

Central Corridor Green Line DBE and Workforce Story June 2014

Laying Tracks, Connecting Communities

GREEN LINE

201A

201A

 Metro Transit



This is a story about communities.

Our communities are diverse and ready to thrive. Building the Central Corridor Green Line was an experience that welcomed participation of everyone who was passionate about opportunities to help build the largest transit project to date. Transparency, collaboration and equity – that was the mantra the Metropolitan Council and its partners lived by. Working together, the tracks were laid to bridge our communities! This is the story of how a large public agency successfully engaged Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, people of color and female workers in the building of the Central Corridor Green Line.



Susan Haigh
Chair, Metropolitan
Council



Wanda Kirkpatrick
Director, Equal Opportunity,
Metropolitan Council

The Metropolitan Council maximizes every opportunity for people of color and women to work on our construction projects. Our efforts on the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) project were exhaustive and transparent.

From the start, the Council and its community partners committed to ensuring equity and meeting the federal government's inclusion goals for hiring qualified workers and disadvantaged businesses that were historically disadvantaged in the construction trades.

In addition to utilizing traditional methods of engagement, we launched several innovative engagement processes, described within this brochure. These efforts included the Great Minds Retreat, contractor and project staff meetings throughout the project, the Central Corridor Joint Oversight Committee and the LRTWorks.org website.

As a result of this shared work we not only have a new LRT line; we substantially increased the pool of people of color and women who are ready, willing, able and qualified to participate in the design and construction of large-scale transit projects. Our region benefits by increasing its prosperity, livability, sustainability and equity!

Susan Haigh

Wanda Kirkpatrick





The mission of the Metropolitan Council is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region. The Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.



The mission of Metro Transit is to deliver environmentally sustainable transportation choices that link people, jobs and community conveniently, consistently and safely. One of the largest transit systems in the country, Metro Transit is the transportation resource for the Twin Cities, offering an integrated network of buses, light rail and commuter trains as well as resources for those who carpool, vanpool, walk or bike. Metro Transit is an operating division of the Metropolitan Council.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD / ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	1
EXPECTATIONS	4
HISTORY – PROJECT FACTS	6
OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	8
DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE	9
WORKFORCE INCLUSION	14
MAJOR CONTRACTORS	18
INNOVATIONS	19
COMMUNITIES ALONG THE TRACK	28
CONCLUSION	35
IN MEMORY	37

Expectations from Public Partners

Leadership of the Metropolitan Council, City of Minneapolis, City of Saint Paul, Hennepin County, Ramsey County and Minnesota Department of Human Rights spoke in a single voice to potential contractors. The message was simple—we are committed to inclusion.

Construction firms received letters from mayors and county commissioners affirming the importance of inclusion success for the Central Corridor Green Line project.



Minnesota Department of
HUMAN RIGHTS

“ We urge you to consider the importance we place on maximizing opportunities for local hiring and training during the construction of this light rail line. We are committed to ensuring that every public dollar spent on this construction project provides employment and business opportunities for people of color and residents from both central cities. We expect to see construction activities that support minority- and women-owned businesses and strengthen lower-income families by providing well-paying jobs. ”

— Excerpt from cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul letter to potential contractors, dated March 12, 2010.

Expectations from Community Partners

As the project began, we were in the midst of the recession. The Rondo community had a great deal of distrust over potential displacement due to their experience with the 1960s construction of I-94. Communities were skeptical of our commitment to be transparent and of our ability to meet project goals.

Many organizations and communities along the line offered both criticism and advice of our proposed plan. They requested commitment to local hiring, inclusion of people of color, and contractor accountability. They were active in helping us shape the monitoring systems we would implement for the project.

Community Partners

District Councils Collaborative

Local faith-based advocacy groups

Minneapolis and Saint Paul Building and Construction Trades Councils (unions)

People of Color and Women Contractor Associations

Residents of the corridor

Workforce Training Institutions

Youth Advocacy Groups

“*HIRE Minnesota is a coalition of over 70 organizations and thousands of individuals dedicated to ensuring that our public investments provide jobs that lift people out of poverty, reduce racial disparities and create healthier communities. One of our main goals is to ensure that low-income communities, women and people of color are a significant component of the workforce for publicly funded infrastructure projects, and that workforce goals are met.*”

— Excerpt from Hire Minnesota letter to Metropolitan Council, dated March 12, 2010

Central Corridor Green Line – Rich History

From original story by Aaron Isaacs,
Minnesota Streetcar Museum Historian

It's déjà vu all over again on University Avenue between Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Rail transit is back, after an absence of 61 years. Horse-drawn streetcars ventured out University from downtown Saint Paul as far as Dale Street in 1882. In 1890, with the coming of electricity, the two cities were connected for the first time via University Avenue and Washington Avenue. In the process it connected the downtowns with the University of Minnesota, and opened up the land between the cities for development. They called the line the Interurban, a name it would keep until the streetcars disappeared.

For a while, the Saint Paul and Minneapolis cars would meet at the city limits and exchange crews, but the streetcar continued into the other city. Soon, however, crews ran through. Travel time end-to-end was about 50 minutes, and much of it was through open country with few stops and little traffic to cause delay. Beside passengers, the streetcars carried the mail in locked metal boxes chained to the rear wire gates. Ridership was extremely heavy, with cars running only one minute apart during rush hours.

The Green Line's route is very similar to that of the Interurban. It's interesting to note that the Minneapolis end of the line was at 5th Street and 5th Avenue N., where the Green Line will end.



5th Street and 5th Avenue North, Minneapolis Photo by Norton & Peel, courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society



Snelling Station, Snelling and University Avenues intersection

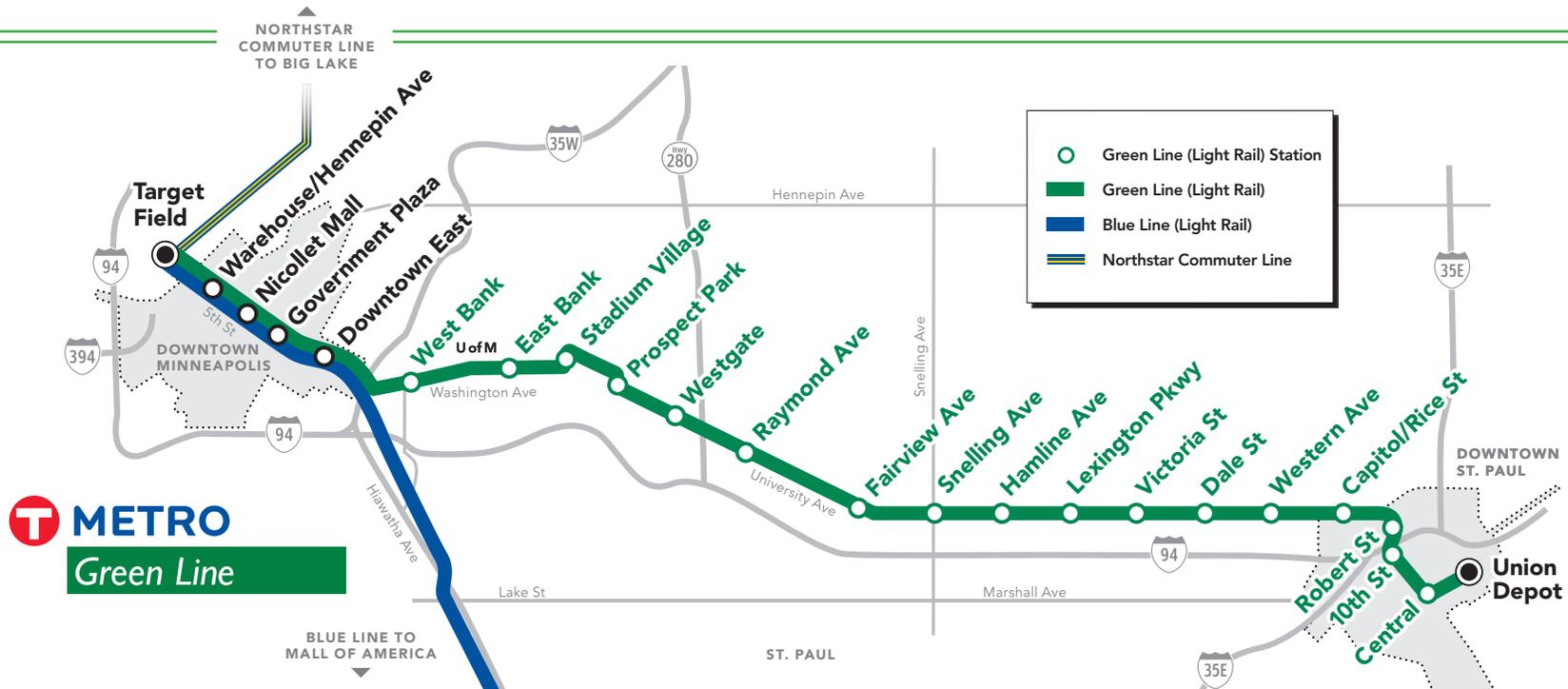


Washington Avenue bridge, by the University of Minnesota



Streetcar by the Minnesota State Capitol

Central Corridor Green Line Project



Project Partners

- Metropolitan Council
—Lead local sponsor
- Metro Transit
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Counties Transit Improvement Board
- Ramsey County
- Hennepin County
- City of Saint Paul
- City of Minneapolis
- University of Minnesota
- Central Corridor Funders Collaborative

