

Central Corridor

**News
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Central Corridor LRT Project

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Ames-McCrossan to build 3 miles of line, Siemens to build 41 LRVs

ST. PAUL – Aug. 25, 2010 – The Metropolitan Council awarded the second heavy construction contract Wednesday for the Central Corridor light rail transit (LRT) Project to Ames Construction/C.S.McCrossan and gave Siemens Transportation Systems Inc. the contract to build 41 light-rail vehicles (LRVs).

Ames/McCrossan's \$113.8 million bid to build the three-mile Minneapolis segment of the line includes betterment work valued at nearly \$1 million that was requested by, and will be paid for, by the city of Minneapolis, Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota. The cost to construct the westernmost three miles is \$4.2 million below budget.

Thirty-one of the low-floor LRVs are required for the Central Corridor project to provide for two-car operations when revenue service begins in 2014. The cost for the Central Corridor cars is \$120.2 million compared with \$119.1 million budgeted. The remaining 10 cars are needed to accommodate plans for the Hiawatha Line's three-car train program. Total cost of Siemens' proposed base contract is not to exceed \$153 million, including the cars for Hiawatha, contingent on satisfactory results from the Pre-Award Buy America Audit.

The bulk of the construction on the Minneapolis segment will start in spring 2011. Prep work is expected to begin this fall to retrofit the Washington Avenue Bridge to accommodate LRT trains by strengthening the bridge piers.

In December, crews will begin the process to tie in the Central Corridor line with the Hiawatha Line just west of the Cedar-Riverside Station to west of the future West Bank Station. When Washington Avenue is closed in May 2011 for its conversion to a transit-pedestrian mall, the work will take two bridge lanes out of service. For details on how this will affect bridge traffic, see:

<http://tinyurl.com/2fslypa>

The proposed LRV contract also includes an option to purchase up to 58 additional vehicles for future fleet expansion for Central Corridor, Hiawatha and Southwest lines should the need and funding be identified. The vehicles would be built at the Siemens plant in Sacramento, Calif. The proposed contract includes LRV production along with spare parts to support testing and initial operations. Engineering and testing of the LRVs requires two years prior to the arrival of the first vehicle, which is expected at the end of 2012. After that, delivery is expected at a rate of two to four cars per month.

Walsh Construction earlier this summer won the contract to build the seven-mile St. Paul segment and will begin construction after Labor Day east of the state Capitol on Robert and 12th streets. Walsh will work on University Avenue between Emerald Street and Hamline Avenue in 2011, between Hamline and Robert in 2012 and in downtown St. Paul in 2011-2012.

The project began improvements in May on streets around the East Bank campus of the University of Minnesota and utility relocation work last year on Fourth Street in St. Paul. The Federal Transit Administration has agreed to reimburse the project partners for the 50 percent federal share of advanced work once it awards a Full Funding Grant Agreement late this year.

Work on the three-mile Minneapolis segment includes:

- Building four stations from West Bank to 29th Avenue

- Relocating utilities necessary for the LRT trackway

- Constructing three miles of double track

- Fully reconstructing streets where track is being installed

- Strengthening the Washington Avenue Bridge by adding four trusses and replacing about 90,000 square feet of concrete deck

- Work necessary for systems testing by late 2013 to maintain the revenue service date in 2014.

About the Central Corridor LRT Project

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project will link downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis along Washington and University avenues via the state Capitol and University of Minnesota. Construction will begin in late summer 2010 on the planned 11-mile Central Corridor line, with service beginning in 2014. The line will connect with the Hiawatha LRT line at the Metrodome station in Minneapolis and the Northstar commuter rail line at the Target Field Station. The Metropolitan Council would be the grantee of federal funds. The regional government agency is charged with building the line in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The Central Corridor Management Committee, which includes the mayors of St. Paul and Minneapolis, commissioners from Ramsey and Hennepin counties and the University of Minnesota, provides advice and oversight. For details, visit www.centralcorridor.org