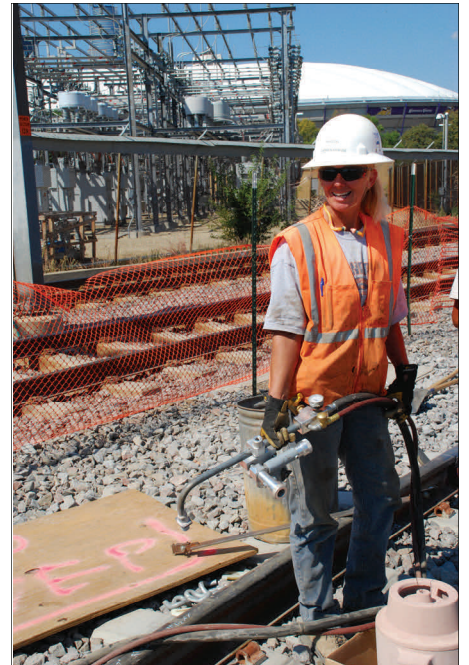


Making Tracks

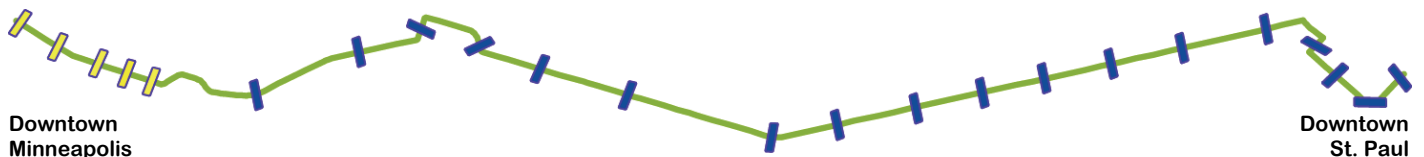
Aug.-Sept. 2012



WELDED BLISS — Welder Miguel Ayala (left) steps back as flames shoot from the weld that joined the Central Corridor LRT line to the Hiawatha line Sept. 5 between the Cedar-Riverside and Metrodome LRT stations. Welder Duane Dopp (top right) waves to a passing train as he prepared the “golden weld.” Welder Carmen Krause (bottom right) was part of the Herzog Contracting Corp. team that set the weld. While track installation and rail welding will continue throughout the rest of 2012, this weld was significant. “This weld is our own version of the golden spike for the trans-continental railroad as it connects the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis,” said Mark Fuhrmann, local program director for New Starts rail projects such as Central Corridor and Southwest LRT.



For details, see: <http://tinyurl.com/9f7c7of>



Downtown
Minneapolis

Downtown
St. Paul



The first of 14 traction power substations was installed in late August near Raymond and University avenues.

One of the 700 poles (right) being installed for the overhead catenary system. Miles of wires will be strung next year from pole to pole to carry electricity that will power the trains.

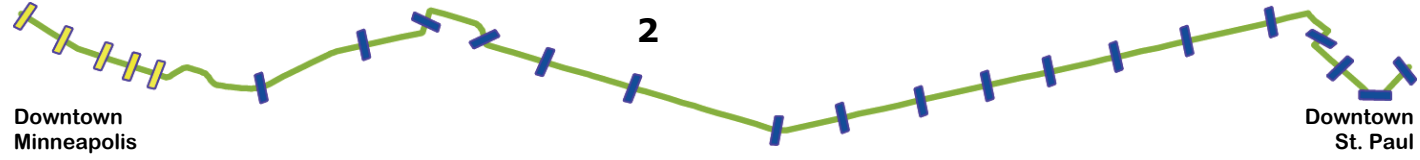


Bring on the juice

A crane operator and ground crew at the end of August carefully maneuvered into place the first of 14 80,000-pound traction power substations to be installed on the Central Corridor line. This unit was placed south of Raymond and University avenues in St. Paul.

Fourteen substations, located about one mile apart, will convert alternating electrical current to direct current, which will power the light rail vehicles. Over the next year, the other substations will be installed at a rate of one a month.