Project Facts

- Length: 11 miles
- Trains: 47 new light rail transit vehicles
- Stations: 18 new stations; 5 shared stations with Blue Line
- Service: 40 minutes between the two downtown stations
Every 10 minutes during peak travel periods
24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Ridership: Projected 40,000+ weekday ridership by 2030
- Cost: \$957 million
- Jobs/Payroll: Delivery of the Green Line LRT created an estimated 150 design, engineering and management jobs and over 5,000 construction jobs resulting in a \$252 million payroll.
Created 200 operations and maintenance jobs

Office of Equal Opportunity, Metropolitan Council

OUR MISSION IS TO CHAMPION EQUITY

The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) is committed to utilizing businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in its procurement and contracting efforts. To support that commitment, the Metropolitan Council facilitates equity for contracts and procurements made with federal money by implementing the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE). In addition our office monitors compliance to ensure the equitable participation of people of color and women in the construction of our projects.

When the Central Corridor Green Line project came on-line, OEO prepared a strategic plan that guided decisions, set priorities, committed resources and measured progress. The Council carried out the strategic plan working with public and community partners, prime contractors and the community at large.

OEO committed two full-time staff and allocated additional staff to support the compliance and monitoring of the Central Corridor Green Line.



OEO staff under the direction of Wanda Kirkpatrick

“ I have appreciated our partnership from the first day and our team is forever grateful to all of you. We really hope that we can meet up down the road for Southwest LRT and beyond. ”

John O'Phelan – Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

135+ DBEs

135+ DBEs at Work on the Green Line

3 Rivers Insulation Inc 4RM + ULA A & B Trucking Co Act Electronics Inc Add On Staffing Solutions Airfresh Industries All Agape Construction Company LLC All Phase Contracting All Star Rolloff Inc Allied Electrical & Industrial Supply Aloha Landscaping Inc Am-Tec Designs Astro Engineering and Manufacturing Inc B & B Diversified Materials B & L Supply Inc Bald Eagle Erectors Inc Big G Tech Support LLC Big Jay's Cleaning Services Company Biko and Associates Inc Borgert Products Inc Bywater Business Solutions CM Valuation C P Office Products Camelot Metals Carlo Lachmansingh Sales Inc Castrejon Incorporated Coho Enterprises Connetics Transportation Group Inc Covenant Electric Inc Crocus Hill Electric Co Crystal Welding Inc D'fense LLC DF Countryman Co Inc Dispatch Trucking LLC Duan Corporation E & J Rebar Inc Eagle Land Surveying Inc E-Con-Placer Inc Eden Resources Emerge Construction Elliott Contracting Corp Environmental Enhancements LLC EVS Inc F.A.M Trucking LLC Franz Reprographics Inc Frontier Construction Company Inc Goliath Hydro-Vac Gunnar Electric Inc Hansen Thorp Pellinen Olson Inc Hess Roise & Company High Five Erectors Inc Highway Solutions Inc Honda Electric HZ United LLC Icon Services Corporation J & L Steel & Electrical Services Jambo Trucking JD Donovan Inc JD Rynders JPCO JV Trucking KSO Metalfab Kang Contracting Corp Lake Street Realty Lanier Steel Products Inc Lema Trucking Liz Weber Trucking Inc Loeffel Construction LKG-CMC Inc Lucas Company LLC M & J Trucking Co LLC Mass Transit Consultants LLC MAG Mechanical MBE Inc MC Electric MC Supply Inc Meyer Contracting Inc MFRA Inc Midwest Lighting Products Minnesota Geoservices Inc Miracle Trucking and Towing M-P Consultants MS Trucking LLC MTEC Electric Inc Nadeau Nexpro Personnel Services Inc Northstar Imaging and Reprographic Services O'Malley Construction Inc On Site Sanitation OTA Trucking Inc Our Team Advantage Inc Povolny Specialties Inc Precision Testing Inc Princess Trucking Inc Pristine Cleaning Connections Professional Engineering Services Ltd Progressive Consulting Engineers Inc Public Solutions Inc Quality Cutting and Coring Inc Rani Engineering Inc Ray Trucking Inc Rock On Enterprises Inc Safety Signs Sanders Steel Erectors Shaw Trucking Inc Simplex Construction Supplies Inc Standard Contracting Inc Stonebrook Fence Inc Stripe Right Inc Midwest Systems Technical Services Inc Tarraf Roll Off Services Inc Terron Trucking Total Insulation Transignal LLC Tricom Communications Inc Tri-Construction Triunity Engineering & Management Inc Turnkey Appraisals Two Buffalo Construction Supplies Inc Utility Sales and Supply Inc Vedi and Associates Victor Trucking Vision Inc Vogel Sheet Metal Waterproofing by Experts Inc Willis Trucking Inc Wissota Supply Company Inc Woody's Rebar Co Inc Yaw Construction Group Inc Zan Associates Zawadi Inc

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

The DBE Program is a federal program for increasing the participation of women- and minority-owned businesses in the award of federally assisted contracts. The Central Corridor Green Line Project received half of its total project funding from the federal government.

What is a DBE?

DBEs are for profit small business that are controlled and owned by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.

What were the DBE goals?

OEO established the Central Corridor Green Line project goals based on local availability and historic utilization of DBEs for each major contract. The goals for the professional service contracts ranged from 15-17%. The goal for major construction contracts was 15%.

How does the DBE Program work?

A Senior Equal Opportunity Consultant was assigned full time to administer the DBE Program on the Central Corridor Green line. DBE Program work included the following activities:

- Goal setting
- Pre-bid outreach
- Bid DBE evaluation
- Commercially Useful Function site visits
- Good Faith Effort determination
- Dispute resolution
- Monthly reporting
- Pay verification
- Reporting

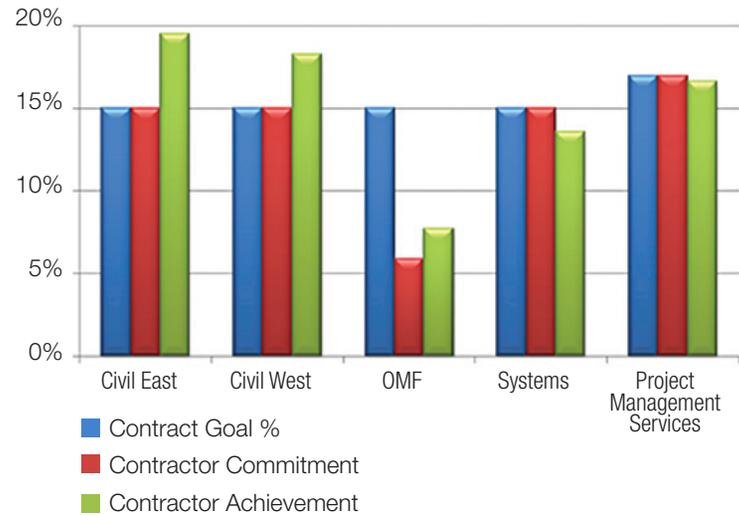
DBE Success

Built relationships. Increased capacity.
Delivered quality.

