



Construction Update: April 24, 2020

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Minnesota Builds

Southwest construction will support an estimated 7,500 construction jobs over the course of the project and will generate \$350 million in construction payroll, all of which helps keep our economy rolling. About 16% of construction funding is dedicated to small disadvantaged business enterprises, which are businesses owned by women, minorities and veterans. Supplies for the project also come from Minnesota and other states around the country, which highlight how projects of this size both impact the local and national economy.

Weekly Construction Photo: Surcharge Work Near West 21st Street in Minneapolis



A common construction activity along the corridor is the building of surcharges. Surcharges are an efficient and economical way of achieving proper soil compaction for structures. Crews use the weight of the surcharge which consists of soil to compact the ground beneath. Extra soil is brought into an area, temporarily, and stacked into a

pile. Crews then compress the soil with rollers, let the soil settle over an extended period, adding additional soil as needed to achieve desired compaction of the underlying ground. After the necessary compaction is complete, the excess soil is removed, and the next phase of construction can begin. For the area south of 21st Street, the surcharge will be removed later this summer and station construction will then begin.

Eden Prairie Highlights

- The ramp from westbound I-494 to eastbound Highway 212 is now open.
- Work is beginning to shift into phase two, with traffic being moved to the south side of Flying Cloud Drive as work moves to the north side in the next few weeks. The west bound exit from Highway 494 to Flying Cloud Drive is reduced to one lane and will close within the next two weeks, as will the intersection of Eden Road and Flying Cloud Drive. The intersections of Technology Drive and Flying Cloud Drive closed today, Friday, April 24. **See Eden Prairie detour maps [here](#).**
- There will be intermittent daytime closures to set bridge beams at the intersections of Valley View Road and Flying Cloud Drive from May 4 to 7. **See Eden Prairie detour maps [here](#).**
- Multiple construction activities continue in the Golden Triangle Station area, including constructing retaining walls, bridge work and station advancement. Crews are also working north of Shady Oak Road on utilities.

Visit our website for more details on construction activities in [Eden Prairie](#).

Minnetonka Highlights

- The southern portion of Red Circle Drive is currently a two-way road as bridge work has closed the roadway near the outlet to Shady Oak Road. **See Minnetonka detour maps [here](#).**
- Retaining wall work from Bren Road West to Smetana is ongoing in various phases of completion. Expect ongoing work activities in the area.
- Tree clearing and ground cover removal work for the Minnetonka/Hopkins LRT bridge continues to move south, past the Hopkins landfill towards Smetana Road. LRT bridge work is also underway north of the freight tracks starting from the northern abutment and moving south.

Visit our website for more details on construction activities in [Minnetonka](#).

Hopkins Highlights

- Utility and other preparation work has begun at the Shady Oak Road Station now that demolition and soil correction is complete.

- Crews are beginning preparation work for LRT tracks across 11th Street. LRT crosses this roadway just north of 5th Street, south of Excelsior Boulevard. During the week of April 27 crews will remove the roadway median. The following week, May 4, the roadway will be reduced to one lane in each direction and crews will begin construction on the east side of the roadway.
- Additional lane closures are anticipated on Blake Road on Monday, April 27. Crews are preparing to close the southbound lanes of Blake Road. Traffic will be permitted in one lane in the northbound direction. Expect sheet pile driving and excavation and concrete work in the area. **See Hopkins detour maps [here](#).**

Visit our website for more details on construction activities in [Hopkins](#).

St. Louis Park Highlights

- The closure of Wooddale Avenue is postponed until the week of May 4. The roadway closure will be for 30 days.
- Crews continue to advance bridge work at Beltline Boulevard. All lanes are currently open. Lane restrictions occurred earlier in the week to accommodate concrete work for the bridge spans.
- Grading for water management will begin in the coming weeks east of Beltline Boulevard.

Visit our website for more details on construction activities in [St. Louis Park](#).

Minneapolis Highlights

- Utility work on Depot Street is ongoing. The 28th Street/Dean Court intersection is anticipated to close the week of May 4.
- Work continues on the Cedar Lake Channel freight bridge deck.
- For approximately the next two months, crews will remove soil and will install freight rail ballast from south of the channel to near the Burnham Road Bridge. This will be followed by the construction of the permanent freight rail tracks. Some additional tree clearing will occur between the Channel and the Burnham Road Bridge to complete this work and to install permanent fencing.
- Crews will be conducting utility work south of the freight tracks near Glenwood Avenue on Saturday, April 25.

