

Making Tracks

June-July
2012

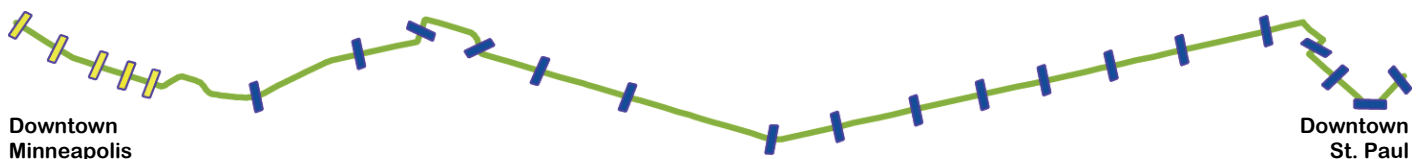


Bonnie's Café, 2160 University Ave. W in St. Paul, is among businesses featured on the first round of billboards promoting University Avenue businesses.

Coming soon to a billboard near you...

The first round of advertising to promote Central Corridor businesses affected by light rail construction began appearing in July on St. Paul and Minneapolis billboards and Metro Transit buses.

The advertising campaign kicks off a two-year, \$1.2 million initiative by the Metropolitan Council to promote businesses along the 11-mile Central Corridor during light rail construction. MOD & Company of St. Paul is conducting the ad campaign on behalf of the Met Council.



Central Corridor marketing campaign (continued from page 1)...

The advertising campaign will break up the 11 miles of the Central Corridor into nine business "nodes," or districts, which will each have their own branding and advertising, said Luke Soiseth, co-owner of MOD & Co.

The businesses initially appearing in Central Corridor billboard and bus side advertising were selected based on input from community representatives to showcase a variety of St. Paul and Minneapolis businesses. Additional Central Corridor businesses will be featured in future bus shelters ads, ads in mainstream and ethnic print media, selective radio and TV ads and a business directory.

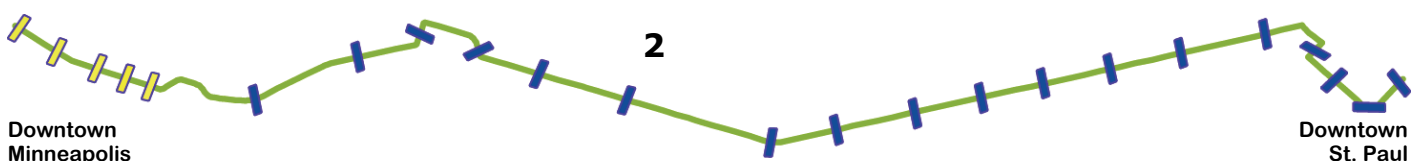
The first stage of the advertising campaign features the following businesses:

St. Paul businesses

- [Bangkok Cuisine](#), 432 University Ave. W.
- [Black Dog Coffee & Wine Bar](#), 308 Prince St.
- Bonnie's Cafe, 2160 University Ave. W.
- [Flamingo Restaurant](#), 490 N. Syndicate St.
- Glamour with New York Cuts, 446 University Ave. W.
- [Milbern Clothing](#), 1685 University Ave. W.
- [Ngon Bistro](#), 799 University Ave. W.
- [Royal Tire](#), 1695 University Ave. W.
- Succotash, 781 Raymond Ave.
- Tay Ho, 302 University Ave. W.
- [Transformation Salon](#), 931 University Ave. W.

Minneapolis businesses

- [Acadia Cafe](#), 329 Cedar Ave S.
- [Arts & Architecture](#), 3338 University Ave. S.E.
- [Big 10 Restaurant](#), 606 Washington Ave. S.E.
- [Bun Mi Sandwiches](#), 604 Washington Ave S.E.
- [Cupcake](#), 3338 University Ave. S.E.
- [Southern Theater](#), 1420 Washington Ave S.





Union Depot Station (left) and Westgate Station (right) are among three of the 18 LRT stations that are substantially complete. Robert Street Station is the other. All 18 stations are to be substantially complete by the end of the year.

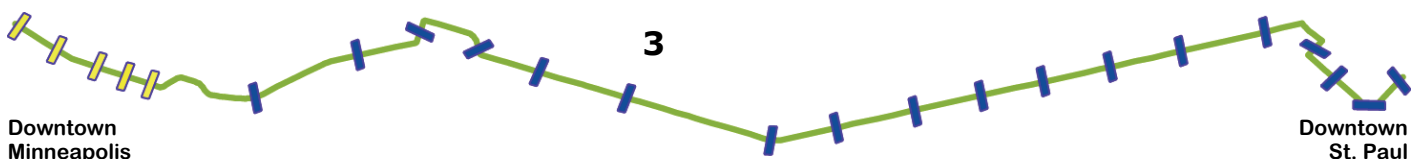
Three of 18 stations substantially complete

Three of the 18 Central Corridor LRT stations -- Union Depot, Robert Street and Westgate -- are substantially complete, and work has begun on the last two remaining stations, Capitol/Rice and Prospect Park.

