

Central Corridor Light Rail Transit



Status Report On the Implementation of Mitigation Measures – CCLRT Construction-Related Business Impacts April 2013



Prepared by
The Central Corridor Project Office
On behalf of The Metropolitan Council

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1.0 Purpose

This Report summarizes how the Metropolitan Council and other partner agencies worked during the month of April to minimize impacts from Central Corridor LRT (CCLRT) construction to local businesses. This monthly report is a requirement of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The requirement is described in the Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI), which FTA issued following publication of the April 2011 *Supplemental Environmental Assessment of Construction-Related Potential Impacts on Business Revenues* (Business Impacts SEA).

1. Construction-related complaints and responses
2. Public outreach and communication activities
3. Funds spent to assist businesses during construction
4. Requests for business assistance and responses
5. Number of business openings / closings / relocations

1.1 Mitigation Activities to Assist Central Corridor Businesses

Mitigation activities to assist businesses during construction were summarized in the Business Impacts SEA and form the basis of reporting for items #3 and #4 above, as required by the FTA's FONSI. These activities focus on: (1) minimizing the impacts of construction activities; (2) communications with corridor businesses and the community regarding construction activities; (3) promotional and marketing activities to encourage customers to shop at businesses during construction; (4) technical assistance to businesses during construction; (5) financial assistance to businesses losing nearby on-street parking, and; (6) general financial assistance to small businesses affected by construction activities.

Business assistance activities are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Attachment A to the CCLRT Business Impacts SEA FONSI – Summary Table of Mitigation Measures and Financial Commitments

Mitigation Measures		Financial Commitment	Responsible Agency	Contact Information
Construction Contract (see Section 2.3.5)	Construction Access Plan	\$200,000	Metropolitan Council	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457
	Contractor Incentive Program	\$850,000	Metropolitan Council	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457
Project Communications (see Section 2.3.6)	Community Outreach Coordinators	\$4,000,000	Metropolitan Council	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457
	Construction Communication Plan (Special Signage)	\$200,000	Metropolitan Council	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457

Mitigation Measures		Financial Commitment	Responsible Agency	Contact Information
Parking Assistance (see Section 2.3.1)	Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program	\$2,100,000	City of St. Paul	Craig Blakely Craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us 651-266-6697
	Alley Improvements Program	\$350,000	City of St. Paul	Craig Blakely Craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us 651-266-6697
Business Assistance Programs (see Section 2.3.2)	Business Support Fund	\$4,000,000	City of St. Paul	Nancy Homans Nancy.homans@ci.stpaul.mn.us 651-266-8568
	Business Improvement / Expansion Assistance	\$700,000 ⁽¹⁾	Neighborhood Development Center	Isabel Chanslor ichanslor@ndc-mn.org 651-379-8431
	Business Resources Collaborative	\$315,000 ⁽⁵⁾	N/A	Jonathan Sage-Martinson jonathan@funderscollaborative.org 651-280-2384
	University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative	\$1,275,000 ⁽²⁾	N/A	Isabel.Chanslor ichanslor@ndc-mn.org 651-379-8431
	Great Streets and Business Association Assistance Program	\$210,000	City of Minneapolis	Emily Stern Emily.stern@ci.minneapolis.mn.us 612-673-5191
	Other	\$7,670	N/A	Jonathan Sage-Martinson jonathan@funderscollaborative.org 651-280-2384
	Business Marketing Program ⁽⁴⁾	\$1,200,000	Metropolitan Council	Anne Taylor anne.taylor@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1449
University Avenue / Cedar Riverside Betterments	Improved Street Lighting / Street Amenities	\$1,000,000 ⁽³⁾	City of St. Paul / Metropolitan Council	Kathryn O'Brien kathryn.obrien@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1927

Mitigation Measures		Financial Commitment	Responsible Agency	Contact Information
(see Section 2.3.3)	Business Façade Improvements	\$150,000	City of Minneapolis	Emily Stern Emily.stern@ci.minneapolis.mn.us 612-673-5191
Promoting Business Access	Additional Business Signage	\$50,000	Metropolitan Council	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457
(see Section 2.3.4)	Cooperative Advertising and Transit Fare Passes	\$250,000	Metro Transit	Robin Caufman Robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us 651-602-1457
TOTAL		\$16,657,670		

- (1) This amount reflects a decrease of \$150,000 from the amount reported in the Business Impacts SEA. This decrease reflects the actual amount dedicated in Living Cities funds to this effort.
- (2) This amount reflects an increase of \$600,000 from the amount reported in the Business Impacts SEA. This increase reflects an additional commitment of \$200,000 per year in 2011, 2012 and 2013 from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative supporting business marketing and technical assistance> .
- (3) This amount reflects an increase of \$350,000 from the amount reported in the Business Impacts SEA. This increase reflects the actual amount dedicated to this effort.
- (4) This amount was approved September 28, 2011 by the Metropolitan Council to be used to retain a consultant to provide marketing assistance to Central Corridor businesses.
- (5) This amount reflects an increase of \$75,000 from the amount reported in the Business Impacts SEA. This increase reflects additional funds committed by the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative for marketing efforts from November 2011 to March 2012.

Table 2: Attachment A to the CCLRT Business Impacts SEA FONSI – Mitigation Measures: Staffing and Contract Commitments (Non-Direct Financial Commitments)

Mitigation Measures		Responsible Agency
Construction Contract	Special Events Plans	Metropolitan Council/Contractor
	Best Management Practices (BMPs)	Metropolitan Council/Contractor
Project Communications	Contractor Community Relations Leader	Contractor
	Construction Communication Plan	Metropolitan Council
	Construction Information Packet	Metropolitan Council
	Construction Signage	Metropolitan Council/Contractor
Parking Assistance	Construction Employee Parking Plan	Metropolitan Council/Contractor

This Report will be updated by the Metropolitan Council monthly throughout construction. The construction period is currently scheduled to be completed in 2013.