Visit our website for more details on construction activities in [Minneapolis](#).

[On-going Trail Detours:](#) Minnesota River Bluffs, South Cedar Lake Parkway, Kenilworth, Cedar Lake Trail

[On-going Eden Prairie Sidewalk and Roadway Detours:](#) Southwest Station, Technology and Flying Cloud Drive Intersection, Upcoming: Valley View Road/Flying Cloud Drive

[On-going Minnetonka Roadway Detours:](#) Yellow Circle, Red Circle, Bren Road, Smetana Road

[Upcoming Hopkins Detours:](#) Blake Road

[Upcoming St. Louis Park Detours:](#) Wooddale Avenue

[On-going Minneapolis Roadway Detours:](#) Glenwood Avenue, Royalston Avenue

Eden Prairie

SouthWest Station Area

The former SouthWest Transit facility is demolished, and crews are working on excavation and utilities in the area. Expect piling driving as crews work on the bus loop, retaining walls and begin on the new parking structure and associated utility work.

The right-turn lane on the eastbound Highway 212 ramp to Prairie Center Drive remains closed until later this spring to accommodate the completion of retaining wall work. Removal of the temporary sheeting for the retaining wall is nearing completion and the wall will be backfilled shortly.

Prairie Center Drive Bridge

The Prairie Center Drive LRT Bridge structure, which begins on the north side of SouthWest Transit Parking Ramp, follows alongside Purgatory Creek Park then crosses over Prairie Center Drive north of Singletree Lane, will be under construction until fall 2020. Crews have finished some piers and are currently working north of Parking Ramp and next to Purgatory Creek Park along Prairie Center Drive. Work is also starting on the east side of the roadway near Bachman's. Expect ongoing piling in the area through the spring. This includes ongoing work on Saturdays.

Sidewalks near the intersection of Prairie Center Drive and Technology Drive remain closed, please follow local signage to ensure your safety. The sidewalk is closed from Technology Drive to Singletree Lane. **(See the SouthWest pedestrian detour map [here](#)).**

The outside southbound lane on Prairie Center Drive will intermittently close for pier work. Additional roadway lane closures will be needed later this spring as work for piers advances.

Eden Road Area

Work on retaining walls as well as utility work in the area has begun. The intersection of Eden Road and Flying Cloud Drive will close in about two weeks. Eden Prairie Town Center Station work is also anticipated to begin in the next month.

LRT Bridge at I-494/Flying Cloud Drive

LRT will travel on a bridge over I-494, parallel to Flying Cloud Drive. The north abutment is almost complete. Concrete work is underway for south abutment. The ramp from westbound I-494 to eastbound Highway 212 has reopened. Traffic control barriers continue to be in place in the immediate vicinity of the work zone.

Valley View Road/Flying Cloud Drive

Crews are constructing multiple piers for the new LRT bridge at Valley View Road. The piers are at different stages of construction with many nearing completion. During the week of May 4, a couple intermittent daytime road closures on Valley View Road will be needed to set bridge beams. **See Eden Prairie upcoming detour map [here](#).**

The lane restriction on the ramp from Valley View Road to Highway 212 continues. Traffic is being diverted onto the HOV lane and will remain in this configuration into the spring.

Along Flying Cloud Drive between Eden Road and Valley View Road crews will be conducting major utility work, which includes moving utilities that are in the way of the LRT guideway and improving other area utilities while the roadway is under construction. Once the utilities are removed, crews will begin work on the LRT track guideway. Overall, there will be four phases of temporary traffic changes, specifically lane reductions and closures. These four phases will last the duration of the 2020 construction season. This work will also result in closures to connecting roadways.

Work is beginning to shift into phase two, with traffic being moved to the south side of Flying Cloud Drive as work begins on the northern side in the next few weeks. The west bound exit from Highway 494 to Flying Cloud Drive is reduced to one lane and will close within the next two weeks. The intersections of Technology Drive and Flying Cloud Drive closed today, Friday, April 24. **See Eden Prairie traffic map [here](#).**

Nine Mile Creek

Pile driving for the LRT bridge structure and abutments at Nine Mile Creek will continue through the spring. Crews have advanced abutment work and continue to complete piers. The sidewalk on the west side of Flying Cloud Drive is closed; pedestrians should use the east side.

