

December 4, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation for Jake Schutt, who has served as a Principal Planner in the Metro District Planning Office at the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). From January, 2022 to December, 2023, I supervised Jake and observed his contributions to our planning efforts.

Jake has consistently demonstrated a high level of professionalism, initiative, and technical expertise. As the project manager for the US 169 Corridor Study, one of the first 450 regulations planning studies at MnDOT, Jake navigated complex challenges with confidence and clarity. He quickly familiarized himself with the regulatory framework, proactively identified potential issues, and implemented tools to monitor consultant performance and budget adherence. His leadership was instrumental for this study.

In addition to his project management skills, Jake has shown a strong aptitude for innovation and systems improvement. He led the effort to enhance our development reviews database by incorporating a geographic component, significantly improving our ability to analyze development patterns and their relationship to transportation. His vision and collaboration with the development review team laid the groundwork for more efficient and insightful planning processes.

Jake's technical proficiency includes working with large datasets and analytical tools such as Streetlight Insight, where he has effectively used big data to uncover important issues for both corridor studies and development reviews. He also brings a collaborative spirit to his work, engaging effectively with local governments, state agencies, and our many stakeholders. His approachable demeanor, respect for others, and commitment to equity have made him a trusted leader in both internal and external settings.

Jake has proven to be dependable, humble, and trustworthy, with a strong work ethic and a positive attitude. He actively mentors others, volunteers in the community, and consistently contributes to a supportive and inclusive work environment.

In summary, Jake Schutt is a great planner and a valuable asset to any organization. I highly recommend him for any opportunity that allows him to continue applying his skills, leadership, and dedication to public service.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tod Sherman
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