Signs saying "Green Line" are being erected, foreshadowing the day when the Central Corridor name goes away. Installation of station artwork has begun, although most artwork will be installed next year. Safety features are appearing at stations, such as yellow tactile warning strips at the platform edges. As track installation and roadway and sidewalk reconstruction nears completion later this year, work will shift to the complex electrical and communication systems that run the light rail vehicles.

"During 2013, crews will install electrical substations, the overhead catenary system of wires that brings power to the trains and signals for light rail operators, motorists and pedestrians who will share the road with light rail vehicles," said Mark Fuhrmann, program director for New Starts rail projects in the Twin Cities.

The public can expect to see testing of light rail vehicles in late 2013, with the goal of starting revenue service in 2014. The start date depends on the testing results.





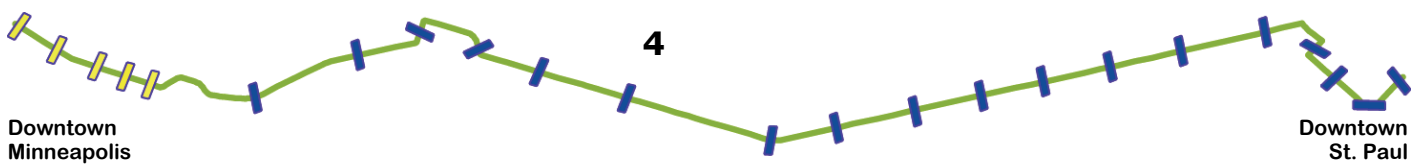
Three of 18 stations (continued from page 3)....

Stations also will include information kiosks. Besides departure times, nearby bus connections and a walking map, the kiosks also will incorporate information unique to the community itself.

“We’ve asked district councils to weigh in on a community description, locations of interest, images of landmarks or community scenes, and important local websites or other resources,” said John Siqveland, Metro Transit public relations manager.



Workers installed artwork in mid-July at the East Bank Station.





Project progresses on schedule—A busy scene in July on University Avenue where crews have lowered the grade to get LRT trains under the Minnesota Commercial Railway Bridge. The project is 58 percent and is expected to be 75 complete by the end of the year. The project has employed 3,502 construction workers to date.

What to expect from construction this year by area:

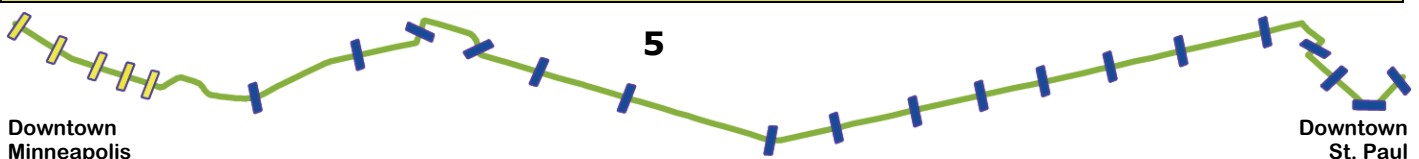
West Bank: <http://tinyurl.com/82smjde>

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>



The greening of St. Paul

Rock-filled infiltration system being installed along CCLRT side-walks

A green side story to the Central Corridor LRT is unfolding under 16 miles of new sidewalk being built in St. Paul, with the installation of a unique rock-filled infiltration system.

In an environmental twofer, the system will soak up some of the storm water runoff. It also will water 1,200 new trees planted along both sides of University Avenue in St. Paul.

Here's how it works: Storm water seeps through permeable brick pavers along the sidewalk. It then passes through several feet of special soil and drainage rock. The runoff nourishes the trees planted along the walkway, while layers of structural soil act like a magnet, capturing pollutants from the storm water. Over time, the soil will break down contaminants such as gasoline, diesel, motor oil and phosphorus.

Tree trenches and rain gardens have become increasingly popular in urban construction.

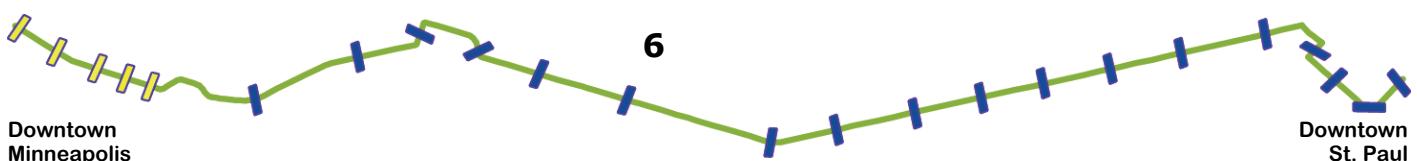
According to John Bilotta, Minnesota Extension Educator, "Trees play a very important role in removing ground and surface water pollutants." A mature tree can consume as much as 2,380 gallons of rainfall each year.



