



City of Hopkins

Office of the Mayor

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Dear Representative Daudt,

I am writing to express my grave concerns regarding the unwillingness to support transit funding and the SWLRT project in particular. As Mayor of Hopkins, I hear daily from both our businesses and residents about the need and importance of the Green Line Extension from Minneapolis to Eden Prairie, as well as additional transit to complete a metro-wide system that includes light rail.

Our business leaders have said they have difficulty filling the needs of their workforce, as many employees are dependent on transit options to get them safely to and from their work. SuperValu, with a large distribution center in Hopkins, has talked with me about their struggle in filling some of their shifts as the last bus departs at 10 p.m. and leaves workers stranded on later shifts.

Other large employers in our city, such as Cargill, have spoken in-depth about the need for transit to continue to attract the employees they actively seek. One of the top three reasons today young people decide to set down roots, select a home, and pick the community in which they want to raise their children is access to a transit system. We are in competition to attract the workforce that supports so many of our Fortune 500 companies headquartered here, with other major metropolitan areas that already have systems in place, such as Salt Lake City, Dallas, Seattle, Portland and Phoenix.

Many of the residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the three LRT stations that would be located in Hopkins either do not own or have access to a car, or could better use the limited resources they must devote to having a car, to other household expenses. A transit system would allow them much greater access to jobs, as well as the ability to see family members and enjoy a better quality of life with the ability to access the many amenities we Minnesotans are so proud of, and that contribute so much to enriching our lives. This is an issue of fairness and equity.

To turn out backs on the \$895 million Federal match at this stage would be a travesty! We simply cannot build and maintain enough roads to keep up with our growing population. So much time currently is wasted sitting in traffic gridlock in the metro area. We must expand our transit system, which has already surpassed ridership expectations and caused a multi billion dollar boom in development around the existing lines. This is NOT an issue of the metropolitan area vs. greater Minnesota as some would try to make us believe. Greater Minnesota fully understands that the entire State will benefit in untold ways through the expansion of transit in the region.

I urge you to support the final \$135 million commitment from the State to allow the Green Line Extension and Bottineau Line to continue to move forward. All of the communities along the line have made significant contributions to this project and we ask the State of Minnesota to step up now!

Respectfully,

Molly Cummings
Hopkins Mayor