Golden Triangle Station

Throughout the 2020 construction season, crews will advance work on the Golden Triangle Station, the land bridge around the station, and the LRT bridge that will transition to cross over Shady Oak Road and Highway 212. Expect ongoing activity in the area as these elements advance.

Current activities include piling and concrete work for retaining walls and the LRT bridge. Work on the Golden Triangle Station and the adjacent track slab is also being advanced.

Shady Oak Road/Flying Cloud Drive

Storm sewer work has resumed in this area. As work advances, there will be minor traffic impacts on the east side of the Shady Oak/Highway 212 intersection. The storm sewer work will take approximately four months.

Minnetonka

Highway 62

Construction of the LRT tunnel under Highway 62 will be ongoing through the 2021 construction season. The work is divided into two phases, work on the north then the south side of the highway. The traffic lanes have been shifted to the south side of the highway corridor to accommodate LRT tunnel construction on the north side of the highway. This traffic configuration will be in place through fall of 2020. Crews began constructing the bottom leveling slab of the north tunnel section and will advance concrete and structural work. In the next month the tunnel walls will take shape.

Red Circle Drive and Yellow Circle Drive

Yellow and Red Circle Drives have been reconfigured to allow for ongoing tunnel construction at Highway 62. Yellow Circle Drive is temporarily dead ended with a cul-de-sac where it connects to Red Circle Drive. Yellow Circle Drive has temporarily become a two-way roadway in the area south of Blue Circle Drive. A temporary bypass road is complete on Red Circle Drive. This roadway configuration will be in place until fall 2020. **See Minnetonka roadway changes [here](#).**

Additional work has begun on Red Circle Drive in May for bridge reconstruction. The southern portion of Red Circle is now a two-way. **See Minnetonka roadway changes [here](#).**

Opus Station Area

Earthwork continues in this area. Retaining wall work is ongoing north of the station area.

Bren Road West, just west of Green Circle to Bren Road East, closed to vehicles and pedestrians on March 30 and will remain in this condition through the 2020 construction season. **See Minnetonka detour map [here](#).** Crews have removed pavement and have begun excavation work. Watermain work is underway in the area. Minor traffic lane impacts on Bren Road East are also expected over the next few weeks to accommodate pipe jacking.

Smetana Road

In this area, the project includes two roadway bridges to accommodate LRT travelling underneath. Utility work has been ongoing in this area and will be followed by bridge and track work.

Currently, Smetana Road from Feltl Road to Nolan Drive is closed through 2020. A temporary bypass is in place west of the intersection of Smetana and Feltl roads to accommodate traffic in this area. **See Minnetonka detour maps [here](#).** Watermain and sanitary sewer work continues in the area. Within the next few weeks, retaining wall work will begin in the area, as well as abutment work for the Smetana roadway bridge. Expect piling driving in the area.

Hopkins

Minnetonka-Hopkins Bridge Area

The Minnetonka-Hopkins LRT Bridge is located east of Noland Drive and west of the Hopkins Landfill and will cross over the freight tracks to the north. The bridge will take multiple years to complete. Tree clearing and ground cover removal is ongoing, crews are working south of the freight rail line and are moving south towards ongoing work underway at Smetana Road. Excavation and piling has begun for the bridge's northern most abutment. Piling for pier will move north to south. Piling work for the bridge piers and will be ongoing through the 2020 construction season.

Shady Oak Road Station

Building demolition and soil correction for the station is complete in the area. Utility and foundation work for the Shady Oak Station is beginning to pick-up momentum.

11th Street

Crews are beginning preparation work for LRT tracks across 11th Street. LRT crosses this roadway just north of 5th Street, south of Excelsior Boulevard. During the week of April 27, crews will remove the roadway median. The following week, May 4, the roadway will be reduced to one lane in each direction and crews will begin construction on the east side of the roadway.

Downtown Hopkins Station

Earthwork will begin in the area next week. Work to advance the station will be ongoing as crews begin to work on plumbing and concrete elements.

Excelsior Boulevard Area

Crews continue building the LRT bridge over Excelsior Boulevard. Bridge piers and abutments continue to take shape. Pile driving, sheeting and concrete work is ongoing in the area. As piers are nearing completion, focus will shift to construction of bridge deck segments.

