

T Transportation Committee
Meeting date: March 12, 2012
For the Council Meeting of March 14, 2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: March 7, 2012
Subject: Application to host 2014 Rail~Volution Conference, Resolution No. 2012-5
District(s), Member(s): All
Policy/Legal Reference: None
Staff Prepared/Presented: Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS (651-602-1754)
Brian Lamb, General Manager, Metro Transit (612-349-7510)
Guy Peterson, Director, Community Development (651-602-1418)
Division/Department: MTS, Metro Transit and Community Development

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes staff to prepare and submit a formal application to Rail~Volution to host the 2014 Rail~Volution Conference, in conjunction with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

Background

Rail~Volution is an annual conference that showcases the link between land use and transportation. Rail~Volution strives to be an all-inclusive, comprehensively and collaboratively planned event that emphasizes not only the link between land use and transportation, but also the coalitions of people and organizations that must be built to successfully achieve results. Rail~Volution presents an opportunity for all "livable communities" stakeholders to engage in debate and learn from each other's experiences. The conference's success stems from its ability to draw participants from a wide base of industries, professions and social services. Rail~Volution strives to attract diverse constituents by uniting them in a common forum.

The 4-day conference is typically held between late September and early November. The 2010 and 2011 conferences drew 1,250 and 1,150 attendees, respectively.

Rationale

The Twin Cities region has a compelling and rich transportation and land use story to share. Our transportation story includes a light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit and arterial BRT (Rapid Bus) transitway network, intermodal facilities, transit advantages such as MnPASS managed lanes and downtown bus lanes, a robust network of bike trails and bike sharing, complete streets initiatives and the skyway systems.

Our land use story includes the Council's role in regional land use planning, the Livable Communities Demonstration Act program, TOD grants, and the Corridors of Opportunity initiative. Other regional efforts to showcase include the state's Transit Improvement Areas, the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, and many more.

While the Council, CTIB and MnDOT will co-host the conference, many regional and local public, non-profit and private partners will be invited and encouraged to actively participate in the conference through their attendance, giving presentations and organizing mobile workshops.

2014 is the targeted year to host the conference given that 2014 will bring the start of revenue operations on the Green Line (Central Corridor LRT) and the completion of both the St. Paul Union Depot and the Minneapolis Interchange. The region's first BRT, the Red Line (Cedar Avenue) will also be in service.

Funding

The \$40,000 Host Contribution in 2014 will be split equally between the Council, CTIB and MnDOT. The hosting partners will be responsible for in-kind services and contributions such as transit passes. The hosting partners will also conduct private fundraising for approximately \$170,000 to fund a variety of conference costs including the opening reception and scholarships.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition. Both CTIB and MnDOT support this action.

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RESOLUTION 2012-5

**Resolution Authorizing the Metropolitan Council to Submit Application to
Host Rail~Volution 2014**

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council is the regional planning agency for the Twin Cities metropolitan area and owns and operates the regional transit system including: LRT, BRT, Commuter Rail, and the bus system; and the Council promotes transit oriented development through its policies and Livable Communities programs, and

WHEREAS, Rail~Volution is the nation's preeminent transit and transit oriented development conference, annually drawing together approximately 1,000 participants and scores of accomplished engineers, planners, development experts and other practitioners from across the country and around the globe to share knowledge, experiences and best practices in developing and implementing 21st century transit systems; and

WHEREAS, each year the Rail~Volution leadership selects a host community for their conference; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of being a Rail~Volution host community include: the opportunity to plan a conference program that meets regional needs; the opportunity to involve, educate and activate a broad range of public support for transit and transit oriented development investment in the region consistent with the Council's mission; the opportunity to nationally showcase the region's system of transitways including Hiawatha, Northstar, Cedar, Central, as well as the new hubs at the Union Depot and The Interchange, the region's nationally-lauded bike trail system, and transit oriented development; the opportunity to bring more than a thousand conference participants, sponsors, regulatory and funding agency representatives and others to the region generating an estimated economic benefit of \$500,000; and

WHEREAS, both the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) enthusiastically support the opportunity to bring the 2014 Rail~Volution Conference to the Twin Cities area; and have stated interest in co-hosting the conference with the Council; and

WHEREAS, after feedback from the Rail~Volution Steering Committee, and after additional research on the potential benefits and responsibilities involved in hosting Rail~Volution in 2014, staff from the Metropolitan Council, CTIB, and MnDOT have jointly determined that (1) the Twin Cities region possesses all of the organizational capabilities and locational features to host an exceptional conference, (2) an excellent opportunity exists to be selected as the 2014 site and (3) it would therefore be advisable for the Metropolitan Council, in conjunction with CTIB and MnDOT, to submit a formal application to host Rail~Volution in 2014.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Council hereby authorizes staff to prepare and submit a formal application to Rail~Volution to host the 2014 Rail~Volution Conference, in conjunction with CTIB and MnDOT.

Adopted this 14th day of March, 2012.

Susan Haigh, Chair

Sue Harder, Council Recording Secretary

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and correct copy of the resolution presented to and adopted by the Metropolitan Council at a duly authorized meeting held on the 14th day of March, 2012, as shown by the minutes of the meeting in my possession.

Sue Harder, Council Recording Secretary