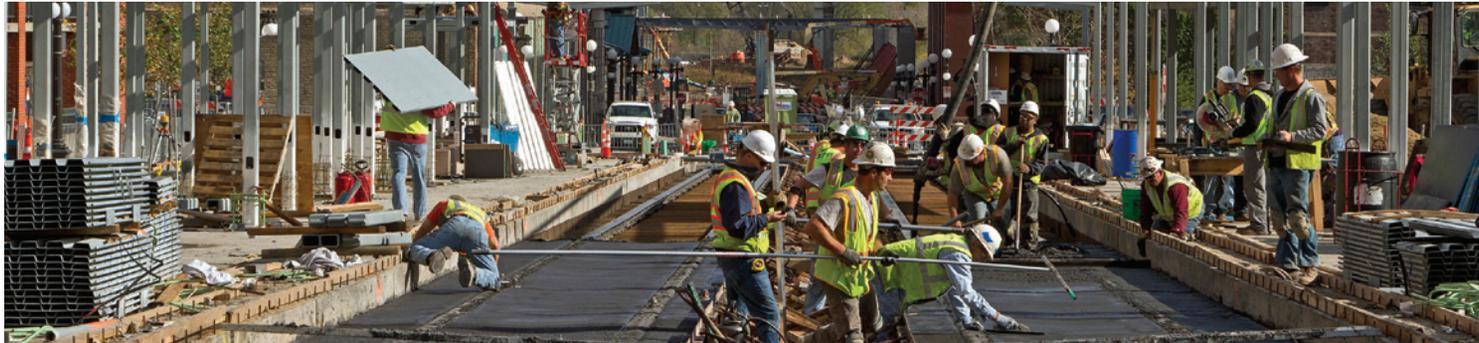
Money



DBE Achievement on Core Contracts



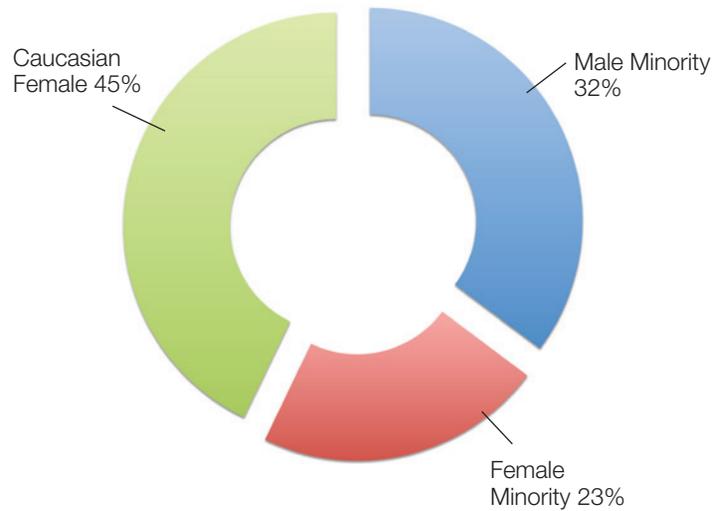
DBE achievement verified as of May 2014.
Systems and project management services contract will be completed by December 2014.



Courtesy
Steve Gilschinski
TRAINS Magazine

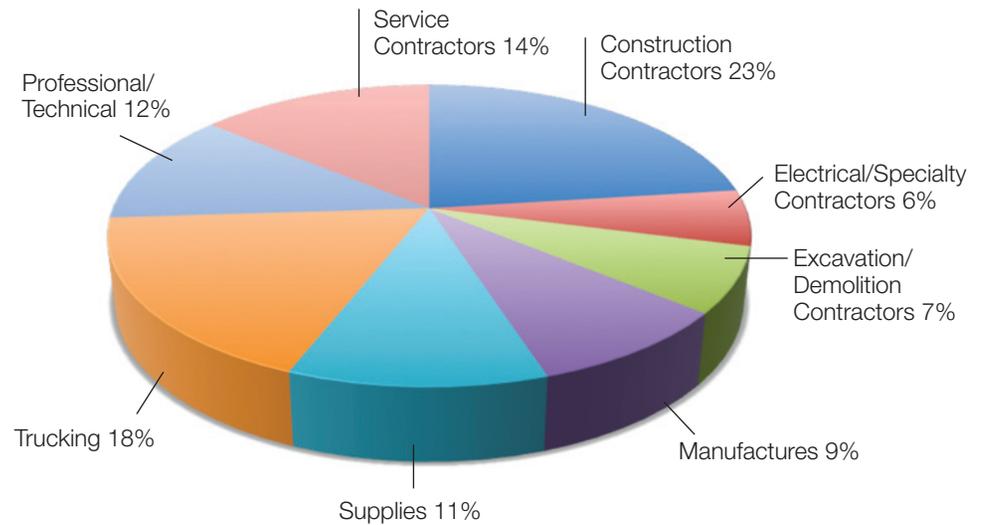
The DBE achievement on the Central Corridor Green Line project is both an illustration of the current capacity of the local DBE community and a blueprint for future DBE success on major public projects. Central Corridor Green Line DBEs were involved in all construction scopes and represented nearly 20% of the construction and design activity on the project. Minnesota DBEs emerged from the Central Corridor Green Line project stronger, more experienced and better prepared to play a larger role in the next LRT construction project.

DBE Participation by Contract Value



Based on Core Contracts

DBE Participation Breakdown by Areas of Work



Nick Deng, MTEC Electric Inc.

Nick came to the United States alone when he was in his 20s as a refugee after the Vietnam war. He went to work right away, helping to shape his view of what he wanted to do next to rebuild his life. After Nick finished school, he worked as an electrician for 18 years. He wanted to try the next thing, which was to open an electrical shop. At first, Nick was not aware of the DBE program but learned of it through other minority contractors. The DBE certification assists MTEC Electric in connecting with general contractors and prime electrical contractors, which represents about 20-25% of its annual sales.

Nick attended a meet and greet session to connect with electrical contractors proposing on the Central Corridor Green Line project. MTEC was awarded a contract with Premier Electric, with whom Nick previously worked. MTEC's scope of work was to supply and install electrical system grounding throughout the Central Corridor Civil East Project.

This contract on the Central Corridor Green Line was over \$800,000 over a two-year period which helped MTEC provide work to their core electricians, helping MTEC retain them through tough times. Through this project MTEC continued a working relationship with Premier Electric.

Nick is proud and appreciative to have worked on this landmark project.



Gerald Ben-Ami, Big G Tech Support LLC

Big G Tech Support, founded in 2007 by Gerald Ben-Ami, was started with the goal of "the customer first". This ultimately led Big G Tech Support to obtain DBE certification in Minnesota and other states.

"The DBE Program has allowed Big G Tech Support to have access and obtain opportunities it otherwise simply would not have had. The DBE program creates a framework but special emphasis is placed on work; this is not a handout or entitlement but an opportunity", says owner Gerald Ben-Ami.

Big G Tech Support places a strong emphasis on uniquely networking and branding its company such that "When You think "I.T." – You THINK Big G!" Through this approach at various meet and greets, Big G Tech Support established and differentiated itself very quickly. That ultimately resulted in being awarded a part of the CCLRT – East Project with Walsh Construction, and the CCLRT – Systems Project with Aldridge Electric/Collisys Joint Venture. Setting up the field offices and partnering with the Prime's local IT departments allowed Big G Tech Support to showcase its "the customer first-can do-will do" approach. This in turn expanded into additional out of state opportunities.

"Big G Tech Support is very grateful for the various and continued opportunities provided via the DBE program and looks forward to showcasing its capabilities to future customers", said Gerald.



Beatriz Mendez-Lora, M-P Consultants

Until the Central Corridor Green Line project, electrical engineering consultant Beatriz Mendez-Lora was content to be a lone ranger. The Northstar commuter rail project was the largest one that Mendez-Lora, who started M-P Consultants 15 years ago, had worked on solo (with one CAD technician) until the CCLRT.

To keep pace with both projects, Mendez-Lora hired an electrical designer, a senior systems/communications engineer and another CAD technician.

“Instead of limiting the amount of work that one person can handle, I am now pursuing multiple projects in both the transit/transportation market and the environmental/municipal market. We have also pursued more projects related to stand-alone radio communications and security systems. We have our eyes set on some larger projects here and other states outside of Minnesota,” said Mendez-Lora, who earned her electrical engineering degree from Boston University.

She has come a long way since getting her start in the field as an intern in the electrical department of a Florida architectural and engineering consulting firm, learning drafting and drawing production skills and calculations.

On Central Corridor Green Line, her company’s primary role was to design the electrical and communications systems for the 18 LRT station platforms and the operations and maintenance facility.



Susan Park Rani, Rani Engineering

Susan Park Rani, president of Rani Engineering in Minneapolis, Minnesota was among eleven “Champions of Change” recently honored by the Obama Administration at a White House ceremony for their leadership to ensure that transportation facilities, services, and jobs help individuals and their communities connect to 21st century opportunities.