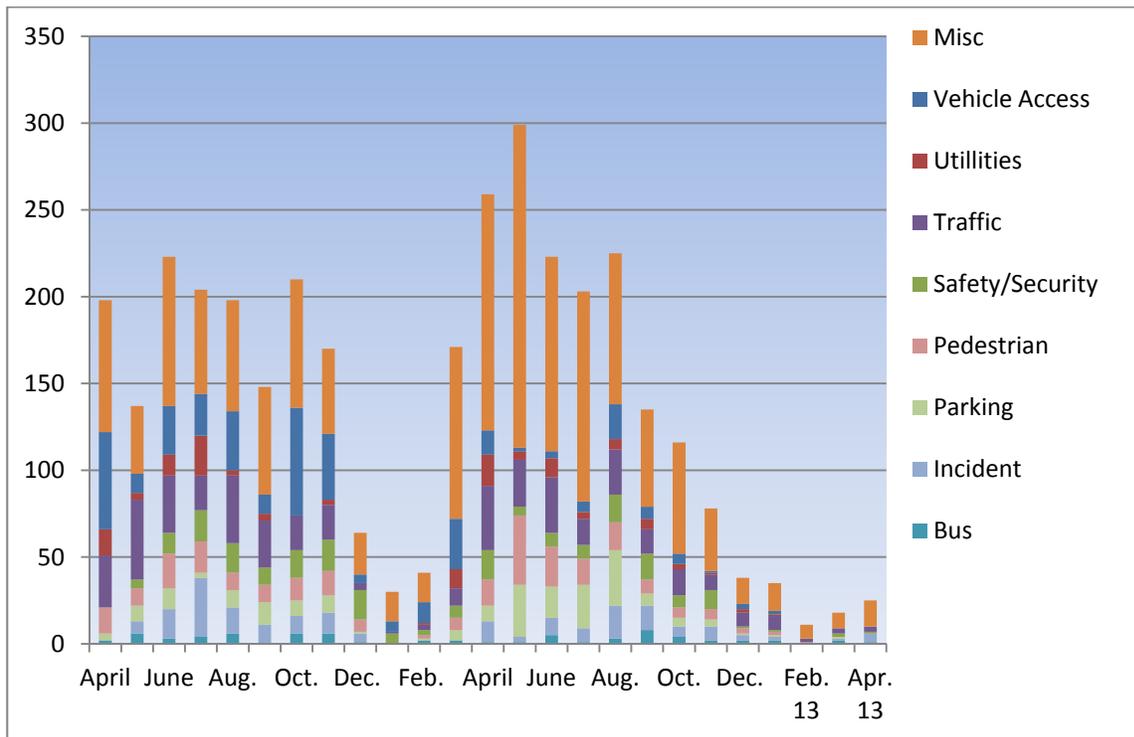
2.0 Activities Reported

2.1 Construction-related Calls, Complaints and Responses

Attachment A to this Report is a summary of construction and other calls and complaints received during April and their response / resolution. During April, a total of 25 complaints, comments or questions were received by Central Corridor Project Office staff (see Figure 1). This compares to a total of 18 in March. A majority of calls and e-mails were responded to within 24-hours. Nearly all issues were responded to within one week. Calls received in April concerned primarily property- or traffic-related issues along with a few parking, safety-security, and bus issues.

Figure 1 is a summary of construction-related calls and e-mails received from April 2011 to April 2013.

Figure 1: April 2011 – April 2013 Construction Hotline Complaints Received



2.2 Public Outreach and Communication Activities

During the month of April, the following major outreach activities took place.

Construction Updates: Beginning January 2013, one project-wide construction update will be published monthly or as needed in recognition of the end of significant civil construction work. All current construction updates can be viewed at www.centralcorridor.org. In April, one construction update was issued. The website had more than 13,000 visits in April.

News Releases: In April, the Project issued one news release regarding the April construction update. All current news releases can be viewed at www.centralcorridor.org

Transit Rider Alerts: A link has been established on the home page of Metro Transit alerting riders of Central Corridor transit services affected by construction to detours and other information. <http://metrotransit.org/rail-construction.aspx>

GovDelivery: GovDelivery is a listserv that CCLRT Outreach and Communications staff began using in May 2012 to update people on project news, including construction activities. It currently has over 9,465 contacts to which information project information is sent. Previously, the Outreach and Communications staff used a ConstantContact listserv to serve this function.

Social Media: CCLRT Outreach and Communications Staff uses Twitter to send press releases, newsletters, and weekly construction updates to the public. At the end of April, @cclrt had over 2,231 followers.

April Public Meetings / Events: Fifteen meetings / events took place in April, with an estimated total attendance of approximately 615 people. These included meetings with stakeholder groups, Lunch on the Avenue events, Go Green Line promotion activities, and construction communications meetings. See Attachment B1 for a list of all meetings held in April.

Upcoming Public Meetings / Events: A list of upcoming meetings scheduled for the month of May and June is included as Attachment B2. Many of the meetings listed are open to the public. Contact an Outreach Coordinator identified in Attachment B2 for more details.

2.3 Funds Spent to Assist Businesses during Construction

The following is a summary of monthly activities related to the programs summarized in Tables 1 and 2 above.

2.3.1 Parking Assistance:

Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program: The City of Saint Paul is funding and administering a program to address parking loss during and after CCLRT construction. The program provides forgivable loans to individual businesses and property owners to improve off-street parking resources. The limit for each loan is \$25,000, unless the parking is shared, in which case the amount can be more. Figure 2, below, depicts the locations where parking lot improvements have been or are being made.

