

City of Minneapolis comments on the Minnesota Urban Ballpark Final EIS

The FEIS includes a Mitigation Measure Matrix analyzing the cost and feasibility of a comprehensive list of forty-five mitigation measures and commits to the preparation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) for the Ballpark's operations, in response to the City of Minneapolis recommendations.

The Mitigation Measure Matrix identifies twenty-three "Mitigation Measures Commitments" to be implemented as part of the Ballpark project. The specific funding arrangements and responsibilities are to be determined in the preparation of the TMP. An additional sixteen mitigation measures are listed for further consideration as part of the preparation of the TMP while six mitigation measures are rejected in the FEIS. The rejection of those six mitigation measures is premature at this point.

All six measures have a great potential to mitigate the transportation impacts resulting from Ballpark events. Some of those measures are part of ongoing discussions among affected agencies and others could be the subject of further discussions/negotiations between the parties. Therefore, the City of Minneapolis recommendation that the six mitigation measures rejected in the FEIS be carried into the TMP development process to better determine their feasibility.

The FEIS also incorporates an outline of the elements to be included in the TMP as well as a list of participants in the preparation of the TMP, in response to the recommendations of the City. It is important to reiterate the importance of identifying an Event Transportation Manager during the TMP development process.

A copy of a preliminary draft of the TMP prepared by the City is attached to these comments and could be used as a starting point in the TMP preparation process.

Additionally the City of Minneapolis encourages Hennepin County, the Minnesota Ballpark Authority and the Minnesota Twins to open the concourse level of the ballpark for public use between 5th Street North and the new 6th Street pedestrian plaza as a means of maintaining and mitigating the pedestrian grid system in the vicinity of 3rd Avenue North and 5th Street North.

Detailed comments are as follows.

1. Project Alternatives - The proposed parking to the southwest of the ballpark is now proposed as a surface lot. Given that this interim use could remain for a decade or more, the lot should be landscaped in a manner that reduces the urban heat island, contributes to the management of storm water, and mitigates negative visual impacts (including the parking lot's frontage along the Cedar Lake Trail).

2. Traffic Analysis and Other Transportation Analysis

On page 4-3 - Mitigation measure #2 correctly identifies the need to provide information about events, among other methods, via a website. It does not explicitly identify, as mitigation measure #3 does, a specific website where all the pertinent information and links to other websites would be concentrated. The Minnesota Twins and/or the Minnesota Ballpark Authority websites would be the logical repository for those information dissemination functions.

On page 4-3 - The city does not agree that the feasibility of mitigation measure #29 is unlikely.

On page 4-3 & 5 - The city appreciates the recognition in the Final EIS of the importance of pursuing good connections between the Twins Ballpark and the A, B, C and HTC ramps as described in mitigation measures #32, 33 and 34.

On page 4-5 - The City of Minneapolis recommends that the six rejected mitigation measures listed in the FEIS be carried into the TMP development process to better determine their feasibility.

In section 7, page 10 - The city disagrees that it is a City responsibility for periodically updating the TMP as suggested in page 10, item J of the MnDOT response to comments on the DEIS.

In section 7, page 29 - The City appreciates the efforts made by the Ballpark project to accommodate an extension of the Cedar Lake Trail as mentioned in page 29, item I of the response to the City of Minneapolis comments on the DEIS. The City would like to clarify that it is the City's intention to build this extension.

3. Noise - The City of Minneapolis requires appropriate Minneapolis Ordinances be followed.

4. Permits and Approvals – There are several additional permits that will be required. The following is a list of additional permits.

Under "State"

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry/Electrical permits

Under "Local"

Elevator permits

Encroachment permits

Fire Alarm permits

Mechanical/HVAC permits

Plumbing/RPZ permits

Pollution control permits

Sidewalk permits

Street use permits

Tower crane operator

Tank installation and removal for above or underground storage tanks

Well construction/sealing for any existing wells or wells that are damaged and to be repaired

After hours work permits

Contaminated site storage