The Central Corridor Green Line project gave Rani Engineering challenging and predictable workload in professional/technical services. “Commitment of Metropolitan Council to the DBE program together with the initiative to include Rani Engineering as a key project partner by the prime consultant, AECOM, presented many opportunities for Rani Engineering to both increase capacity and improve capabilities in land surveying and civil engineering,” explained Susan.



Workforce Inclusion Program

Workforce Inclusion is the goal of anti-discrimination employment laws that guarantee employees and job candidates the equal benefits of employment as well as a discrimination-free workplace. Large federal and state construction projects are subject to goals for the participation of women and people of color in order to remedy the effects of past discrimination.

What were the workforce goals?

Community members came to the Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) before construction to request that the project's workforce goals of 6% female and 11% minority be evaluated. The community members argued that such a high profile project would attract the attention of many more people with an interest in the construction industry. MDHR evaluated the goals utilizing the new 2010 census data and concluded that a higher goal was appropriate for minorities. The change recognized the increased availability of minority workforce. The reissued goals were 18% minority and 6% female.

How does the workforce inclusion program work?

The Metropolitan Council and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, led by MDHR, partnered to monitor the workforce inclusion on the Central Corridor Green Line. MDHR is charged with monitoring workforce participation goals on state-funded and state-assisted construction projects. Partnerships with HIRE MN, Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Minneapolis Building Trades Council and community members resulted in the development of innovative workforce inclusion tools such as LRTWorks.org and the Workforce Utilization Projection Tool.

The Metropolitan Council took an active approach by hiring a workforce specialist who specialized in workforce development. The workforce specialist worked in partnership with the MDHR to monitor the workforce inclusion on the project. Monitoring included:

- Goal setting
- Bid workforce inclusion evaluation
- Project outreach
- Field site visits
- Onsite compliance reviews
- Dispute resolution
- Reporting

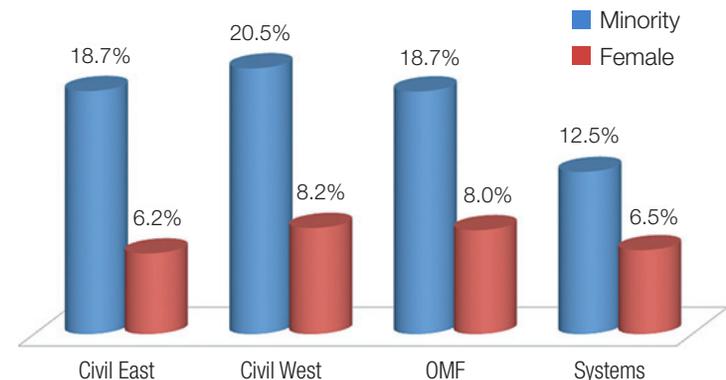
Workforce Inclusion Success

Increased construction careers. Trained workforce. Fostered partnerships.

Created over 5,000+ construction jobs!

**Workforce Inclusion Goals:
18% minority, 6% female**

Workforce Inclusion Achievement on Core Construction



Goals are expressed in percentages of hours.
Workforce inclusion achievement verified as of March 2014.



Civil West Snap Shot Ames McCrossan Joint Venture (AMJV)

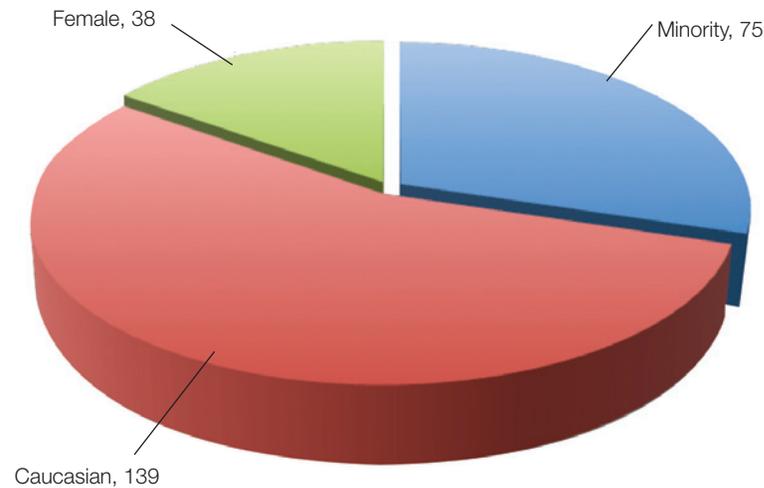
Over 1500 construction Jobs were created in 19 trades

Brick Layer	Glazier	Operator	Roofer
Carpenter	Inspector	Painter	Sheet Metal
Cement Mason	Iron Worker	Pile Driver	Surveyor
Electrician	Laborer	Pipe Fitter	Truck Driver
Elevator Mechanic	Mechanic	Plumber	

Apprentice Inclusion

The Civil West contract allowed for an infusion of new construction workers. Nearly half of this apprenticeship group were people of color and/or female, and helped AMJV exceed the workforce inclusion goals. Experience gained on the Central Corridor Green Line provided a platform for a career in the construction industry. These apprentices will contribute to a more diverse workforce on future projects.

Civil West Apprentice Workforce Inclusion



“To create a diverse workplace equity must be more than just a policy. Equity must be a core value. We worked hard to create employment opportunities for people regardless of race, color, or gender. With equity in our hearts and opportunity on our minds we achieved success.”

Leo Jackson – Metropolitan Council
Workforce Specialist

Abdoul Diallo

Title: Assistant Project Manager, Walsh Construction

Duties: Include negotiating and writing subcontracts, reviewing and pricing contract change orders, reviewing and approving all subcontract vouchers, writing subcontract change orders, reviewing and certifying the project equipment schedule; managing and assisting junior engineers and helping solve daily issues that arise in the field, attending and presenting the project's three-week look-ahead at the weekly progress meetings, reviewing and forecasting project cost report and reviewing production.

Abdoul grew up in Guinea and knowing that after college it would be a struggle to find a job, "I knew it would be best to choose a discipline where I would be able to be self-employed if I couldn't find a job with the government. Besides that, I always have loved to build stuff since childhood. What I like the most about my job is the final product, being part of a legacy. I enjoy driving through a city such as Chicago or New York, seeing my work and knowing it will last for generations."



Corrie Neuens

Title: Quality Control Manager, Walsh Construction

Duties: Oversees all aspects of quality in construction of the light rail project to ensure the specifications are being followed by our production staff.

Corrie enjoys being outside, reading plan sets and using her analytical skills to solve a problem. "The challenges in this job are making sure there is constant communication among all the players involved and preventing mistakes", says Corrie. Corrie said a background in engineering, construction management or similar fields can also lead you down the same career path. Taking all the materials courses from MnDOT is also highly encouraged.



Workforce Profiles

Gwenn Miller

Title: Construction Craft Labor, Veit Company

Duties: Flag person, regulated the excavation and removal of materials with dump trucks, earthwork and landscaping

Eighteen years ago, when Gwenn Miller told family and friends she was going to be a construction worker, the reaction was, “Are you kidding me?”

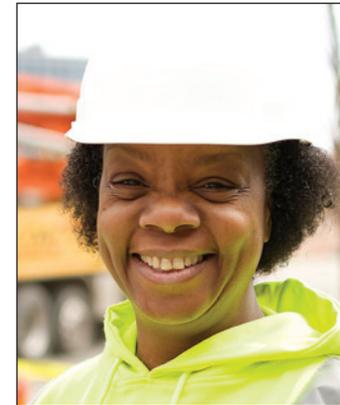
Miller wasn’t kidding. Her children’s misgivings quickly turned around when food appeared on the Thanksgiving table and presents showed up under the Christmas tree. Over the years, Miller has bought a home in New Hope and built a solid life for herself and her family.

Today she still takes pride in her old construction sites. “I just glow when I drive by,” she said, ticking off a long list of her projects, including the giant scoreboards at Target Field and TCF Bank Stadium.

Her recent venture is the Central Corridor light rail project, a special job because it’s a challenging assignment to squeeze a major street railway into an already built-up neighborhood. One of Miller’s more challenging tasks was directing dump trucks in and out of a tight construction zone. “At one point I was handling 24 trucks at a time,” she said.

The job is challenging but she loves it. As an African American, Miller sees the construction trades as a pathway that inner-city minorities too often rule out, assuming that it’s a career only for men and mostly for whites.

As a young woman in north Minneapolis, it was the Minneapolis Urban League that first brought the possibility of a construction career to her attention. “More people should get the training and try it,” she said.



