
PUBLIC COMMENTS BY PHONE

**(Email addresses and phone numbers have been redacted in this report,
but have been maintained in the official public record)**

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Transcription of messages left on Central Corridor telephone comment line

Call received at 7:40 p.m. May 10, 2006

Hello. I am calling to voice my support for light rail as the mode of transit selected on Central Corridor. I think Light rail has the potential to really revitalize University Avenue. I think both of the bussing options are just buses. I think buses are just going to keep University Avenue crowded, unpleasant, and not do much of anything for anyone. Thank you. Bye.

Call received at 8:00 p.m. May 10, 2006

My name is Cheryl Ekstrums. My address is 1451 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN. I am in favor of light rail transit for the Central Corridor. I think that would be the best way to go. Thank you. Bye.

Call received at 7:30 a.m. May 13, 2006

Marvin Placket, CEO
Episcopal Homes
1850 University Avenue West
St. Paul, MN 55104

My view is that I strongly support light rail along the central corridor here on University Avenue. I have traveled worldwide and my view is that those cities that have invested in light rail, subway systems, or rail systems, are far superior to those cities that have not invested in that kind of infrastructure. Furthermore, the riders of light rail are a very different market than the riders of bus rapid transit. So, I am not at all supportive of choosing the bus rapid transit. We essentially have now. And I am certainly not in favor of doing nothing. I am very much in favor of doing the light rail transit. I know it will be a minor inconvenience, even a major inconvenience, but only for the period of time when construction is occurring right in front of the particular shops on University Avenue, just for that limited period of time. Then for decades and centuries to come, we will have a marvelous opportunity to benefit from the improvements and the growth that will occur along the light rail line. So I strongly support it.

Call received at 2:40 p.m. May 24, 2006

Emmy Vadnais, 1294 Blair Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104
Hamline-Midway resident

Regarding Central Corridor, my concern is traffic congestion and traffic going perpendicular to University Avenue. My suggestion would be to instead of having stops at Lexington and Snelling, is to have a stop one block east of Lexington, so it is not causing congestion on Lexington Avenue, and one block west of Snelling Avenue. Of course, it would be nice to have the trains go over or under the traffic, so as to decrease congestion. Thank you.

Call received at 6:30 a.m. May 25, 2006

Daniel Clarkin
4131 Geneva #309
Oakdale, MN 55128

I am calling about the light rail comments. I am 110% for light rail down University Avenue. I am really looking forward to this because it will take a whole bunch of traffic off the roads and I love the Minneapolis light rail. I take it the ball parks, when I go to ball games. I love it a lot. We definitely need it downtown St. Paul, going to Minneapolis. It will be a big plus to the University of Minnesota. We need to get it. So I hope to God, we get it soon. Thank you very much. Bye.

Call received at 7:30 a.m. May 25, 2006

Eve Stein
1302 Bayard Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55116

I am wondering why there is not exit scheduled for Cleveland Avenue where the Amtrak station is. If this is a rail line, why are we not trying to connect railroads. We have a working railroad running through St. Paul. It is Amtrak. It takes people all over the Country and we have scheduled this Central Corridor statement to make many stops, but not at the Amtrak line. It is absolutely ridiculous to offer this line without connecting it to Amtrak. I would like to know why that was not scheduled. Thank you.

Call received at 12:50 p.m. May 25, 2006

My name is Julie Croft. I live at 2035 Nortonia Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55119. I am calling because my concern for where the-how you are going to place the Metro Transit rail. It is a concern because it is really going to limit parking on University Avenue. We are once again going to have dilapidated homes, the prostitutes and the drug dealers rolling through there. I think you should take a look at the Las Vegas, Nevada system. They have their transit up above ground and they have steps or elevators that you can take up to the platform to get on the train. But also it has created a desert town around the tracks. Everything is closed up around there and it is real junky and seedy looking because businesses have moved out. The only places that are left, really, are the one-night stand motels. So, please take a look and talk to some people in Las Vegas and get their idea of what they may felt they should have done different. I don't know where else you would put it, other than high above ground. I thought maybe you were going to go the freeway route and do it above the freeway. I realize along side the freeway is not going to be feasible. And then too, to end it at the Depot, a dead-end part of town, is kind of dumb too. It should be closer to where commerce and trade is going on. I realize we are trying to get a little more interest in the lowertown area, but I don't think transit is going to do the job because you are looking for people that are coming in to their jobs, not people who are going to be looking at

the condos-over priced condos at that. All I can say is I am glad I am a senior citizen so I won't have to be contributing my lifetime to a \$40 million debt every year. Thank you.