Figure 2 – Parking Lot Improvement Locations**Significant Activities:**

To date, the City of Saint Paul HRA has approved over \$1.6 million in funding for 24 parking improvement projects.

- As of December 18, 2012 the following parking improvement projects have been completed under this program.
 - 345 University – Metro Social Services
 - 353 University – Ha Tien Market
 - 377 University – May’s Market
 - 575 University – Unidale Insurance
 - 672 University – A1 Vacuum and Shuang Her Grocery (SE corner of St. Albans and University)
 - 860-866 University – Victoria Best Steak House and East-West Beauty Salon
 - 904-908 University – Thong’s Auto Repair and The Williams Store
 - 933 University – Safety Care
 - 979 University – Shear Pleasure Hair Salon
 - 1133 to 1141 University – Twin Cities Monument, Realty Matrix Apartments, and Kimble Chiropractic
 - 1159 University – The Vietnam Center
 - 1556-60 Sherburne – NE block of Snelling and University
 - 1647 University – Hammond Awards
 - 1685 University – Milbern Clothing
 - 2119 University – Subway parking lot
 - 2447 University – Design Press
- The following projects are planned for completion by the end of 2013.
 - 389 to 397 University – Apartment building and Anh’s Hair Salon
 - 498 Arundel – a remote lot for 441 University
 - 633 University – Spectrum Staffing (NW corner Dale and University)
 - 739 University – Trung Nam
 - 850-854 University – Tai Hoa BBQ
 - NW block of Snelling and University – shared parking between Axman and Turf Club
- The following approved projects have dropped out of the program.
 - 750 University – Cambodian Employment
 - 1449 University – Hair Salons

Alley Improvements Program: The City of Saint Paul has dedicated \$350,000 in their Capital Improvement Budget to improve alleys adjacent to the Central Corridor.

Significant Activities:

- All of the committed funds (a total of \$350,000) were obligated in the City of Saint Paul’s Capital Improvements Budget (CIB) to complete this program. Additionally, Met Council contributed \$282,000 in 2012 to pave 14 alleyways. All improvements have been completed.
 - Lexington to Oxford (north side of University)
 - Victoria to Avon (south side of University)
 - Avon to Grotto (north side of University)
 - Grotto to St. Albans (bet. Thomas & Lafond)
 - Grotto to St. Albans (north side of University)

- St. Albans to Dale (north side of University)
- MacKubin to Arundel (bet. Edmund & Thomas)
- Arundel to Western (north side of University)
- St. Albans to Dale (added as part of a parking improvement project)
- Arundel to Western (north side of University)
- Fry to Snelling (north side of University)
- Snelling to Asbury (north side of University)
- Pascal to Albert (north side of University)
- Aldine Street to Fry Street (north side of University)
- Asbury Street to Simpson Street (north side of University)
- Simpson Street to Pascal Street (north side of University)
- Griggs Street to Dunlap Street (north side of University)
- Chatsworth Street to Milton Street (south side of University)
- Chatsworth Street to Milton Street (north side of University)
- Virginia Street to Farrington Street (south side of University)
- Farrington Street to Galtier Street (south side of University)
- Galtier Street to Marion Street (south side of University)

Construction Employee Parking Plan: Central Corridor LRT construction contracts require contractors to minimize use of available on-street parking by developing an employee parking plan.

Significant Activities:

A construction employee parking plan has been developed, submitted, and approved by CCPO staff for the Civil East (St. Paul) and Civil West (Minneapolis) construction contracts. Enforcement of contractor parking requirements is part of the duties of CCPO construction inspectors. Any complaints received from the public regarding contractor parking are immediately responded to by CCPO outreach staff.

2.3.2 Business Assistance Programs:

Business Support Fund: The Business Support Fund program provides no-interest forgivable loans to small businesses (gross annual sales less than \$2 million) that experience construction-related loss of sales.

On February 1, 2013, the program was opened up to:

- Businesses from any of the segments that were either first time applicants or had not received the maximum loan of \$20,000; and
- Businesses in the major intersections but more than 1 block from University Avenue.

On May 1, 2013, if funds remain available, the program will make funds available a first come, first served basis until the fund is depleted to the following types of businesses:

- Businesses from any segment that received a loan of less than \$20,000 but would qualify for the balance if they were able to count losses from both years; and
- Businesses in segments directly impacted by construction for more than one construction season can qualify for an additional loan of up to \$10,000.

Significant Activities:

In April 2013, 4 loans to businesses, totaling \$80,000, were approved. All of the businesses were new to the program. A total of \$3,475,228 has been disbursed since 2011. (See Attachment C for a depiction of funds disbursed.)

Business Support Fund - Financial Activities	Allocation	Approvals	Balance	Percent Remaining
Minneapolis				
Cedar Riverside	\$289,825	\$369,825	(\$80,000)	0%
Stadium Village	\$221,994	\$296,668	(\$74,674)	0%
Prospect Park	\$345,324	\$300,951	\$44,373	13%
Minneapolis Total	\$857,143	\$967,444	(\$110,301)	0%
Business Support Fund - Financial Activities	Allocation	Approvals	Balance	Percent Remaining
Saint Paul				
Emerald to Hampden (North Side of University Avenue)	\$169,616	\$111,497	\$58,119	34%
Emerald to Hampden (South Side of University Avenue)	\$514,149	\$85,183	\$428,966	83%
Hampden to Aldine (North Side of University Avenue)	\$524,750	\$139,321	\$385,429	73%
Hampden to Aldine (South Side of University Avenue)	\$180,217	\$227,933	(\$47,716)	0%
Aldine to Syndicate (North Side of University Avenue)	\$222,621	\$318,291	(\$95,670)	0%
Aldine to Syndicate (South Side of University Avenue)	\$270,326	\$65,918	\$204,408	76%
Syndicate to Lexington (North Side of University Avenue)	\$63,079	\$148,458	(\$85,379)	0%
Syndicate to Lexington (South Side of University Avenue)	\$14,557	\$0	\$14,557	100%
Lexington to Dale (North Side of University Avenue)	\$169,827	\$231,848	(\$62,021)	0%
Lexington to Dale (South Side of University Avenue)	\$203,793	\$394,565	(\$190,772)	0%
Dale to Rice (North Side of University Avenue)	\$150,418	\$451,086	(\$300,668)	0%
Dale to Rice (South Side of University Avenue)	\$373,620	\$191,998	\$181,030	48%
Lowertown St. Paul	\$95,409	\$141,686	(\$46,277)	0%
St. Paul Total	\$2,952,381	\$2,507,784	\$444,598	15%
Grand Total	\$3,809,525	\$3,475,228	\$334,297	9%

