

**APPENDIX M**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

- **NLX Newsletter – November 2009**
- **NLX Flyer – July 2010**
- **Open House Summary Reports:**
  - **Cambridge – December 3, 2009**
  - **Coon Rapids – December 8, 2009**
  - **Superior – December 9, 2009**
  - **Hinckley – December 10, 2009**
  - **Duluth – July 27, 2010**
  - **Minneapolis – July 28, 2010**
  - **Sandstone – July 29, 2010**
  - **Cambridge – August 3, 2010**





# NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS

## Minneapolis – Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

Newsletter #1

November 2009

### About the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

NLX is spearheaded by a joint powers board, called the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance. It was formed in 2007 to explore options for renewing passenger rail service in the 155 mile corridor. The Alliance works with community partners and elected officials at the local, state and federal levels to move NLX forward. Already the Alliance has completed a feasibility study, continues to work closely with the BNSF Railway. The Alliance is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and FRA on an environmental study anticipated to be completed by the end of 2010.

Alliance members include: the regional rail authorities of Hennepin, Anoka, Isanti, Pine, St. Louis and Lake Counties, and the cities of Minneapolis and Duluth. Also participating are Douglas County in Wisconsin, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, the cities of Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, Sandstone and Superior in Wisconsin, and other agencies along the corridor. The group is led by St. Louis County Commissioner Steve Raukar, chair, and Anoka County Commissioner Dan Erhart, vice-chair.



### High Speed Passenger Rail is gaining momentum!

Comfortable, accessible, affordable rail service between Minneapolis and Duluth has been a vision of federal, state and local leaders. That vision has made significant progress toward reality. The proposed action offers an opportunity to provide reliable and competitive passenger rail service as a viable alternative to vehicular travel by:

- Decreasing travel times;
- Providing safe and reliable transit service; and
- Providing amenities to improve passenger travel quality and comfort.

Confirmation of the corridor's economic viability in the Northern Lights Express (NLX) Feasibility Study in 2007 supported funding for the next stage of the project. Over the next year, concept-level engineering plans and environmental review of NLX will be completed, facilitating completion of plans to begin construction in the next 5 years.

Recent accomplishments include:

- NLX was designated one of eight top priorities for development by the National Passenger Rail Study Group, headed by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, in December 2007.
- NLX feasibility study completed in December 2007.
- Received \$1.1 million from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in its first Capital Assistance Grant Program.
- \$475,000 designated for NLX in the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.
- A consultant has been hired and work has begun on environmental review and documentation and associated preliminary engineering.
- \$825,000 invested by local cities and counties in the Corridor.
- \$900,000 of Minnesota bonding has been leveraged with the \$1.1 million from the FRA to start the environmental and preliminary engineering work.
- In the 2009 Minnesota legislative session, \$26 million in bonding for rail projects was passed.
- Four years into the planning process, NLX is uniquely positioned to take advantage of funding opportunities through both the 2008 Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act and the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

### What is High Speed Rail?

High speed rail, just as its name implies, runs at higher maximum speeds than conventional rail. Improvements made to typical freight or passenger rail tracks to facilitate travel at these higher speeds include welded instead of butt-jointed rails and broader curves that allow comfortable travel at higher speeds. Parallel tracks and improved rail signaling systems facilitate travel by both high speed passenger service and freight rail in the same corridors. Safety improvements at roadway crossings better protect both rail and automobile travelers.

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## Upcoming Public Meetings

Please join us at one of the following public meetings to learn about plans to advance the NLX corridor. Representatives of the Alliance and the consultant team will be available to answer your questions and receive input. Your participation is important!

