

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

Northstar Secures Final Federal Approval



Gov. Tim Pawlenty and Adm. Thomas J. Barrett, U.S. deputy secretary of transportation, sign the Full Funding Grant Agreement in Anoka.

The Northstar Commuter Rail Project celebrated its final federal approval and secured a Full Funding Grant Agreement worth \$156.8 million at the Anoka County Government Center on Dec. 11, 2007. Northstar has now achieved all financing approvals to complete the project.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty and Adm. Thomas J. Barrett, the U.S. deputy secretary of transportation, signed the agreement after giving congratulatory speeches to a crowd of more than 200 officials and guests. The agreement also releases an additional \$97.5 million in state bonding money for the Northstar Project.

This bolsters already significant contributions from the state of Minnesota, the regional rail authorities of Anoka, Hennepin and Sherburne counties, the Metropolitan Council and the Minnesota Twins. It also allows construction to proceed with full speed ahead!

Minnesotans will be able to travel the 40-mile Northstar line between Big Lake and downtown Minneapolis starting in late 2009. Employers and residents in the Northstar Corridor will finally have an alternative to traveling on congested highways.

Northstar's connection to the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit line will allow passengers to reach the new Twins' ballpark, the Metrodome, the Airport and the Mall of America with one affordable ticket purchase. Traveling at speeds of up to 79 mph, Northstar will offer quick, efficient transportation up and down the Northstar Corridor.

Northstar Locomotive Design Unveiled

Metro Transit recently unveiled the new design for Northstar locomotives. It reflects the development of the Northstar Project by incorporating the original Northstar star icon while also complementing the current design of Hiawatha Light Rail Transit trains, which will connect with Northstar in downtown Minneapolis.

Metro Transit will manage Northstar operations. More news, other features and design updates will be available as we approach the launch of rider service in late 2009.



The locomotive design features interlocking arcs of color (red, yellow and white) on a blue background, leading to a bold yellow star.

Construction Updates and Next Steps for Northstar

- Construction work continues on the Northstar and Hiawatha LRT connection in downtown Minneapolis.



- Infrastructure work is progressing on the vehicle maintenance facility in Big Lake, which is now fully enclosed.
- Construction of commuter rail stations will begin this spring.
- Five locomotives are on order and will be delivered starting in fall 2008.
- Seventeen passenger cars have been ordered.

NCDA Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary and Big Lake Groundbreaking

More than 150 local officials and guests helped the Northstar Corridor Development Authority (NCDA) break ground on the vehicle maintenance facility in Big Lake in September. Attendees also celebrated the NCDA's progress and success since its founding in 1997.



Past and present NCDA officials, elected officials, chamber of commerce members, representatives from BNSF Railway, and state and metropolitan transportation officials gather near the Big Lake site for a groundbreaking ceremony.

The NCDA, consisting of 30 local government entities and rail authorities, was formed to improve transportation in the Northstar Corridor between St. Cloud and Minneapolis. Its hard work, along with the help of thousands of Northstar supporters and local elected officials, has secured funding and final approvals for the state's first commuter rail line.

The vehicle maintenance facility at U.S. Highway 10 and County Road 43 is under construction just south of the Northstar station site in Big Lake. The two-story facility will serve as a fueling, cleaning and routine maintenance hub for Northstar locomotives and train cars.



An artist's rendering of the vehicle maintenance facility in Big Lake shows the view from the southeast.

Northstar Will Be a Convenient and Cost-Effective Transportation Option

Northstar's Estimated Travel Times

Northstar will provide convenient service for weekday commuters. In addition, Northstar will make three roundtrips each weekend day (with possible special event service added in the future).

A Northstar ticket will serve as a transfer pass to other connecting transit services, such as Hiawatha LRT and bus services.

Estimated Timetable, Weekdays: **Big Lake to Downtown Minneapolis**

	STATION	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	PM
DEPARTURE TIMES	Big Lake	5:59	6:29	6:59	7:29	7:59	4:54
ARRIVAL TIMES	Elk River	6:08	6:38	7:08	7:38	8:08	5:03
	Anoka	6:18	6:48	7:18	7:48	8:18	5:13
	Coon Rapids - Riverdale	6:21	6:51	7:21	7:51	8:21	5:16
	Downtown Minneapolis	6:40	7:10	7:40	8:10	8:40	5:35

Estimated Timetable, Weekdays: **Downtown Minneapolis to Big Lake**

	STATION	AM	PM	PM	PM	PM	PM
DEPARTURE TIMES	Downtown Minneapolis	6:55	3:50	4:20	4:50	5:20	5:50
ARRIVAL TIMES	Coon Rapids - Riverdale	7:15	4:10	4:40	5:10	5:40	6:10
	Anoka	7:18	4:13	4:43	5:13	5:43	6:13
	Elk River	7:27	4:22	4:52	5:22	5:52	6:22
	Big Lake	7:37	4:32	5:02	5:32	6:02	6:32

Subject to change prior to start of Northstar service • Fridley station is currently deferred.

These are estimated schedules for weekday trips and could change slightly by the start of Northstar service in late 2009.

2008 Legislative Session

The 2008 legislative session convenes on Feb. 12, 2008. Supporters of the Northstar project will be focused on important legislation for the project and for the entire state. These initiatives include:

- A comprehensive transportation funding bill for the entire state.
- State bonding for the Fridley station and the extension of Northstar to St. Cloud.
- A sales tax exemption for Northstar trains and construction.