

NEWS ADVISORY

Contact: Laura Baenen
Communications Manager
Central Corridor LRT Project
Metropolitan Council
651-602-1797 office
612-269-4365 cell
Laura.baenen@metc.state.mn.us

ST. PAUL -- Jan. 14 – Xcel Energy will begin utility relocation in mid February on the western end of University Avenue in St. Paul in advance of the start of heavy construction in March.

The Central Corridor Project Office notified business and property owners today about the utility relocation work.

Xcel Energy has existing gas lines that run across University Avenue on the east side of Cromwell and Eustis. The work will take up to four weeks. Xcel crews are working with the Central Corridor construction team to coordinate the heavy construction activities that are scheduled to begin in this same area in early March at Emerald Street. Heavy construction will progress eastward toward Hamline Avenue through November.

The utility relocation work is expected to have the following impacts:

- University westbound will be reduced to one lane from west of Eustis to Cromwell.
- University eastbound will be reduced to one lane from east of Cromwell to Eustis.
- Eustis will be reduced to two lanes southbound and the turn lane for eastbound University will be closed. Traffic needing to go eastbound on University will be detoured via Franklin.
- Cromwell will be reduced to two lanes northbound.
- Right turn lanes will be maintained except for a weeklong period when the right turn lane from northbound Cromwell to eastbound University will need to be closed for utility relocation work. Traffic needing to go eastbound on University will be directed to use Franklin.
- On-street parking will be removed in the construction zone.
- Access will be maintained to all business and parking lot entrances.
- Xcel staff will work individually with businesses if there are any utility impacts.

Qwest and St. Paul Regional Water also plan preliminary minor work before the end of January on the western end of University in advance of heavy construction. Water supply to buildings in the area should not be interrupted.

When heavy construction starts in March on the south side of University at Emerald, one lane of traffic in each direction will be maintained on the north side of University. Additional information about the main construction will be distributed around the end of January.

More detailed information will be made available online at www.centralcorridor.org and distributed via a weekly electronic construction update. The public can sign up for these updates online at: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/CCLRTSubscribe.htm>

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 began in 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 new 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. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration, Counties Transit Improvement Board, state of Minnesota, Ramsey and Hennepin counties' regional railroad authorities, city of St. Paul, Metropolitan Council and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. For details, visit www.centralcorridor.org