

The NCDA provides regular updates to supporters on new information about the Northstar Commuter Rail project. For more information, go to www.mn-GetOnBoard.com.

Northstar to Add Fridley Station



Thanks to the collaboration and commitment from the City of Fridley, Anoka County, Northstar Corridor Development Authority, Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and Northstar Commuter Rail supporters, the Fridley station is planned to be ready for commuters on day one of Northstar service.

The Northstar Project learned in October that it can complete construction of the Fridley station thanks to the CTIB's first round of transportation grants. The \$9.9 million grant will be combined with funds already invested by the Anoka County Regional Rail Authority and the City of Fridley Housing and Redevelopment Authority and will allow the station to be fully operational when Northstar service begins in late 2009.

Funding for the Fridley station was made possible from the new 0.5-percent metro sales tax passed this year by the Minnesota Legislature and participating metro counties. Northstar Commuter Rail was among the first recipients of this funding because of the station's positive impact on the region's transit system.

Some preliminary construction, including a pedestrian tunnel under the BNSF Railway train tracks, was completed earlier this year in anticipation that additional funding would be secured. An official groundbreaking for the Fridley station is expected to occur next spring.

First Northstar Locomotive Arrives in Big Lake



The first of Northstar's five locomotives arrived in Big Lake this fall—a visible reminder that the anticipated start up of Northstar service is approaching fast. The remaining locomotives are expected within the coming weeks. They are being manufactured by Motive Power, Inc. in Boise, Idaho.

Residents along the corridor will begin to see testing of Northstar trains once passenger cars arrive next spring. Seventeen passenger vehicles are on order from Bombardier.



While major construction activities have been significantly reduced or stopped for the winter, Northstar facilities and stations have reached significant milestones.

- The Vehicle Maintenance Facility in Big Lake is complete and ready for use by Northstar.
- Significant progress has been made with the Big Lake, Elk River and Coon Rapids-Riverdale station platforms and shelters, with major concrete and structural work completed.
- At the Coon Rapids-Riverdale station, crews have finished steel work on the pedestrian overpass.
- Park-and-ride lots have been expanded at the Elk River and Coon Rapids-Riverdale stations.
- Station shelters have been erected and park-and-ride lots are nearly complete in Anoka.
- In downtown Minneapolis, station shelters have gone up and track work to connect Northstar with the Hiawatha Light Rail Line continues.

In the spring, work on the Fridley station will begin and work to complete all other stations will resume.

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Commuter Coach Bus Service Planned from St. Cloud to Big Lake

With the initial phase of Northstar making steady progress, officials are exploring an extension of Northstar Commuter Rail Line benefits even further to St. Cloud. Commuter coach bus service is being planned between St. Cloud and Big Lake to connect with Northstar trains when service begins in late 2009.

The St. Cloud commuter coach bus service is being planned by St. Cloud Metro Bus and Sherburne and Stearns counties in cooperation with the Northstar Corridor Development Authority. Plans are coming together for development of park-and-ride sites along Highway 10 and Interstate 94.

More information about St. Cloud commuter coach bus service will be announced in 2009.

Stay Connected with Northstar

This is the last print edition of Northstar's Supporter Update newsletter, so we can focus in 2009 on preparing you for Northstar service. To receive future updates electronically, please sign up at www.mn-GetOnBoard.com.

Northstar Gets a New Look!

Northstar recently redesigned its web site (www.mn-GetOnBoard.com) and other project materials to represent the bold new look of Northstar and provide more detail as Minnesotans get ready to ride the line in 2009. The new site features information about safety, how to ride the line, what to expect from Northstar, as well as improved navigation tools and interactive features.

Visitors to the site will get:

- Tips to help plan your trip and connect to other transit lines.
- Details about buying tickets, station and train amenities and safety on and around trains.
- Updated animations and pictures showing construction progress and what Northstar will look like when service begins.
- News updates and other project developments.



Stay Away from Northstar Station Construction Zones

Although stations may appear to be nearly complete, residents need to remember that the Northstar station sites still are live construction zones and are unsafe.

Even as construction slows during the winter months, safety is a priority for the Northstar Project. A dormant site may look appealing, but it is important to stay clear of fenced construction zones and remember the following safety tips:

- **Never assume you know when and where to expect a train.** Trains travel in both directions on multiple BNSF train tracks. While Northstar trains will travel on specific schedules, freight trains travel at any time along the tracks and generally will not slow down when traveling through station areas.
- **Some signs and other signals may not be active to announce an approaching train.**
- **Environmental noise and wide-open spaces can muffle warning whistles or the sound of trains,** so it is crucial to stay alert around train tracks. In addition, BNSF trains are not always allowed to sound their horns because of local sound ordinances.
- **Stay away from high voltage wires, power lines and track switches.** While Northstar stations can appear dormant, wires and other electrical devices may be live and switches can move at any time.



Everyone is eager for the beginning of Northstar service, but it is important to remember that Northstar stations and train tracks are not places to explore. There will be ample opportunities to tour station sites as the beginning of service approaches.