Call received at 9:20 a.m. May 26, 2006

Hello, my name is Connie Singleton. I live at 3454 North Vincent Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55412. I have already testified before the committee. However, I would like to make some additional comments that I was not able to make during my testimony. Those are: 1) as soon as the alternative or LRT is proved to be the mode of transportation down this corridor, I would like to see it get up and running fast, which would mean putting two crews on during the day to get this thing up and running. I think we could get it up and running by the end of 2010. The other thing is I would also like to see this tunnel section be configured in this way to where the stadium village and east bank become part of one station and construct another station right along the University of Minnesota transit way so that you can essentially set up for a feeder line up to the St. Paul campus and state fair grounds up to the Rosedale Shopping Center, as well as the Shoreview Industrial Park. I can be reached for any further clarification.

Thank you gentlemen and gentlewoman for your attention and I hope to see this line up and running as quick as possible. Thank you.

Call received at 6:10 p.m. May 29, 2006

Hi, this is Karen Lindmen. I live at 690 Lafond Avenue, St. Paul, MN. I am calling on behalf of ACORN, the largest organization representing low to moderate-income persons, who takes action representing their interest of our members. At the executive council monthly meeting, the representatives directed that we address some concerns regarding the DEIS proposal for the Central Corridor. While no action was taken regarding the mode, our members are unsure of the impact of the light rail on the community. It should be noted that many of our members are dependent on public transportation. According to the DEIS, the number 16 bus that is one of the most widely utilized buses in the entire system, a bus that many of our members depend upon will go from an every 10 minute schedule to every 20 minutes during peak time, and every 30 minutes off-peak. According to the statements, the mode chosen will be to improve and expand ridership. We find that this reduction in services is unacceptable because it places the onus on those less able to take the change. Another concern that ACORN was directed to bring to your attention has to do with property taxes that will result from the very real possibilities that property values will increase. One of the purposes of light rail is to encourage development. Our members who live along the corridor, either renting or owning, could be priced out of their homes if the property tax increase or speculated as they begin to buy a property. St. Paul must develop a way to minimize property tax increases. The city gives tax breaks to businesses who wish to locate in the city. The City must give breaks to citizens to remain in their homes, just as they give tax breaks to the businesses.

Call received at 10:20 a.m. June 1, 2006

1224 Edmond Avenue, St. Paul. The reason I am against the light rail is because I am a senior citizen and they don't make enough stops and I am not able to walk a long way. Even if I drove, I would not have a place to park my car. So I am very much against the light rail. So I hope that there will other means of transportation, or keep what we have. Thanks for listening. Good bye.

Call received at 5:00 p.m. June 1, 2006

My name is Choua Lee. I am a long-time citizen of St. Paul and also a long-time business owner on the University and Dale Avenues. I am very concerned about the light rail proposal that is going to go through this area here. I know that there was a meeting--I read about a meeting that was held. I have not received any invitation for this meeting. Was there some public announcement about it? I did not learn about it until this community meeting that took place on the 24th of May. I have some real reservations about the light rail being proposed for this area without discussing the impact that it is going to have on the local businesses, especially the small businesses in the area. Also, any other proposal to help either expansion proposal or any capitalization for the infrastructure for the small businesses here, and yet we are talking about a light rail proposal and I think that was a set back, if anything, for the small businesses in the area here without talking about the infrastructure of the business and how we can help those businesses grow rather than putting light rail in front of it, which we don't know the impact that will have on the small businesses here. So, I am very concerned about it. I am a taxpayer and I want to make sure that our voices are heard. If somebody could maybe get back to me or let us know what is going on, and what the project is going to be, and how the impact is going to be for the small businesses in the area here. I would appreciate it. Otherwise, I am very disappointed that the Central Corridor transit project has not included lots of businesses, including my business, and I am very concerned about that. I would like for the Central Corridor transit project committee to do a little bit more extensive research into what the impact will be for the businesses and share those results with the local businesses before proceeding with the project. As business owners, we have not received any of that data or research to support that this will be a successful project for this area. I would very much like to see that happen first before this project starts or this project is approved for the near future.

