

Twin cities welcome Canadian light rail system

Bombardier's light rail transit (LRT) commuter rail system will soon connect major centres and suburbs in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region.

Several years ago, Chuck McGriff, Business Development Officer at the Canadian Consulate General in Minneapolis, uncovered a proposal by Minneapolis-St. Paul to establish an LRT system. He shared this market intelligence with Bombardier and, on June 26, 2004, the company's technology was centre stage as the first phase of the light rail transit service was launched.

During its first full week of paid operations, the light rail trains carried more passengers than Metro Transit had expected. The agency, which operates the light-rail system, reported 93,000 riders between June 28 and July 4, nearly 68% more than the 55,400 riders that had been expected.

The first phase of the project is to be completed by December 31, 2004, and will provide 19 kilometers of service through 17 stations to downtown Minneapolis, the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America in nearby Bloomington.

Passengers travel on 14 *Flexity* light rail vehicles (LRVs) manufactured by Bombardier. The LRVs represent the first North American application of Bombardier's *Flexity* light rail technology. The company is manufacturing a total of 24 *Flexity* LRVs for Metro Transit, which is the 11th largest transit system in the United States.

The *Flexity* LRVs employ service-proven engineering concepts from Bombardier's low-floor, light rail products in Europe while complying with all North American standards and regulations. The low-floor design

facilitates passenger access at grade level, helping transit agencies avoid costly construction of special ramps and access platforms.

Car shells for the LRVs are manufactured by Bombardier in Mexico with final assembly and testing taking place at the company's manufacturing site in Plattsburgh, New York.



Bombardier's light rail transit system is up and running in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota.

In North America, Bombardier is the leader in high-speed rail, commuter rail, automated rapid transit and guide way transit systems. The company also maintains two of the largest multi-level commuter fleets in Canada and the United States.

For more information, contact Estelle Arnaud-Battandier, Canadian Consulate Trade Office in Minneapolis, tel.: (612) 492-2910, fax: (612) 332-4061, e-mail: estelle.arnaud-battandier@international.gc.ca. 🇨🇦

Fortune 500 companies look to Aboriginal companies

In April, the Native American Business Alliance (NABA) held its 4th annual convention in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico. Again this year, Canada's Aboriginal business community was well represented. The conference has become a key event for representatives of Fortune 500 companies to meet with potential aboriginal suppliers, both American and Canadian. NABA is also a useful venue for North American Aboriginal companies to network with one another.

The Canadian delegation included a record 42 Aboriginal companies, Aboriginal economic development officers, chiefs and government trade representatives. Corporate participants and event sponsors included Daimler Chrysler, UPS, Coca Cola, Ford Motor, Proctor and Gamble, General Mills and Walt Disney.

International Trade Canada (ITCan) sponsored an on-line trade mission

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Canada knocks on wood at U.K. building fair

This year's **Interbuild**, the United Kingdom's largest and most important exhibition for the building and construction industry, attracted 40,000 buyers, architects, contractors, builders and specifiers from around the world.

Fifty Canadian organizations made up the Canada pavilion making it the single largest national presence at the fair. The Canada Wood area showcased flooring, engineered wood products and wood-frame housing among other value-added wood products. The Canadian pavilion was home to a number of private firms, an Ontario delegation and the Super E® House Program. Super E®, supported by Natural Resources Canada, International Trade Canada, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Canada Wood Export Program, provides marketing, technical and

training support to Canadian exporters of high quality housing.

Opportunities

Interbuild is quickly becoming a must-attend event for Canadian companies in this sector. Recently, the U.K. has seen a dramatic rise in new home building to meet increasing demand. With property prices in the U.K. at their highest level in almost 20 years, and an industry unable to meet the country's growing needs, the U.K. is set for a new period of steady housing expansion with major opportunities for international suppliers.

The U.K. has opened up new green and brownfield sites for development with a greater emphasis on building density and sustainable building practices. A brownfield is a property whose expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence

of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

The British government is keen for its industry to adopt modern forms of construction, including offsite manufacturing like panelizing and prefabrication, for example. The U.K. government wishes to improve building standards, reduce costs, decrease construction times and address areas of energy conservation and sustainability. Canadian firms, with far greater experience in wood-frame construction, are meeting this challenge and earning a positive reputation both in the local press and within the U.K. construction industry.

The next Interbuild exhibition is scheduled to take place from April 23 to 27, 2006. **For more information**, contact Jason Kee, Canadian High Commission in the United Kingdom, tel.: (011-44-207) 258-6600, fax: (011-44-207) 258-6333, e-mail: jason.kee@international.gc.ca. 🇨🇦

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(www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/trade/missions/oltm) for this event. This was a first for the NABA convention and was a useful tool for Canadian and U.S. companies to introduce themselves on-line to potential partners before the event.

ITCan also sponsored a networking breakfast for the Canadian companies. The purpose of the event was to inform participants of the department's export assistance programs and services in the U.S. (www.infoexport.gc.ca). This also allowed companies to network with one another as well as share information on how to do business in the U.S. and with Fortune 500 companies. As pointed out by one successful business person during the seminar, "exporting is essential to broadening your market and once you get through the paperwork, it's worth it."

Dave Tuccaro, President of the National Aboriginal Business Association of Canada, was so impressed with the event that he is determined that next year's mission to NABA will have an even larger Canadian participation thanks to active recruitment from his association's membership.

NABA 2005 will be held at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida, from April 15 to 18, 2005. **For more information**, go to NABA's Web site at www.native-american-bus.org, or contact Rosi Niedermayer, International Trade Canada, tel.: (613) 944-0634, e-mail: rosi.niedermayer@international.gc.ca, Web site: www.itcan-cican.gc.ca. 🇨🇦

"NABA is the best business conference that we have ever attended! We are now in discussions with an American Native-owned company and a Fortune 500 company for the distribution of our Nisga'a Wild Salmon and canned salmon line into the U.S. market."

Harry Nyce,
President, Nisga'a Fisheries Ltd.



Harry Nyce of Nisga'a Fisheries Ltd. in a one-on-one meeting at NABA.