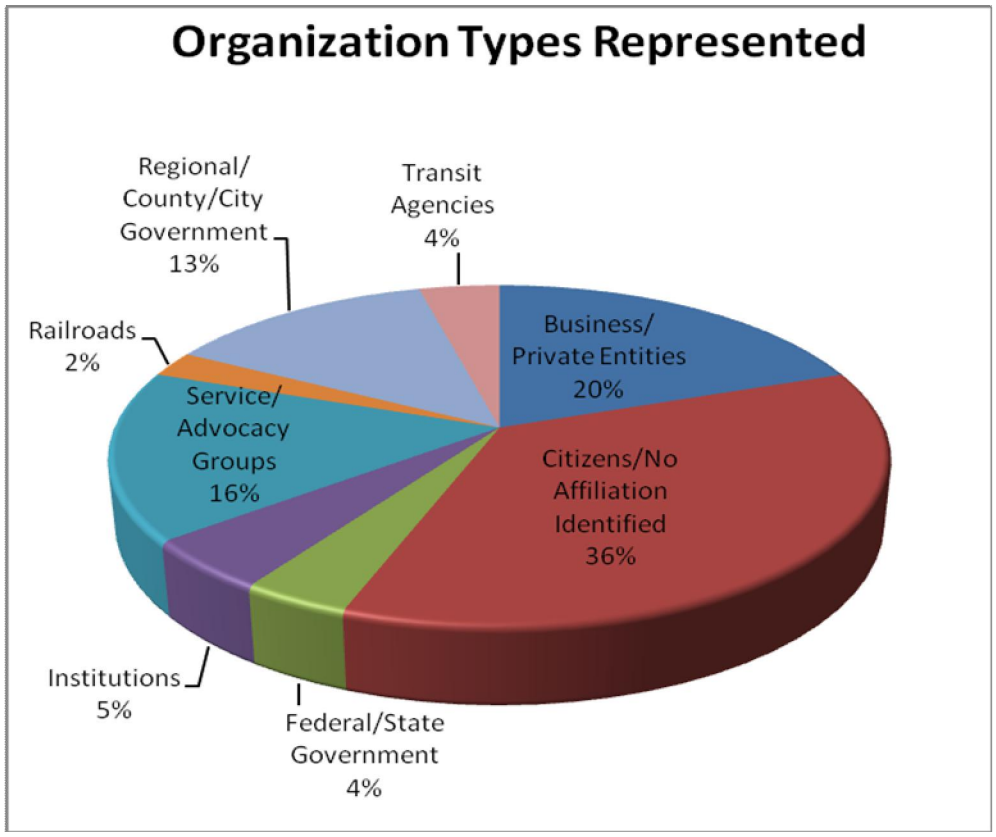
OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY – DULUTH

Wednesday, April 29, 2009
Duluth Union Depot and Transportation Museum – Great Hall
5:00PM – 7:00 PM

TOTAL NUMBER SIGNED IN: 216



WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED: 7

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: *(as summarized by staff)*

- Do not engage in shared operations with freight railroads; build as new railroad between Duluth & MSP
- Get a train running as quickly as possible, conventional is ok
- Build and operate railroad with union labor
- Minimize fares, subsidize as much as necessary
- Many veterans live in northern MN require treatment at the VA hospital in Minneapolis. Current minivan service is inconvenient and uncomfortable. Continued supply of clientele from Iraq & Afghanistan makes this a long-term issue.
- Provide service to Two Harbors, eventually
- Amenities of rail travel are far better than alternative options.
- Rail is an important tourist asset in Duluth and northern MN

- Changing workforce over last twenty years, with massive growth in telecommuters. Many must occasionally travel to MSP, for whom the train would be greatly preferable to driving, as they will be able to work while on the train.
- How is the consultant team selecting the preferred route?
- Harrisburg, PA metro region is actually 1 million, not small number shown in presentation.
- Rail must have good connectivity to other services at MSP and Duluth
- Train needs to serve both Minneapolis and St. Paul
- Project is desperately needed, with 25 – 30% unemployment in the Duluth-area construction trades.
- Train should serve both Superior & Duluth.
- Metrolink commuter rail accident is cautionary tale for why we need union rail labor to operate trains.
- Don't assume Duluth train station location as given; also evaluate Garfield/Lincoln Park location.
- What is the timeline for NLX implementation?
- Competitive future calls for world class infrastructure. Otherwise northern MN will be left behind.
- High quality accessibility "exceeding ADA minimum standards" for trains is necessary.
- Trains should readily accommodate sports equipment, e.g. bikes, canoes, skis, etc.

MAIN THEMES:

- Union labor should be used to build and operate this service.
- Service between Duluth and Twin Cities is important and necessary for commuting and tourism.
- Use a dedicated alignment for this service.