

Making Tracks



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Two Pages

Traffic mitigation issues identified for Washington Avenue transit-pedestrian mall

Planners for the Central Corridor LRT line envision a transit-pedestrian mall on Washington Avenue extending from Pleasant Avenue to Walnut Street through the heart of the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus. The cost of converting this stretch of Washington into a mall is \$11.1 million. The mall will be designed to accommodate LRT, buses, emergency vehicles and pedestrians.

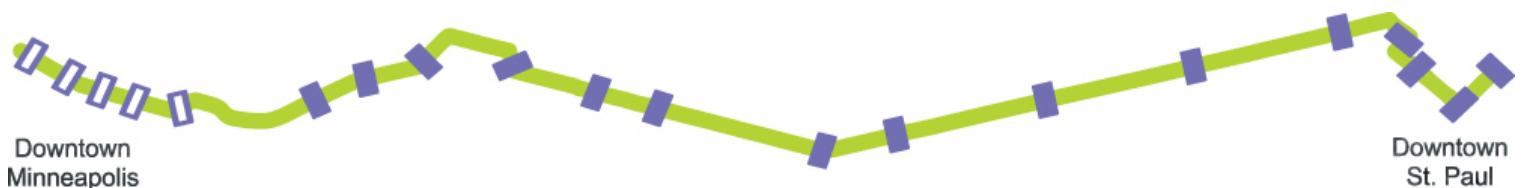
Planners conducted four traffic studies that looked at intra-campus roads and surrounding roadways to determine how to reroute autos off the mall. They are recommending a number of traffic mitigation steps to accommodate the rerouting while maintaining access to university facilities. The steps include:

- Installing traffic signals and constructing turn lanes at six intersections on the East Bank
- Converting Harvard and Beacon streets from one-way streets to two-way streets and extending each a block to improve connections with adjacent roads
- Improving five intersections by modifying the timing of traffic signals and extending or adding turn lanes

Project stakeholders have identified areas that will need work but are outside of the project's scope and budget, such as currently congested intersections near campus and new roadways previously planned. They are discussing how to accomplish these needed improvements.

Technical staffers for the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Hennepin and Ramsey counties, the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Council's Central Corridor Project Office believe direct impacts of the Washington Avenue at-grade alignment have been adequately identified and can be mitigated.

More



Station design will be simple, with emphasis on durable materials

Design concepts being developed for the 15 Central Corridor LRT stations will be guided by a philosophy that the stations should enhance the street and surrounding buildings and be a part of the street as opposed to a monument placed in the street.

Under the station design, architects will incorporate features to protect waiting passengers, including those in wheelchairs, from the elements and road spray.

Stations areas identified as opportunities for integrated art applications include columns, railings, platforms and windscreens. Integrated art is that which enhances existing system elements, rather than creates a freestanding art piece. Materials need to be durable to withstand the elements. Standardization is necessary to make replacing broken and worn elements easier and affordable and ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Metropolitan Council, on behalf of the Central Corridor LRT Project, is issuing a Request for Qualifications in early June, seeking up to five artists with expertise in creating integrated, outdoor public art for the design, fabrication and installation of art. Artists must have experience in engaging the community, have knowledge of the community and explain how their work will be inclusive of and responsive to local culture and identity. Artists will develop a plan for how they will engage the community in the art process for each station. The station art budget is \$3.7 million.

The deadline for artists to submit their qualifications is 2 p.m. July 8. For information on requesting a form, visit: http://www.metrocouncil.org/doing_business/solicitindex.htm

Project office to hire replacement outreach coordinator

The Central Corridor LRT Project Office is looking for a community outreach coordinator to replace Nkongo Cigolo, who resigned to help his family rebuild their home and business that were destroyed in a series of earthquakes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The project office seeks an experienced outreach coordinator who speaks a foreign language and has Web skills. The application deadline is June 11. To apply and to view a job description, applicants should visit the Metropolitan Council's job openings' Website at

<http://agency.governmentjobs.com/metrocouncil/default.cfm>

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

Questions or comments? Call the Central Corridor LRT Project Comment Line at 651-602-1645 or email us at centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

