

Central Corridor

News Release



Central Corridor LRT Project

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Overnight light rail vehicle tests beginning on University Avenue

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Aug. 16, 2013 –Overhead wires for Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (Green Line) will be energized on the western half of University Avenue so overnight testing of light rail vehicles can begin there the week of Aug. 26.

“With these tests, the Central Corridor LRT Project continues to make excellent progress toward our goal of opening in mid-2014 before the Major League Baseball All-Star game at Target Field next July. Construction is now 95 percent complete,” Metropolitan Council Chair Sue Haigh said.

Beginning late night Aug. 26 into overnight hours, a light rail vehicle (LRV) is scheduled to operate on University Avenue between Stadium Village in Minneapolis and Fry Street, which is two blocks west of Snelling Avenue in St. Paul. The LRV will draw power from the overhead wires for the first time in this stretch of the 11-mile line. Light rail vehicles may be present anywhere along this segment during overnight hours.

Late in the week of Aug. 19 in preparation for the so-called live wire tests the following week, a railcar mover will pull an LRV along University between Stadium Village and Fry during daytime hours to verify clearances before the lines are energized.

The first live wire test of an LRV anywhere on the corridor occurred late night July 25 from the West Bank through the East Bank to Stadium Village. Live wire tests through campus resumed overnight the first full week of August and are continuing there through September.

Testing on the eastern half of University Avenue and the rest of the corridor will begin later this fall. Months of testing will follow, the outcome of which will determine the line’s opening date in mid-2014.

With the advent of LRV testing, Metro Transit has introduced a Green Line Quiz Bowl safety video and public service announcements. They were produced with the help of the City of

Saint Paul Communications Services and its own Nick Nelson, aka "Mr. St. Paul Video," as well as project and Metro Transit staffers.

"We took a game show-style approach in hopes of getting people's attention on the important issue of how to stay safe around light rail trains. We want people to understand that safety is a shared responsibility," said Mike Conlon, Metro Transit's director of rail and bus safety.

Here are the links to the Green Line Quiz Bowl video and three PSAs:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cH2iAOBVF0I>

Mid-block crossing PSA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYduwYwAaxQ>

Crossing tracks PSA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqHgEXaXS2I>

Stations PSA: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2vE6FnLnMs>

The videos and PSAs are the latest components of the project's safety campaign, which includes presentations to school groups and others, safety posters at station kiosks and brochures. See the project's safety webpage: www.centralcorridor.org/safety

What to expect during overnight testing on University Avenue:

For vehicles: No permanent street or sidewalk closures are scheduled. Traffic controls will be in place to help facilitate train movements through signalized intersections.

For pedestrians: No permanent sidewalk or crosswalk closures are scheduled. Traffic controls will be in place to help facilitate train movements through signalized intersections.

About the project: The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project (Green Line) 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 2010 on the 11-mile line, and service will begin in mid-2014. The line will connect with the Blue Line at the Metrodome station in Minneapolis and the Northstar commuter rail line at 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. The Central Corridor LRT Project website is www.centralcorridor.org