Substations are typically located within a block or two of a light rail station. The current generated travels below ground to a series of overhead catenary system wires held up by the poles. Look along the Central Corridor system, and you'll see 700 poles in the process of being erected.





Project on track to be 75 percent complete by year's end

Central Corridor LRT construction reached 68 percent completion this summer.

"We've made tremendous progress this spring and summer," reports Rich Rovang, project director. "At this pace, we should reach our goal to be 75 percent done by the year's end."

Here's what has been accomplished to date:

- Six of the 18 stations (Westgate, Raymond, Fairview and Snelling Avenue, Robert Street and Union Depot) are structurally complete.
- First of 14 traction power substations installed for converting alternating current off the grid into direct current to power the trains.
- Weld tying the Central Corridor line to the Hiawatha LRT line.

By end of year, these tasks will be complete:

- All 18 stations structurally complete.
- All roadways, sidewalks, curbs and gutters rebuilt.
- A few of the 47 light rail vehicles will have been built, shipped from the manufacturing plant and begun test runs with crews on the Hiawatha line.

What to expect from construction this year by area:

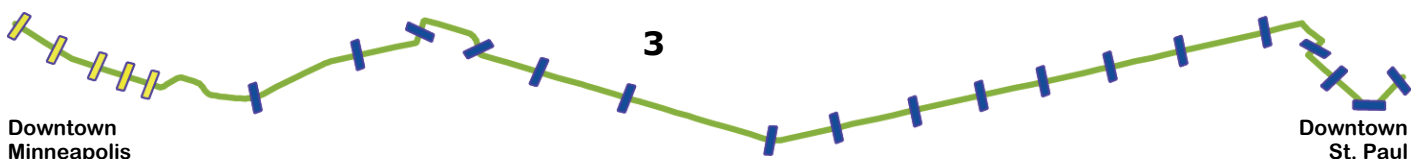
West Bank: <http://tinyurl.com/82smjde>

East Bank/Stadium Village: <http://tinyurl.com/7bu6csc>

Prospect Park: <http://tinyurl.com/7a78snn>

University Avenue East—St. Paul: <http://tinyurl.com/7pbzds4>

Cedar Street and Central Station: <http://tinyurl.com/7nsu5dw>



Reopened Huron Blvd at University, new sidewalks greeted U of M students

Considerable LRT construction progress greeted University of Minnesota students as the fall semester began.

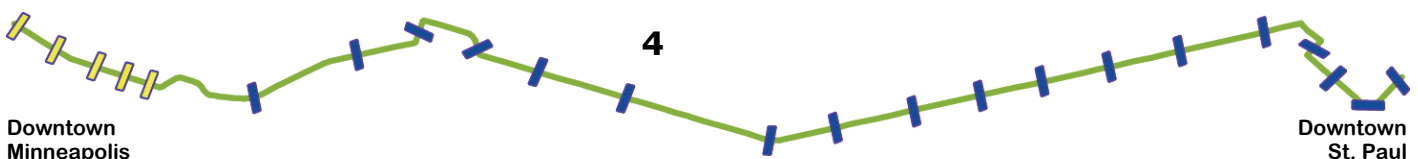
In the 109 days between the end of spring semester May 11 and the start of fall semester Sept. 4, crews installed track from the West Bank to the East Bank, including double track in the middle of the Washington Avenue Bridge. Crews also built out the West Bank, East Bank and Stadium Village stations. Those stations should be structurally complete by the end of year, as will all 18 stations on the line. Huron Boulevard reopened to traffic at University Avenue by Sept. 4, too.

As students returned, they were greeted by new sidewalks open along the south side of Washington Avenue from Huron Boulevard to Church Street. With most of the heavy construction finished on campus, they encountered less noise and dirt from LRT construction.

For the Sept. 8 home football game, crews temporarily reopened Washington between Huron and Oak Street to traffic. That stretch is due to reopen permanently to traffic by mid-September.



Students found the south sidewalk (left) on Washington Avenue between Huron Boulevard and Church Street rebuilt and reopened the first week of September when fall classes began. The intersection (right) at Huron and Washington and University avenues reopened in time for fall semester, too.