Blake Road

The project is improving bike safety in the area by building an underpass for the regional trail. Crews continue constructing the underpass on the west side of Blake Road. Additional lane closures are anticipated on Blake Road on Monday, April 27. Crews are preparing to close the southbound lanes of Blake Road. Traffic will be permitted in one lane in the northbound direction. Expect sheet pile driving, excavation and concrete work in the area. **See Hopkins detour maps [here](#).**

St. Louis Park

Minnehaha Creek

Work on the new freight and regional trail bridges continue in this area. Crews are beginning to backfill retaining walls on the approach to the bridges. Flaggers in the water will alert recreational users of periodic closures as crews begin to set girders and work on other structural elements across the waterway. Bridge girders will be constructed the week of April 27. Crews also continue excavation work to remove topsoil that will allow them to build track foundation in the area.

Louisiana Avenue

In the Louisiana Avenue area, the project is constructing the following elements: Louisiana Station, reestablishing the regional trail, LRT and freight bridges, a pedestrian/bicycle underpass (which connects the area around the old Sam's Club to the station), and a new southerly connector for freight rail to connect to the MN&S freight line. View the area's [visualization](#) to see how this all comes together.

Currently, crews are working on the pedestrian/bicycle underpass. Expect sheet pile driving and excavation work. Shoring and sheet pile driving work for the southerly railroad connection, that will replace the current wye freight track, along Oxford Street will begin in the next few weeks. Clearing work and fencing is being placed in the area. Later this spring crews will place bridge beams over the Louisiana Avenue roadway, two overnight roadway closures are anticipated but not yet scheduled.

Wooddale Avenue

The project is implementing safety enhancements to the regional trail in this area with the construction of a trail underpass, which is ongoing. Wooddale Avenue between West 36th Street and Highway 7, in the immediate vicinity of the Southwest Project. Crews have been setting prefabricated concrete segments for the Wooddale Avenue regional trail underpass. Work on the approaches continues, expect piling and excavation work in the area.

The closure of Wooddale Avenue has been postponed until the week of May 4. The roadway closure will be for 30 days.

Highway 100

The project will be re-positioning the existing freight rail bridge and will build a new LRT bridge over Highway 100 later this year. Piling for the abutments is complete and crews are advancing concrete work and connecting retaining walls.

Beltline Boulevard

Beltline Boulevard is being improved by the addition of a trail bridge over the roadway. The main truss for the regional trail bridge has been set. Work on the trail bridge deck continues. Major earthwork has begun in the area, extending west to Highway 100.

Minneapolis

Chowen Avenue to Lake Street

For the 2020 construction season, this area will experience major utility work, soil correction activities, pier protection work on the Lake Street Bridge, West Lake Station construction and the realignment of Chowen/Abbott roadways.

Utility work continues in the area. Clearing ground cover in the Chowen/Abbott loop is being completed Friday, April 24.

Kenilworth Tunnel Area Construction

From the Lake Street Bridge to just south of the Cedar Lake Channel, construction of an LRT tunnel will be ongoing through 2022. Sheet piling for the Kenilworth tunnel is ongoing south of Cedar Lake Parkway. Sheet pile installation for the tunnel is expected to last through summer of 2020.

Tunnel excavation is anticipated to begin late spring 2020, we will provide notice in this update and through the efforts of our outreach coordinators before this work begins. For more information about tunnel construction, see the [tunnel FAQ](#) information under the construction tab of our webpage: swlirt.org. A short [video](#) of the press-in-piler construction technique that is being used for the tunnel is also available.

In preparation for future tunnel work, a Metropolitan Council Environmental Services' sanitary sewer force main will be relocated, with crews working around 28th Street. Dean Court will become a two-way roadway and will remain in this configuration for six to eight weeks. We anticipate the roadway reconfiguration will be implemented the week of May 4. Associated with this work, utility activities have started on Depot Street, crews will construct a utility receiving pit requiring temporary excavation support. A backhoe will be pushing in the support, which is noisy.

Cedar Lake (Kenilworth) Channel

Three bridges will be constructed over the channel for freight, LRT, and the Kenilworth trail. Construction for the freight rail bridge is underway and will be completed first and the LRT then trail bridges will follow in sequence.