“More people should get the training and try it.”

Central Corridor Green Line Prime Contractors



Project Management Services

14 DBEs on team

“AECOM is proud of our record of inclusion on the CCLRT project, exceeding the Council’s goals and providing meaningful contracting opportunities for more than a dozen Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.”



Systems

17 DBEs on team

“ACJV appreciates the level of commitment and the efforts of all of our DBE subcontractors relating to the CCLRT project. The information they provided upon request was responsive, timely and accurate.”



Civil West

47 DBEs on team

“Ames/McCrossan Joint Venture was successful in achieving the workforce goals due to the dedication and commitment of our partners which include subcontractors, suppliers, local labor unions, community organizations, Met Council and our own staff. AMJV thanks all of these parties and the individual employees for all of their efforts in helping us achieve the workforce goals.”



CONSTRUCTION

Operations and Maintenance Facility

34 DBEs on team

“PCL Construction is honored to have participated in such a transformational project in our area. The success of the CCLRT Operations and Maintenance Facility was a direct result of the inclusion of the DBE contractors on the project and the dedication, relationships and assistance they provided.”



The Walsh Group

Civil East

66 DBEs on team

“Including underrepresented work groups in our workforce doesn’t just satisfy numbers, it goes towards developing an experienced workforce that is ready and able to build tomorrow’s projects.”



Innovations

The \$957 million, Central Corridor Green Line was the first light rail project that Metropolitan Council has been responsible for from start to finish. In light of this challenge, the Metropolitan Council's OEO was faced with developing new systems and processes which were transparent, ensured equity and engaged a full range of public and community partners needed to achieve success. While some of the processes were adapted from MnDOT's Hiawatha LRT Blue Line, most innovations were the result of lessons learned and creative tensions born from the authentic engagement of community partners in the Central Corridor Green Line project.

It was vital to build trust, shared values and equitable participation by regularly convening stakeholders in a forum where there was frank discussion, conflict, collective problem-solving and where everyone was encouraged and allowed to speak. The Metropolitan Council facilitated a process that led many different parties to speak in "one voice" by ensuring that everyone involved was heard and decisions were transparent.

Innovations

Great Minds

“Great Minds” was a full day retreat, convening community residents and organizations, government agencies, labor trades, construction training organizations, construction firms, construction workers, and DBEs to discuss and develop strategies surrounding the most important issues for Central Corridor Green Line DBE and workforce achievement.

The Great Minds session was the catalyst to broaden community partnerships that propelled and sustained innovations. This retreat provided a space to share information about the basic limitations and parameters of federal regulations so that all participants could strategize how to meet the goals within program structure. As a result of Great Minds, innovative approaches emerged to develop a reconstituted Joint Oversight Committee, pre/post contractor interviews, LRTWorks.org, Contracting for Success, and lessons learned.

Key Values

- Everyone was informed about federal requirements
- Retreat was held prior to construction
- Retreat established a foundation for project-long collaboration
- Jointly developed strategies for DBE and workforce inclusion
- All voices were valued and heard



Participants

- Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
- Association of Women Contractors
- Central Corridor Funders Collaborative/Observer
- Chicano Latino Affairs Council
- City of Minneapolis
- City of Saint Paul
- Construction Workers
- DBE/Falcon Communications
- DBE/Holte Contracting
- DBE/Safety Signs
- Goodwill/Easter Seals
- Hmong American Partnership
- Merrick Services
- Metropolitan Airports Commission
- Metropolitan Consortium of Developers
- Metropolitan Economic Development Association
- Minneapolis Building and Trades Council
- Minnesota Department of Human Rights
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Mortenson Construction
- National Association of Minority Contractors
- Neighborhood House
- Ramsey County Commissioner Office – Commissioner Center
- Ramsey Workforce Solutions
- Saint Paul Regional Labor Federation
- State of Minnesota Department of Administration
- Summit Academy OIC
- TriMet, Portland OR
- Upward Consulting Group
- U of M Business & Community Economic Development Center
- WomenVenture
- YWCA of Saint Paul
- And more

Pre/Post Contractors Interview

The three low bidders for each major construction contract were interviewed by a panel of experienced and informed stakeholders. The panel provided their critical assessment of the bidders to OEO prior to recommendation.

Key Values

- Allow face to face response to contractors' inclusion for commitment and plan
- Allow community to participate in assessment of contractors' plans
- Leveraged community expertise and knowledge about the contractors' inclusion practices

Contractor Meetings

Standing monthly meetings involving Central Corridor Green Line, Office of Equal Opportunity and contractor staff were essential in resolving DBE and Workforce issues at the ground level. In these meetings the contractors could collectively problem solve issues that the community had raised and hold each other accountable for collective resolution. This was the contractors forum for challenging each other and sharing best practices.

Key Values

- Confidential
- Scheduled monthly
- Participation of all major contractors
- Council construction staff participated
- This forum empowered the contractors to build relationships around problem-solving related to DBE and workforce inclusion

Annual Contractor Inclusion Summit

Contractor assessments are conducted annually to identify and verify contractor achievements and to address long-standing issues. Contractors are provided with a set of questions pertaining to their achievement and inclusion performance. They attended the assessment interviews prepared to address concerns to ensure success in subsequent years. The annual summit provides an additional avenue for contractors and community partners to problem-solve collectively.

Joint Oversight Committee

The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise/Affirmative Action (DBE/AA) Joint Oversight Committee co-chaired by Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Department of Human Rights provided a forum to ensure a transparent process in reporting requirements, monitoring, enforcement, and contractor compliance.

Representatives included the prime contractor, DBEs, federal, state and local agencies, and nonprofit agencies. Agendas for these meetings included the ongoing evaluation of the joint monitoring efforts, measurement of contractor success in meeting goals, and recommendations for modifications to improve monitoring procedures. The joint committee was open to the public and was a primary tool for continued collaborative oversight of project achievement.

Key Values

- Held monthly
- Open to the public
- Full support from agency leadership
- Open agenda
- Mandatory for contractors
- Encouraged creative tensions
- Testing ground for innovation
- Created community ambassadors
- Transparent decision making
- Partner accountability
- Fostered relationships



“ I believe that, aside from the transparency and accountability, the Joint Committee meetings helped us to build relationships with the various community organizations/ members. We were able to openly discuss concerns, struggles and successes. ”

Sheena Maloney – PCL Construction

“*The Joint Oversight Committee and LRTWorks.org team has been one of the essential implementations of a new way to manage public construction projects with an intentional and holistic model approach. Through this model we were able to accomplish many goals and create new models that identified DBE companies, minority and female workers and connected them to new jobs and business opportunities. These new models should be used on future public projects throughout Minnesota.*”

John O’Phelan – Ramsey County Workforce Solutions



Joint Oversight Committee Team Members

- African-American Outreach
- AGC of Minnesota
- Airfresh Industries
- Aldridge Electric
- Aldridge/Collisys Joint Venture
- Ames McCrossan Joint Venture
- AMS
- Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota
- Association of Women Contractors
- Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Bricklayers & Allied Craft Workers Local 1
- Cement Finishers Local #633
- Central Corridor Funders Collaborative
- City of Minneapolis
- City of Saint Paul, Human Rights Dept.
- District Councils Collaborative
- Falcon Communications Group, Inc.
- Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota
- Hennepin County Purchasing & Contract Services
- HIRE, MN
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Holte Contracting, Inc.
- IBEW Local 110
- IBEW Local 292
- Insight News
- Laborers District Council
- Laborers Local 132
- Laborers Local 563
- Lutheran Church of Redeemer
- McCrossan Construction
- Metropolitan Economic Development Association
- Metropolitan Airports Commission
- Metropolitan Council
- Metropolitan Interfaith Council of Affordable Housing MICAH
- Midwest Construction Group
- Minneapolis Building & Construction Trades Council
- Minnesota Dept. of Human Rights
- Minnesota Dept. of Labor
- Minnesota Dept. of Transportation
- Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance
- National Assoc. of Minority Contractors
- PCL Construction
- Progressive Consulting Engineers, Inc.
- Ramsey County Commissioner Carter’s Office
- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
- Safety Signs
- Sheet Metal Workers
- Students for Positive Change
- Summit Academy OIC
- The Hathor Group, Inc.
- Twin Cities RISE
- U.S. Department of Labor, OFCCP
- Veit Company
- Walsh Construction

Meet and Greet Events

Relationships matter. Meet and Greets are a way to create an environment in which interested business owners could learn about opportunities and interact face to face with potential firms interested in doing work on the Central Corridor Green Line. Eight contract-specific DBE meet and greets where potential firms and DBEs learned about project scope, requirements for the contract, and were able to network with prime contractor's key staff, agency staff and other DBEs.

