September 14, 2015

Dear Mayor and Council,

I would like to request funding to attend the National League of Cities Congress of Cities and Exposition November 4-7 in Nashville, Tennessee. This conference is the largest gathering of local elected officials and staff in the country, and is designed to offer exceptional educational and networking opportunities to increase the effectiveness of local leaders. The event regularly attracts over 3,000 attendees.

In any given year, conference attendees represent almost all 50 states, plus Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, and Canada. NLC is a bipartisan organization focused on connecting officials to local government solutions, and the conference attendance reflects this fact. In terms of city size, small towns to large cities and everything in between are represented. This diverse attendee base will maximize my opportunities for sharing ideas and solutions to bring home and implement in Rapid City.

The conference will include sessions and learning opportunities where I can gather tangible takeaways to bring back home on a variety of topics important to our community, such as economic development, infrastructure (both the built environment and technology), sustainability and the environment, leadership, public safety, and topics around improving outcomes for youth and families in our community.

Outside of the sessions, there will be countless opportunities for me to meet and build relationships with other local elected officials, staff, and experts from all over the country who may serve as key contacts for both present and future initiatives in Rapid City. The opportunity to make valuable connections at this conference is consistently stated by past attendees as one of the greatest assets.

Part of what makes the Congress of Cities unique and such a "must attend" event are the many ways in which the local host city gets involved in putting on the conference, especially the creation and production of mobile workshops. Not only is there educational programming at the convention center as part of the conference but also experiential educational opportunities around the City of Nashville and often the surrounding region.

>   Here is the breakdown of conference costs:
>   Roundtrip Airfare: $519.20
>   Transportation: $14 one way

Hotel and Conference Fee: $995
Per Diem: $247

The total costs associated with attending this conference are: $3,192

With such a great offering of educational content and relationship-building opportunities in one place, having representatives from Rapid City at the conference will afford our team of leaders access to top strategies and best practices that will help us reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and build value in various areas for our community.
If there's any further information I can provide to support my request, please do not hesitate to ask!

Sincerely,

Ritchie Nordstrom
Ward 2 Alderman