Call received at 5:20 p.m. June 1, 2006

Hello. My name is Pen Thao and I learned of the light rail project that is going to be proposed for the University Dale area here. As a long-time business owner here, I have a concern about the proposal. First of all, there has not been much engagement from the business community here and I am a business owner here and I did not hear about this until I read somewhere about it. It was very disenheartening that the Central Corridor transit committee did not put in any effort to making sure that the community was fully engaged in this process. That is a very, very disappointing thing to let this happen. Also, if you could share some information about the long-term impact for the businesses here that will even be helpful in terms of having the business community support. As I look at the light rail proposal right now, it doesn't really address all of the concerns that the community, as well as the business community here has. So I am very concerned at this point and I am going to need to have somebody from the corridor contact me as soon as possible to let us know what is going on because I am not happy about this at all.

Call received at 11:00 a.m. June 2, 2006

Hello. This is Dorothy Jean Myer. I am from Little Canada. I certainly believe in the Central Corridor transit project, linking downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis. I think it is way, way late, but I think it is still alright and I think it should go by the University of Minnesota so that students can get on in St. Paul and get off at the University and vice versa come back and I think that's one of the biggest things-it will be great for our young people who don't have a car, and probably never will. Thank you. Bye.

Call received at 1:20 p.m. June 5, 2006

This is RuthAnn Ovenshire. I live at 201 Bedford Street SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414. I am commenting on the Central Corridor. I would be for the current #16 bus and #50 bus. They give excellent service. I can't see that a light rail would give any advantage speed wise and certainly not as far as frequency of stop is concerned. I am very concerned that I would have to walk further to my stop if it is light rail and not a #16 bus. Thank you very much. Bye.

Call received at 3:30 p.m. June 5, 2006

Patricia Scott, 922 Fuller Avenue. First of all, I think it is such an insult to us again as a community to divide us one more time. This time is worse than the other. First of all, we have no say. We didn't have say the first time when you put in I-94. Whenever a neighborhood, especially a Caucasian neighborhood does not want it, it comes to us. Everything they say against the light rail is true, even worse. Now that our neighborhood is picking up in diversity, and everything is wonderful, now you are going to divide it. Our property values, the noise, senior citizens going a mile for transportation. Many people are going to loose their homes-not that anyone cares. The noise, if you can imagine that. If you remember downtown St. Paul, and they don't even have light rail, how the businesses had to go out of business. People who had just opened their businesses were put out. That's going to happen with us. But, again, most people who are for this don't live here. I understand Governor Pawlenty is all for it. Well then put it on Summit Avenue or Grand. Put it in another area. There is Minnehaha, there are streets all over. But no, you just want to see us divided one more time. We are not going to disappear. Even the lawyer companies and car lots know that it is a done deal. They all moved out months ago. That's all I have to say. It doesn't do any good. Minnesota nice-it's really ridiculous. It's not Minnesota nice, it is out and out discrimination. It is almost extermination of my area, the area I grew up in, and my people. Thank you.

Call received at 4:50 p.m. June 5, 2006

Hi my name is Chris Robinson. I am 1433 Ashland Avenue in St. Paul. I have a few comments. Thank you for having this line to leave comments on. I apologize for not writing them. When the DEIS was finally released, was released at a very busy time for me. First and foremost, whatever happens to the Central Corridor to be in line with the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, especially with a starting point being the neighborhood livability points in the plan. The process has been a little difficulty. The draft EIS was not released for many months, or a couple of years I believe. And I believe the timing of the release of this was kind of difficult, because it was a time when people starting getting very busy. The meetings were good to have, but they all happened in the same week and that week I could not attend, so I think 45 days for something that took so long to release that will have an impact on our community was way too short of a comment period and I cannot access the 600 page draft EIS on my computer. I cannot download that, so I was not able to read the actual document. So the process has been a little difficult, especially with it being done for so long and us waiting so long for it to be released. I am also concerned about the purpose of whether it is light rail or bus rail. It seems like it is pretty much going to be light rail, like the decision has already been made. I know that there was lobbying for money for engineering which should not have taken place until after the draft EIS was completed. So if it is going to LRT or BRT, I don't understand why the corridor has to be University. It seems like I-94 is where most of the commuter traffic is. Then if it is going to be an alternative to that traffic, then it should be down on I-94. This is imminently doable. I have seen it in other American cities and people are able to access, even with overpasses. There are even overpass stops on the Hiawatha line at Franklin, I believe, which is not difficult to do and it seems like anything built along University will turn into a commuter line, so it will be best to just have that be where it has already been decimated in the neighborhoods that have already been impacted or removed and use I-94. If it is truly going to be a local mode of transportation, then there needs to be mobility across University. It is very difficult to cross Hiawatha right now. I am going to have to call back to leave a few more comments. Thank you. Bye.

