

Making Tracks



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Three Pages

Design efficiencies offset higher contingency fund

Design efficiencies generated savings that more than offset a bigger contingency fund to cover unexpected expenses for the Central Corridor LRT Project.

The result is a revised cost estimate of \$913.9 million, down \$1 million from last September. Engineers reconfigured the West Bank roadway to address public access concerns, saving \$6.5 million in the process. Moving the operations and maintenance facility to a more suitable site at the east end of the line in Lowertown St. Paul saved \$3 million.

Scope refinements saved \$5.2 million, reducing undercut and backfill in a modified track cross section cut out \$3.2 million and lower prices for rebar, aggregate, asphalt and underground piping shaved \$2.5 million off the baseline cost estimate.

But the Federal Transit Administration strongly recommended that the 17.4 percent contingency fund be increased to 20 percent, adding \$13.8 million to the previous \$130.9 contingency fund.

Project director Mark Fuhrmann told the Central Corridor Management Committee on Feb. 11 that the budget still faces challenges.

Costs for retrofitting the Washington Avenue bridge to create structural redundancy and carry light rail trains over the Mississippi River may exceed the budgeted \$30 million to \$40 million, and the route may affect some property not previously anticipated, Fuhrmann said.

Met Council OKs funding for supportive housing for homeless near LRT station

The Metropolitan Council has approved \$448,800 for supportive housing for the long-term homeless four blocks south of the Lexington Parkway Station on the future Central Corridor LRT line.

The money will be used to help with asbestos abatement at a vacant nursing home on Lexington Parkway North near Interstate 94. The building will be converted into 48 supportive apartments for people who have been homeless for a long time. The building also will include administrative, community and program space for tenant use.



Community outreach coordinator Shoua Lee (left) for the Central Corridor LRT Project with Daisy and Thomas Haung, owners of Shuang Hur grocery store on University Avenue in St. Paul. Daisy Haung said she was encouraged to hear that contractors for the Central Corridor LRT Project will work with business owners to accommodate their needs during construction of the light rail line. Work will begin in late summer 2010 on the line. The LRT line will run in front of Shuang Hur. Shuang Her is in Lee's territory for community outreach. The outreach coordinators are the go-to people for the public when questions arise now through construction. To contact Lee or any of the outreach coordinators, call 651-602-1645 or email Centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us



New pavement, sidewalks, curbs, gutters part of baseline streetscape plan

Streetscape plans show new road surfaces, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, station markers, directional signs and many safety features for the Central Corridor LRT Project.

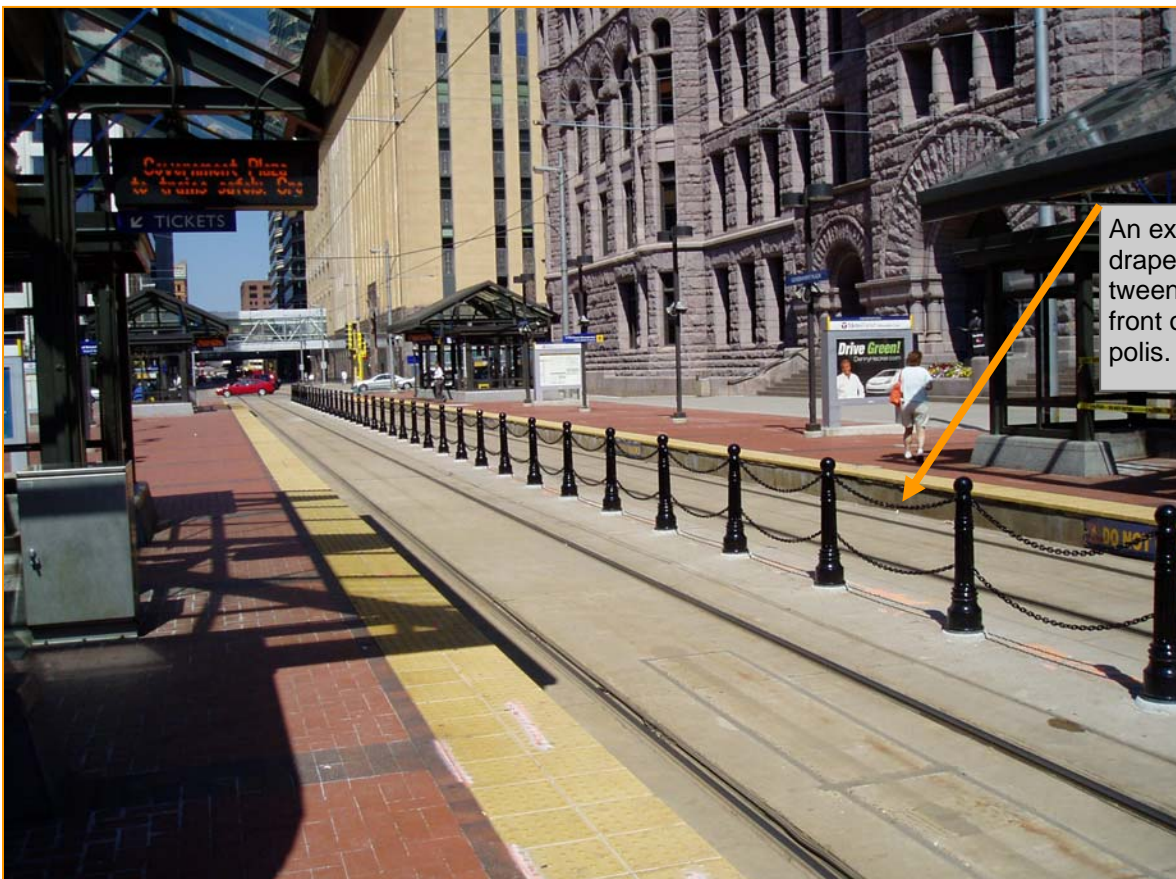
Existing trees that are impacted by construction would be replaced, and existing lights and bus shelters would be re-installed along University Avenue.