East Bank, Stadium Village

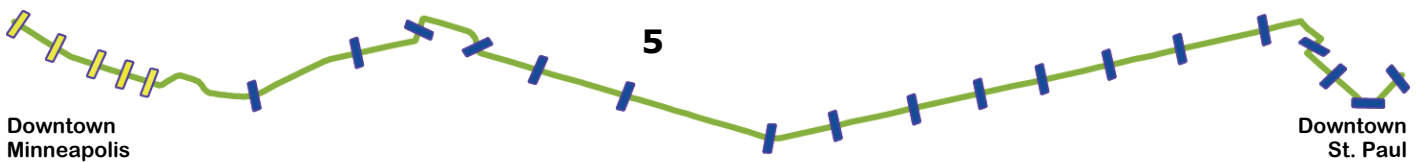


Sidewalks and road rebuilt and open at Washington Avenue and Harvard Street.

Guideway for tracks under construction in middle of Washington Avenue on East Bank.



Stadium Village Station takes shape.



Downtown
Minneapolis

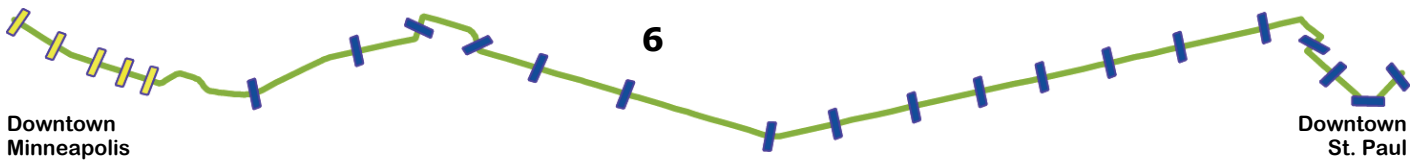
Downtown
St. Paul



Capitol area



Workers install plants (left) at Robert Street Station in the Capitol area. Crews (below) build retaining walls as part of LRT construction on University Avenue on the north side of the state Capitol.





Transformation Salon owner Mary Milton (left) served a free lunch to thank LRT crews. Crews (right) display banner promoting the lunch.

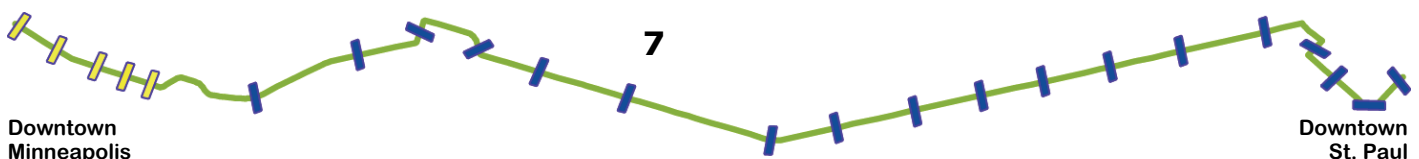
Small business owner thanks LRT construction crews with free lunch

Efforts to minimize construction impacts along eastern University Avenue in St. Paul are paying off — in the form of hotdogs.

Complaints to the 24-hour hotline have dropped from a peak of nearly 70 to 80 a week to 30 the first week of September. One business owner decided to show her appreciation with a free lunch for construction workers who labored over a long hot summer.

Dubbed “Hotdogs for Hard Hats,” the Sept. 10 event was sponsored by Mary Milton of [Transformation Salon](#), 931 University Ave., as a thank you for all construction workers.

“This was a great idea by a University Avenue business owner trying to make the best of a situation that has been trying at times for all involved. It is also another example of how U7 works with the area businesses. She came to us with the idea, and we are helping her execute it,” said Jason Allen, a small business consultant with the University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative or U7, a collaborative community initiative of the Neighborhood Development Center.





Construction traffic

Neighbors raised concerns in early August as construction trucks rumbled through eastern University Avenue neighborhoods. Since then, Central Corridor Project Office staff has worked with Walsh Construction, the contractor, to make improvements.

