



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: October 25, 2011
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Referral: Honorable Betsy Hodges, Chair Ways & Means Committee
Subject: **2011 Northern Lights Express (NLX) Fees**

Recommendation:

- A. Authorize \$38,000 to be expended from fund (04100-600100-507007) to allow 2011 City of Minneapolis participation in the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance Board for the development of the Northern Lights Express.
- B. Authorize the appropriate city officials to amend the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance Joint Powers Agreement to allow for payment of these funds in 2011 and for subsequent years (2012 to 2016) when funding has been budgeted.

Previous Directives:

- January 22nd, 2008: Authorize city officials to enter into the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance Joint Powers Agreement.
- January 22nd, 2008: Approved funding for the city's portion of the rail study in the amount of \$57,750.
- April 28th, 2009: Authorize \$50,000 to be expended from fund (04100-600100-507007) to allow 2009 City of Minneapolis participation in the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance Board for the development of the Northern Lights Express.
- June 22nd, 2010: Authorize \$48,000 to be expended from fund (04100-600100-507007) to allow 2011 City of Minneapolis participation in the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance Board for the development of the Northern Lights Express.

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Approved by:

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Donald Pflaum, Transportation Planner 673-2129

Reviews:

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Not Applicable
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan:	Not Applicable
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Not Applicable

Financial Impact

Action is within current department budget

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: NA

City Goals: Supports City Transportation Goals

Comprehensive Plan: Supports Comprehensive Plan Goals

Zoning Code: NA

Background/Supporting Information

In January 2008 the City Council authorized the City of Minneapolis to enter into the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance. As part of this action the City agreed to contribute \$57,750 toward the 2008 Rail Alliance budget. The City Council took action to pay \$50,000 in 2009 and \$48,000 in 2010. Since the Joint Powers Agreement did not specify annual payments after 2008, this action is needed to continue membership on the Joint Powers Board. The 2011 contribution has been calculated to be \$38,000.

Project Status

The development of the Northern Lights Express (NLX) project from Minneapolis to Duluth continues to move forward. A \$5 million dollar U.S. Department of Transportation grant was awarded to the project in May 2011 to get the preliminary engineering plans to 30% complete. Since this funding was announced, the Federal Railroad Administration has provided a letter of concurrence stating that one alignment (route option 9) be pursued, which will allow the environmental work to be completed and for the engineering work to begin.