

# Making Tracks



July 2010



Chair Peter Bell of the Metropolitan Council speaks about the Met Council's contribution of \$1 million to a \$1.5 million small business loan fund during a July 20 news conference with Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak (left) and St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman (right) at Shuang Hur Supermarket on University Avenue in St. Paul.

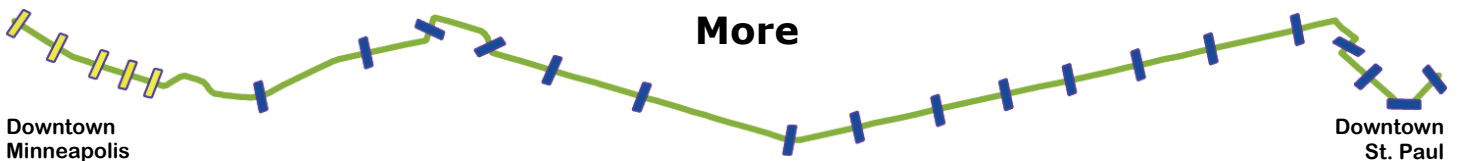
## Met Council contributes \$1 million to small business loan fund

The Metropolitan Council's latest effort to minimize the disruptive effects of building the Central Corridor light rail transit (LRT) line is the contribution of \$1 million to an interest-free loan program to help small businesses during construction.

The creation of the loan fund was announced July 20 at a news conference by Council Chair Peter Bell, St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman and Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. In addition to the Council's \$1 million, the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative will contribute \$500,000 to the loan fund.

It is part of a corridor-wide "Ready for Rail" initiative that will make available resources and services to assist small businesses in preparing for construction of the rail line, which will ramp up next year.

The loan program, to be administered by the city of St. Paul, is intended to help small businesses that prepare for construction but are still adversely affected by it. The idea grew out of initial discussions with the Asian Economic Development Association and input from other business groups concerned about how small businesses will fare during the construction period.





## Loan fund continued....

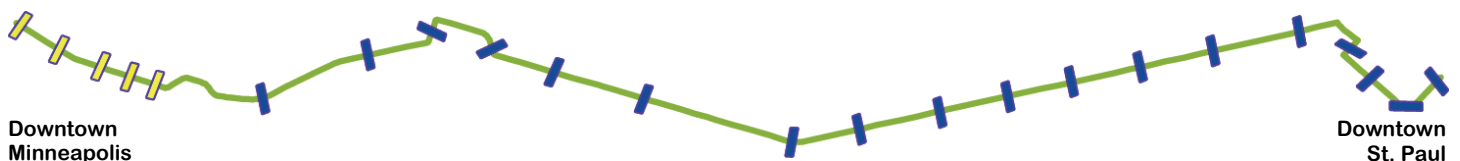
“The Council and our project partners are doing everything we can to reduce the disruptive impacts during construction,” said Bell. “Through our Ready for Rail initiative, we want to help businesses prepare to survive construction and to thrive once it is completed in 2014.”

### Other steps to minimize disruption

The Met Council has worked steadily to minimize the disruptive effects of building the state’s largest public works project in a developed urban area. Other steps to minimize the disruption include:

- **Limiting construction of each segment on University Avenue** to two-thirds of the street at a time while maintaining a lane of traffic each way on the other third
- **Requiring contractors to restore the street** in front of any business within 150 days and the sidewalk within 15 days
- **Implementing a contractor incentive program** with the community to encourage responsiveness, create a partnership between contractors and the community and promote cooperation. Evaluation criteria will include conformance with notification requirements, timely response to public concerns, maintenance of vehicle access and accessible pedestrian routes and cleanliness of construction sites
- **Issuing weekly construction updates** to provide the public with advance notice of routes that are closed and their alternates
- **Holding public construction meetings** for businesses and the public to get updates and a look ahead from project staff and utilities
- **Setting up a construction hotline** and posting the number in prominent locations throughout a work zone
- **Assigning multilingual outreach coordinators from the community** to be liaisons between the project and the public from the engineering phase through construction. The Central Corridor LRT Project’s outreach efforts have been recognized nationally as a model for other communities.
- **Promoting small businesses in the construction zone** through directional signage and photos in the weekly construction updates, monthly newsletter and on the project website

### More





## Sign up to learn about LRT construction training, job opportunities

CCLRTWorks is a notification service for people interested in learning about construction employment opportunities on the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project.

Sign up to receive periodic emails with information about current and future construction training and employment opportunities related to the project at:

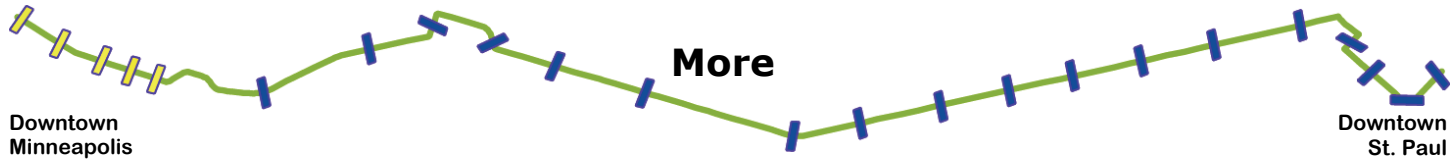
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/CCLRTWorks/CCLRTWorks.asp>

Lucas Miller, the project’s new workforce coordinator, will manage the notification service. He also will conduct site visits to confirm contractors’ utilization of women and minorities on the project. Miller can be reached at [lucas.miller@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:lucas.miller@metc.state.mn.us) or by calling 651-602-1842.

