

More traffic shutdowns on Union

Work ongoing on future UT-Baptist Research Park in Medical Center

By [Daniel Connolly](#)

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Construction related to the future UT-Baptist Research Park is expected to slow traffic on Union for the next few days as workers go underground to reroute utility connections and make way for buildings meant to spawn scientific discoveries.

In recent weeks, the work has led to shutdowns of lanes on Union. That has slowed traffic, especially at peak periods.

The interruptions should be over by the end of this month at the latest, said Chris Stanley, a spokesman for Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division.

MLGW is relocating the path of an underground electrical line from inside the research park to the outside in order to make way for construction, said Geoff Wyonzek, a project manager with Hnedak Bobo Group. He said the MLGW workers have accessed the electrical line through manholes and by digging into the street.

The research park is being built on the site of the old Baptist Memorial Hospital, which was imploded in 2005 after parent organization Baptist Memorial Health Care shifted its focus to the suburbs.

Work started earlier this year on the first building in the research complex, the Regional Biocontainment Laboratory, a \$25 million facility designed for the study of dangerous infectious diseases.

Planners also hope to construct a new building for the university's pharmacy school as well as buildings to house startup companies.

The park is projected to cost a total of \$450 million in public and private money. Organizers hope that the research park will help support private companies spun off from university work and that it will help create high-paying jobs in the area.

-- Daniel Connolly: 529-5296