Nick Landwer, project engineer

Tree trenches won't eliminate street flooding in some low-lying areas of University Avenue, but should lessen the impact.

Nick Landwer, CCLRT project engineer, said the trenches will capture one-half inch of runoff during a typical rainfall. That is equivalent to "3 feet of water sitting on top of one acre of land."



The greening of St. Paul (continued from page 6)...

The \$5 million tree trench project is a collaborative effort of the Capitol Region Watershed District, the city of St. Paul, Ramsey County, the Metropolitan Council and the CCLRT project team. For example, the city of St. Paul planted 1,200 trees along the boulevard. The city also helped to test the system, said Forrest Kelley, the watershed district regulatory compliance manager. "The city opened up fire hydrants, filled up the trenches and we measured how long it takes the water to go back in the ground."

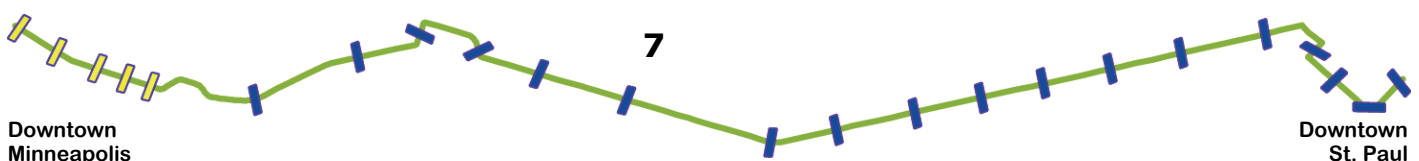
While the trenches have passed the operational test, the real test results won't come for many years, as researchers monitor the long-term reduction of pollutants entering the Mississippi River. "We can never go back to the way it once was, but we're beginning to take small steps toward putting the water back in the ground the way it used to be treated," said the watershed district administrator, Mark Doneux.

"The combination of treatment and infiltration, along with significant conversion of existing paved areas to pervious surfaces, will greatly enhance the quality of the street in terms of the environment, livability for residents and economic vitality for businesses," concludes Michael Herman, vice president and senior associate with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc., which consulted on the project.

Watch a video of this story at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JT22zTZ0eA&list=UU96jWWILLtoFtMWZeXC2orw&index=1&feature=plcp>

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Fun on the avenue

Some University Avenue merchants have found ways to make the best of LRT construction.

On the west end, a group of businesses banded together to stage a party in early June. Held on the rooftop of **Overflow Espresso Café** at 2929 University Ave. in Minneapolis near the Prospect Park Station, the event attracted thrill seekers. One of the businesses, **US Airbag**, donated use of a giant airbag and invited trick bicyclists to perform stunts in mid-air, with the safety of a giant cushion below (left photo).



Erica Strait (below) declared Fridays Falafel Friday. In June, she started bringing her truck to the Raymond Avenue Station area near University and Raymond avenues and selling falafels, fried chickpea fritters with organic condiments and special sauces. Strait plans to open her first restaurant, **Foxy Falafel**, this summer at 791 Raymond Ave. in St. Paul in the space formerly occupied by Caribe restaurant. "This location is great, I love the neighborhood," she said. "It's casual, there's lots of foot traffic and when light rail begins it will bring even more people in."



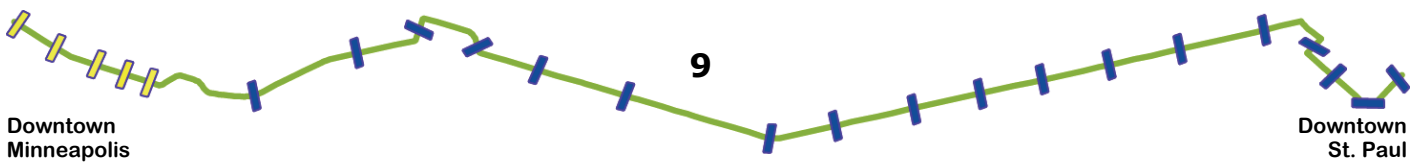


Fun on the avenue (continued from page 8)...



The Midway Chamber of Commerce hosts Lunch on the Avenue to showcase some of the many restaurants located on University Avenue. At a lunch in June at **Ngon Vietnamese Bistro** at 799 University Ave. near Victoria Street Station in St. Paul, Minnesota Lt. Gov. Yvonne Prettner Solon enjoyed lunch with local business owners and residents. To see upcoming events, visit: <http://midwaychamber.com/>

Farther east on University Avenue, several dozen Hmong farmers host a farmer's market every Friday, Saturday and Sunday through October. The market, held in the parking lot of **Sun Foods** at 544 University Ave. in St. Paul near Dale Street Station, offers vegetables, fruit, flowers and herbs. Bao Ziouq has sold cucumbers, potatoes, onions, various greens and other homegrown veggies from his stand there for four years.



