

Making Tracks



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Two Pages

City of St. Paul considers parking management strategies after Central Corridor LRT is built

The city of St. Paul is exploring using metered and time-restricted parking and enforcement of parking regulations to promote frequent turnover of parking spots once the Central Corridor LRT line is built. For more information about these strategies, visit the Hot Topics section in the top left corner of the Central Corridor LRT Project's homepage at <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/centralcorridor.htm>. The city identified these potential next steps after the LRT project's parking analysis showed new surface lots on University Avenue are unlikely because ample parking exists, the city's development strategy discourages them and that building parking lots would require property acquisition. The project's study found 15,300 parking spaces within one block of University, while a 2006 study by the city found 25,000 spaces in private lots within a quarter mile of the seven LRT stations in St. Paul. Also, 560 on-street parking spots were identified on north-south cross streets within a block of the corridor. Of University's 1,150 existing on-street parking spots, 175 will remain once the LRT line is built. Mandatory features, such as station platforms, took away 625 spots, while highly desirable features requested by the public, such as non-signalized pedestrian crossings, eliminated 250 spots. Forty spots were lost due to requests for secondary station access. Expanding station platforms to accommodate three-car trains in the future took out 20 spots, and 40 spaces were removed to minimize lane transitions.

Converting outer lanes on University Ave. for parking would result in congestion, failing intersections

Converting University Avenue's outer lanes for on-street parking during standard business hours would cause traffic congestion and intersection failures, according to a study by Central Corridor LRT Project engineers. They are working with the city of St. Paul and Ramsey County to determine if on-street parking should be allowed after 7 p.m. The study plotted hourly traffic volumes for five segments on University between Highway 280 and Rice Street to determine when two lanes in each direction are necessary. During standard business hours, volumes were greater than 700 vehicles an hour, the threshold for two lanes each way.

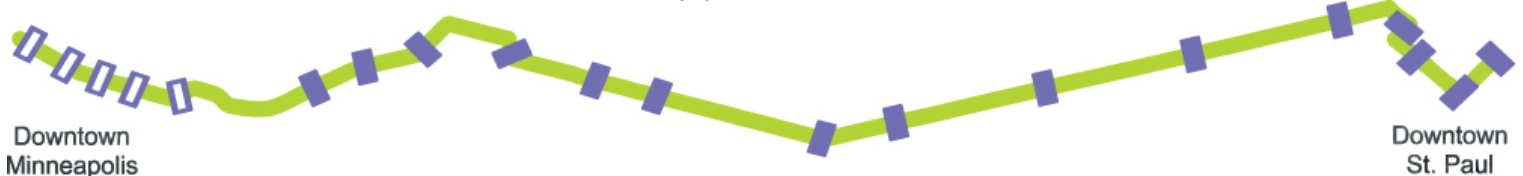
Testing shows vibration can be mitigated at churches, broadcast stations, university research facilities

Vibrations impacts from Central Corridor LRT trains can be mitigated at four University of Minnesota research facilities, KSTP-TV, Minnesota Public Radio and Central Presbyterian Church and the Church of St. Louis King of France in downtown St. Paul, according to a study for the Central Corridor LRT Project. Resilient track fasteners installed during construction can mitigate vibration impacts at all locations, except the university's Hasselmo Hall Nuclear Magnetic Resonance facility where a floating concrete slab would be required under the track. These techniques have been used elsewhere around the country to mitigate vibration impacts. Field testing was performed in May following Federal Transit Administration guidelines.

Newest outreach coordinator is fluent in Vietnamese

Hue Pham, who speaks Vietnamese in addition to English, replaces Nkongo Cigolo as outreach coordinator, representing the Snelling and Lexington station areas. Cigolo resigned earlier this year to help his family in Africa recover from a series of earthquakes. Pham, an Augsburg College business administration graduate, has worked at the Children's Home Society Family Services managing its Vietnam and Thailand programs. Previous work experience includes management positions at AT&T Corp., IBM and as a Wilder Foundation consultant. Pham can be reached at 651-602-1559 or hue.pham@metc.state.mn.us

More



Parking, infill stations, bus service among common concerns expressed about project's SDEIS

The deadline for submitting comments on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Central Corridor LRT Project is Aug. 25. At three public hearings earlier this month and in comments received at the project office, concerns expressed have included a desire that the SDEIS address parking impacts, ensure equitable benefits such as the infill stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western, maintain local bus service, mitigate gentrification effects and provide safe crossings on University Avenue. The Final Environmental Impact Statement, which will be prepared over the fall and winter, will respond to these comments.

Meeting to prepare women-owned, minority-owned and small businesses for LRT work

A special mixer Sept. 25 at the Central Corridor LRT Project office is intended to help businesses learn what they need to do to apply for contracts to help build the Twin Cities' second light rail line. Construction begins in 2010, and now is the time for businesses to become certified as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and learn whether they will need to hire additional workers with special skills to qualify for contracts. Small, minority-owned and women-owned construction and construction-related business owners are invited to hear about job opportunities from project staff. A DBE and CERT certification information session will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. Sept. 25, followed by the mixer from 4 to 6 p.m. at the project office in the Griggs Midway Building, 540 Fairview Ave. N., Ste. 200, in St. Paul. Directions to the office will be provided with acknowledgement of RSVPs, which are due by Sept. 20. RSVPs should be directed to Mary Richardson at 651-602-1940 or mary_richardson@metc.state.mn.us. Questions should be directed to Roderic Southall, who is in charge of the project's DBE program, at 651-602-1415 or Roderic.southall@metc.state.mn.us. The project already has hired 16 women-owned and minority-owned businesses for the engineering and environmental analysis phase of the project, which amounts to 17 percent of the nearly \$94 million worth of contracts.

Ten artists chosen to present sample station designs as part of artist selection process

To compete for contracts to design the 15 Central Corridor LRT stations, 10 artists have been asked to submit sample station designs and public outreach plans by Sept. 10. By mid September, the Central Corridor LRT Project and its artist selection committee will interview the 10 artists and make recommendations to the Metropolitan Council, which will choose three to five artists. The artists will work with the community over the fall and winter on developing public art that will be integrated into the station design. The Central Corridor Project Office team developed the preliminary station design, including the canopy, safety strip and walkway widths, following applicable laws and codes regarding accessibility. For the station design, the project has actively solicited the advice of people with disabilities, including the Met Council's Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee, which has been involved in periodic review of the entire project. The 10 artists or artist teams chosen for further review from among 66 applications are: Nancy Blum; Carolyn Braaksma/Leticia Huerta; Roberto L. Delgado; Wing Young Huie/LOCUS Arch.; JEFRE + Sensitile Team Studio; Seitu Kenneth Jones; Janet Lofquist; Andrea Myklebust/Stanton Gary Sears; Russell Rock/Jeanine Centuori; and Michael Singer Studio. The selection criteria included artistic merit, maintainability, durability, appropriateness for local climate and public involvement.

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

Questions or Comments? Call the comment line at 651-602-1645 or e-mail us at centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

