

## **Attachment A:**

**Purpose/Need for a Study and Expected Study Outcomes**

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# Rosemount / Empire / UMore Area Transportation System Study

## Expected Study Outcomes

There is a need to develop a plan that will result in safe and efficient travel in the area as cost-effectively as possible, while at the same time supporting land use plans for the area that accomplish the objectives of the City of Rosemount, Empire Township, the University of Minnesota, the Department of Natural Resources, and Dakota County. This study will therefore develop a balanced plan that achieves the following:

- The Transportation Plan identifies the need for a connection of County Road (CR) 79 in Empire Township to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 71 in Rosemount. This connection should be planned for in a way that supports its function and works in concert with future plans for Vermillion Highlands and UMore Park.
- The function and potential connections of Biscayne Avenue and CR 73 both need to be clarified so they can support planned development.
- The connectivity and function of 170<sup>th</sup> Street.
- UMore concepts show a potential realignment of CSAH 46, and a number of new local street connections to CSAH 46. This should be reviewed to ensure consistency with the County's arterial standards.
- A plan that includes new roadways (that do not currently exist) if they help accomplish the study objectives.
- Coordination and connectivity of the local roadway system between Rosemount, Empire Township, and the University. This would include a coordinated plan for public access to Vermillion Highlands, DNR/University owned Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and Aquatic Management Area (AMA), and County parkland.
- Coordination of access to CSAH 42 with planned supporting roadways in Rosemount and the potential UMore development.
- A plan to address interim system issues related to existing and future aggregate mining in the area. In addition, address how roadway system plan affects the phasing of UMore Park, including mining activity.
- Planned land uses are compatible with the planned transportation system and vice-versa, and roadways are used to support/benefit land uses (e.g. serve as boundaries/buffers between land uses).

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- An understanding of and consideration for the challenges related to Trunk Highway 3, including principal arterial function, capacity needs, funding challenges, and land use compatibility in downtown Rosemount.
- General alignments of greenways and major trails should be identified and coordinated with the transportation elements considered within this study (e.g. future highway crossings, overpass, and underpass locations).

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## Purpose/Need For A Study

1. The University of Minnesota is currently considering conceptual land use plans for UMore Park, a 5,000 acre area that would include residential, industrial and commercial uses that will support approximately 30,000 people in the future. For this community to be sustainable and economically viable, it is critical that people can move through the community safely and efficiently.
2. South of UMore Park, the Minnesota Legislature and the Governor has established approximately 2800 acres, known as “Vermillion Highlands”, for research, recreation and wildlife. It is intended that this area balance needs for University research, education and public engagement, public access to diverse and high-quality recreation, and wildlife management/hunting. There has been some effort made to this point in the Concept Master Plan, but there is currently not a clear plan for establishing access to the site and its uses.
3. Dakota County recently purchased 456 acres west of Vermillion Highlands known as the “Butler Trust” property for protection of open space and for public use as a County Park. Access to this area needs to be coordinated properly with Vermillion Highlands and Empire Township.
4. Dakota County’s 2025 Transportation Plan identifies the need to connect County Road (CR) 79 in Empire Township to County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 71 in the City of Rosemount. Such a connection affects UMore Park, Vermillion Highlands, the City of Rosemount, Empire Township, and potentially affects area property owners.
5. The City of Rosemount is currently planning for future growth and development in areas surrounding UMore Park, underlining the need for coordinated transportation system planning. Related to this, the future function and jurisdiction of CR 73 has been questioned.
6. Empire Township is also planning for future growth and development in the area. Related to this, the future function and jurisdiction of both Biscayne Avenue and 170<sup>th</sup> Street have been questioned.
7. Even with a connection of CR 79 to CSAH 71, there would be a gap of 4 miles between north/south arterial roadways if no additional arterials were planned. This could result in longer trips on local streets, resulting in safety issues and in inefficient transportation for those who will live, work, and play in the area. The Metropolitan Council’s guidelines recommend 1-2 miles between arterials in developed areas. There is a need to balance these system principles with the need to preserve open space.
8. There is currently a gap of 4 miles between east/west arterial roadways in the area as well. Again, in developed areas, 1-2 miles is typical, and less than that could create safety and efficiency issues.
9. The first phase of UMore Park development will include aggregate mining. There is currently not a mining plan complete, but the University is in the process of developing this plan. It is important that all agencies involved understand the impacts of mining on the transportation system as well as any improvements necessary to address these impacts.

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10. There has been a significant public investment to protect large open spaces in the UMORE area. The value of this open space should be balanced with the need to provide transportation and efficient movement throughout the larger area of Dakota County. It is critical in planning for open space development and uses (vegetation/habitat, hunting, archery range, trails/greenways, research, etc.) to coordinate transportation planning with open space planning and achieve the appropriate balance between the two public purposes.

Considering these transportation issues/implications together, it is timely for Dakota County, the City of Rosemount, Empire Township, the University, the Department of Natural Resources, and the general public to develop a plan that addresses transportation issues in this area of Dakota County in a coordinated and balanced manner with area land use development plans. Such a plan will allow these agencies to develop a transportation system together over time that will result in safe and efficient travel in the area as cost-effectively as possible, while at the same time developing land use plans in the area that will accomplish the objectives of the City of Rosemount, Empire Township, the University of Minnesota, the Department of Natural Resources, and Dakota County.