June 13, 2012

Mr. Glen Markegard
Planning Manager
City of Bloomington
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, MN 55431

RE: South Loop District AUAR Update
City of Bloomington, Hennepin County, Minnesota
Metropolitan Council District 5, Steve Elkins
Review File No. 18655-4

Dear Mr. Markegard:

Metropolitan Council staff has reviewed the AUAR Update for the project described above to determine its adequacy and accuracy in addressing regional concerns, its potential for significant environmental impact, and its consistency with regional plans and policies. The Council staff finds the document to be complete and accurate, but the following comments are offered with regard to the project.

Section 6 – Description
The AUAR discusses high-density residential development and mixed-use development south of the Airport and east of TH 77. Higher intensities of use and development are already assumed in Metropolitan Council's forecasts for Bloomington. No forecast change is required for the development discussed.

Section 18 – Water Quality – Sanitary Wastewater
The Metropolitan Council recognizes Bloomington's commitment to re-conveyance of several regional interceptors in the South Loop District, including the Cedar Avenue Interceptor (7804). Once re-conveyed, it will negate the 85% wastewater capacity restriction.

Section 21 – Traffic
Transportation Projects described in Tables 2 and 2A have the potential to affect transit:
Project numbers 7, 8, and 15 could improve the operating speeds of Route 54 (a potential Bus Rapid line) at the now congested interchange of I-494 and 34th Avenue South.

Project numbers 19 and 20 – the Lindau Lane extension and 30th Avenue upgrade, would trigger a proposed re-alignment of Route 54 via American Boulevard – 30th Ave. – Lindau Lane – 24th Avenue – MOA in 2014. These projects are tied to a Metro Transit Project to modify the surface park & ride lot north of the 28th Avenue Station. Route 54 would then serve the 28th Avenue Station from Lindau Lane rather than from 28th Avenue.

Project numbers 12 and 13 potentially affect bus stop locations and possible waiting shelter locations on 24th Avenue South, affecting routes 5, 515, 540, and 542 (routes 5 and 542 are potential Bus Rapid lines).

Project numbers 17 and 18 improve the safety of the exit from Northbound TH 77 to Lindau Lane, lower Lindau Lane below current grade at the MOA. In discussions with City staff, Dakota County, and MVTA, Metro Transit staff concluded that these improvements would make a much faster access route

possible for any bus coming from Eagan via TH 77 to the Mall of America Transit Station. This would be a major improvement for all of this transit service which includes the new Cedar Avenue Red Line. Staff discussed the possibility that a new transit stop could be designed into the grade-separated section of Lindau Lane to improve access via bus to the north side of the mall and the phase II area to the north of Lindau Lane.

Section 25 – Nearby Resources – Designated Parks, Recreation Areas, or Trails
The AUAR Update should acknowledge the planned Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail, which will connect the Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail in Hopkins to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Bloomington. The trail will follow American Boulevard through the South Loop area. This trail has been planned by Three Rivers Park District subsequent to the adoption of the original AUAR.

If you have questions about these comments, please contact Jim Larsen P.E., Principal Reviewer, at 651-602-1159.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Hanson
Manager, Local Planning Assistance

cc: Steve Elkins, Council District 5
Cheryl Olsen, Reviews Coordinator
Freya Thamman, Planning Sector Representative
Kyle Colvin, MCES Engineering Services Assistant Manager
Judy Sventek, MCES Water Resources Assessment Manager