The Central Corridor LRT Project will provide for 800 direct construction and management jobs annually over the project. Laborers and mechanics on federally assisted construction contracts earn the prevailing wage and fringe benefits. There will be many other ancillary impacts from the project, including the creation of precast and ready-mix concrete jobs, shop labor, etc. These are much more difficult to quantify.

The Metropolitan Council will not be hiring any construction workers for the project. The project’s prime contractors will do the hiring. The Met Council, though, will monitor the efforts and results of the prime contractors.

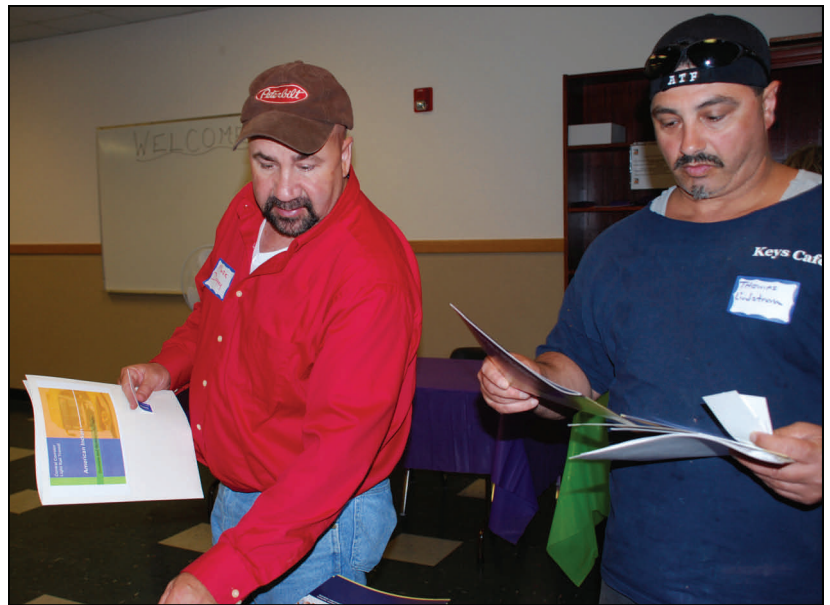
People interested in construction jobs on the project need to contact the human resources departments of the current prime contractors to see what their process is. The current prime construction contractors are: Carl Bolander & Sons for the advanced utility relocation work on Fourth Street in St. Paul, Graham Construction Services for the advanced traffic improvements work around the University of Minnesota and Walsh Construction of Chicago for the construction of the line’s eastern seven miles.



**American Indian Business and Employment Workshop for the Central Corridor LRT Project was held July 7 at the Minnesota Chipewewa Tribe Center in Minneapolis**



Community outreach coordinator Joey Browner (above) of the Central Corridor LRT Project speaks with William D. Carter, American Indian community advocate with the city of Minneapolis. Shelly Diaz (top right) of EMERGE, a nonprofit community development agency in Minneapolis, and Mark Daggy (at left in bottom photo) of St. Paul, a member of Local 49 of the Highway Heavy International Union of Operating Engineers, and Thomas Lindstrom of St. Paul, owner and operator of Peltier Welding and Wire Mesh, learn about construction opportunities with the project. A similar event was also held in July for the Latino-American community.





The Central Corridor LRT Project will create a temporary access from the alley behind Hoa Bien Restaurant at the corner of University Avenue and Lexington Parkway when this section of University is under construction in 2012. The work will require temporary modifications at project expense to the fence at the back of the parking lot to maintain access to the restaurant during construction.

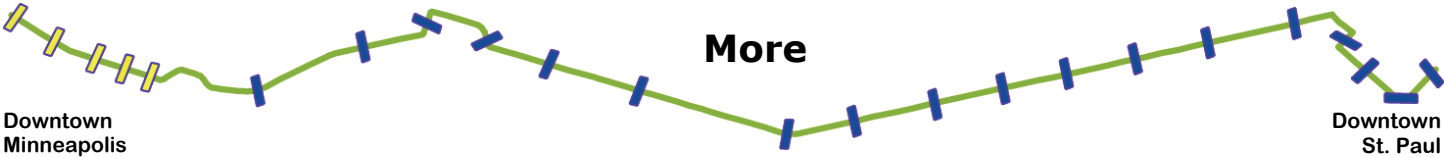
### Four strategies identified for maintaining access for properties

