



Community Planning and Economic Development Department News Release
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Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ *Jobs & Economic Vitality* ▫ *Eco-Focused* ▫
Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ *Many People, One Minneapolis* ▫ *A City That Works*

Minneapolis small businesses on Central Corridor light rail route may begin applying for forgivable loans on Monday

A business may be eligible for up to \$20,000 in assistance to help keep operations up and running during construction

June 23, 2011 (MINNEAPOLIS) –Minneapolis businesses along the Central Corridor route may begin applying for assistance Monday, June 27 to help keep their operations up and running during the construction phase of the light rail line. In 2010, the City of Minneapolis, City of Saint Paul, Metropolitan Council, and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative announced a loan program in the amount of \$1.5 million in response to the needs of business owners along Central Corridor where Light Rail Transit construction is underway. The loan program has increased by \$2.5 million for a total of \$4 million in forgivable loans, giving qualified small retail businesses in both Minneapolis and Saint Paul access to up to \$20,000 each.

The program is available to independent for-profit businesses with four or fewer locations, gross annual sales not exceeding \$2 million, and a business focus on retail services. The business must be located in the Central Corridor Light Rail construction zone or within a block of construction where businesses can demonstrate a significant barrier to access during construction. Loans to eligible businesses will be interest-free and forgiven in equal installments over five years if the business can

certify that it is operating on the Central Corridor each year. Funds may be used for working capital and current business expenses.

“The next three years will be challenging for businesses on Central Corridor, and this expanded forgivable-loan program is one way we’re helping them survive during construction and thrive when the line opens,” said **Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak**. “But the important thing that we can all do right now is shop along Central Corridor. It’s open for business, so come visit: ride a bike, take the bus, or park around the corner from your favorite stores and shop here today. Central Corridor has what you want.”

See www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/business/CCLRT_Loan_Program.asp to download an application. Once completed, applications can be dropped off at:

- Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers, 3137 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis
- Dairy Queen, 716 Washington Ave SE, Minneapolis (on Mondays only, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.).

For more information, contact the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers, 612-789-8448.

“This dramatic increase in the loan fund is the result of a lot of hard work and advocacy,” **Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman** said. “The additional financial assistance will help businesses during construction so they can take maximum advantage of the opportunities that will come with the new line.”

“This has been a great collaborative effort to assist businesses along the corridor,” said **Council Chair Sue Haigh**. “The Metropolitan Council is committed to doing as much as we can to ensure businesses remain in place and reap the benefits of this investment in transit, economic development and street and sidewalk enhancements.”

Saint Paul businesses should contact the Neighborhood Development Center at (651) 379-8118, or by email, R4Rforgivableloanprogam@ndc-mn.org for application information.

The forgivable loans are made possible through a partnership of the Metropolitan Council, City of Minneapolis, City of Saint Paul and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative.

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