



## Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

**Date:** July 21, 2009

**To:** Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

**Subject:** **Comments on Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)  
for the Central Corridor LRT Project**

**Recommendation:**

Approve the Final EIS comments for the Central Corridor LRT project and direct the Public Works Department to submit the comments to the Metropolitan Council.

**Previous Directives:**

- August 22, 2008: Approve the SDEIS comments for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project and recommend submittal of the SDEIS comments to the Metropolitan Council.
- July 11, 2008: Authorize execution of a MOU defining the scope and commitment of Central Corridor Project mitigation issues.
- June 20, 2008: Approval of Preliminary Design Plans
- June 16, 2006: Resolution 2006R-342, Recommending Light Rail Transit for the Central Corridor.
- June 16, 2006: Approve summary comments and final detailed comments on the draft EIS regarding the Central Corridor Project.

**Prepared by:** Kelly Moriarity, P.E., Project Manager, 673-3617  
Heidi Hamilton, P.E., Deputy Director of Public Works

**Approved by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

**Presenters:** Kelly Moriarity, P.E., Project Manager, Transportation Planning and Engineering

**Reviews**

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Approval	NA	Date
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan	Approval	NA	Date
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Approval	NA	Date

**Financial Impact**

No Financial Impact

## **Community Impact**

Neighborhood Notification: The Central Corridor Project Office is working regularly with the neighborhoods impacted by the project through a Community Advisory Committee, and a Business Advisory Committee, as well by holding various meetings with individual neighborhoods, residents and business groups.

City Goals: A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME: the city's infrastructure will be well-maintained, people will feel safe in the city.

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES: Connected network of Transportation Options.

Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan is being met.

Zoning Code: Not Applicable

## **Background/Supporting Information**

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit project is an 11-mile LRT line connecting downtown Minneapolis and Downtown St Paul and linking with the Hiawatha LRT line and the new Northstar Commuter Rail line. The project will involve the construction of LRT primarily within existing street rights-of-way along Washington Ave SE and University Ave SE. As well as sharing the existing tracks and stations used by the Hiawatha LRT in Downtown Minneapolis.

The Metropolitan Council has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to document the purpose and need for the project, present a discussion of the alternatives considered, and address the anticipated social, economic, and environmental effects that might result from implementing the project. Potential impacts are evaluated for both short-term construction and long-term operational effects. The FEIS also describes the mitigation activities expected to be undertaken by the project to address these impacts.

In accordance with federal regulations, full consideration of environmental effects through the NEPA process is required before the project can be advanced to final design and construction. The FEIS was released for public comment on June 26, 2009 and a 30-day comment period will conclude on July 27th, 2009. The FEIS forms a basis for a record of decision (ROD) by the FTA which will allow the project to advance to final design. It will also allow the project to request a Letter of No Prejudice (LONP) to begin project funded utility relocation work in Downtown St Paul this fall. Full project construction is currently expected to start in late 2010 with revenue service operation beginning in 2014.

The attached comments of the project FEIS. The 30-day public comment period ends on July 27, 2009. Due to the limited time to submit comments, staff purposes to forward our comments to the Metropolitan Council after the July 21, 2009 T&PW Committee and noting that the City's final comments will follow after the July 31, 2009 Council meeting.

## **Recommended Action:**

Approve the Final EIS comments for the Central Corridor LRT project and direct the Public Works Department to submit the comments to the Metropolitan Council.

Attachment: FEIS Comments

Cc: Council Member Gordon, Ward 2  
Council Member Hofstede, Ward 3  
Council Member Goodman, Ward 7  
Peter Wagenius, Mayor's Office  
Steve Kotke, Public Works  
Heidi Hamilton, Public Works  
Jon Wertjes, Public Works  
Don Elwood, Public Works  
Lisa Cerney, Public Works  
Kelly Moriarity, Public Works