

# Making Tracks



July-Aug. 2007

## Washington Avenue bridge report expected in fall

A report is expected this fall on improvements needed for the Washington Avenue bridge over the Mississippi River to be able to carry Central Corridor LRT trains. The Metropolitan Council hired URS this spring to re-evaluate the bridge because it was built in 1965, long before LRT was envisioned. URS has completed a draft report, identifying two primary areas of concern that require further research. The first regards the ability of the bridge to withstand repetitive live loadings from the light rail vehicles (LRVs). The second area relates to the steel girders beneath the lower bridge deck because they do not meet current codes and may need to be modified or replaced. The Met Council in late July asked URS for more research to model structural deficiencies and identify necessary structural modifications. Upgrading the bridge will be factored into the project's cost-effectiveness index. The project's cost is already estimated at more than \$930 million and needs to be lowered appreciably to qualify for federal funds.

## Public meetings wind up for summer

The community outreach coordinators met with more than 350 people in a series of summer public open houses about the Central Corridor LRT Project. Open houses were hosted by Episcopal Homes, a senior housing complex; the District Councils Collaborative of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the St. Anthony Park Community Council at the South St. Anthony Community Center, St. Paul Area Council of Churches and Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church, Hmong Center for Arts and Talent and the Hmong Organizing Committee of Take Action Minnesota at the Foodsmart on University Avenue. A special meeting for all the nonprofit organizations on the corridor was held at the Goodwill/Easter Seals headquarters on University. Model Cities also hosted several events.

They are now studying comments collected during the meetings, looking for ways to better explain project details and address misunderstandings. Comments and questions covered a range of topics, including handicapped accessibility, parking, noise, safety, station locations, comparisons to the Hiawatha LRT line, public involvement, snow removal, how to transfer between Central Corridor and Hiawatha trains, whether buildings will have to be torn down and surviving construction. Their input will be used to update the Central Corridor frequently asked questions section at [www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/ccfaq.html](http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/ccfaq.html)

**For more information about the project, visit:**

<http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/centralcorridor.htm>.

**Questions or Comments?** Call the Met Council comment line at 651-602-1500 or e-mail us at [data.center@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:data.center@metc.state.mn.us)

