

# Making Tracks



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Four Pages



The Central Corridor LRT's operation and maintenance facility in the former Gillette Co. factory in Lowertown will resemble the Hiawatha LRT's operation and maintenance facility pictured above. Workers will clean the interior and exterior of light rail vehicles and will perform light maintenance in the enclosed facility.

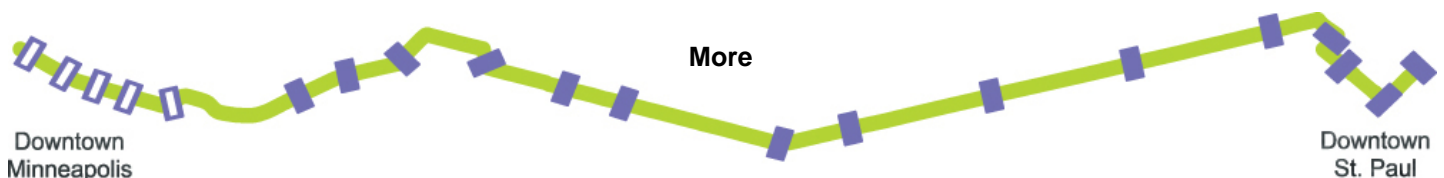
## Approval for relocating maintenance building keeps project on schedule

The Central Corridor LRT Project remains on schedule, thanks to municipal consent from the St. Paul City Council and Ramsey County commissioners for relocating the line's operation and maintenance facility in a vacant Lowertown factory.

The votes were required because project designers proposed changing the location from a Ramsey County-owned site east of Union Depot and south of Kellogg Boulevard. After the city and county gave municipal consent for that site last year, preliminary engineering work identified several significant problems there, including poor soils, contamination and historic preservation concerns.

To allay some Lowertown residents' concerns about the new location across the street from condos and lofts, Central Corridor LRT Project officials offered to make the facility more neighborhood friendly. They would do this in a number of ways, including:

- Leasing space on the facility's west side facing Broadway so it will have a storefront appearance and access to the street.
- Including façade improvements on the westernmost 300 feet of Prince Street frontage to make it fit with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Silencing routine use of train horns and bells between the last station at Union Depot and the operation and maintenance facility





An example of typical Hiawatha LRT streetscape in downtown Minneapolis is found on Fifth Street between Marquette and Second avenues.

## Streetscape plan includes many quality improvements

The Central Corridor LRT line will include reconstruction of University Avenue from façade to façade with many quality improvements throughout the corridor.

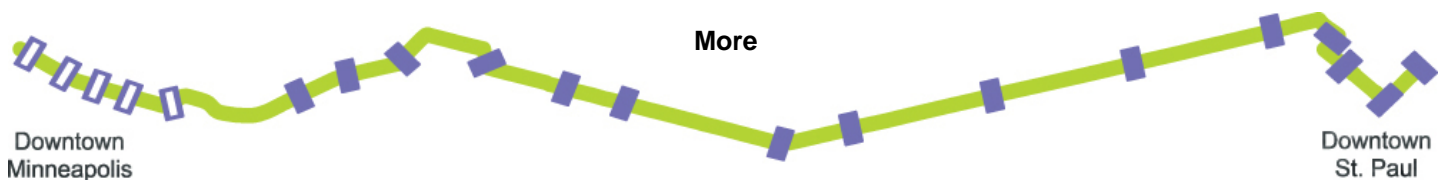
When the Central Corridor LRT Project replaces all sidewalks on the corridor, design features will comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, such as tactile warning strips. New curbs and gutters will address storm water issues.

Other improvements include the addition of many non-signalized pedestrian crossings as requested by the public for community cohesion and access across University Avenue.

Improved signalization and the timing of signalized intersections will improve traffic flow.

The 15 new LRT stations will be outfitted with security cameras, emergency phones and shelters with radiant heaters, protection from the elements and artwork that reflects the communities surrounding each station.

The project will replace existing trees that have to be removed for construction and will re-install existing lights and bus shelters.