Call received at 5:00 p.m. June 5, 2006

Hello. This Chris Robinson again at 1433 Ashland Avenue. Thank you for letting me record more. I am concerned about park and ride, even if we don't have park and ride lots that people will use the LRT as a cheap way to avoid downtown parking and still park in the neighborhoods. I think that needs to be addressed and discouraged and I think having a LRT, if we go with LRT on 94 will discourage that because people will only walk so far from their parked cars. I think the best alternative of the three (rapid bus, LRT, and improving the existing system) is to improve the existing bus service. If I know there is dependable bus service, I will take the bus more often. But right now, I know things get cut and I can't depend on it coming in a reasonable amount of time, so I don't look to the bus like I would if it was a better system. We have improved ridership in the past before when there was money given to it and it seems like an awful amount of money to spend on LRT instead of the buses and some of the rides on the Hiawatha line are due to rerouting the buses and forced ridership as a result, forcing people to connect on to the LRT whereas before they could just stay on the bus and get to their destination. I think comparing University with Hiawatha does not work. They are completely different corridors. Hiawatha pretty much had nothing on the street and University is already developed. Central Corridor I don't believe should be looked at as a opportunity for jobs or an opportunity for development. I think that it should be an opportunity to serve the community in which it is located and transit that makes frequent stops and allows the flow across University in the community is going to be what serves the community. That is what I have seen in other countries and it keeps communities from being left behind. Crossing Hiawatha is pretty much unbearable right now and I would hate to see more limited north south access in St. Paul. It is already very difficult. I think we should also look at how Ayd Mill would fit into this. The congestion created by Snelling/University/I-94 and now Ayd Mill being hooked up on the south end to 35E. This all needs to be taken into account with noise levels, air pollution, and traffic and pedestrian safety and bicycle access needs to be looked at as a whole. Those of us that live right

in this area are finding it more and more difficult to move within our own community. I believe that is all my comments. If I have anything else before 5:00 p.m., I will call. Thank you and I look forward to a better bus system and money well spent. Thank you. Good-bye.

Call received at 5:00 p.m. June 5, 2006

My name is Dr. Bara Berg. My address is 956 Laurel Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104. My phone number is [REDACTED] I am speaking in opposition to light rail along University Avenue for some of the following reasons. I live less than a mile from University, near Victoria. For me to get to Lexington and University LRT stop, I would have to drive. There is no way short of taking three buses and over an hour to get to University and Lexington from my house. Once I get to University, if I want to have a bite to eat at Victoria and University, stop at Target on my way to the YMCA, I can take bus and then come back. With light rail, I will lose that option because there will be fewer buses and light rail will not help me. Unless there are rail stops at Victoria, Hamline, and Fairview, local businesses and local residents will not benefit at all from the light rail, unless there are feeder north/south buses running on those same streets and on Lexington Avenue. Those of us in near-by neighborhoods will not be able to get up and use the light rail. The light rail is clearly advantageous for downtown businesses and for businesses at the intersections that have stops. Those people could be served just as well by having the light rail run, for instances, on Pierce Butler or I-94. We would still need the north/south feeder buses, but the traffic congestion would not be so dismal. With increased cars coming to the stops to get on the light rail, parking will be worse and air quality will be worse and those of us that want to drive to University to do quick shopping in the neighborhood will not be able to find parking spaces. It will be a disaster for the neighborhood. It's a sacrifice with no benefits. For the end stops, downtown St. Paul, Woodbury, downtown Minneapolis, and key intersections along the way, it will be a boon for land values, but those boons can be achieved without disrupting the neighborhood so I am very much opposed. I think eventually-I love the idea of public transportation-and as technology improves, we will have a way to have an elevated line along University that will not cause the traffic to destroy the neighborhoods until we develop those modern methods. Thank you.
