

**STATUS REPORT
on the**

**Programmatic Agreement
Among
The Federal Transit Administration
The Metropolitan Council
The Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
And
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Regarding the Construction of
The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project
Between Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota**

**Status Report #3
April 2010**

INTRODUCTION

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) project is an approximately 11-mile LRT line that will serve the Minneapolis and St. Paul downtown areas, as well as the University of Minnesota (U of M) and the State Capitol complex. In downtown Minneapolis, it will integrate with the Hiawatha LRT line. There will be 20 stations along the line, including five shared with the existing Hiawatha LRT. Below-grade infrastructure to allow for later construction of three future infill stations will be provided and an operations and maintenance facility will be constructed as part of the project.

This Status Report covers the period from January 1 to March 31, 2009.

STIPULATION I: PROJECT DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

In January, MnSHPO provided comments on final design plans submitted in 4th Quarter 2009 for work at the University of Minnesota, completing Advanced Traffic Improvements. No adverse effects requiring mitigation were identified by MnSHPO.

On February 4, 2010, a set of final design plans were submitted to MnSHPO for the Civil East portion of the Central Corridor LRT Project. The Civil East portion of the project includes installation of LRT tracks, catenary pole foundations, LRT stations, streetscaping and other project improvements from the border of the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis to Broadway Street in downtown St. Paul. Concurrent with submittal to MnSHPO, consulting parties were offered the opportunity receive a set of the Civil East final design plans. The comment period for these plans closed on March 8, 2010. In a letter dated March 9, MnSHPO found that the plans submitted met Secretary of Interior's Standards. No adverse effects requiring mitigation were identified by MnSHPO.

In March, final conceptual plans were provided for MnSHPO and consulting party review of the proposed reconstruction of the Central Corridor LRT Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) façade. The OMF will reuse the Diamond Products building in downtown St. Paul, which is proximate to the Lowertown Historic District. The submittal of these final conceptual plans occurred subsequent to a community meeting held in early March and reflect the preferred design selected by the citizen's task force charged with providing input into the design process.

STIPULATION II: DESIGN OF FUTURE STATIONS AT HAMLINE, VICTORIA AND WESTERN

In January 2010, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published an Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing the social, environmental, and economic impacts of constructing above-grade elements of infill LRT stations at Hamline Avenue, Victoria Street, and Western Avenue. Following the 30-day comment period, FTA issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), concluding the NEPA review of this action. The Final EA and FONSI are available on the Council Web site at www.centralcorridor.org.

Final design plans for the infill stations at Hamline Avenue, Victoria Street and Western Avenue were reviewed by staff from MnSHPO, and by staff from the Minnesota Preservation Alliance, and the City of St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission at a meeting in March. Subsequent to the meeting, final design plans were submitted for MnSHPO review and comment.

STIPULATION III: ARCHAEOLOGY

There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

STIPULATION IV: RESOLUTION OF ADVERSE EFFECTS

As of the date of the completion of this Status Report, MnSHPO has made adverse effects findings for three historic properties and/or districts – the St. Paul Urban Renewal Historic District, the State Capitol Mall Historic District, and St. Paul Union Depot.

St. Paul Union Depot: During the first quarter of 2010, work on finalizing the St. Paul Union Depot plan was suspended as discussions between the CCPO, MnSHPO, Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority, and other parties took place relating to the purchase of the Union Depot by Ramsey County and Ramsey County's plans for its re-use as a multi-modal facility.

State Capitol Mall Historic District: On January 12, 2010, MnSHPO provided comments on the draft mitigation plan developed to offset adverse effects of the Central Corridor LRT project to the State Capitol Mall Historic District. MnSHPO indicated that the draft mitigation plan was an appropriate means to offset adverse project effects. Subsequent to receipt of MnSHPO's comments, a final mitigation plan was circulated to MnSHPO and all parties in a transmittal dated February 25, 2010.

St. Paul Urban Renewal Historic District: Mitigation for effects to the St. Paul Urban Renewal Historic District was documented in the Programmatic Agreement and is reported under Stipulation VII.