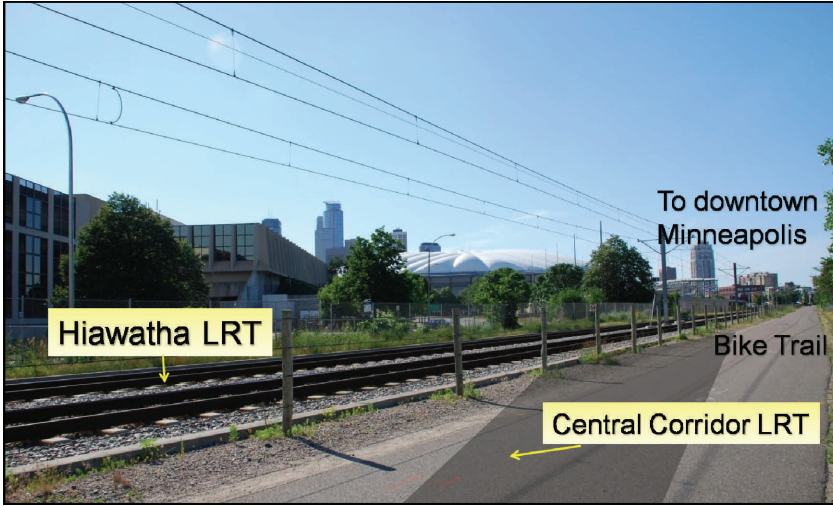
Project staff have identified four strategies for maintaining access for more than 200 properties with driveways directly onto the Central Corridor LRT route.

The strategies are:

- Using existing drive onto side street
- Using existing access from alley
- Creating temporary access from alley by modifying a fence, for example
- Maintaining access to street

Staff have met with these property owners and discussed access options.





The Central Corridor LRT line will connect with the Hiawatha LRT line between the Metrodome and the Cedar-Riverside Station in Minneapolis. From the meeting point, Central Corridor trains will travel over existing Hiawatha track to Target Field Station, stopping at the four other existing downtown Minneapolis stations. During construction, the existing bike path between 15th and 11th avenues will be detoured from the northeast side of these tracks to the southwest side along the Fifth Street off-ramp from Interstate 94.

### **Bids to be opened in September for systems work**

Bids for the systems construction package will be opened Sept. 2, and the Metropolitan Council is expected to award the contract Sept. 22.

This contract involves construction of the traction power, overhead contact, signaling and communication systems for the Central Corridor LRT line.

The systems construction package has provisions for mitigating operational effects to the Hiawatha LRT line when the Central Corridor LRT line is tied into it. They are:

- Five weekend closures will be allowed for Hiawatha LRT line
- Downtown events will be avoided
- 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. closures will allowed
- Metro Transit work zone requirements will apply
- Hour-by-hour construction work plans will be required



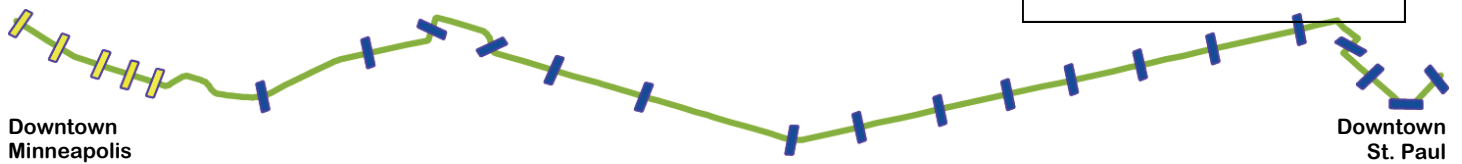


Campus life continues despite improvements to streets around the University of Minnesota in preparation for turning Washington Avenue into a transit-pedestrian mall from Pleasant to Walnut streets. In the background, students play volleyball in the green space north of the Scholars Walk while contractor crews in the foreground work on extending Harvard Street and connecting sidewalk to Beacon Street.



Colored markings in the intersection of Seventh and Cedar streets in St. Paul show where underground utility lines are located in preparation for utility relocation work that is to begin in August in advance of Central Corridor LRT construction. Construction on Cedar is anticipated to begin in June 2011.

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## At-a-glance schedule of construction work by segments

### Western three miles from anticipated start to substantially complete

Hiawatha LRT tie-in to Pleasant Street — Jan. 2011 to Nov. 2012  
West Bank and Washington Avenue Bridge — Sept. 2010 to Nov. 2012  
Transit mall — May 2011 to Aug. 2012  
Oak Street — May 2011 to Nov. 2011  
Oak to Emerald Street — March 2012 to Nov. 2012  
Transitway reconstruction — May 2011 to Aug. 2011

### Eastern seven miles from anticipated start to roadway substantially complete

University Avenue from Emerald to Hamline Avenue — March 2011 to Nov. 2011  
University from Hamline to Robert Street — March 2012 to Nov. 2012  
Robert to 12th Street, 12th to Cedar Street — Aug. 2010 to Nov. 2010  
Cedar Street — June 2011 to Nov. 2012  
Bremer Bank — April 2011 to Nov. 2011  
Fourth Street — Aug. 2009 to Nov. 2010

**About the 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 the University of Minnesota. Construction will begin in 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 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.

**Questions or comments?** Call 651-602-1645 or email [centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us)

**For more information,** visit: [www.centralcorridor.org](http://www.centralcorridor.org)

