



**395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55155**

April 15, 2021

The Honorable Ilhan Omar  
United States House of Representatives  
1730 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Letter of Support for Congressional Interest for Community or Member Directed Projects

Dear Representative Omar:

The Minnesota Department of Transportation supports the Blue Line Light Rail Transit Extension project that will connect northwestern Twin Cities metro suburbs, including Brooklyn Park, Crystal and Robbinsdale to North Minneapolis and Downtown Minneapolis. This project is led by Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council and benefits MnDOT's Trunk Highway System.

The project will extend the existing Blue Line from Target Field Station in Downtown Minneapolis northwest to Brooklyn Park and connect communities along the way, implementing the next phase of the planned regional transitway network. It will improve mobility for Hennepin County residents and visitors, while expanding access to jobs, schools and other destinations. New routes are being explored for a portion of the project to avoid use of freight rail property, which could impact the location and length of the project.

The total project cost estimate is currently being developed. The Blue Line LRT Extension project is included in the current MnDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in fiscal year 2023. The project is in the Federal Transit Administration New Starts Engineering phase and a portion of the corridor is approximately 90% designed. The project is revisiting alignments for portions of the project as indicated above. The project team hopes to have a community supported and Corridor Management Committee approved alignment by the end of 2021 and will work with the FTA on next steps (a possible Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement).

MnDOT is committed to coordinating with Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council on efforts to complete the project. MnDOT looks forward to continued cooperation with Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council as this effort moves forward to completion.

Thank you for your interest and support to improve Minnesota's transportation system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Anderson Kelliher". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a light blue rectangular box.

Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Transportation

cc: Daniel Soler, Senior Program Administrator, Hennepin County  
Sergius Phillips, Federal Liaison, MnDOT  
Michael Barnes, Metro District Engineer, MnDOT  
Christopher Kufner, Deputy State Aid Engineer, MnDOT  
Dan Erickson, Metro District State Aid Engineer, MnDOT

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