This tractor-trailer parking lot at Raymond Avenue and Myrtle Street in St. Paul was chosen as a substitute location to house a traction power substation to better conceal the substation from public view and should not hinder future redevelopment in the area. This site and alternate locations for five additional light rail support facilities were chosen based on public feedback.

## Public feedback leads to relocation of six signal bungalows, substations

Community meetings to review proposed locations for 12 traction power substations and 10 signal bungalows led designers of the Central Corridor LRT Project to adjust the location of six of these light rail support facilities along the alignment.

The new sites better conceal the substations and signal bungalows from public view and should not hinder future redevelopment of surrounding areas.

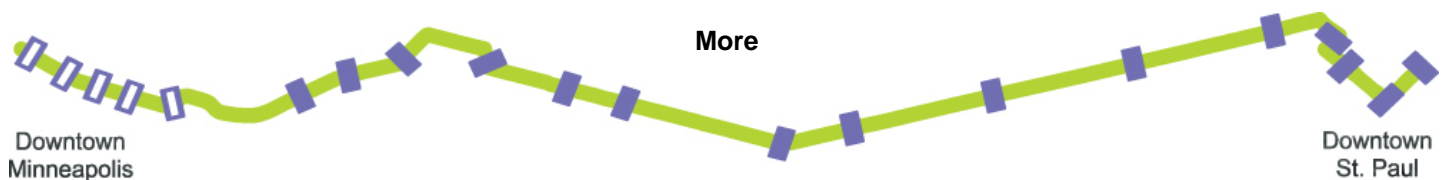
The relocations were based on feedback from six St. Paul District Councils and some Minneapolis neighborhood groups.

Four of the 10 signal bungalows were relocated in the:

- Interchange of Washington and Cedar avenues in Minneapolis
- Underutilized surface parking lot behind a gasoline station on Pillsbury north of University Avenue in St. Paul's Midway area
- Greyhound Bus parking lot on University east of Marion Street
- Sibley Street parking ramp in downtown St. Paul.

Two of the 12 substations were relocated in the:

- Private tractor-trailer parking lot at Raymond Avenue and Myrtle Street
- Surface parking lot east of the vacant Diamond Products building, which will become part of the project's operations and maintenance facility.



## Public feedback...

Traction power substations, which resemble intermodal containers carried on semitrailers, house electrical equipment used to change local utility power into power able to be transmitted to the overhead catenary system, a system of contact wires that supplies power to operate the trains. Substations have to be located close – preferably within 500 feet of track – to prevent power loss, rail-voltage rise and overhead contact strain and to contain cost. A typical substation is 14 feet wide by 45 feet long and 11 feet high.

Signal bungalows hold the equipment to operate and monitor the signals that regulate train movement on the alignment. They need to be placed near special trackwork, which refers to track features such as turnouts and crossing diamonds, to minimize installation costs and power demand and to reduce power losses. A typical signal bungalow is 10 feet wide by 16 feet long and 10 feet high.

In all cases, the substations and signal bungalows need to be easily accessible to maintenance crews. No homes or existing businesses need to be taken to provide room for these structures as currently planned.

## New outreach intern has construction experience

Newly hired community outreach intern Shawn Walding brings civil and structural engineering experience to the job.

Walding will assist the six multilingual community outreach coordinators, who with an associate intern, gather public feedback to aid project engineers in their designs. With their ability to speak Hmong, Vietnamese, Spanish, French, some Somali, some Thai and American Sign Language and experience interacting with the diverse communities on the corridor, the community outreach coordinators will be important liaisons between the public and construction supervisors when heavy construction work on the line begins in late summer 2010.

An Iowa State University graduate with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, Walding is completing a master's degree in urban and regional planning at the University of Minnesota.

He has worked on structural design for several projects, including various 3M process facilities, a dam restoration project near Monrovia, Liberia, and the Midtown Exchange building in Minneapolis.

His study interests center on public involvement within issues of land use, transportation and the environment.



## 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](mailto:centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us)

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

