



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

**Office of the
City Coordinator**

Steven Bosacker
City Coordinator

350 South 5th Street – Room 301M
Minneapolis MN 55415-1393

Office 612 673-3992
Fax 612 673-3250
TTY 612 673-2157

steven.bosacker@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

MEMORANDUM

To: Paul Ostrow, Chair Ways and Means Committee
Other committee members

CC: Council Members
Mayor R.T. Rybak

From: Jayne Baccus Khalifa, Deputy City Coordinator

Subject: \$200,000 Request in Mayors Budget for Community Fest

Date: December 3, 2007

When the Republic National Convention meets in Minneapolis and Saint Paul in 2008, the City of Minneapolis has three primary goals. They are to:

- maximize the economic benefit to the City of Minneapolis;
- showcase our City and the convention center to promote future business; and
- involve our citizens

The Mayor's \$200,000 request reflects his priority that Minneapolis should seize the opportunity presented by this national and international event to promote our convention facilities and other amenities to the thousands of national and international meeting planners, corporate executives, and media who will be visiting Minneapolis Saint Paul. This investment in 2008 will allow us to reap benefits in the future as we grow our national and international convention business.

The Opportunity:

Over 40,000 people will visit Minneapolis and Saint Paul for the 2008 Republican National Convention. Among these visitors will be many high-level association and corporate executives with strong influence over or responsibility for where their organizations hold future meetings and conventions. We know from research that individuals who visit Minneapolis as a convention attendee or visitor are much more likely to have a favorable impression of our community, and more likely to want to return. The Republican National Convention presents the same level of opportunity as the grand opening of the Minneapolis Convention Center expansion in 2002 and the hosting of the American Society of Association Executives in 2004.



In addition, the Minneapolis Convention Center will be a primary location for daytime convention activities, and this presents unprecedented opportunities to market Minneapolis and our Convention facilities to the world. A Press Hospitality Center will provide a home base for 15,000 expected national and

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international press. National broadcasts like the Today Show, Good Morning America and evening newscasts, as well as local interest stories, will be broadcast live from Minneapolis. Convention delegates will use the space for meetings. Finally, the Convention Center will host a week-long event with the working title of "Community Fest." 150,000 out of town visitors, party delegates, local residents, and school children are expected to visit the 250,000 square foot exhibit and 80,000 square foot vendor space.

This "Community Fest" will be a vibrant civic festival and community experience that offers educational and entertainment opportunities for local Minneapolis residents and school children to participate in the unique opportunities that a national political convention affords host cities. Over 30 exhibits will include replicas of the Oval office, Air Force One, an exact scale model of the White House, memorabilia from Presidential Libraries, the Minnesota Historical Society, the C-Span bus and class room. A 300 vendor marketplace will showcase "Made in Minnesota" products, small business owners, and unique Minnesota merchandise. Other plans include a convention stage where Minneapolis artists will perform throughout the day; a political memorabilia road show (modeled after the Antique Road Show), book signings and lectures by prominent authors.

Preliminary Plans and Budget:

We must emphasize that these plans and budget numbers are preliminary. We also would like to emphasize that this budget request would fund additional program options above and beyond routine sales activities to promote Minneapolis.

If the Council approves the Mayor's Budget request, we will work with the Convention Center, Meet Minneapolis, the Mayor's Office and the Minneapolis and Saint Paul 2008 Host Committee to further define these plans. Currently, we expect to invest the Mayor's budget request in the following ways:

- Step-Up Interns: Hire and train ten Step-Up interns from Minneapolis High Schools to work with the City, local businesses and potentially the Host Committee to serve as marketing interns and work as docents and tour guides at the "Community Fest" Event. Please note that we will work with the Host Committee to sponsor Step-Up interns on their own, and also work with interns to address scheduling issues, given that the Convention takes place over the Labor Day weekend, after students have returned to class. ***Preliminary Budget: \$30,000***
- Direct marketing to association executives and corporate executives. Direct marketing and promotion on a more intimate level to association executives, meeting planners and corporate executives visiting Minneapolis for the convention. Budget request would fund sales and targeting research, one-to-one meetings, small hospitality events, transportation, memento and a follow-up piece. ***Preliminary Budget: \$20–35,000, depending on the extent of the programming***
- Co-Host client event in Washington D.C. We also have an additional opportunity to co-host a client event in Washington, DC, for key association customers, with the Denver Convention & Visitors Bureau. We would promote the benefits and abilities of both cities to

host an event of this magnitude from a business perspective. This event would take place in the late spring when the interest level in the upcoming election is at its peak. The consolidated efforts from both cities Convention and Visitors' Bureaus will generate a good response and also defray overall expenses by sharing the cost equally with Denver. This will expose Association and Corporate executives in a very distinctive way to the benefits and amenities of Minneapolis and our convention facilities, while not taking away from our core marketing programs. **Preliminary Budget: \$25,000**

- Develop enhanced media and promotion kit: Meet Minneapolis currently has the capacity to fulfill basic needs around tourism and meeting information required by the convention. However, with 15,000 media in Minneapolis, many looking for unique ways to cover our city, we would be well served by developing the resources to create new stories and tools to sell our city, including our neighborhoods, our theaters, arts and cultural scene, the diversity of our residents and the health and vitality of our business environment. With additional resources, we would improve the quality and expand the content of the photography, B-roll images and overall press kit available for the 15,000 media expected to visit Minneapolis Saint Paul. **Preliminary Budget: \$25,000**
- Develop an on-line media room with downloadable assets specifically available for the press. **Preliminary Budget: \$50,000**
- Develop comprehensive materials to promote Minneapolis, including features on business and people, Insider's Guides, features on Minneapolis neighborhoods and an interactive map for visitors and meeting planners. Develop an insert in *NWA World Traveler* for the August and September magazines with an eight-page spread promoting Minneapolis. **Preliminary Budget: \$35,000.**

In summary, preliminary plans for the \$200,000 Mayor's budget request would make investments in expanded marketing and promotion to maximize the economic benefit of the Republican National Convention to Minneapolis. Just as important, these investments position Minneapolis to take full advantage of the convention to secure future convention business. Finally, this request will expand Minneapolis' long- term capacity to promote Minneapolis with national and international media even after the convention is over.

Thank you for your consideration.