Networking matters. Networking and information gathering is key to opening up work opportunities in the construction industry. Office of Equal Opportunity held five Career Expos to create an opportunity in which interested community members could learn about opportunities offered by unions and training schools. In addition the career expos were a chance for job seekers to interact face to face with contractors looking to hire construction workers for the Central Corridor Green Line project.

Information matters. The Office of Equal Opportunity engaged in nine community specific meets targeting African American, African immigrants, Asian, Hispanic, Native American communities. The intent was to provide first-hand information and address barriers that may prevent people from participating in the construction of the LRT.

Key Values

- Build relationships face to face
- Educate community members about project facts
- Promote common interests
- Provide translators
- Define contracting opportunities and job opportunities



Hired On-the-Spot

On Thursday May 2012, the Central Corridor Light Rail Project hosted a Ramsey County Construction Career Expo to introduce interested community members to construction career opportunities. The expo was not a typical job fair. It featured four Informational sessions: Construction 101, Women in Construction, Work Readiness, and Getting and Maintaining a Job in Construction. The prime contractors utilized LRTWorks.org to seek out qualified candidates and used the expo as an opportunity to hold interviews. Vikki Mackins was hired by Custom Drywall during a brief meeting with a company rep while walking through the vendor hall. Seven other people were offered jobs as a result of the event.



Youth Engagement

In response to community inquiries regarding engaging youth in the Central Corridor Green Line project, the Joint Oversight Committee and the Twin Cities Building and Construction Trades Council developed a pilot program entitled “Youth Career Exploration”. Throughout the project, annual youth career events were held highlighting careers in the transit and construction industry. More than 400 youth participated. In 2011, the Metropolitan Council partnered with the University of Minnesota College of Science & Engineering and the Center for Transportation Studies, to host the event “Dream Design Build” on the college campus. Local unions, light rail contractors, and community members worked together to create the ultimate learning opportunity for students in the Twin Cities. Students were introduced to transit-oriented construction and engineering career options. This proved to be an excellent way to increase youth awareness of the importance of transit and development in the region.



LRTWorks.org

LRTWorks.org was born out of the Great Minds retreat. It formalized and computerized an informal, unfunded practice that had been attempted by a local collection of construction workforce training organizations. The Metropolitan Council, with a grant from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, hired Ramsey County Workforce Solutions to partner with the Joint Oversight Committee and the local unions in the development of the tool. LRTWorks.org is a single labor monitoring and exchange system that:



- Created and maintained a website to be the central conduit for the community to get information on jobs, training, union information and construction projects throughout Minnesota.
- Assisted contractors by creating a searchable database of over 1,000 construction workers, representing over 25 trades and mostly from our local area.
- Submitted reports to public agencies and contractors highlighting trades, ethnicity, veterans and local job seekers registered on the LRTWorks.org database.
- Started the Construction Hiring Connection – a new resource for all construction projects to utilize the LRTWorks.org tools and services.

LRTWorks.org has proven to be an effective resource for contractors and government agencies, doing work on public construction projects in Minnesota to assist in meeting their hiring goals.

Workforce Utilization Projection Tool

Meeting workforce utilization for women and people of color is a dynamic process that has to be tracked across time and across trades.



The HIRE Workforce Projection tool, developed with funding from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, created real-time, by-trade tracking to allow contractors as well as stakeholders to recognize lagging utilization. Frequently updated projections avoid reaching a point of no return where a trade, a sub, or the prime will not be able to meet hiring goals. The Projection Tool signals if the plan is working, and will allow contractors and other stakeholders to take appropriate measures if the plan goes awry.

Thanks to the “test run” and success on CCLRT, the Projection Tool is becoming an important component of workforce planning and compliance tracking on other public investments in the region.

“What I found most helpful about LRTWorks.org was a consistent repository of information to direct job seekers to input their information if they were interested in working on the project or in the industry. It did not circumvent the unions, but instead worked in collaboration with the contractors and unions to identify potential candidates to enter the union apprenticeship programs.”

Jenny Winkelaar – Minneapolis Building & Construction Trades Council



Contracting for Success— Metropolitan Economic Development Association (MEDA)

Contracting for Success, a program of MEDA, was designed to create significant and lasting economic opportunities for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). The program provides targeted assistance for up to 20 DBEs that perform work on the CCLRT Green Line project.

The final year of the 3-year project was focused on using DBE contractors' successes to springboard and secure additional contracts throughout the region.

- MEDA provided continual service to 19 active companies and overall, interacted with 27 DBEs on the project.
- Though there is variety in how companies have fared in the last three years, clients generally report that the visibility and experience they gained have contributed to winning other projects.
- The DBEs were able to land \$14 million in additional contract awards on other projects.

MEDA continues to stand ready to assist DBEs on business operation challenges and to advocate for an equitable business environment where entrepreneurs can flourish.

Lessons Learned Sessions

Lessons Learned conversations with DBEs, contractors, council construction managers, workforce advocates and the Joint Oversight Committee ensured that critical information is passed on to subsequent projects.

Feedback from:

DBEs

- Prepare for long pay cycles and retainage
- If scope is too large, negotiate just a portion
- Increase visibility by displaying your logos on equipment and safety gear

Workforce Advocates

- Utilize community partners to support participation goals
- Provide support for firms seeking to identify diverse candidates
- Hold all contractors equally accountable for achieving goals

Council Construction Staff

- Safety first! Wear safety equipment
- Clear understanding of scope and specifications
- Know primes schedule and staging of work

Prime Contractors

- Bid early and competitively
- Understand the contract
- Know prime contractors' expectations

Joint Oversight Committee

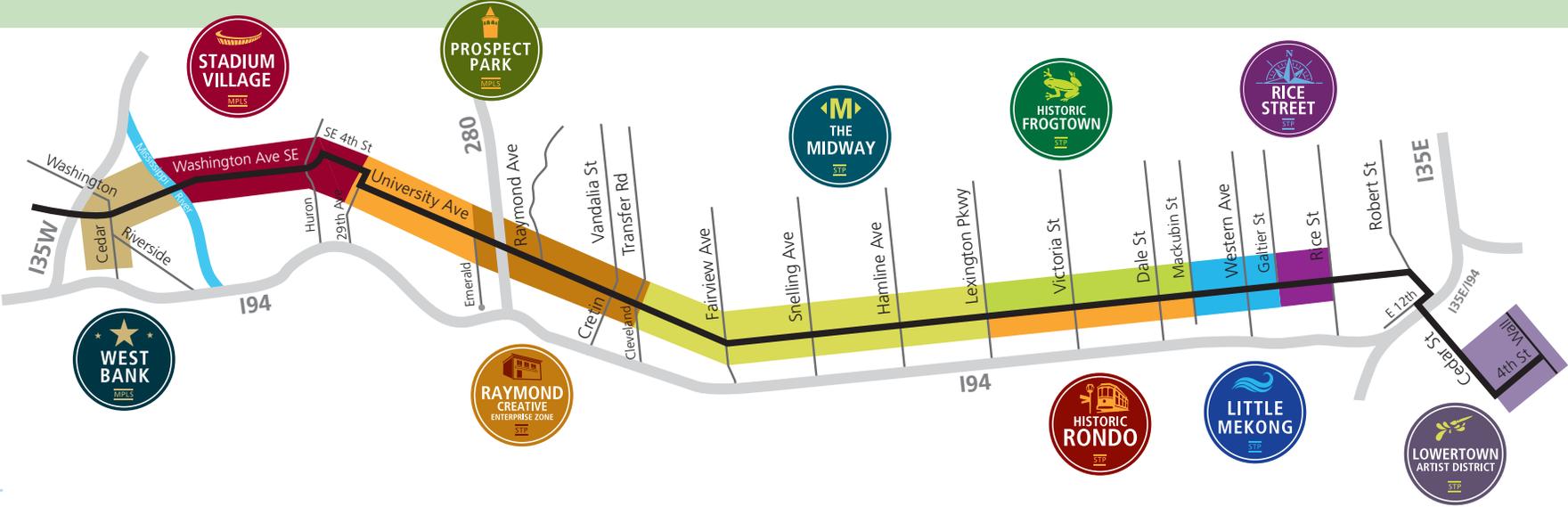
- Hard and honest dialogue early benefits productivity
- Assess contractor DBE/WF projections early and often
- Face-to-face monthly interaction builds trust and accountability