Business Improvement / Expansion Assistance: The Business Improvement / Expansion Assistance program includes \$700,000 available in loan, grant, and Program Related Investment (PRI) funds to assist targeted businesses with significant growth opportunities and/or that are in a position to buy or improve their own buildings with the goal of reinforcing the importance of locally- and minority-owned businesses to the Central Corridor. This program will be administered by the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC).

Significant Activities:

The loans listed below have been approved under this program. See Attachment D for a 2012 mid-year report from the NDC on these programs.

- May’s Building, 377 University Avenue: \$50,000 expansion loan and \$60,000 façade grant.
- A-1 Vacuum Cleaner, 666 University Avenue: \$50,000 expansion loan and \$10,000 façade grant.
- X-Treme Beauty Salon, 500 N. Dale Street: \$20,000 expansion loan.
- Ha Tien Grocery Store, 353 University Avenue: \$200,000 expansion loan and \$30,000 façade grant.

2012 Financial Activities:	Amount
Living Cities Small Business Expansion loans	\$320,000
Business façade improvement for small businesses	\$109,247
Loan Loss Reserve Fund that supports Program Related Investment loan for building owners and business expansion	\$150,000
NDC’s administrative costs	\$33,250
Total	\$612,497

Business Resources Collaborative (BRC): The Business Resources Collaborative (BRC) is an informal coalition that provides support and technical assistance to businesses affected by the Central Corridor LRT Project. The BRC has received \$315,000 in grants in support of its operations. The BRC provides the following services to businesses along the Central Corridor:

- Provide business consulting and technical assistance (e.g., business and real estate development loan assistance; parking; energy efficiency programs; advocacy, information and referrals).
- Provide and maintain a business resource/information clearinghouse (<http://www.readyforrail.net>).
- Provide a grassroots "buy local" marketing campaign to help provide customers to Central Corridor businesses during project construction.

Financial Activities:	Amount
Creation and facilitation of Central Corridor Business Resources Collaborative. (June 2009)	\$15,000
Creation of the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative Corridor-wide business development strategy, announcement of the strategy, creation of an evaluation framework, and facilitation for 2010. (Feb. 2010)	\$90,000
Grassroots buy local marketing plan. (Nov. 2010)	\$50,000
City of St. Paul funding to Midway Chamber of Commerce to assist in business marketing efforts (paid to Nemer Fieger).	\$75,000
Central Corridor Funders Collaborative funding to Midway Chamber of Commerce to assist in Business Marketing Efforts	\$75,000
Total	\$305,000

University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative (U7): The University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative (U7) was created by community development organizations to provide marketing support, on-site business consulting, resource center and planning center, small business workshops, grants for marketing and façade improvements, micro-lending and financing support to small businesses along the Central Corridor. All funds reported in the Business Impacts SEA for this activity have been disbursed.

Significant Activities:

Since 2009, U7 staff and the BRC have provided over 7,600 hours of one-on-one assistance to more than 130 Central Corridor businesses. See Attachment E for the U7’s January 2013 report of Technical Assistance provided to small businesses on the green line.

Business Testimonials from January 2013 Report:

U7 introduced Fransico O’Ryan, owner of **East African Bakery** (786 University Avenue), to efficient accounting software, provided bi-weekly accounting support, helped increase revenue by reducing costs, and is now working with O’Ryan to look into forgivable loans for construction-related losses. O’Ryan was pleased that U7’s financial coaching allowed him to more time to contact new customers:

“In less time, I’m more accurate with where my money is going and I can spend more time finding customers.”

--Francisco O’Ryan, owner of East African Bakery

U7 facilitated a \$1,000 micro-grant for marketing **Embodied Health** (2506 University Avenue). U7 used its resources along with this grant to help Embodied Health owner Lucinda Pepper consistently brand her business, utilize social media, set up a photo shoot, create new print materials, and launch a new website. U7 continues to provide Pepper with help as needed. Pepper is excited by the new business the U7’s marketing helped attract:

“I was inundated with calls. It was a quality problem. This year, gross revenue should top \$46,000. It was astounding how helpful working with NDC and U7 has been for me.”

--Lucinda Pepper, owner of Embodied Health

Ya Poophakumpanart, owner and chef at **Thai Cafe** (371 University Avenue) received about 120 hours of U7 assistance. She was awarded a \$1,000 micro-grant used to develop a more modern brand, effectively price her menu, build a website, and maintain her facebook page. In the midst of construction,

U7 worked with Poophakumpanart to keep business strong by expanding catering services, distributing flyers, and posting signs to help customers find their way to Thai Cafe even through road closures. Poophakumpanart is excited by the new business the light rail will bring right to her door.

