



500 Center Avenue, Box 779 • Moorhead, MN 56561
(218) 299-5166 • TDD/Relay 711
www.ci.moorhead.mn.us

March 12, 2010

The Honorable Collin Peterson
103 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

**SUBJECT: REVISED 2011 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST
CITY OF MOORHEAD
SE MAIN AVE/20TH/21ST STREET UNDERPASSES AND ANCILLARY IMPROVEMENTS**

Dear Congressman Peterson:

On behalf of the City Council and citizens of the City of Moorhead, I am asking for your consideration of our request seeking a fiscal year 2011 federal appropriation of \$1 million to construct the next phase of the SE Main Ave/20th/21st Street Underpasses and Ancillary Improvements project. Our request will allow us to continue our comprehensive community improvement program, as we implement a coordinated set of projects that will mitigate safety issues, reduce travel delays, improve traffic circulation, enhance environmental conditions, create jobs, and help implement urgent flood protection measures. Having received FHWA and Mn/DOT approval of the Environmental Assessment for this project, and with federal funds in hand, we will be ready to bid the construction contract for this project phase by the spring of 2011.

The need for the project has taken on even greater importance, as we prepare again for a major flooding event. Southeast Main Avenue and 20th Street play two significant roles during major flood fights. First, they serve as major arterials connecting sandbag production facilities and affected riverfront properties. "Just-in-time" delivery of sandbags to flooded sites is critical to saving the entire city, and train delays at the SE Main intersection can disrupt or slow the timely installation of these protective measures. Second, as in the 2009 flood crisis, when all bridges across the Red River, except Main Avenue and I-94 were closed, any evacuation of the metro area (as was discussed last year) would need to use one of these bridges and then SE Main, to safely evacuate the city.

Additionally, on a less urgent but still significant note, the project will provide approximately 850 jobs, including 150 jobs as part of the 2011 appropriation request. Clay County's unemployment has been increasing, with over 1,000 residents currently seeking work.

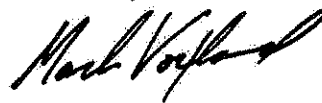
Working in partnership with you and other members of our congressional delegation, our City has made significant progress in implementing our vision for a vibrant downtown, integrating community and transportation safety measures. Dating back to TEA-21, and your work to establish a Commission to Study Alternatives, we have worked cooperatively to identify solutions that work—and work efficiently. We have previously obtained authorization for the project, and secured a total of \$6.9 million of federal funds to date, for the SE Main/20th/21st Street Project.

Thank you for your leadership in adding the \$500,000, 2010 appropriation to the project! With a 2011 appropriation of \$1 million (to be matched by the City with \$250,000), we will be able to complete the next phase of construction activities. Specific activities will include construction of a critical storm water discharge main line to drain the roadway at the railroad underpasses, a necessary prerequisite to bridge construction. After 2011 funding, a shortfall of \$32.5 million will exist. The City of Moorhead anticipates seeking the remaining funding necessary to complete the project from future federal appropriation acts and local resources.

We appreciate your consideration of this pressing community need and look forward to your sponsorship of this request during the 2011 appropriations process. We stand ready to assist you in this matter by providing whatever additional information and technical analysis you may need to move this project forward.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with this request.

Sincerely,



Mark Voxland
Mayor

MV/bj:030707

C: Michael Redlinger, City Manager
Robert A. Zimmerman, City Engineer