

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution

file number 11-101

date December 16, 2011

Minnesota High Speed Rail Study Preferred Alternative

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota, in conjunction with the states of Illinois and Wisconsin, has been studying "High Speed Rail" between Chicago and the Union Depot; and

WHEREAS, such High Speed Rail will provide reliable and competitive passenger rail service by decreasing travel times, increasing frequency of service, providing accessibility to major population centers, improving freight rail mobility and minimizing environmental impacts; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, nine Midwest states, including Wisconsin and Minnesota, and Amtrak formed the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI); and

WHEREAS, The work of the Initiative (MWRRI) has resulted in a well coordinated and integrated 110-mph rail Business Plan that defines the way in which the rail system should be implemented, and included a Benefit Cost and Economic Analysis (2006); and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), with assistance of a federal grant, initiated a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement document for new passenger rail service on the Milwaukee-Twin Cities corridor; and

WHEREAS, beginning in late 2009, the Alternatives Analysis portion of the Tier 1 EIS (Alternatives Analysis Milwaukee-Twin Cities High-Speed Rail Corridor Program) was begun, for the purpose of selecting a preferred routing alternative for further study; and

WHEREAS, 25 initial routes were screened down to 14 alternatives, then down to 4 alternatives and finally down to one; and

WHEREAS, the 4 semi-final alternatives included #1 – Existing Amtrak route, #4 – Existing Amtrak route via Madison, #10 – Existing Amtrak route to Tomah, then via Eau Claire, and #11 – Existing Amtrak route via Madison to Tomah, then via Eau Claire; and

moved by Spaulding

seconded by _____

in favor Unanimous

against _____

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WHEREAS, Alternative #1 was selected because it has a.) fewer significant grades; b.) fastest travel times; c.) lowest capital costs; d.) second lowest track maintenance costs; and e.) serves more population in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the City (via City staff and Council Member Stark) has participated in the Upper Midwest High Speed Rail Commission and the Governor's forum on passenger rail, both of which has found favorable the existing Amtrak routing alternative (#1) as the highest priority inter-state passenger rail route.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission support the selection of Alternative 1 of the Alternatives Analysis Milwaukee-Twin Cities High-Speed Rail Corridor Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this endorsement of Alternative 1 be conveyed to MnDOT as part of the official public hearing record.