CENTRAL CORRIDOR GREEN LINE

MPLS-STP



Communities Along the Track

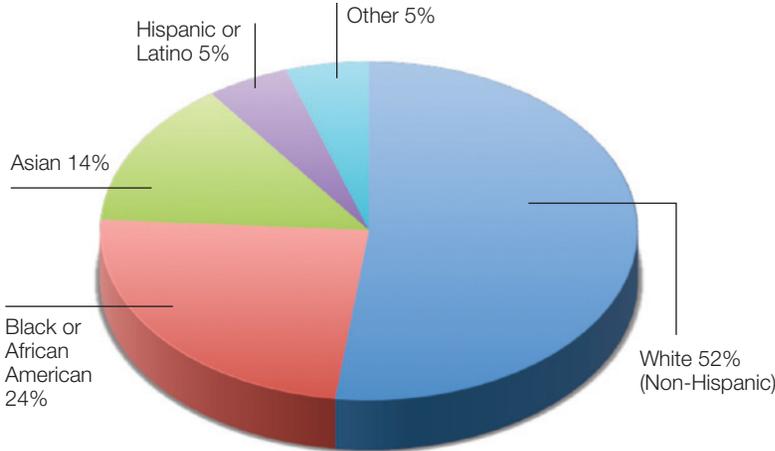


Communities Along the Track

Asian, African Immigrant, Hispanic, European, African American and American Indian; this diversity creates an unique urban character within the Corridor. Home to approximately 83,500 people, living in 33,600 households, there are almost 240,000 employees working within a half mile of the Green Line.

The diversity of the Central Corridor, (including racial/ethnic, and those with disabilities, cultural differences, language barriers, poverty, mobility and age related constraints), was a significant driver in developing communication and public involvement strategies.

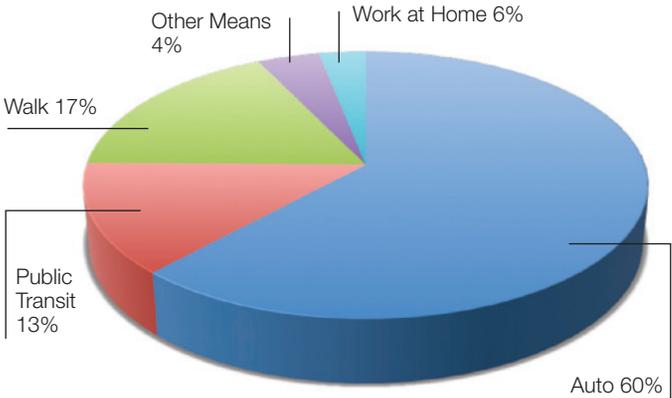
The Green Line Corridor: Population by Race and Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Summary File 1 (SF 1), 2001 Central Corridor FEIS

The Central Corridor Green Line Benefits Many Residents and Workers

More than 70% of households living within half a mile of the Central Corridor Green Line have access to only one automobile or no automobiles. Among workers living within half a mile of the Green Line, 30% commute to work by public transit or by walking.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey.



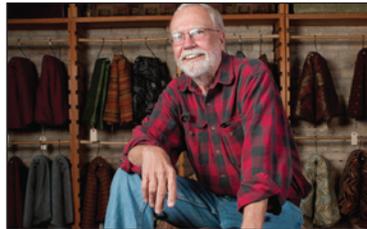
ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: West Bank

The historic West Bank district of Minneapolis, also known as Cedar-Riverside, is one of the most diverse and densely populated areas along the Green Line. Historically home to some of the largest communities of immigrants in Minneapolis, the West Bank is rich with culture as reflected in its live music venues and clubs, coffee houses, pubs, restaurants, theaters, and shops.

Running eastward from Cedar Avenue to the Mississippi River, the West Bank includes a significant college population, including the West Bank campus of the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, and the University of St. Catherine's Minneapolis campus.

The area also includes a flourishing arts community, including the University of Minnesota West Bank Arts Quarter, a major hospital, and two prominent high-rise apartment complexes: more than 1,800 units in Riverside Plaza and The Cedars.



ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Stadium Village

Stadium Village is located near the East Bank campus of the University of Minnesota. The heart of the neighborhood is the intersection of Oak Street Southeast and Washington Avenue Southeast. The Stadium Village name comes from the area's close association with the University of Minnesota.

College football fans attend games at the TCF Bank Stadium, which replaced Memorial Stadium in 2009. Other sports venues in the area are Williams Arena and Mariucci Arena.

Stadium Village is a bustling community year-round. Its population ebbs and flows from a few thousand University of Minnesota students, employees and visitors on an average day to tens of thousands people during major sporting events. There is a vibrant array of restaurants, bars and shops in Stadium Village, many of which have been around for decades.





ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Prospect Park

From the east, Prospect Park is the gateway to Minneapolis, home to hundreds of University of Minnesota students, and the locale for several notable shops and restaurants.

The Prospect Park area is immediately east of the University of Minnesota East Bank campus and health services complex. Prospect Park is bounded by a major railroad yard to the north, Saint Paul to the east, the Mississippi River to the south and the Stadium Village area of the University of Minnesota to the west. Prominent landmarks in Prospect Park are the Prospect Park Water Tower (with its witch's hat top) and Tower Hill Park.

Families reside in single-family homes near Tower Hill Park, university students live in apartments on the west side, and the northern section is a mix of light industry, rail yards and grain silos.



ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Raymond Creative Enterprise Zone

Once commonly known as the West Midway of Saint Paul, the area was then the city's largest industrial district. The historic architecture reflects its heritage, with buildings developed to take advantage of the area's proximity to rail and highway transportation.

Renamed as Raymond Creative Enterprise Zone, it reflects the transformation from its industrial heritage to a new era of livable, mixed-use neighborhoods. Many historic buildings have been converted to condominiums, apartments and live-work art spaces. Sidewalk cafes and coffee shops in the Raymond Creative Enterprise Zone serve residents, local workers and visitors.

Its boundaries run west to east from Emerald Street to Cleveland Avenue in Saint Paul, with Highway 280 running directly through the middle.





ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Midway

Located midway between Minneapolis and Saint Paul, the Midway District is one of Saint Paul's most popular shopping areas. The name comes from the fact that the area is almost literally midway between the downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

The Midway is home to the city's warehouse district, and a diverse mix of residential and commercial properties, including Midway Center, one of Saint Paul's key shopping areas. A variety of retail stores, grocers and restaurants, represent a variety of cultures that provide a bustling mix of commerce.

The Midway area is a retail bonanza for shoppers, between its permanent retail stores and the Minnesota State Fair that attracts over 1.7 million visitors. Throughout the year, the property hosts large-scale wholesale/retail sales, auctions and shows, attracting thousands of visitors for each event.



ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Historic Frogtown

Historic Frogtown is actually a blend of seven neighborhoods—East Midway, Frogtown, Lower Rice Street, Capitol Heights, and Mount Airy. Settled in the 1860s, the neighborhood was named by the first European settlers, German-Bohemians, who noted the number of frogs that lived in the swampy terrain and called the area “Froschenberg” or “frog city.” Late in the 20th century families from Southeast Asia, Africa and Central and South America arrived creating one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the region. According to the 2000 census, nearly 40 percent of Frogtown residents are of Asian descent, with white and black residents each accounting for about a quarter of the area's population. In addition, more than 20 percent of area residents were born outside of the United States.

Frogtown has always been a home for new immigrants and continues to be so in part because of relatively affordable housing. University Avenue is dotted with a culturally diverse storefronts and small businesses—restaurants, grocery stores, retail and service businesses run by resilient, hard working people. The rich variety of places to visit, things to do, and food to eat make Historic Frogtown a unique choice for visitors.





ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Historic Rondo

Located south of University Avenue, starting near the State Capitol at Rice Street and ending west at Lexington Parkway, Rondo has been the home of Saint Paul's most prominent African American community. Early in the 20th century, Rondo Avenue was a thriving community, home to thousands of residents, businesses, schools, and places of worship. The Rondo neighborhood nurtured men and women who went on to lead the nation in arts and athletics, civil rights and education, law and politics. NAACP Executive Director Roy Wilkins, world-renowned photographer Gordon Parks and Hall of Fame baseball great Dave Winfield all trace their roots to Rondo.

In the 1960s, construction of Interstate 94 demolished Rondo Avenue and much of the neighborhood. The result—homes and businesses were lost along with much of the equity long-term residents would have provided as legacy to their children. Economic and community vitality seemed lost along with half the neighborhood.