Flamingo Restaurant (1277 University Avenue) received more than 450 hours of U7 assistance which helped co-owners Shegitu Kibede and Frewoini Haile cut costs, maintain relationships with customers, learn accounting and financial strategies, create new branding, and put up signs to direct customers to the restaurant during construction. Soon after receiving U7’s help, Flamingo Restaurant achieved a 92 percent rating on Urban Spoon:

“They opened our eyes, they told us not to just sit and wait for people to come to us.”
 --Shegitu Kibede, co-owner of Flamingo Restaurant

Rachelle Simmons, owner of **Foundations Health Care Academy** (225 University Avenue) received U7 assistance in the form of a \$1,000 micro-grant used for relocating. Additionally, U7 helped Simmons create a website, utilize social media, and secure an outside grant to repaint her classroom. Though Simmons experienced obstacles starting her new business just weeks before the University Avenue construction, she is excited about the future of Light Rail:

“We’re not two cities. This makes us one city. There are so many more options for people to get to where they need to go.”

--Rachelle Simmons, owner of Foundations Health Care Academy



Lowertown Art Crawl Advertisement

Financial Activities	Amount
Program to help small through training, technical assistance, and financing. (Jan 2009)	\$200,000
Program to help small business through training, technical assistance, and financing. (Feb. 2010)	\$100,000
Program to help small businesses through training, technical assistance, and financing.(Sept. 2010)	\$100,000
Program to help small businesses through training, technical assistance, and financing. (April 2011)	\$200,000
Bigelow Foundation (\$50,000 in 2009 and \$75,000 in 2010) to prepare small businesses for Central Corridor LRT construction.	\$125,000
St. Paul Foundation (\$75,000 in 2009 and \$75,000 in 2010) to prepare small businesses for Central Corridor LRT construction.	\$150,000
Program to help small businesses through training, technical assistance, and financing. (April 2012)	\$200,000
Program to help small businesses through training, technical assistance, and financing. (March 2013)	\$200,000
Total	\$1,275,000

Great Streets and Business Association Assistance Program: The City of Minneapolis will contribute a total of \$210,000 for business technical and marketing support. The City’s contract with the African Development Center has expired following a two-year period of availability to CCLRT area businesses. The City renewed its contract with the West Bank Business Association.

Significant Activities:

In April 2013, \$10,626 was disbursed to the Stadium Village Commercial Association in April for advertising and marketing campaigns promoting businesses in the area.

Financial Activities (Minneapolis along University Ave, Cedar Riverside):	Amount
Business Association Assistance Program	\$ 20,500
Great Streets Business District Support Grants	\$205,000
City Business Finance Assistance to the African Development Center	\$ 40,000
Total	\$265,500

Other Business Assistance: The “Other” category in Table 1 consists of funding commitments from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC). All funds reported in the Business Impacts SEA for this activity have been disbursed.

Financial Activities	Amount
Central Corridor Partnership to support public presentations from Bill Knowles (business mitigation consultant)	\$3,000
Asian Economic Development Association to support consultation / presentations by Thao Tran (business mitigation consultant).	\$4,670
Total	\$7,670

Business Marketing Program: On September 28, 2011, the Metropolitan Council approved the use of \$1.2 million in Central Corridor LRT project contingency funding for use to market businesses during project construction. The program is focused on increasing awareness of the diversity of businesses in the Central Corridor area of St. Paul and Minneapolis, increase customer traffic, and minimize lost business revenues.



Significant Activities:

MOD and Co. has been contracted to conduct the marketing program on behalf of the Metropolitan Council. See Attachment F for a report of activities conducted as part of the business marketing campaign in the month of April.

Financial Activities	Amount
Marketing Agency Contract Fees	\$868,334
Administrative Costs	\$24,000
Total	\$892,334

2.3.3 University Avenue / Cedar-Riverside Betterments:

Improved Street Lighting / Street Amenities: The City of St. Paul has contributed additional funds to the project in the amount of \$1,000,000 to include street lighting, colored paving, and other amenities within the public right of way, to enhance the pedestrian character of University Avenue and downtown business districts.

Significant Activities:

These improvements are being implemented concurrently with CCLRT construction, and are being funded using CCLRT contingency funds. The improvements are being made as part of CCLRT construction and were complete by December 31, 2012.

Business Façade Improvement Financing: The City of Minneapolis has committed \$150,000 for business façade-improvement matching grants to businesses along the project corridor.

Significant Activities:

To date, the City of Minneapolis has expended \$96,350 for the Great Streets Façade Improvement Program in Central Corridor business districts. This total includes a \$5,000 grant disbursed in April to a University Avenue organization upon completion of a façade improvement project. The West Bank Business Association also received \$2,500 in April 2013 for administering the façade grant program in the Cedar Riverside area.

2.3.4 Promoting Business Access:

Additional Business Signage: The Metropolitan Council will employ movable variable message signs during construction to assist travelers in accessing businesses in response to frequent changes in construction activities. A total of \$50,000 will be allocated by the Metropolitan Council for this additional business signage.

Significant Activities:

All funds (\$50,000) in this category have been expended to purchase the variable message signs. Variable message signs are in storage for the winter and will be available for use in 2013 as needed during the CCLRT Systems construction activity.

Cooperative Advertising and Transit Fare Passes: Metro Transit will provide \$250,000 in marketing support in the form of cooperative advertising and fare passes to businesses for distribution to customers.

Significant Activities:

To date, a total of \$254,096 has been expended on the following activities:

- Go To Passes for U7 Business Support Staff: In 2011, four Go To Passes with two months fare (totaling \$567) were provided to U7 to support their outreach efforts to Central Corridor businesses by providing transportation to interns going door-to-door to talk about available loan programs and related workshops.
- Development / Deployment of Metro Transit Bus Side Ads : A total of six Metro Transit buses were used to promote patronage of Central Corridor businesses during year one of construction. These ads ran from May through November 2011. From July to December 2012, a total of 30 Metro Transit buses are being used to promote Central Corridor businesses (total value for 2011 and 2012 is \$211,555). In the first quarter of 2013, Metro Transit provided additional bus ads at cost for a value of \$62,000.
- Go To Passes for Go Green Saturday Promotion: On November 24, 2012, Metro Transit offered free passes for 320 rides (\$640 value) to shop along the Central Corridor as part of the Go Green Saturday event.

