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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 26, 2011
To: Kevin F. Bittner, P.E.
From: Gina Auwles, Archaeologist
Dale Maul, Archaeologist
Subject: Archaeological Site Evaluation
Proposed Shovel-Ready Sites
City of Isanti
Project No.: R13.103692

A query of the archaeological and historical/architectural database, maintained by the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), was requested for sites within one mile and one-half mile of the project area, respectively. The database returned three archaeological sites that lie within one mile of the project area as defined by the attached maps, as provided by the City of Isanti (Figures 1 & 2). Sites that are known within one mile of the project area are located on bluff edges of the eastern bank of the Rum River. Each of the three sites was identified during archaeological surveys (two separate surveys) of land near and/or adjacent to the Rum River. The lack of identified sites in some areas does not indicate an absence of sites. It may be that many of the areas have not undergone an archaeological survey. An additional two surveys near and/or adjacent to the Rum River failed to identify any cultural material. The SHPO database provides only legal descriptions, as precise as ¼-¼-¼-¼ Sections, or 1/16 mile. The historical/architectural database returned nine historic standing structures located within one-half mile of the project area, eight of which are located within the City of Isanti. Site files and reports were also reviewed at the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA), housed at the Fort Snelling History Center. The sites are detailed below. See Figure 3 for the locations of the archaeological and historical/architectural sites in relation to the project area.

Archaeological Sites

21IA69, located one mile southwest of the project area, is a single quartz flake. The isolate was observed on the surface of an eroding agricultural field. Fragments of a broken whiteware ceramic cup were also observed in the vicinity, likely the result of food/beverage consumption by farm workers. The archaeologist deemed the site not significant given the limited cultural material and the eroded nature of the site.

21IA80 is located 7/8 mile north-northwest of the project area, at the confluence of the Rum River and Isanti Brook. The site is a lithic scatter consisting of three chert flakes, two which exhibit heat treatment characteristics. The site was identified during subsurface testing. The archaeologist recommended further work only if the site was planned for future development, the current plans were green space.

21IA81 is located 15/16 mile west of the project area. The site is a single chert flake, identified during subsurface testing. No other cultural material was observed, no further work is recommended by the archaeologist.

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Historical/Architectural Sites

Nine historic standing structures were identified within one-half mile of the project area, eight of which are located within the City of Isanti. None of the historic properties are listed or are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The nearest historic property is the Eastern Railway Company of Minnesota/Great Northern Railway/Burling Northern Railway/Burlington Northern Sante Fe Railway, Inventory Number XX-RRD-002. The railway is located on the western side of the project area, adjacent to Parcel IDs 16.124.0020 and 16.128.0020. It is a single railway track, absent of any associated buildings or structures, such as railroad stations, yards, depots, grade separation structures, or section houses. When the railroad arrived in the City of Isanti (circa 1899) one other railroad had already existed within the county and one was found just east in Chisago County. The St. Paul & Duluth line had been in existence for over 20 years, traveling through the county seat, Cambridge, on the western side of the county. Historic standing structure XX-RRD-002 would not meet National Register Criterion A, it is not important in regards to transportation within the county or to the land east of the Mississippi River. There already were railroad connections in operation between the Twin Cities and Duluth at the time. In general, railroads are not eligible under Criterion B or C, and rarely D.

It is our professional opinion the Shovel Ready Certificate project will not impact archaeological or historic sites. We recommend a finding of “**no historic properties affected**” for the Centennial Industrial Park.

If there are any questions please contact Gina Aulwes or Dale Maul at 952-890-0509.