Project staff and Walsh have responded to residents' complaints by:

- Monitoring traffic on Sherburne and Charles three times a day to make sure construction vehicles aren't parking in residential neighborhoods.
- Installing signage that directs business traffic to specific streets.
- Increasing communications with neighborhood groups about city-approved haul routes for the project.
- Increasing use of flaggers at cross streets to ensure safety.

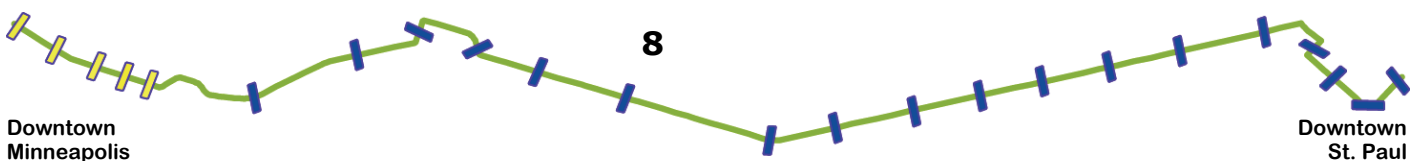
Project staff and Walsh also have increased communications with immigrant business owners on University Avenue. Among some of the actions resulting from the meetings:

- Installation of more business access signs in addition to regular business signs.
- Translation of construction posters in eight languages to keep businesses and their customers informed of sidewalk, road and intersection closures.
- Provisions for a language interpreter, when necessary, to assist in communications between immigrant business owners and project personnel.
- Work with business owners to help them obtain business assistance loans.
- Promotion of University Avenue businesses through both paid advertising and various public relations efforts.

The efforts to improve are appreciated.

A vocal critic of the project recently wrote the project office that he and others were walking near a construction area when they encountered a Walsh employee directing truck traffic.

"He saw that we were facing major regular traffic to get across the street. He stopped regular traffic so we could cross safely. Wish I knew his name. He went above and beyond his call of duty for the day," the person wrote.

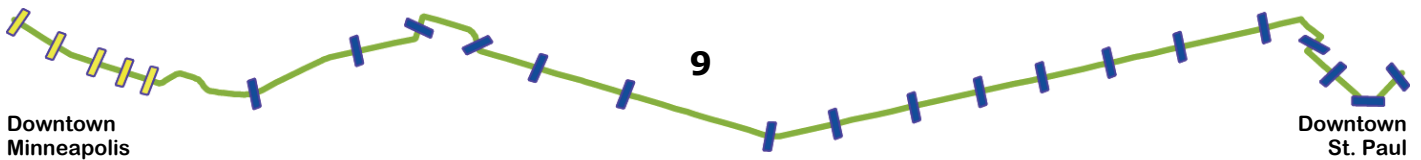




Russian Tea House, 1758 University Ave. W., and Tay Ho restaurant, 302 University Ave. W., are among small businesses featured in free ads on billboards and Metro Transit bus sides as part of the Metropolitan Council's Central Corridor marketing campaign. MOD & Co. of St. Paul is conducting the campaign on behalf of the Met Council.

[Russian Tea House](#)

[Tay Ho](#)



Downtown Minneapolis

Downtown St. Paul



Bus information—Visit www.metrotransit.org/construction for construction-related bus detours and bus stop closures during construction.

Weekly construction updates— Get weekly construction updates to learn how to get around during construction by entering your email address in the gray Stay Connected box at the top left of the www.centralcorridor.org homepage.

Addressees will receive updates every Friday for the sections of the corridor they choose. The updates provide a look at the week ahead with details on lane shifts, crosswalk and sidewalk closures and alternate routes and relocated bus stops. The public also can sign up to receive project newsletters such as Making Tracks and DBE News.

24-hour construction hotline - 651-602-1404.

Follow us at: www.twitter.com/cclrt

For general questions or comments - Call 651-602-1645 or email centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

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 began in late summer 2010 on the planned 11-mile Central Corridor line, and service will begin 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 is 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. Funding is provided by the Federal Transit Administration, Counties Transit Improvement Board, state of Minnesota, Ramsey and Hennepin counties' regional railroad authorities, city of St. Paul, Metropolitan Council and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. For more information, visit www.centralcorridor.org

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