

Making Tracks



Winter - 2011



Shop locally — Signs set up by the Central Corridor Project Office the first week of March encouraged the public to patronize University Avenue businesses during construction.

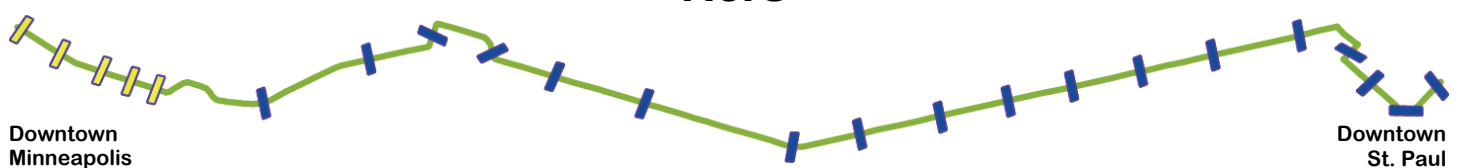
March marks start of two years of heavy construction

Washington Ave. Bridge: Washington Avenue Bridge reduced to one lane through 2012; watch for lane shifts.

West Bank: Utility relocation began at Cedar and Washington avenues in 2010. Work will start in early April on Washington and Cedar Avenue ramps.

East Bank: Utility relocation began at Washington and Oak in 2011. Construction will start in mid-May 2011 on Washington between Pleasant and Oak streets. This work will permanently remove auto traffic from Washington between Pleasant and Walnut Street to construct the transit/pedestrian mall.

More





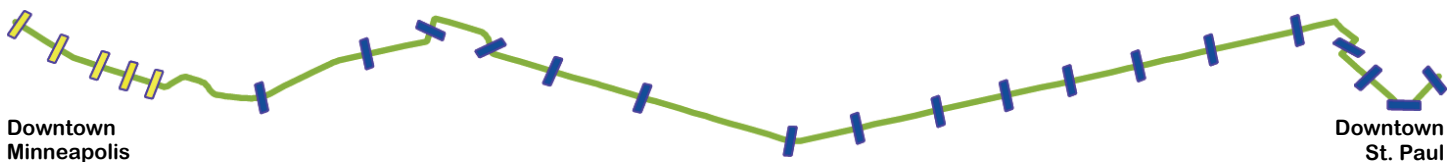
March marks (continued from page 1)

University Ave. between Emerald St. and Hamline Ave.: Utility relocation began in February 2011. Construction started in early March 2011 on the south side of University between Emerald and Hamline. Traffic will shift to the north side of University and be reduced to one lane each way. In midsummer, work will switch to the north side of University and traffic will shift to the south side, remaining one lane each way through November 2011. Access will be maintained to all businesses but on-street parking in the construction zone will be removed. Left turns will be allowed only at signalized intersections at Eustis, Cromwell, Franklin, Raymond, Vandalia, Cleveland, Prior, Fairview, Fry, Snelling and Hamline; all other left turn lanes will be closed. Work on the eastern end of University between Hamline and Rice Street will begin March 2012.

Capitol Area: Robert Street is closed to all traffic through November 2011 between University Avenue and 12th Street. Access is maintained to Regions Hospital facilities and the east side of the Capitol area via Jackson and 14th streets and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The west side of the Capitol is accessible via Cedar Street and MLK Blvd. Twelfth Street is reduced to one lane westbound between Jackson and Cedar.

Downtown St. Paul-Cedar Street: Utility relocation began in fall 2010 and will continue along Cedar Street and several cross streets through spring. Heavy construction on Cedar between Fifth and Seventh streets will begin June 2011 and continue through November; additional work will be required in 2012. Access will be maintained to businesses and parking ramps. In April, crews will remove the skyway over Fifth Street between Minnesota and Cedar streets in downtown St. Paul when they demolish the vacant former Bremer Bank building. That is where the tracks will be built on a diagonal from Fifth and Cedar streets to Fourth and Minnesota streets. A replacement skyway will be built and opened by November.

Downtown St. Paul-Fourth Street: Trackbed construction and track installation from Broadway to Minnesota will occur between March 21 and the end of July. Additional work will be done from July to November to construct the Union Depot Station between Sibley and Wacouta streets. Work will require closures of cross streets and two-block sections of Fourth for two to four weeks. Access will be maintained to businesses and parking ramps.

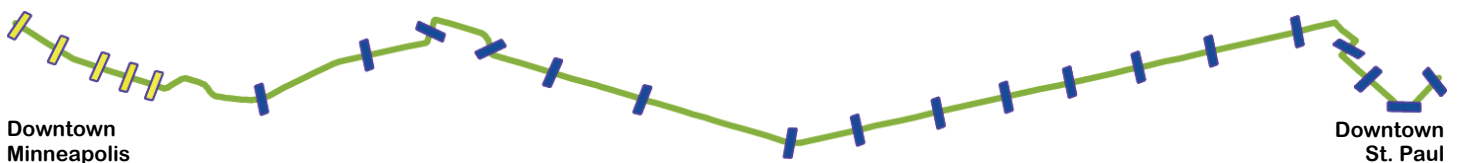




Washington Avenue Bridge



Crews (left photo) install temporary bracing in February under the Washington Avenue Bridge in preparation for starting work later in March to replace the vehicle deck. Crews built forms (right photo) in preparation for pouring concrete to create additional columns that will strengthen the bridge so it can support LRT trains on double tracks.