Directions to each meeting location will be posted to [www.NorthernLightsExpress.org](http://www.NorthernLightsExpress.org)

### Cambridge, Minnesota

Thursday, December 3, 2009, 4:30 – 6:00 pm

Brief presentation at 5 pm

Armed Forces Reserve Community Center – Assembly Hall

505 Spirit River Drive (County Road 70)  
Cambridge, MN 55008

### Coon Rapids, Minnesota

Tuesday, December 8, 2009, 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Brief presentation at 5 pm

Anoka-Ramsey Community College

– Legacy Room (2nd Floor)  
11200 Mississippi Blvd. NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

### Superior, Wisconsin

Wednesday, December 9, 2009, 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Brief presentation at 5 pm

Superior Middle School - Cafeteria

3626 Hammond Ave., Superior, WI 54880

### Hinkley, Minnesota

Thursday, December 10, 2009, 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Brief presentation at 5 pm

Fine Arts Center – Lobby

(enter from east parking lots at Hinckley-Finlayson High School)

201 Main St. E., Hinkley, MN 55037

For more information visit

[www.NorthernLightsExpress.org](http://www.NorthernLightsExpress.org)

**Bob Manzoline**, St. Louis & Lake Regional Rail Authority,  
phone: (218)254-2575

**Jon Olson**, Anoka County,  
phone: (763)323-5789

Just as importantly, however, is a greater emphasis on passenger comfort and convenience. Rail stations are located in conjunction with other transportation facilities to allow easy connections to commuter rail, light rail transit, and busways as well as automobile facilities. Tickets are purchased at the station to enable quick and easy boarding with minimal delays at passenger stops. Once on the train, passengers are treated to a relaxing comfortable ride and high amenity service.

High speed rail connections between Minneapolis and Duluth will facilitate recreational and business travel alike. Connections in Minneapolis will allow continued travel along the Northstar corridor and to the south metro area along Hiawatha LRT as well as future LRT lines serving the Twin Cities region. Plans are in the works for high speed rail connections to Milwaukee, Chicago, and many destinations beyond.

## Related planning efforts also underway

In addition to concept engineering and environmental documentation, a number of other planning efforts are underway that will support the NLX corridor. These efforts include:

- Station area planning at the Duluth Depot
- Planning for a multi-modal facility connection Northstar Commuter Rail, Hiawatha LRT, future Central Corridor LRT and NLX at the new Twins Ballpark
- Plans to extend the Northstar corridor to the St. Cloud area
- Station area planning in the communities of Sandstone, Hinkley, Cambridge and Mora
- Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Planning including connections from Chicago to Minneapolis
- Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

## Evaluating the environmental impacts of NLX

NLX would provide transportation connections for a variety of passengers. However, transportation projects have the potential to negatively impact communities, natural environments and cultural resources if not planned and designed appropriately. Efforts are currently underway to identify critical resources in both the urban, suburban and rural areas of the corridor, and to take early measures to avoid or minimize impacts to those critical resources. NLX staff have initiated coordination with federal, state and local agencies to facilitate evaluation efforts.

Input from local communities is also critical to these efforts. The current NLX study has planned for meetings at three critical points in the planning process – project initiation, evaluation, and review of the environmental document – to inform planning and design at critical points in the project process. At each point in the process, we will hold meetings at a variety of locations throughout the corridor to encourage participation from residents and businesses.

The first series of meetings will be held December 3 – December 10, 2009. Please see sidebar – for more information about meeting locations. If you are not able to join us for one of these meetings, please visit the NLX website at [www.NorthernLightsExpress.org](http://www.NorthernLightsExpress.org) to review project materials and provide your input via email. Your insights and input will be carefully considered and are appreciated.





# NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS

## Minneapolis – Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

Northern Lights Express Update:

July 2010

### About the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

NLX is spearheaded by a joint powers board, called the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance. It was formed in 2007 to explore options for renewing passenger rail service in the 155 mile corridor. The Alliance works with community partners and elected officials at the local, state and federal levels to move NLX forward. Already the Alliance has completed a feasibility study, continues to work closely with the BNSF Railway. The Alliance is working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and FRA on an environmental study anticipated to be completed by the end of 2010.

Alliance members include: the regional rail authorities of Hennepin, Anoka, Isanti, Pine, St. Louis and Lake Counties, and the cities of Minneapolis and Duluth. Also participating are Douglas County in Wisconsin, the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, the cities of Coon Rapids, Cambridge, Hinckley, Sandstone and Superior in Wisconsin, and other agencies along the corridor. The group is led by St. Louis County Commissioner Steve Raukar, chair, and Anoka County Commissioner Dan Erhart, vice-chair.



