

June 25, 2018

Cynthia Brown, Chief
Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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Ms. Brown:

I'm writing to ask that you conduct an efficient and expeditious review of the letters and comments received relating to Surface Transportation Board (STB) document #36178 from the Metropolitan Council and #36177 from Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority.

As a member of the Corridor Management Committee, tasked with policy and budget decisions related to this project, I've seen firsthand that throughout the years of project planning, safety and the needs of the railroads have been of paramount concern. Extraordinary efforts have been taken to ensure those needs are incorporated into the SWLRT final design. For example, when Twin Cities & Western Railroad Company (TCWR) concluded that the rerouting of freight wasn't feasible, considerable costs and delays were incurred to allow TCWR southern interconnects and route choices that supported safe, efficient rail operations.

The City of St. Louis Park strongly supports Metro Transit's proposed Green Line Extension/Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) project, and has committed significant financial resources to the project. The city is contributing \$2 million in cash to the overall cost of SWLRT, as well as an additional \$3.5 million to pay for additions and capital investments to the project. Those costs are over and above the significant time, energy and resources invested by our community and by city staff in this project.

Development is already happening around the three future station sites in St. Louis Park, including a mixed-used, transit-oriented development at one station and a mixed-use, mixed-income creative community at another station. It's spurring renewed activity in a nearby commercial district that is one of the oldest in St. Louis Park. We expect even more interest from businesses and developers as SWLRT moves forward to its anticipated opening to passenger service in 2023.

The Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority have proceeded thoughtfully and carefully throughout the planning and design process for this project. We are now poised to make those plans a reality. Contracts are ready to be awarded and local funding is committed from St. Louis Park as well as every community along the line. We ask that the STB act in a timely manner to allow this vital investment in our community and region to move forward.

Regards,



Jake Spano
Mayor, St. Louis Park, Minnesota
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cc: Parties of Record