2.3.5 Construction Contract:

Construction Access Plans: Construction contracts (Civil East – St. Paul, and Civil West – Minneapolis) included \$200,000 for civil construction access plans. Outreach efforts and other contracting activities related to maintaining access were significantly completed in November 2012, as civil construction activities are scheduled to conclude at the end of 2012. In 2013, access plans will be developed as needed. Businesses will be notified of any changes to access at least two weeks prior to the start of construction.

Contractor Incentive Program: A contractor incentive program is being provided for the two major construction contracts (Civil East – St. Paul and Civil West – Minneapolis). This program is intended to encourage effective communication and cooperation between the contractor, businesses and residents. A Construction Communication Committee (“CCC”) composed of business owners, residents, and other stakeholders will be created for each outreach sector identified in contract documents. The CCC will meet once per quarter in 2013 to vote on identified evaluation criteria measuring contractor efforts to minimize construction-related impacts and award quarterly incentives to contractors demonstrating compliance with these measures. In the first quarter of 2013, weather prohibited construction projects. Therefore, funds allocated for the first quarter of 2013 were reallocated to the second and third quarters of 2013. The construction contracts include an \$850,000 allowance (project-wide total) for the contractor incentive program.

Significant Activities:

To date, nine evaluations have taken place by CCC’s for the Civil East and Civil West construction contracts. The table below summarizes, by contract by quarter, the contractor incentive funds available and the amount the CCC voted to award, based on contractor performance.

	Civil East		Civil West	
	Funds Available	Funds Awarded	Funds Available	Funds Awarded
2010 – Quarter 4	\$50,000	\$46,920 (94 percent of total)	\$10,000	\$9,920 (99 percent of total)
2011 – Quarter 1	\$40,000	\$30,993 (77 percent of total)	\$20,000	\$20,000 (100 percent of total)
2011 – Quarter 2	\$60,000	\$25,085 (42 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$18,891 (75 percent of total)
2011 – Quarter 3	\$70,000	\$23,200 (33 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$20,000 (80 percent of total)
2011 – Quarter 4	\$70,000	\$27,500 (39 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$18,150 (73 percent of total)
2012 – Quarter 1	\$50,000	\$40,000 (80 percent of total)	\$20,000	\$16,327 (82 percent of total)
2012 – Quarter 2	\$60,000	\$34,200 (57 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$21,250 (85 percent of total)
2012 – Quarter 3	\$70,000	\$45,500 (60 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$21,250 (85 percent of total)
2012 – Quarter 4	\$50,000	\$37,500 (75 percent of total)	\$25,000	\$21,250 (85 percent of total)
2013 – Quarter 1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total (to date)	\$520,000	\$310,898 (60 percent of total)	\$200,000	\$167,038 (84 percent of total)

2.3.6 Project Communications:

Construction Communication Plan (Special Signage): Construction signage will include “Open for Business” signage and other information alerting drivers and pedestrians to construction impacts or other relevant information (e.g., available parking, alternative access, etc.). Approximately four signs will be required per block of construction, and signs will be in place until substantial completion of construction of the surface elements of the project.

Significant Activities: Construction signage is in place in areas where Civil East (St. Paul) and Civil West (Minneapolis) construction activities are ongoing.

Community Outreach Coordinators: Community Outreach Coordinators will be provided by the Metropolitan Council throughout project construction. The Community Outreach Coordinators act as a liaison between the public and local businesses, including minority-owned businesses, and project contractors. Community Outreach Coordinators are available to answer questions and direct specific construction related concerns back to project contractors and the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council has dedicated \$4,000,000 to this effort, which includes salary and benefits for a fully staffed Central Corridor Outreach and Communications Team for the four years of project construction from 2010 through 2013. See Attachment G for a display of current Outreach staff and their contact information.

2.4 Requests for Business Assistance and Response

Several of the programs summarized in Section 3 involve direct assistance to businesses in the forms of loans, grants, or other direct assistance. Programs that are managed in this way are listed below, along with information on the number of requests to receive assistance from these programs.

Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program (City of St. Paul): To date, a total of 50 applications have been received by the City of St. Paul and 24 projects have been funded. The City has closed the application process for this program.

Business Support Fund: To date, a total of 242 loans been approved by the City of Saint Paul. A total of 17 applications for loans were not funded, as reported below:

- Two of the applicant businesses closed prior to the loan being disbursed.
- Six were not eligible as they actually demonstrated business revenues that increased from periods prior to construction. Two of the six later reapplied with additional demonstrated losses and the applications were then deemed eligible and approved.
- Three were not eligible as they were not retail establishments.
- Two were not eligible as they were outside the established geographic area for qualified applicants.
- One did not meet minimum required time for being in business on the corridor (one-year minimum).
- One was the subject of an adverse action taken by the City of St. Paul and was evicted by the landlord before the loan application was processed
- One was not eligible because the previous year’s sales exceeded \$2 million.
- One business was sold before the loan was closed.

(See Attachment C for a visual depiction of the status of funds approved.)

Business Improvement / Expansion Assistance: Loans have been made to four businesses along the Central Corridor, as reported in Section 2.3.2 of this report.

Business Façade Improvement Financing (City of Minneapolis): To date, 25 applications have been received to access funds administered through this program with 22 applications approved and/or funded (one additional application was submitted and then later withdrawn). West Bank Business Association also received \$2,500 for administering the façade grant program in the Cedar Riverside area.