Enhanced landscaping, decorative lighting and expanded or new pedestrian tunnels would be considered betterments, and others would have to pay for them.

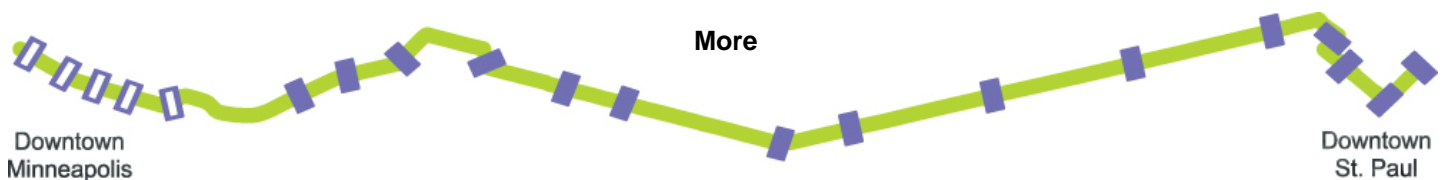
The St. Paul section of the route has 161 trees, and the section in Minneapolis, including the University of Minnesota, has 84 trees.

Safety features included in the baseline:

- Inter-track post and double draped chain fence (not chain-link fence)
- Curb wall and metal railing along road edge of median walkway
- Metal fence along track edge of median walkway
- Concrete bollards at stations adjacent to intersections



An example of a double draped chain fence between tracks is found in front of City Hall in Minneapolis.



Streetscape plan...



Dale Street and University Avenue intersection in St. Paul with light rail and baseline elements.

Baseline elements at non-signalized pedestrian crossings will include tactile warning edges, lighting at intersection and along median walkway, bike racks and striped crosswalks.

Betterment elements, which would cost \$12 million between Emerald and Rice streets in St. Paul, include:

- Installing twin lantern streetlights (\$2.5 million above baseline)
- Adding boulevard pavers, structural soil and trees (\$8.5 million above baseline)
- Upgrading wide flange poles for the overhead catenary system to painted tapered tubular poles (\$1 million above baseline)

The Central Corridor Project Office is finalizing costs for betterment elements for University Avenue and working with project stakeholders to define betterment elements for the West Bank, the state Capitol area and downtown St. Paul. Project stakeholders must secure funding for betterment elements to be added during construction.

About the Central Corridor LRT Project

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project linking downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis via Washington and University avenues would be the sixth in a planned network of rail and bus "transitways" in the Twin Cities. Construction would begin in 2010 on the planned 11-mile Central Corridor line, with service beginning in 2014. The line would connect with the Hiawatha LRT line at the Metrodome station in Minneapolis and the soon-to-be built Northstar commuter rail line at the new Minneapolis Multimodal 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.

Questions or comments? Call 651-602-1645 or email centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

For more information, visit: <http://www.centralcorridor.org/>