## Please join us!

Come hear about progress on the Northern Lights Express (NLX) Minneapolis to Duluth/Superior high speed passenger rail project since last December's public meetings. Learn more about ongoing study results, a recent public opinion survey, agency coordination activities, and connections to other transit options and destinations.

### Duluth

Tuesday, July 27, 5 to 7 p.m.

The Depot, Great Hall  
506 W. Michigan St.

Parking available in ramps

From I-35, take Mesaba Avenue exit and turn onto Fifth Avenue West.

The Depot is one block west.

### Minneapolis

Wednesday, July 28, 5 to 7 p.m.

Hennepin County Environmental Services Building  
417 N. Fifth St.

Located next to Target Field and easily accessible by transit

Enter from 6th Avenue (see [www.NorthernLightsExpress.org](http://www.NorthernLightsExpress.org) for a map)

Free parking available after 5 p.m.

### Sandstone

Thursday, July 29, 6 to 8 p.m.

Sandstone Senior Center  
206 N. Main St.

From I-35, take Sandstone exit and turn east onto Highway 23.

Take Highway 123 to the right, which turns into Main Street.

The Senior Center is inside the American Legion.

### Cambridge

Tuesday, August 3, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Armed Forces Reserve Community Center  
505 Spirit River Drive (County Road 70)

From Highway 65, take exit for Highway 95 (First Avenue) and turn west onto Highway 95. Drive through Cambridge and take a left on County Road 70 (Spirit River Drive).

### Contact:

**Bob Manzoline**, Executive Director

Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance,  
phone: (218)254-2575

Email: [bmanzoline@mndiscoverycenter.com](mailto:bmanzoline@mndiscoverycenter.com)

For more information visit: [www.NorthernLightsExpress.org](http://www.NorthernLightsExpress.org)



**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT**  
**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE**  
**CAMBRIDGE, MINNESOTA**  
**December 3, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Thursday, December 3, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Armed Forces Reserve Community Center, Cambridge, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on November 19, 2009. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, newsletters announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of November 23, 2009. A PDF of the newsletter was emailed to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification email list (approximately 90 people) on November 19, 2009. A reminder email was sent to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification list the week of the meeting.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance Board:** Bob Manzoline  
Jeanne Witzig  
Commissioner Larry Southerland

**Mn/DOT:** Dave Christianson

**SRF Consulting:** Chuck Gonderinger  
Beth Bartz  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 73 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:00. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size. Copies of the presentation boards are attached.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

## **Written Comments**

A total of seven comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of December 14, 2009. The comments are summarized below.

## **Summary of Comments**

### **Project Process**

- Questions about project timeline
- Meeting times are too early

### **Project Cost**

- Concerns about cost estimates
- Will the Hinckley Casino participate in the cost?
- Support for project even though cost is high

### **Station Location**

- Keep the number of stations to a minimum
- Concerns about a station near the Cambridge Mall due to traffic flow and increased development (comment from nearby resident)

### **Issues for Further Study**

- Concerns about roadway/rail crossings
- Could the project revitalize the Cambridge Airport?
- Concerns about noise
- Price should be competitive with cost of driving
- Allow flexible departures from stations or allow transfers to allow passengers to get off train and visit local businesses and tourist sites`

### **Support for project**

- Support for NLX as a transportation connection within the state and beyond
- Support for positive impacts to businesses that NLX could bring

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
COON RAPIDS, MINNESOTA  
December 8, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on November 19, 2009. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, newsletters announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of November 23, 2009. A reminder email was sent to the NLX Alliance Board list the week of the meeting.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance Board:** Jeanne Witzig  
Commissioner Dan Erhart

**SRF Consulting:** Chuck Gonderinger  
Nancy Frick  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of ten people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:00. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

## **Written Comments**

A total of three comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of December 14, 2009. The comments are summarized below.

## **Summary of Comments**

### **Project Cost**

- What is the projected fare?
- What is the comparative cost of adding a lane to 35E?
- When will the generated revenue be greater than the cost of operation?

