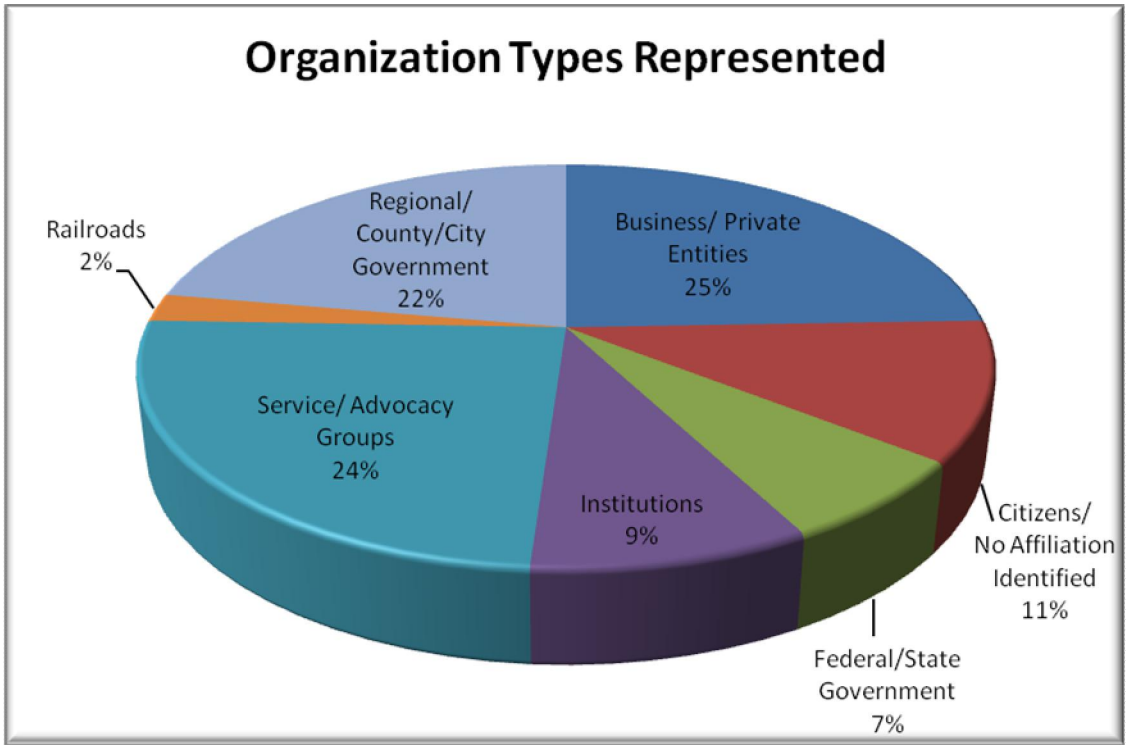
OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY – MANKATO

Wednesday, May 13, 2009
Best Western North Mankato
5:00PM – 7:00 PM

TOTAL NUMBER SIGNED IN: 45



WRITTEN COMMENTS SUBMITTED: 2

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

- Can you expand more on how public gains from economic growth?
- Provide an update on initial work done on some other passenger rail corridors – NLX, Twin Cities to Mankato, Rochester, St. Cloud Extension.
- Utilizing UP track to Twin Cities and CP to other destinations for passenger service are viable options.
- Passenger service to St. Paul is desired, and is being studied in current Mankato Area Transportation Action Plan (MATAP) – Envision 2020.
- Passenger rail is getting a lot of attention. Short lines were created after some of the bigger passenger rail lines got degenerated. Short lines are needed for rural economic development, good service levels, and rural survival. Will this plan study the benefits of running freight on rail and capital investment benefits to short lines?
- We hope the plan looks at improving short line railroads; dispose funds for signals and grade crossing improvements on short lines.
- 280 trucks = 1 train = a lot of unemployed truck drivers.

- Trucks cannot go everywhere.
- Population growth is not the entire story; also look at freight growth and needs.
- What are the efforts being made for public-private partnerships?
- The Global Warming Mitigation Act aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 15% by 2015. All projects should take action to minimize the effects of global warming.
- Have any feasibility studies been done on Twin Cities-Mankato route?
- Rail Plan should encourage cooperation between various agencies.
- Two Class 1 railroad crossings in Mankato. Need for whistle free zones and grade crossing improvements.
- Mankato would suitably be part of through rail passenger service to Sioux Falls, SD, and/or Des Moines, IA.
- Commuter rail service to the Twin Cities (multiple daily frequencies) is preferred, is suggested by current bus services in area.
- Use of other lines in area should be studied for low cost passenger travel alternatives, i.e., Minnesota Prairie Line, TC&W, DM&E.
- Grade crossing investments are not being made at a reasonable level in Greater Minnesota, compared to Metro region.
- MRSI program should allow larger loans, $500,000 and above, due to scope of projects and cost of materials.

MAIN THEMES:

- Passenger rail between Mankato and Twin Cities is desired.
- Freight investment should be made in Greater Minnesota.