2.5 Business Openings / Closings / Relocations

The following update on number of Central Corridor business openings, closings, and relocations uses data gathered by CCPO Outreach staff. Outreach staff maintains an inventory of Central Corridor businesses, which provides a comprehensive contact database. This inventory is a list of street-level business establishments that are found along the Central Corridor alignment from the West Bank area of Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul.

The information in the following table reflects known business openings, closings and relocations on the Central Corridor for the month of April.

Change in Central Corridor Businesses April 1, 2013 to April 30, 2013	
Business Openings	6
Business Closings	2
Business Relocations off Corridor	0
Business Relocations on Corridor	1

3.0 Frequently Asked Questions

3.1 How do I request a translated summary of this report?

Please contact the Central Corridor Public Outreach and Communications Team for assistance:

Central Corridor email: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

Hotline: 651-602-1404

Requesting a Spanish Summary of Report:

¿Cómo puedo solicitar un resumen traducido de este informe?

Por favor comuníquese con el *Equipo de Corredor Central Publico de Alcance y Comunicación* (Central Corridor Public Outreach and Communications Team) para asistencia.

Correo electrónico del Equipo de Corredor Central: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

Línea de ayuda: (651) 602-1404

Requesting a Vietnamese Summary of Report:

Làm thế nào để yêu cầu một bản tóm tắt dịch của báo cáo này?

Xin vui lòng liên hệ với Central Corridor Public Outreach and Communications Team để được hỗ trợ: Central Corridor email: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

Hotline: 651-602-1404

Requesting a Somali Summary of Report:

Sideen u dalbadaa warbixintaan kooban oo la fasiray?

Fadlan la soo xiriir Central Corridor caawimada dadweeynaha iyo kooxda farriinta dadweeynaha u qaabilsan.

Central Corridor Eemeylkoodu waa: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us
Telefoonka: 651 602 1404

Requesting a Hmong Summary of Report:

Yuav ua li cas thiaj li thov tau daim ntawv txhais ua lus Hmoob txog cov xov xwm no?

Yog koj xav tau kev pab, thov hu los yog sau ntawv rau tom cov Koos Haum (Central Corridor Public Outreach and Communications Team).

Sau ntawv rau: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

Xov Tooj: 651-602-1404

3.2 How can I report a construction-related problem?

To report problems that arise during construction, call the 24-hour hotline at 651-602-1404.

3.3 How can I get information on business assistance during construction?

“Ready for Rail” is a great source for information on programs to assist Central Corridor businesses during construction and can be found at <http://www.readyforrail.net/> or by calling 651-280-2384.

3.4 How can I comment on the project?

The outreach program provides many avenues for people to submit comments and concerns. The outreach team forwards your comments and concerns to the engineers.

Central Corridor email: centralcorridor@metc.state.mn.us

Phone line: 651-602-1645

Attend a public meeting. See the Central Corridor meetings page at www.centralcorridor.org

3.5 Where do I get information about job opportunities

The Met Council and Central Corridor Funders Collaborative created www.lrtworks.org for job seekers to register their qualifications.

3.6 How can the public get construction information?

Details about construction will be available at www.centralcorridor.org and the public will be notified in advance about work, including detours and road closures. Project outreach coordinators began surveying business and property owners in the spring of 2008 for details on their points of access to help engineers design the line and plan construction.

Attachment A

Summary of Monthly Complaints / Response

Category	Description	Response	Responded Within 24 Hours	Responded Within 1 Week	Date Received	Date Responded
Civil East						
Bus	Bus Stop - 979 Univeristy Avenue	Shoua Lee called 4/16. Issue resolved and closed.	X		04.16.2013	04.16.2013
Incidents	Damaged Irrigation - 2700 SE Univ	Reassign to Shoua		X	04.05.2013	04.12.2013
Incidents	Poor Sidewalk Install - 1449	Sidewalk rework is on punch list for when whether			04.05.2013	04.16.2013
Incidents	Accident Damage to Median - Grotto	Reassign to Shoua		X	04.08.2013	04.12.2013
Incidents	Damage Done - St. Paul Traffic Ops	Shoua called back - wrong info	X		04.12.2013	04.12.2013
Incidents	Break In - 979 Univ Ave	Shoua Lee called 4/17 and responded to request.	X		04.17.2013	04.17.2013
Misc	94 & Vandalia - Directions 21212	Reassign to Shoua		X	04.06.2013	04.12.2013
Misc	Boom Restriction? 480 Cedar	Spoke with caller via phone	X		04.08.2013	04.08.2013
Misc	Trash @ Simpson Crossing	Shoua Lee responded immediately. Issue resolved.	X		04.08.2013	04.08.2013
Misc	Website - 172 E 4th	Left voice mail with caller	X		04.16.2013	04.16.2013
Misc	Betty Charles Requests call back	Shoua Lee called back as requested.	X		04.18.2013	04.18.2013
Misc	Driveway Repairs - 1690 Univ Ave	Issue to be repaired as punch list. Closed 5/21	X		04.19.2013	04.19.2013
Misc	Visitor Guide Error?	Responded via email.		X	04.22.2013	04.30.2013
Misc	Vehicle drove across Tracks - Sibley & 4th St	Construction management responded. Issue closed out 5/21.		X	04.29.2013	05.29.2013
Misc	Light Rail Job	Responded by phone.	X		04.30.2013	04.30.2013
Traffic	Buses & Traffic Lights	Reassign to Shoua	X		04.08.2013	04.08.2013
Traffic	Retime Lights - Univ & Dale	Issue forwarded to the city for resolution. Closed	X		04.17.2013	04.17.2013
Traffic	No Clear Line of Site - Cedar & 11st	Responded to caller via email.	X		04.29.2013	04.30.2013
Civil West						
Misc	U of M - 2508 Delaware	Left a voice mail.	X		04.02.2013	04.02.2013
Misc	Hiawatha Bike Path	Responded to caller by email	X		04.05.2013	04.05.2013
Misc	Sign Backwards - 29th Ave & Univ	Spoke with caller via phone.	X		04.15.2013	04.15.2013
Misc	Trash Pickup - 716 Washington	Responded via email.	X		04.23.2013	04.24.2013
Misc	Wisc to Harvard Directions	Left a message on caller's voice mail	X		04.26.2013	04.26.2013
Misc	Noise - 1849 Wash Ave S	Spoke with caller via	X		04.29.2013	04.30.2013
Safety Security	Signage turned around - 29th & Univ	No response requested	X		04.30.2013	04.30.2013