### **Issues for Further Study**

- How many permanent jobs will the project create?
- Access to/from 610 to Foley Station would allow for greater economic development opportunities

### **Support for project**

- Concerns about lack of public interest in the project study

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN  
December 9, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Wednesday, December 9, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Superior Middle School, Superior, Wisconsin.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on November 19, 2009. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, newsletters announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of November 23, 2009. A reminder email was sent to the NLX Alliance Board list the week of the meeting.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance Board:** Jeanne Witzig  
Bob Manzoline  
Commissioner Nick Baker

**SRF Consulting:** Beth Bartz  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 18 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:00. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

## **Written Comments**

A total of three comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and two comments were received after the meeting as of December 17, 2009. The comments are summarized below.

## **Summary of Comments**

### **Project Cost**

- Concerns about study costs
- Questions about overall project costs
- Concerns about tax impacts to states and municipalities
- More emphasis should be placed on the local match and funding sources

### **Issues for Further Study**

- Questions about affordability of fare
- Will the line connect with light rail in the Twin Cities?
- Will the terminal in Superior or Duluth include a multimodal transportation facility?
- Coordinate service with the proposed Bethel-Minneapolis commuter service

### **Support for project**

- Concerns about lack of public interest in the project study
- Concerns about cost of studies to Superior and Douglas County
- Would like to see NLX as a local referendum
- Train service is needed to augment and coordinate with airline travel to reduce traffic and exhaust, provide a more fuel-efficient option, and bring economic growth

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
HINCKLEY, MINNESOTA  
December 10, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Thursday, December 10, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Hinckley Fine Arts Center, Hinckley, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on November 19, 2009. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, newsletters announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of November 23, 2009. A reminder email was sent to the NLX Alliance Board list the week of the meeting.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

***NLX Alliance Board:*** Jeanne Witzig  
Bob Manzoline  
Commissioner Dan Erhart  
Commissioner Doug Carlson

***SRF Consulting:*** Beth Bartz  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 34 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:00. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

## **Written Comments**

A total of ten comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of December 14, 2009. The comments are summarized below.

## **Summary of Comments**

### **Project Cost**

- Concerns about funding and federal debt

### **Issues for Further Study**

- Difficult for Hinckley to plan for a station since the casino loop plans are not known
- Concerns about use of eminent domain – “not necessary to allow transportation to a remote area.”
- Concerns about freight train congestion with the addition of passenger rail
- Questions about the number of trains through town each day
- Does BNSF support the track upgrades necessary for high speed passenger rail?
- Consider using the Munger Trail for a connection into Duluth
- Would like to see Hinckley station in Hinckley rather than at the casino
- Concerns about whether the project would require taking of the Senior Center land, but could be okay if the facility is relocated
- Will the casino be willing to work with the federal agency that oversees railroads?
- Concerns about safety and access for an unregulated crossing
- Questions about station locations
- Congestion reduction is not needed outside the Twin Cities area

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT**  
**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE**  
**DULUTH, MINNESOTA**  
**July 27, 2010 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Tuesday, July 27, 2010 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the St. Louis County Heritage and Arts Center (The Depot), Duluth, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on July 13, 2010. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, flyers announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of July 13, 2010. A PDF of the newsletter was emailed to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification email list (approximately 90 people) on July 13, 2010.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance:** Bob Manzoline, NLX Exec Dir  
Jeanne Witzig, KHA  
Ken Buehler, NLX staff  
Steve Fecker, NLX staff

**SRF Consulting:** Nancy Frick  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of six people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:30. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size. Copies of the presentation boards are attached.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

### **Written Comments**

A total of one comment was received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of August 5, 2010. The comments are summarized below.

### **Summary of Comments**

#### **Support for project**

- NLX will be beneficial to the hospitality industry near the Duluth Depot and should be used as a marketing opportunity. The project should coordinate with local hotels and businesses to offer discounts for riders.