Today, a host of community-based organizations are preserving and building upon the roots of a neighborhood whose rich legacy is an important piece of Saint Paul's past, present, and future.



ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Little Mekong

Saint Paul's Little Mekong is named after the Southeast Asia's Mekong River, which flows from China through Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. Nearly 40,000 Saint Paul residents trace their roots to one of these countries—where their parents or grandparents were displaced by war and persecution.

Stretching five blocks between Mackubin and Galtier along University Avenue, Little Mekong is a business and cultural district, home to over 100 small, locally-owned businesses that proudly honor their Asian heritage. With some of the best-known and best-loved Southeast Asian businesses in the Twin Cities, Little Mekong offers an array of dining, retail, and arts—sharing its color, spice and flavor with not only metro shoppers but tourists from all over who seek authentic and delightful Southeast Asian cultural experiences.





ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Rice Street North End

Since the 1800s, commercial buildings began to line Rice Street with a myriad of business interests, and are still one of the area's most prominent features today. Located immediately north of downtown Saint Paul, and adjacent to the Capitol area, the Rice Street neighborhood continues to be a popular business district.

Named for Henry Rice, a prominent Saint Paul real estate developer, and one of the state's first U.S. senators, the Rice Street area has a distinctly working-class feel. In the 1800s, the area was originally settled by laborers, tradesmen and shopkeepers of British, Irish, German and Scandinavian heritage. Over time, Eastern and Southern Europeans also moved into the neighborhood. In the mid-1900s, a small population of African Americans moved to the area. Most recently, Rice Street has become home to an increasingly significant number of Asian and Latino residents.



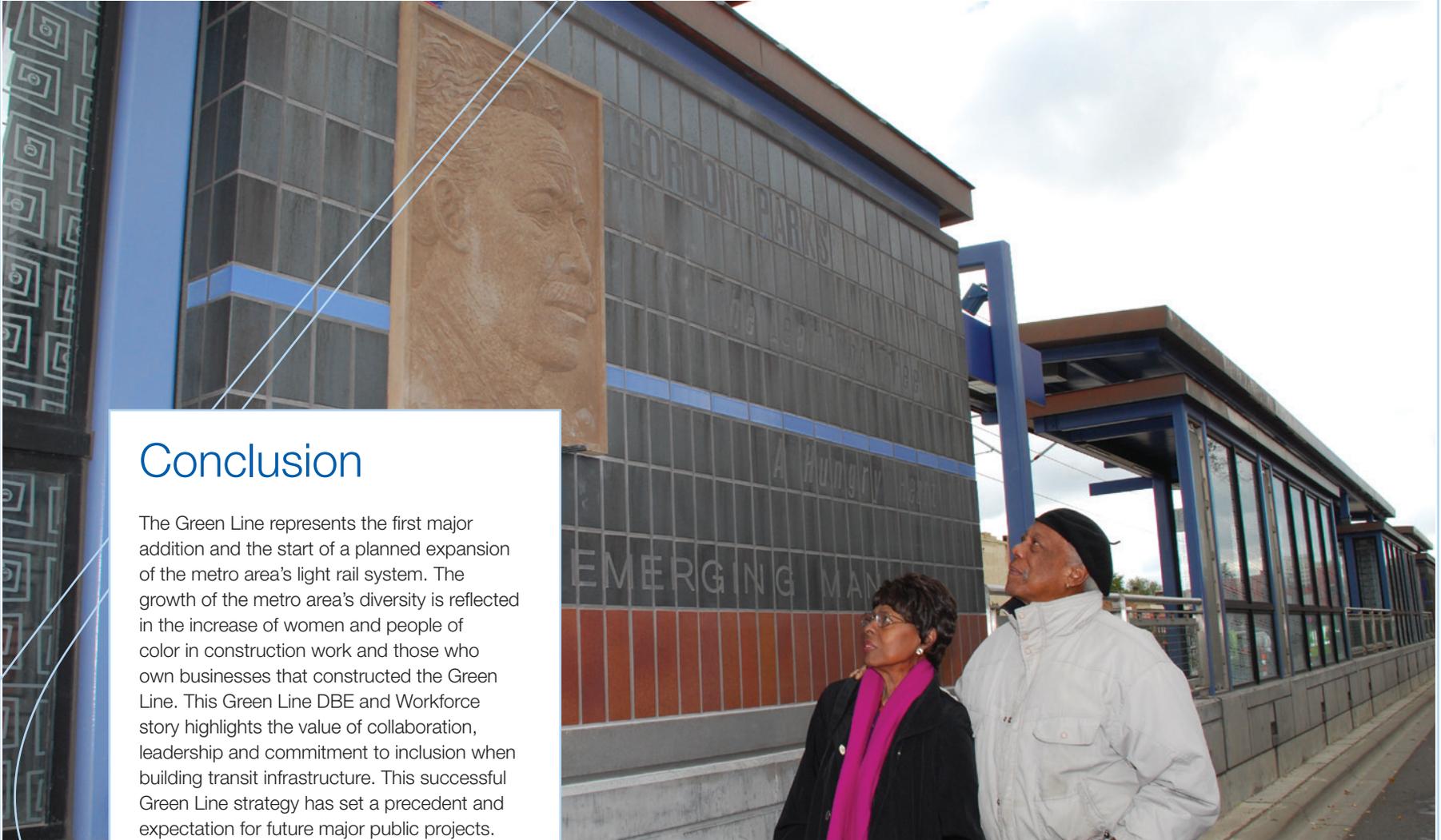
ON THE GREEN LINE

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE: Lowertown

The oldest part of the whole city, the area's name comes from the fact that it was originally the lower landing on the Mississippi River, providing the first port of access to the Twin Cities, from the river. From the 1800s to the 1920s, a variety of warehouse, railroad, banking and distribution centers served Lowertown.

Over time, many of these buildings fell into disrepair and disuse until the 1970s when civic and private investment began to revive unoccupied warehouses, parking lots, and the non-operational Union Depot. Today the area features a variety of retail businesses, apartments, condominiums and entertainment destinations, many of which center around the arts – hence the term, Artist District. The Lowertown Artist District is a 180-acre area that runs from Jackson to the Lafayette Bridge to 7th Street.





Conclusion

The Green Line represents the first major addition and the start of a planned expansion of the metro area's light rail system. The growth of the metro area's diversity is reflected in the increase of women and people of color in construction work and those who own businesses that constructed the Green Line. This Green Line DBE and Workforce story highlights the value of collaboration, leadership and commitment to inclusion when building transit infrastructure. This successful Green Line strategy has set a precedent and expectation for future major public projects. The Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit are moving forward in confidence, knowing that our Green Line success provides a solid platform for future inclusion.

Central Corridor Green Line Victoria Street Station



**CENTRAL CORRIDOR
FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE**
INVESTING BEYOND THE RAIL

Support for this project provided by the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. The Collaborative is a group of 12 local and national funders working with local resident organizations, community groups, nonprofit and business coalitions, and public agencies to ensure the adjoining neighborhoods, residents and businesses broadly share in the benefits of public and private investment in the Central Corridor Light Rail Line between Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

The Metropolitan Council would like to thank the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative for its support of our work with residents and community partners to ensure the inclusion of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, women and people of color in the building of the Central Corridor Green Line.



In Memory of Melanie Miles

May 1953 – December 2012



Melanie Miles was the Co-Chair of the Joint Oversight Committee for the Central Corridor Light Rail Project. As Co-Chair, she worked cooperatively, transparently, and diligently with all partners to ensure the CCLRT project accomplished its workforce goals. Although Melanie became ill during this time, she continued her work on this project. She was overtaken by her illness and retired as a Supervisor from the MN Human Rights Department after 34 years of service. She dedicated her life to eradicating discrimination and to empowering every Minnesotan with the ability to enjoy all the benefits of our State regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, age, or sexual orientation. Throughout her long career, Melanie received numerous accolades and commendations for her meaningful work. The Metropolitan Council would like to honor her for her dedicated efforts in ensuring CCLRT's success. Thank you Melanie, we couldn't have done it without you . . .



Metropolitan Council
390 Robert St. North
Saint Paul, MN 55101
Phone: 651.602.1000
Email: public.info@metc.state.mn.us
Website: metro council.org

Copyright 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the Metropolitan Council except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Design and Writing by Tempo Creative, DBE

Printing by ideal PRINTERS, WBE and Central Corridor Green Line Business