



Northern Lights Express

Minneapolis – Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Northern Lights Express (NLX) is a proposed passenger rail project between the Minneapolis Transportation Interchange station and the City of Duluth, along Highway 65 and Interstate 35. The Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance is a joint powers board formed to explore options for renewing passenger rail service on existing tracks in the 155 mile corridor.

STATUS

- 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.
- Received \$1.1 million from the Federal Railroad Administration in its first Capital Assistance Grant Program, which gave NLX one-third of the total planning dollars available.
- \$900,000 of Minnesota bonding has been leveraged with the \$1.1 million from the FRA to start the environmental and preliminary engineering work. Anticipated completion date is end of 2010.
- \$475,000 designated for NLX in the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.
- \$500,000 appropriated by Congress for NLX in FY 2010.
- Approximately \$2 million invested by local cities and counties in the Corridor.
- In the 2009 Minnesota legislative session, \$26 million in bonding for rail projects was passed.
- In 2010, the project was approved by the MN Department of Transportation to receive \$3 million of last year's state bonding authority to assist in advancing the project.

CONTACT

Bob Manzoline, Executive Director
Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance

Proposed Use of FY 2011 Transitway Funding

Congressional funding in the amount of \$3,000,000 is requested to support environmental and engineering work in the following project elements:

- Mapping (LIDAR technology)
- Subgrade correction/geotechnical plans
- Capacity upgrades
- Equipment specifications
- Model revisions as needed
- Facilities and stations

In addition, the project anticipates applying for \$55,000,000 in FRA grants to support:

- Engineering
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Construction



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Phone: 218-254-2575

Email: bmanzoline@mndiscoverycenter.com



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