Trusses for the freight bridge were set in late March. Crews will focus on finishing deck details over the next couple months. Freight is anticipated to be shifted onto the new bridge in early summer.

Crews are beginning earth work to remove soil and place freight rail ballast on the approaches to the new freight rail bridge at the Cedar Lake Channel. Some additional tree clearing will occur between the Channel and the Burnham Road Bridge to complete this work and to install permanent fencing.

21st Street

Temporary surcharge work began south of 21st Street for the station. Expect excavation and dump trucks in the area as crews remove and bring in new soil. Surcharge work will consist of periods of activity moving soil followed by periods to consolidate the underlying soil. The surcharge is currently in a settlement period.

21st Street Station construction is expected to begin in the summer after removal of the surcharge.

Bryn Mawr Station Area

To accommodate the LRT station, crews will construct a pedestrian bridge on the northern bluff (near Penn Avenue and Highway 394) to the station. In addition, crews need to do a significant amount of earthwork in the area to construct the new trail alignment, regrade the contours of earth in the area and build a stable foundation for the LRT tracks.

The temporary surcharge for the station remains in a settlement period. This work will remain for five months to consolidate the underlying soil to provide a suitable foundation for the station. In May earthwork will begin for the new trail. Retaining wall work in the Penn Avenue/Wayzata Boulevard area is anticipated to begin in the next month.

I-394/Cedar Lake Trail

Pier protection work continues on the I-394 bridge. Trail construction to move pedestrians to their permanent location in the area is upcoming in May.

Linden Yards

Utility work has begun in the area. Construction of the Bassett Creek Valley Station will begin later this summer.

Glenwood Avenue

When the project is complete, LRT will cross Glenwood Avenue at grade. To make that happen three bridges need to be constructed, freight rail shifted, and extensive retaining walls built. Glenwood Avenue between Lyndale Avenue North and 11th Street North is closed until mid-2021. The roadway is closed to vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic as the bridge has been removed. **See detour map [here](#).** Local access to businesses

continues to be maintained. Crews have made significant progress on utility work and retaining walls in the area. Work on the west abutment for the new roadway bridge continues.

Royalston Avenue

This area will see the development of the Royalston Station, an LRT bridge crossing over 5th and 7th Streets and connecting to the Target Field Station. The entire Holden/Royalston/Border loop will also be reconstructed. Work on the LRT bridge piers on the east side of Royalston Avenue is ongoing and will continue through the spring. Expect pile driving activities in this area. The southbound travel lane on Royalston Avenue from 5th Street to Holden Street closed on March 16; the closure will last until summer 2021. Business access is available via the northbound lane. **See the roadway impact map [here](#).**

Regional Trails

Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail

The Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail in Hopkins is closed between Shady Oak Road and 5th Avenue South.

See detour map [here](#).

- The section between Shady Oak Road and 11th Avenue South is closed due to storm sewer construction activities. This portion of the trail is closed until Summer 2020.
- The section between 11th Avenue South and 5th Avenue South is closed until Fall 2021.

South Cedar Lake LRT Trail

The South Cedar Lake Trail from just east of the North Cedar Lake Trail connection in Hopkins to France Avenue in St. Louis Park is closed until Fall 2021. The South Cedar Lake Trail will remain open between France Avenue in St. Louis Park and Kenilworth Trail/Midtown Greenway intersection in Minneapolis. The Midtown Greenway will remain open. Currently, cross streets remain open to automobiles, bikes and pedestrians, with separate closures of roadways upcoming at various dates. **See detour maps [here](#).**

Kenilworth Trail Closure

The Kenilworth Trail is closed in Minneapolis at the intersection with the Midtown Greenway to just south of West 21st Street until Summer 2022. Access for automobiles, bikes and pedestrians remains open at Cedar Lake Parkway and at West 21st Street. **See detour map [here](#).**

North Cedar Lake Trail in Minneapolis

The North Cedar Lake Trail in Minneapolis from Linden Yards located west of Van White Boulevard to east of Royalston Avenue is closed until mid-2021. **See detour maps [here](#).**

Please note, construction vehicles cross the trail as they enter and exit staging areas. Construction vehicles yield to trail users but please be aware that you may encounter construction traffic in this area. Anticipate flaggers in this area as earthwork activities continue in the Bryn Mawr Station area.