

**Metropolitan Council***Building communities that work**Office of General Counsel*

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February 8, 2002

EXT-01611

H4316.170 H4316.170 H4316.230

John J. Bocheck  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
VA Medical Center  
Department of Facilities & Engineering  
One Veterans Drive  
Minneapolis, MN 55417

**RE: Construction of Hiawatha Light Rail Transit System  
Parcel 30**

Dear Mr. Bocheck:

As you know, the Metropolitan Council ("Council") is in the process of constructing a light rail transit line running in front of the VA Medical Center. And, as you are aware, the Council must request the use of your property for the construction and operation of the project.

The attached right of way map shows the property that the Council is requesting. This includes both temporary and permanent easements. The Council is asking that you lease this area to us for three years while we go through the process of acquiring the permanent easement.

In consideration for the grant of this lease and the subsequent grant of the permanent easement, the Council will provide the following modifications to the VA Medical Center property:

- A. The main entrance to the VA Medical Center will be reconstructed to reflect both the presence of the LRT tracks and the narrowing of Minnehaha Avenue. The Council will provide a sidewalk connection from the existing VA sidewalk to the LRT station.
- B. The existing signs that identify the VA Medical Center will be replaced with new signs on each side of the Main Entrance.
- C. The northerly entrance to the VA Medical Center parking lot from Minnehaha Avenue will be closed. Adjacent portions of the parking lot will be reconstructed to eliminate the internal roadway and replace it with additional parking.

- D. Along Minnehaha Avenue, adjacent to the LRT station and the LRT track, Lessee will reconstruct the edge of the VA Medical Center parking lot and relocate or reconstruct the existing fence to be consistent with the boundary of the permanent easement.
- E. The existing entrance to the VA Medical Center parking lot from 54<sup>th</sup> Street will be reconstructed to allow trucks to use the entrance, replacing the entrance off Minnehaha that will be closed. In addition, some curbing within the parking lot will be reconstructed to allow sufficient turning radius for trucks.
- F. Replacement of the waterpit and meters at 54<sup>th</sup> Street.
- G. Provide continuous access from new T.H. 55 to the main entrance of the VA Medical Center as well as providing continuous access to the VA Medical Center from Veterans Drive.
- H. The LRT Construction will be staged according to the attached exhibit.
- I. The jurisdictional management of Minnehaha Avenue, from 54th Street to the new T.H. 55, including roadway, lighting, snowplowing, police response and traffic signal maintenance will be done according to the attached exhibit.

I have drafted a lease using the sample lease agreement that you sent me and using the lease agreement that we used for Parcel 21A. Please review it and let me know if you need anything further for us to proceed.

Sincerely,



Peter A. Hanf  
Assistant General Counsel

PAH:sp  
Attachments

cc: Jeanne Matross  
Frank Loetterle

**Minnesota Department of Transportation**

**Metropolitan Division**  
**Waters Edge**  
1500 West County Road B2  
Roseville, MN 55113

February 7, 2002

David J. Sonnenberg  
City Engineer/Public Works Director  
City of Minneapolis  
City Hall, Room 203  
350 5th Street South  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1315

Gary J. Erickson  
Assistant County Administrator, Public Works  
Hennepin County  
A-2303 Government Center  
Minneapolis, MN 55487-0233

Dear Gentlemen:

As a result of constructing the new TH 55 roadway in south Minneapolis, the old TH 55 route on Minnehaha Avenue, between its north junction with TH 55 and its south junction with TH 55, is no longer a necessary element of the state highway system. At a meeting last spring we discussed the transfer of the old route to the county and city systems. Subsequent discussions regarding the transfer and The Hiawatha Avenue Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) construction have resulted in agreement to proceed with the transfer.

The Minneapolis City Engineer will recommend to the Minneapolis City Council that Minneapolis accept jurisdiction of Minnehaha Avenue from the north junction of TH 55 to 54th Street South, and expects that this recommendation will be approved. These termini comply with state aid system eligibility. At the City's request the route may be designated a municipal state aid street. As a turnback route, the route mileage may be added to the City's system above the 20% cap. The route will be reconstructed in conformance with state aid rules by the TH 55 and LRT construction projects. Therefore, the route will be declared ineligible for turnback account funding. The route may, however collect regular state aid needs in accordance with state aid rules.

The Hennepin County Engineer will recommend to the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners that the county accept jurisdiction of Minnehaha Avenue from 54th Street South to the south junction of TH 55, and expects that the recommendation will be approved.

David Sonnenberg  
Gary Erickson  
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It is understood that the 54<sup>th</sup> Street South terminus does not coincide with the normally desired condition of an equal or higher level designated roadway; however, that will not affect the eligibility of Minnehaha Avenue as a turnback route. At the County's request the route may be designated a county state aid highway. As a turnback route, the route mileage may be added to the County's state aid highway system. The route will be reconstructed in conformance with state aid rules by the TH 55 and LRT construction projects. Therefore, the route will be declared ineligible for turnback account funding. The route may, however collect regular state aid needs in accordance with state aid rules.

The State will continue all responsibilities of jurisdiction and ownership until construction of the route and LRT are satisfactorily completed. Once all construction is completed and determined to be in compliance with applicable state aid and construction standards (particularly as they apply to landscape material warranty periods), the state will proceed with the transfer of jurisdiction. Transfer is planned for 2004 according to current construction schedules; however, it will not occur between November 1 and April 1. The state will continue all responsibilities for the route until the transfer is completed. Upon transfer the City and County will assume all rights and responsibilities of their respective portions of the route.

Sincerely,

*for* Robert C. Winter  
Acting Division Engineer  
Mn/DOT Metro Division

I concur,

David J. Sonnenberg  
City Engineer  
Director of Public Works  
City of Minneapolis

I concur,

  
Gary J. Erickson  
Assistant County Administrator  
Hennepin County