STIPULATION V: NOISE AND VIBRATION ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

Comments on the draft Vibration Noise Management and Remediation Plan submitted for MnSHPO and all parties review in 4th Quarter 2009 were received in early January 2010 from MnSHPO and from Central Presbyterian Church. In March, a final draft of the VNMRP was provided to MnSHPO and to FTA for their review and acceptance, consistent with Stipulation V of the Programmatic Agreement. The VNMRP will be considered final upon acceptance from MnSHPO and FTA.

STIPULATION VI: PARKING AND TRAFFIC

Stipulation VI.A: There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

Stipulation VI.B: There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

Stipulation VI.C: CCPO outreach and public involvement staff completed a series of “parking workshops” focused on developing tailored responses to mitigate parking issues in critical areas identified in the April 2009 report “Mitigating the Loss of Parking in the Central Corridor.” The City of St. Paul has identified \$2 million in funding that will be made available to businesses along University Avenue, implementing plans for shared parking, expanded parking, or other parking solutions. CCPO outreach and public involvement staff have assisted the City of St. Paul in distributing copies of the applications for parking mitigation funds to local businesses, hosting meetings to discuss the program and its requirements and benefits, and will continue to provide staff assistance to the City of St. Paul in implementing parking solutions along University Avenue.

STIPULATION VII: RECORDATION OF CEDAR STREET AND REDEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES

360 Cedar Street Recordation: In a letter dated January 8, 2010, MnSHPO acknowledged receipt of the Minnesota Historic Property Record for the First Federal Savings and Loan of Saint Paul, finding that the documentation fulfills Stipulation VII.A of the Programmatic Agreement.

Design Guidelines for 4th/5th/Minnesota/Cedar streets block: There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

STIPULATIONS VIII THROUGH IX

There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

STIPULATION X: PUBLIC INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Stipulation X.A: During the reporting period, the Central Corridor project Web site was reorganized to make information on environmental documentation activities, and historic resource activities specifically, more readily available. All documents developed as part of implementing the stipulations in the Programmatic Agreement, copies of status reports, and other documentation are now available at www.centralcorridor.org.

Stipulation X.B: There have been no actions pertaining to this stipulation in the reporting period.

STIPULATION XI: PROTECTION MEASURES

On March 1, 2010, a draft Construction Protection Plan (CPP) was submitted to MnSHPO and all parties for review and comment. The CPP will be considered final upon acceptance by MnSHPO and FTA.

STIPULATION XIV: QUARTERLY REPORT ON AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

This is the third quarterly report prepared on the status of implementation of Central Corridor LRT Programmatic Agreement stipulations.

STIPULATION XV: STANDARDS

All work carried out pursuant to the Programmatic Agreement has been carried out consistent with the requirements noted in this stipulation.

STIPULATION XVI: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

There have been no disputes requiring resolution in the reporting period.

STIPULATION XVII: AMENDMENTS

There have been no requests, nor any preparation of, amendments to the Programmatic Agreement during the reporting period.

STIPULATION XVIII: TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

There have been no requests by any party to terminate the Programmatic Agreement during the reporting period.

STIPULATION XIX: DURATION OF AGREEMENT

There has been no change to the duration of the Programmatic Agreement during the reporting period.

SCHEDULE OF ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES OVER NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

The following activities are anticipated to take place over the next reporting period, concluding June 30, 2010.

- Review of final design plans for the Civil West construction package (from the CCLRT connection with Hiawatha LRT to the border of Minneapolis and St. Paul).

PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT STATUS REPORT #3

APRIL 2010

Central Corridor LRT Project

- Review of final design plans for the LRT Operations and Maintenance Facility in downtown St. Paul.
- Finalization of Mitigation Plans for adverse effects identified by MnSHPO to the St. Paul Union Depot.
- Completion of the Vibration and Noise Management and Remediation Plan.
- Completion of draft design guidelines for the Cedar Street Block bounded by 4th, 5th and Minnesota streets in downtown St. Paul.
- Completion of the Construction Protection Plan, pursuant to Stipulation XI of the Programmatic Agreement.