

Congressman Earl Blumenauer was a highlighted speaker at the national Rail-Volution Conference held in Washington, DC, October 16-19. Blumenauer, called the “Godfather of Rail-Volution,” inspired the Livable Communities movement with a keynote speech alongside Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and American Public Transportation Association President Bill Millar. Blumenauer congratulated attendees on the progress they've made in spite of Congress' refusal to invest in critical transportation and community needs. Secretary LaHood affirmed the Obama administration's commitment to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and urged attendees to contact their Congressional delegations in support of the President's Jobs Bill. Millar highlighted the value public transit has added to numerous communities and urged Congress to find the funding needed for continued investments.

This year's conference presented a stellar line-up of speakers, work sessions, and mobile workshops for almost 1200 attendees from 197 communities across the US and 5 other nations, providing the latest information and insights on how investments in transit systems and bicycle and pedestrian facilities have increased transportation choices, improved public safety, decreased greenhouse gas emissions, strengthened local economies, and saved American households money. National experts Chris Leinberger of the Brookings Institution and Dr. Manuel Pastore of UCLA provided valuable insights into the nation's dramatically changing real estate markets and demographics. GSA Commissioner of Public Buildings Bob Peck focused on the federal government's commitment to green building design and location, while noted New Urbanist planner Peter Calthorpe explained how Livable Communities can impact global climate change.

Next year's Rail-Volution conference will take place in Los Angeles, California, on October 14-17, 2012.

