.us

763-324-3179

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ACHD Traffic Section Comments

Listed below are comments from our Traffic Section.

- There is currently 60 feet of ROW west of centerline, which should be sufficient for future reconstruction purposes.
- There is currently a SB RTL and a NB bypass lane in place. After discussion with Engineering, we think that it would be better to put a NB LTL in and remove the NB bypass lane. Specifically, with the larger number of housing units being developed, a LTL would be the safer option than the bypass lane in place.
- A trail construction that would connect to the trail just south of this property would be very beneficial especially with the elementary school at 170th Avenue NW.
- County Ditch #51 runs through the south part of the property line, and this ditch may not be altered without first submitting detailed plans to the appropriate agencies and obtaining their permission as well as permission from the County Engineer.

Please note that the ACHD Plat/Site Plan review process will apply to this development and that concept plans and preliminary plats + site plans should be sent to Logan Keehr for formal ACHD review and comment.

If you have questions on the comments from the Traffic Section, please contact:

Logan Keehr, ACHD Traffic Engineering Technician

Logan.Keehr@co.anoka.mn.us

763-324-3183

ACHD Design Section Comments

Reiterating from what was mentioned above in the Traffic comments, a dedicated NB left turn lane being installed in place of the existing NB bypass lane on CSAH 5 would be preferred for safety, especially with only two accesses in and out of this large development.

The comments in the traffic report on the future 2040 condition of the intersection of Ramsey Blvd and Nowthen Blvd by are noted.

If you have questions on the comments from the Design Section, please contact:

Brandon Ulvenes, ACHD Design Engineer

Brandon.Ulvenes@co.anoka.mn.us

763-324-3159

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the Trott Brook Crossing EAW. We hope to continue coordinating our efforts with the City of Ramsey to improve transportation as the area continues to grow.

Sincerely,



Jack Forslund

Transportation Planner

October 28, 2021

Cc:

Joe MacPherson, P.E., Transportation Division Manager/County Engineer

Jerry Auge, P.E., Assistant County Engineer

Jane Rose, Traffic Engineering Manager

Logan Keehr, Traffic Engineering Technician

Nick Dobda, P.E., Design Supervisor

Michelle Pritchard, Design Engineer

Brandon Ulvenes, Design Engineer

Alison Harwood

From: Tworzyanski, Jennifer (ADM) <Jennifer.Tworzyanski@state.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Bruce Westby
Cc: cmcguire@ci.ramsey.mn.us
Subject: RE: Trott Brook Crossing EAW Comments
Attachments: Pages from Trott Brook Crossing EAW_opt_REDUCED.pdf

Hi Bruce,

I appreciate you getting back to me and being willing to redact sensitive archaeological information. Attached is a copy of the archaeological report included in the EAW. I've highlighted information that should be redacted on page 10, and also included comments on items that should be obscured or omitted from the document. Those include the map on page 14, as well as both of the appendices.

Thanks,
-Jennifer

Jennifer Tworzyanski
Assistant to the State Archaeologist
Office of the State Archaeologist
328 West Kellogg Blvd
St Paul, MN 55102
651.201.2265



From: Bruce Westby <bwestby@ci.ramsey.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 8:04 AM
To: Tworzyanski, Jennifer (ADM) <Jennifer.Tworzyanski@state.mn.us>
Cc: Chloe McGuire Brigl <CMcGuire@ci.ramsey.mn.us>
Subject: RE: Trott Brook Crossing EAW Comments

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Good morning, Jennifer.

Can you please tell me what archaeological data within this EAW you consider to be protected? The EAW is currently posted on our website so if we are need to pull it down and redact some of the data I want to make sure we redact the proper data. Upon reviewing the data in this EAW I don't see any data that I would consider to be protected.

Thanks, Bruce



Bruce Westby, P.E., City Engineer
7550 Sunwood Drive NW | Ramsey, MN 55303
763-433-9825 (Direct) | 763-647-4485 (Cell)
bwestby@cityoframsey.com
www.cityoframsey.com

***Our Mission: To work together to responsibly grow our community,
and to provide quality, cost-effective, and efficient government services.***

From: Tworzyanski, Jennifer (ADM) <Jennifer.Tworzyanski@state.mn.us>
Sent: Wednesday, September 29, 2021 2:30 PM
To: Bruce Westby <bwestby@ci.ramsey.mn.us>
Subject: Trott Brook Crossing EAW Comments

Bruce Westby,

Thank you for the chance to review the Trott Brook Crossing EAW document. The phase I archaeological reconnaissance survey report included in the EAW appears to be sufficient and conform to contemporary archaeological practices, and I agree with the recommendation that no further work is necessary. However, I wanted to let you know for future reference that archaeological data is considered protected, therefore, in any public document that deals with archaeological data locational information should be obscured and site forms should be omitted. If you ever have any questions about what information to share or not share, please feel free to contact me or a colleague here at the OSA and we will be happy to assist you.

Thanks,
-Jennifer

Jennifer Tworzyanski
Assistant to the State Archaeologist
Office of the State Archaeologist
328 West Kellogg Blvd
St Paul, MN 55102
651.201.2265



October 27, 2021

Bruce Westby
City Engineer
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

RE: EAW – Trott Brook Crossing
Ramsey, Anoka County
SHPO Number: 2022-0014

Dear Bruce Westby:

Thank you for providing this office with a copy of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the above-referenced project.

We have completed our review of the project information, including the report *Phase I Archaeological Survey of Trott Brook Property in Ramsey, Anoka County, Minnesota* (July 8, 2021) as prepared by Nienow Cultural Consultants. According to the report, three archaeological sites were identified during the field investigations, sites **21AN0197**, **21AN0198**, and **21AN0199**. We agree with the consultant's recommendation that these sites are **not eligible** for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, we conclude that there are no properties listed in the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and no significant archaeological properties located in the area that will be affected by this project.

Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36 CFR § 800. If this project is considered for federal financial assistance, or requires a federal permit or license, then review and consultation with our office will need to be initiated by the lead federal agency. Be advised that comments and recommendations provided by our office for this state-level review may differ from findings and determinations made by the federal agency as part of review and consultation under Section 106.

Please contact Kelly Gragg-Johnson, Environmental Review Program Specialist, at kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,



Sarah J. Beimers
Environmental Review Program Manager

Alison Harwood

From: Roos, Stephan (MDA) <stephan.roos@state.mn.us>
Sent: Tuesday, October 26, 2021 4:07 PM
To: Bruce Westby
Subject: Trott Brook Crossing EAW

Hi Bruce,

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture appreciates the opportunity to review the Trott Brook Crossing EAW. While the proposed project does impact agricultural land, we recognize that the involved parcels are within the city limits of Ramsey, do not involve agricultural preserves, and that the project complies with the intent of the city's most recent comprehensive plan. Therefore, we have no comments to make on the EAW.

Thanks again for the opportunity,
Steve

Steve Roos, PLA, ASLA
Environmental Planner
Energy and Environment Section
Agricultural Marketing and Development Division
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55155-2538
Ph: 651-201-6631 office, 651-245-2392 cell



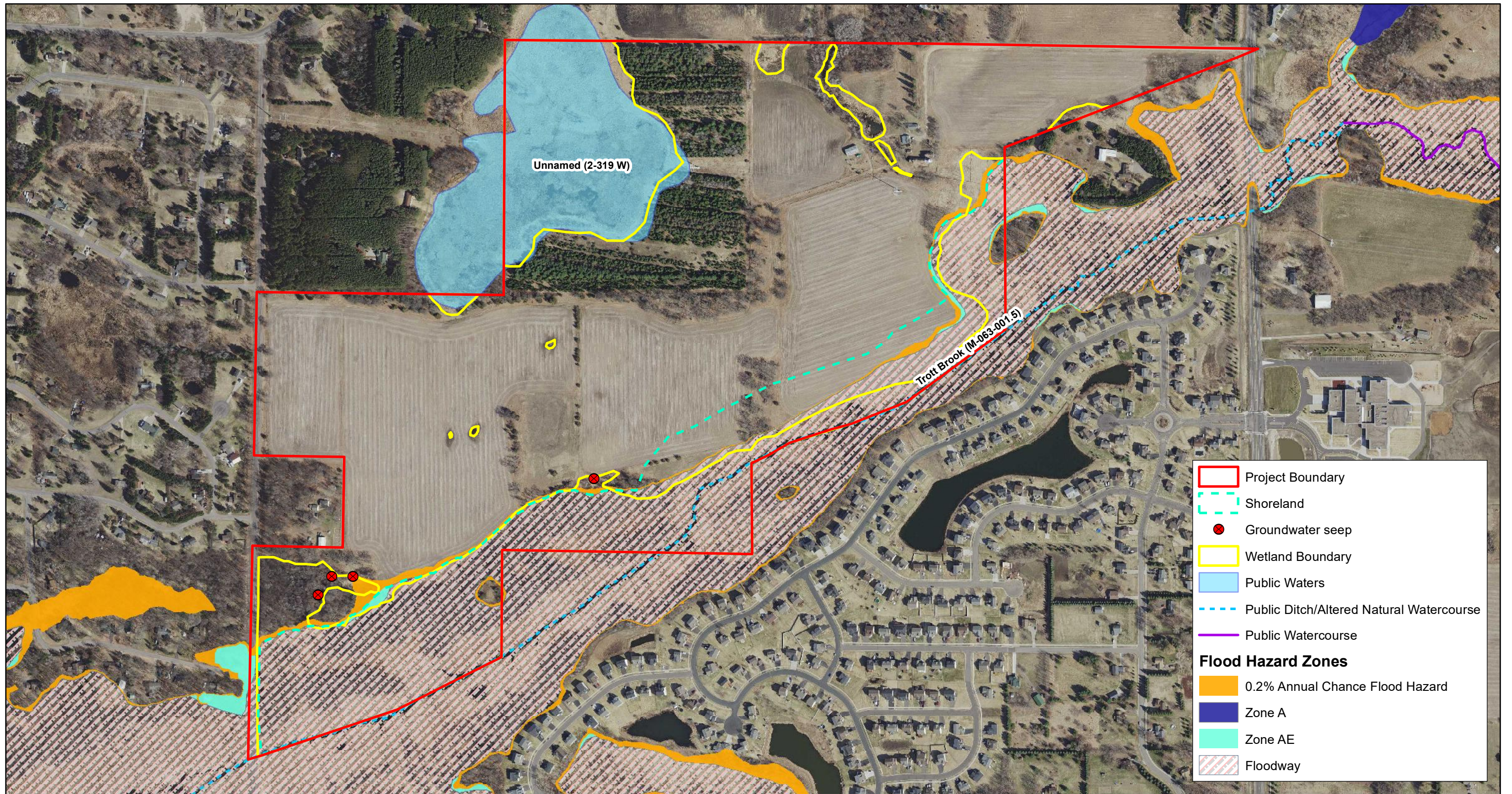
www.mda.state.mn.us

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Appendix B
Revised Figure 6: Floodplain, Wetlands, Shoreland, DNR
Public Water and Waterways

Record of Decision
Trott Brook North EAW

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Revised Figure 6 - Floodplain, Wetlands, Shoreland, DNR Public Water and Waterways