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June 18, 2007

Mayor R. T. Rybak
City of Minneapolis
350 S. 5th Street
331 City Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Councilmember Lisa Goodman
City of Minneapolis
Office of City Council
350 South Fifth Street, Room 307
Minneapolis MN 55415

Councilmember Sandra Colvin Roy
City of Minneapolis
Office of City Council
350 South 5th Street
Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415

RE: DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN ("ACCESS MINNEAPOLIS")

Dear Mayor Rybak, Councilmember Goodman and Councilmember Colvin Roy:

As you know, Ryan Companies US, Inc. (Ryan) is proud to be a strong supporter of the City of Minneapolis. We own, manage and develop commercial real estate throughout the City, especially in the CBD, and want to ensure its continued vibrancy. However, I want to express Ryan's strong objection to certain portions of the proposed Downtown Transportation Action Plan, specifically as it relates to Marquette Avenue and Eighth Street.

Ryan is currently working with our partner, Ralph Burnet, to reposition the Foshay Tower on Marquette Avenue between Eighth and Ninth Streets to become a new W Hotel. In addition, we also own and manage the TCF Bank building and TCF Tower, bounded by Marquette Avenue, Eighth Street and Second Avenue. This block of buildings is at the epicenter of change proposed by the Access Minneapolis Plan as it relates to Marquette Avenue, Eighth Street and Second Avenue.



We have been actively involved in voicing our concerns with the proposed Access Minneapolis plan over the last 8 months. Our main concerns are:

1. The impact on providing adequate passenger loading and unloading for the W Hotel's guest entry, which is in the middle of the block on Marquette, directly across from the Midwest Plaza parking ramp entrance and exit. The positioning of the W Hotel entrance and the Midwest Plaza parking ramp entrance and exit is a significant concern even with today's traffic layout. However, if we cannot provide adequate, convenient hotel loading and unloading at the front door for their guests, typically high-end travelers, we are very likely to lose the W brand.
2. An upscale restaurant will be located in the new W Hotel at the corner of Ninth and Marquette. We are very concerned about guest and visitor access to this restaurant.
3. We have been assessing the redevelopment of the TCF Bank building site for a large scale, mixed use, high-rise project. The Access Minneapolis proposal so negatively impacts the future of this redevelopment concept that we may elect not to proceed with this project.
4. We do not understand some of the elements or there have been no assessments made in the proposed plan, including expanded bus shelters on the west side of Marquette, the reduction of sidewalk widths on the east side of Marquette, costs, special assessments, operational impacts during construction and security to name a few categories.
5. We believe other north and south streets should be assessed for traffic improvement implications such as Third and Fourth Avenues. We believe this is appropriate as the CBD will be oriented to growing east of Marquette.

We are in support of many major changes being proposed in the plan, such as converting Hennepin and First Avenues to two-way streets and reducing the number of buses on Nicollet Mall. However, any proposal must consider the impact on the current property and business owners who already have a significant investment in the city. Change at the cost of harming these existing investments is not progress, but detrimental.

I respectfully request that you not support or approve the Access Minneapolis Plan as proposed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Collins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard M. Collins
Vice President of Development

c: Jim Ryan