Downtown Minneapolis

Downtown St. Paul

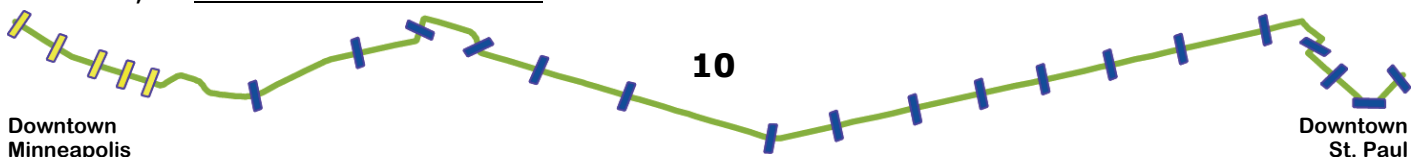
Working on the avenue



Michael Glasgow's grandfather started **Glasgow Automotive** at 740 University Ave. in St. Paul in 1946. Originally a Standard Oil gas station, the business now works exclusively on Volvos. Glasgow takes the LRT construction in stride. "Once the light rail starts running, our customers will like the fact that they can drop off their car for service, then hop on the light rail and travel to work or shopping." Glasgow Automotive is half-way between the Victoria and Dale Street Stations.



Steve Hatzis, co-owner of **The Best Steak House** at 860 University Ave. W. in St. Paul with his brother Mike Hatzistamolou, serves lunch to LRT construction crews. Mike recently emailed the contractor their workers are welcome to come inside for a cool drink to escape the heat and park in his small lot for a short time. "We need to work through this together and make this easier for all concerned," he said. The website for the restaurant, which is at the Victoria Street Station, is www.mmmsteak.com

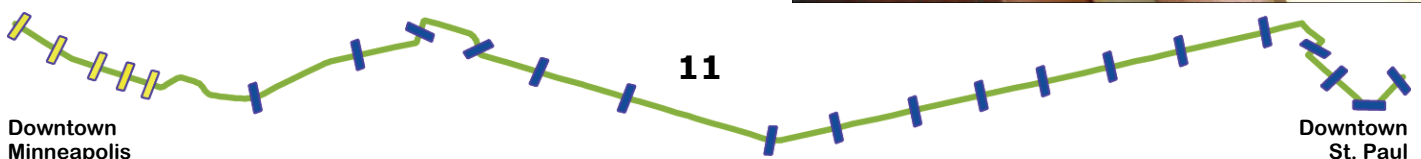


Working on the avenue



Last November when Jai Vang (above) bought a restaurant near Western Avenue Station on University Avenue in St. Paul, he was undeterred by the prospect of LRT construction. "I've experienced light rail in other countries, and I've seen the potential it has for businesses along the line," he said. Vang has big plans for **Bangkok Cuisine**, 432 University Ave. He envisions a patio and would like to show movies on a whitewashed wall across the alley from his restaurant.

Kevin VanDeraa (below), owner of **Cupcake** bakery and restaurant at 3338 University Ave. SE in Minneapolis near Westgate Station, displays some of his award-winning creations. He won a \$50,000 prize for taking first place during the championship series of the Food Network's "Cupcake Wars" TV program. His website is www.cup-cake.com





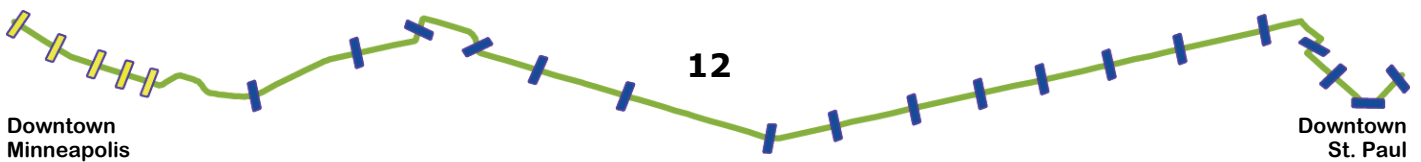
Up and down the line

Crews (top photos) install rail from Fifth and Cedar streets to Fourth and Minnesota in downtown St. Paul, location of the future Central Station.



Cedar Street Bridge (middle) over Interstate 94 is being strengthened to carry LRT trains between the Capitol area and downtown St. Paul.

Stairs and elevator tower are in place for the West Bank Station (bottom).



Downtown
Minneapolis

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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

