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DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES
CITY OF SIOUX FALLS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Sioux Falls is fortunate to have a high quality public transportation system with Sioux Area Metro (SAM). This past year the fixed-route system exceeded over 1 million riders for the first time. The paratransit system continues to provide quality service for those that cannot ride the fixed-route system and provides on average almost 600 rides per weekday. Also, the total population of Sioux Falls added 2,500 people last year and is projected to maintain that growth into the future. To maintain quality public transportation services, Sioux Falls and Sioux Area Metro are planning for ways to maintain services to an expanding and increasingly diverse population base.

In just the past year, the City of Sioux Falls and the Sioux Falls MPO have completed studies to provide a plan for the future of public transit service in Sioux Falls. The studies have included the Transit System Analysis and the Space Needs Study. Also, the City of Sioux Falls has recently initiated a Fare and Operations Analysis to determine some of the short-term and mid-term changes that are required to implement recommendations from the Transit System Analysis.

As a part of the Sioux Falls Route Analysis, three new routes and five expanded and/or modified fixed routes were planned to provide a higher level of service for the projected growth of Sioux Falls. As a part of this plan for expansion, Sioux Area Metro (SAM) would need to add three new transfer stations to improve route connectivity. Also, the Route Analysis recommended

adding a few cross town routes to connect the new transfer centers and improve regional connectivity.

Before expansion is possible, Sioux Area Metro (SAM) needs a major expansion of their bus storage and office facility, at 6th Street and Weber Avenue. The cost of this facility will exceed \$12 million. This expansion was detailed in the Sioux Area Metro Space Needs Study completed in 2012. The Space Needs Study recommends that expansion of the bus storage and office facility is essential before any expansion of the system can take place. As I am sure you are aware, security, maintenance, and efficiency of the busses is dependent on good indoor storage for our bus fleet.

Expanding transportation opportunities and enhancing the independence for people with disabilities is also a high priority for Sioux Area Metro. The paratransit bus system is very successful in Sioux Falls and will continue to be a very important piece of the system. However, the fixed-route bus system is very efficient and provides opportunities for greater transportation independence for all people. All fixed-route busses are fully accessible and bus stops throughout our service area continue to be improved to be accessible for people with disabilities. In fact, this year the City of Sioux Falls will be investing \$46,000 in CIP money to upgrade 88 bus stops. The City of Sioux Falls will continue to find ways to improve the accessibility of our fixed-route system so all citizens have an opportunity for economical and quality transportation.

The full funding of MAP-21 for public transportation and transportation investments are critical for the Sioux Falls region. We look forward to working with the committee on providing more

information about the needs for public transit and transportation as we move forward. Thank you for this opportunity to provide information.