

March 5, 2023

The Honorable Melissa Hortman
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Room 463 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

The Honorable Kari Dziedzic
Senate Majority Leader
Room 3113 Minnesota Senate Building,
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

The Honorable Frank Hornstein
House Transportation Finance Chair
Room 563 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

The Honorable Scott Dibble
Senate Transportation Finance Chair
Room 3107 Minnesota Senate Building,
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

We are writing this letter to express support for \$200 million for the Blue Line Light Rail Transit (LRT) Extension project.

The Blue Line Extension LRT is a key artery to the metro region's transit system. It will provide transformational benefits to residents and businesses along the corridor, connecting Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, and North Minneapolis to downtown Minneapolis.

As major employers along the corridor, we want to see our region thrive to meet the needs of our employees, customers, and the communities we serve. The Blue Line Extension LRT will connect businesses along the corridor to the region's broader transit network, creating an efficient and affordable option for workers to access thousands of jobs along the corridor.

The Blue Line Extension LRT project will employ thousands of construction workers and spur significant economic development along the corridor, benefiting suppliers, subcontractors and contractors in the construction industry. Light rail transit lines have been proven to get private investment flowing creating job, retail and residential density around stations.

Transit investment is critical for our region to compete for jobs, talent, and investment of the future. Many of our peer metro regions like Denver, Seattle, Austin and Phoenix are investing in modern rail transit systems and those same regions are luring Minnesotans away in the process. This has become even more stark with remote work possibilities, allowing talent to prioritize where they want to live. For our region to remain competitive we need to be an attractive place to live and a quality transit system is a quality-of-life factor to draw workers to Minnesota.

The state's investment will put the project in the best position to compete for hundreds of millions in federal matching dollars from the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, bringing significant federal resources to the state of Minnesota. State funding is crucial to meet the transportation needs the region's fast-growing population, spur economic development and benefit the residents, businesses, and commerce in our state.

Thank you for your consideration,

