

August 29, 2014

Governor Mark Dayton
116 Veterans Service Building
20 W 12th Street
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Dayton,

Today's vote by the Minneapolis City Council granting municipal consent to the Southwest LRT (SWLRT) project marks an important step in advancing a project that will boost the economic competitiveness of the Twin Cities region.

Recognizing the significance of today's action, I want to reaffirm for you our deep commitment to transit equity within the SWLRT project. As you know, the Metropolitan Council made a significant commitment to equity when we adopted the Thrive MSP 2040 plan. This commitment will impact how the SWLRT project is designed, constructed, and operated, including how we connect bus riders, pedestrians and bicyclists to the new line.

We will continue to use responsive and equitable guiding principles in our planning, including providing simple and direct routes, serving areas with high density of users, and matching level of service to demand. Our track record in aligning bus routes with new light rail lines to best serve our customers is a good one, as shown when the Green and Blue Lines opened. We also have a plan in place to build or replace 150-200 new shelters by the end of 2015, large numbers of which will be in areas of racially concentrated poverty such as North Minneapolis.

We also pledge to continue to listen and work cooperatively with the community. Outreach and engagement will continue to be prioritized throughout this process. We not only listened to the community and stakeholder groups, but we actively engaged in a two-way dialogue and used community input in our decision-making process. In addition to meetings and conversations, we have published a 21 page written summary of our Transit Equity approach in response to our discussions with community organizations. Recognizing that this is a dynamic, multi-year project, we will continue this dialogue and will take an active role in fostering a positive relationship with the community that will benefit the neighborhoods, residents of our region, and our transit system.

The Metropolitan Council has made a commitment to transit equity and we will use equity as a lens in all SWLRT decisions as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Susan Haigh
Chair