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT**  
**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE**  
**MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA**  
**July 28, 2010 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Wednesday, July 28, 2010 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Hennepin County Environmental Services Building, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on July 13, 2010. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, flyers announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of July 13, 2010. A PDF of the newsletter was emailed to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification email list (approximately 90 people) on July 13, 2010.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance:**           Jeanne Witzig, KHA  
                                  Joe Gladke, Hennepin County  
                                  Kim Benson, Hennepin County  
                                  Frank Pafko, Mn/DOT  
                                  Jill Brown, NLX staff

**SRF Consulting:**       Beth Bartz  
                                  Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 22 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 5:30. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size. Copies of the presentation boards are attached.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

### **Written Comments**

A total of one comment was received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of August 5, 2010. The comments are summarized below.

### **Summary of Comments**

### **Issues for Further Study**

- Concerns about diesel exhaust exposure for downtown Minneapolis residents due to staging/idling BNSF trains.

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
SANDSTONE, MINNESOTA  
July 29, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Thursday, July 29, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Sandstone Senior Center, Sandstone, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on July 13, 2010. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, flyers announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of July 13, 2010. A PDF of the newsletter was emailed to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification email list (approximately 90 people) on July 13, 2010.

**Attendees**

The following agencies had representatives at the meeting to explain the project and answer questions:

**NLX Alliance:** Bob Manzoline, NLX Exec Dir  
Jeanne Witzig, KHA  
Commissioner Doug Carlson, NLX Board

**SRF Consulting:** Beth Bartz  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 47 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 6:30. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size. Copies of the presentation boards are attached.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

### **Written Comments**

A total of five comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of August 5, 2010. The comments are summarized below.

### **Summary of Comments**

#### **Project Process**

- Let the planning process proceed without political intervention.

#### **Sandstone Facilities**

- Bring station and/or maintenance facility to Sandstone.

#### **Issues/Concerns for Further Study**

- Parking cost and availability at stations.
- Suggestion for the Hinckley stop to stay on existing rail and use a shuttle to reach the casino to reduce cost and environmental impacts.

#### **Support for project**

- Support for NLX as an environmentally friendly travel mode easier than driving
- Encourage commuters to use NLX to encourage people to move to Sandstone and create jobs and housing.

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**NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE  
CAMBRIDGE, MINNESOTA  
August 3, 2010 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

**Introduction**

A Public Information Open House for the Northern Lights Express high speed passenger rail project was held on Tuesday, August 3, 2010 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Armed Forces Reserve Community Center, Cambridge, Minnesota.

**Notice of Public Information Meeting**

Press releases announcing the Public Information Meeting were distributed to press contacts by SRF staff on July 13, 2010. The contacts were provided by Jill Brown and Birdie Oddo. Additionally, flyers announcing the meeting were mailed to area community facilities and agencies the week of July 13, 2010. A PDF of the newsletter was emailed to the NLX Alliance Board meeting notification email list (approximately 90 people) on July 13, 2010.

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Jeanne Witzig, KHA  
Commissioner Larry Southerland, NLX Board  
Commissioner, Dan Erhart NLX Board Co-Chair  
Dave Christianson, Mn/DOT

***SRF Consulting:*** Beth Bartz  
Kelcie Young

An attendance record sheet was prominently displayed on a table at the front door and all persons entering were asked to sign in for the record. A total of 53 people signed in.

**Summary of Open House**

The meeting was an informal open house and with a short presentation at about 7:00. Attendees viewed informational exhibits and engaged in one-on-one or small group discussions with the project staff. Boards shown at the meeting were 36 by 48 inches in size. Copies of the presentation boards are attached.

Comment forms were made available to meeting attendees. Meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments either directly at the meeting in a comment box, or by mail. Contact information for project staff was provided in the project newsletter.

### **Written Comments**

A total of three comments were received at the night of the Public Meeting and no comments were received after the meeting as of August 5, 2010. The comments are summarized below.

### **Summary of Comments**

#### **Issues for Further Study**

- Trains in Europe have “regular” and “limited stop” or express service, and perhaps NLX could use that model to decide how many stations are needed.

#### **Support for project**

- Support for NLX as a transportation option for commuters to keep residents in the area.

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