Ax-Man owner Jim Segal (left) talks with project traffic engineer Dan Soler, Met Council Chair Susan Haigh and Robin Caufman, manager of public involvement, for the project during a Feb. 17 meeting about LRT construction's potential impacts on businesses.

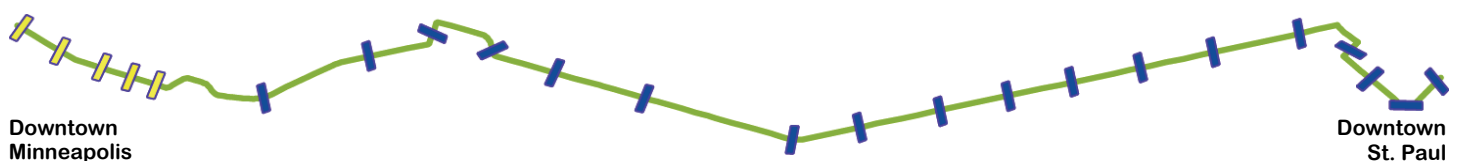
Business impacts: Two public hearings set for March 16

Two hearings will be held March 16 to take public testimony on the Supplemental Environmental Assessment reviewing the potential loss of business revenue along the Central Corridor LRT route during construction.

The meetings are scheduled for 8 a.m. in the Lao Family Community of Minnesota second-floor conference room, 320 University Ave. W., in St. Paul and at Goodwill/Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., in St. Paul. Individuals' comments will be recorded so their testimony can become part of the environmental process.

At the end of the 30-day comment period, the Metropolitan Council and the Federal Transit Administration will respond to all comments as part of the final Supplemental Environmental Assessment document.

People with special needs should contact community outreach coordinator Shoua Lee for reasonable accommodations at the hearings. Her contact information is shoua.lee@metc.state.mn.us or 651-602-1014.



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Business impacts (continued from page 4)

The Supplemental Environmental Assessment addresses the potential loss of business revenue as an adverse impact of the construction of the Central Corridor LRT Project, including mitigation activities. The assessment was conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for environmental review and pursuant to the U.S. District Court’s Jan. 27 ruling on the NAACP’s lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The Supplemental Environmental Assessment is posted on the Central Corridor LRT Project website at www.centralcorridor.org and is available for public review and comment for 30 days. In addition to giving testimony at the hearings, the public may submit written comments by March 31 to Kathryn O’Brien at the address below or via email at Kathryn.obrien@metc.state.mn.us

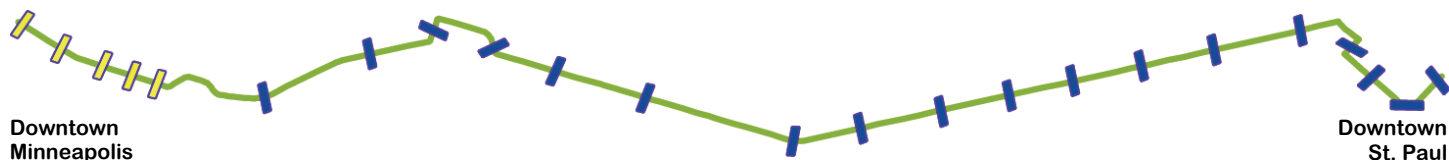
Her mailing address is:

Kathryn O’Brien
Environmental Services Manager
Central Corridor Project Office
540 Fairview Ave. N., Ste. 200
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-602-1927

Copies are also available for review at the following locations:

- Metropolitan Council library, 390 N. Robert St., St. Paul
- Central Corridor Project Office, 540 Fairview Ave. N., Ste. 200, St. Paul
- Minnesota Department of Transportation library, Transportation Building, 395 John Ireland Blvd., St. Paul
- Rondo Community Outreach Library, 461 N. Dale St., St. Paul
- St. Paul Central Library, 90 W. 4th St., St. Paul
- St. Anthony Park Branch Library, 2245 W. Como Ave., St. Paul
- Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., St. Paul
- Rice Street Library, 1011 Rice St., St. Paul
- Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave., St. Paul
- Franklin Library, 1314 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis
- Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis
- Southeast Library, 1222 4th St. SE, Minneapolis

As part of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment process, two town hall/open house meetings were held Feb. 17. At least 150 people attended. Staff from the FTA and the Central Corridor Project Office listened and answered questions on a one-to-one basis.





Sign up to get weekly construction updates by email

Keeping up with how to get around during construction takes only a few keystrokes. Just type in your email address in the yellow box at the top right of the homepage for centralcorridor.org at: **<http://tinyurl.com/2aceyjz>**

Addressees will receive updates every Friday for the sections of the corridor they choose. The updates provide a look at the week ahead with details on lane shifts, crosswalk and sidewalk closures and alternate routes and relocated bus stops. The public also can sign up to receive project newsletters.

About the project: The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project will link downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis along Washington and University avenues via the state Capitol and the University of Minnesota. Construction began in late summer 2010 on the planned 11-mile Central Corridor line, and service will begin 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 will 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 commissioners from Ramsey and Hennepin counties, the mayors of St. Paul and Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota, provides advice and oversight. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration, Counties Transit Improvement Board, state of Minnesota, Ramsey and Hennepin counties' regional railroad authorities, city of Saint Paul, Metropolitan Council and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. For details, see www.centralcorridor.org

Hotline number: To report problems that arise during construction, call the hotline at 651-602-1404.

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