Attachment B1

Summary of Past Monthly Meetings

Central Corridor LRT Meeting Summary

April, 2013

1. Metropolitan Council initiated public meetings/events							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
4/3/13	11:00 AM	Central Corridor Project Office, 540 North Fairview Av Room 2/3, Saint Paul, MN 55104	CCPO	Quarterly Construction Meeting/Quarterly Contractor Evaluation Meeting	Public-Construction Communication Committee Members	40	Cigolo, Nkongo

2. Project partner initiated meetings/events							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees*	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
4/4/13	12:00 PM	Little Szechuan, 422 University Avenue West, St. Paul, MN 55103	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Lunch on the Avenue		30	Centralcorridor
4/5/13	11:00 AM	Bangkok Cuisine, 432 University Avenue W, St. Paul, MN	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Go Green Line Fridays		30	Centralcorridor
4/12/13	11:00 AM	Cupcake, 3338 University Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Go Green Line Fridays		30	Centralcorridor
4/18/13	12:00 PM	Russian Tea House, 1758 University Avenue West, St. Paul, MN	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Lunch on the Avenue		30	Centralcorridor
4/19/13	11:00 AM	Daily Diner, 615 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Go Green Line Fridays		30	Centralcorridor
4/26/13	11:30 AM	Caspian Bistro, 2418 University Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Go Green Line Fridays		30	Centralcorridor

Page 1 of 2 or information about a specific meeting, contact the identified outreach coordinator:

Nkongo Cigolo (651) 602-1559 Dana Happel (651) 602-1954 Jessica Hill (651) 602-1840 Shoua Lee (651) 602-1014
 Dan Pfeiffer (651) 602- 1952 Michelle Webb (651) 602-1485

Central Corridor LRT Meeting Summary

April, 2013

3. Meetings with Stakeholders							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees*	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
4/1/13	12:00 PM	Elsies, Minneapolis, MN	Kiwanis CLub	Kiwanis Club	Members	20	Happel, Dana
4/5/13	1:30 PM	State Capitol, 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 318, St. Paul, MN 55155	Jim Aleckson	Department of Administration Construction Update Meeting	State	50	Cigolo, Nkongo
4/12/13	9:00 AM	US Bank, 101 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Downtown Skyway Committee	Skyway Committee members	10	Happel, Dana
4/18/13	9:30 AM	6715 Minnetonka Blvd, St. Louis Park- Room 109 (the Card Room)	Kiwanis Club	Kiwanis Club	Kiwani members	20	Happel, Dana
4/19/13	12:00 PM		U of M civil engineering students	U of M Civil Engineering Student Tour	U of M civil engineering students	20	Lee, Shoua
4/23/13	11:00 AM	IDS Court, 80 8th St. S, Minneapolis, MN 55402	Nkongo Cigolo	Staff Table at IDS Court Earth Day Event	Commuter Connections	100	Cigolo, Nkongo
4/23/13	11:30 AM	Arnellia's, 1183 University Ave. W. St. Paul, MN 55104	Midway Chamber of Commerce	Midway Chamber Economic Development Meeting	businesses and community members	25	Lee, Shoua
4/24/13	11:00 AM	555 Nicollet Mall, Skyway Event, Minneapolis, MN 55402	Commuter Connection	Commuter Fair, RBC Plaza	Downtown Minneapolis community	150	Happel, Dana

Page 2 of 2 or information about a specific meeting, contact the identified outreach coordinator:

Nkongo Cigolo (651) 602-1559 Dana Happel (651) 602-1954 Jessica Hill (651) 602-1840 Shoua Lee (651) 602-1014
 Dan Pfeiffer (651) 602- 1952 Michelle Webb (651) 602-1485

Attachment B2

Summary of Upcoming Monthly Meetings

Central Corridor LRT Meeting Summary

April, 2013

1. Metropolitan Council initiated public meetings/events							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
6/11/13	11:00 AM	360 Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Federal Courthouse Safety Training	Safety staff	20	Happel, Dana

2. Project partner initiated meetings/events							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees*	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
5/21/13	4:00 PM	891 Dale Street N, Saint Paul, MN	Nkongo Cigolo	13 St. Paul Public Works Open House	Saint Paul Stakeholders	60	Cigolo, Nkongo

3. Meetings with Stakeholders							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees*	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
5/1/13	9:00 AM	Tour	Dunwoody Community College	Dunwoody Community College Student Tour	Students	15	Happel, Dana
5/7/13	11:00 AM	444 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Safety Training UBS Tower		20	Happel, Dana
5/8/13	3:30 PM	340 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Safety Training for Global Language Institute	GLI Staff	10	Happel, Dana
5/9/13	9:00 AM	65 Kellogg Blvd. East, St. Paul, MN 55101	Open World High School	Open World High School Tour	High School Students	55	Happel, Dana

Page 1 of 2 or information about a specific meeting, contact the identified outreach coordinator:

Nkongo Cigolo (651) 602-1559 Dana Happel (651) 602-1954 Jessica Hill (651) 602-1840 Shoua Lee (651) 602-1014
 Dan Pfeiffer (651) 602-1952 Michelle Webb (651) 602-1485

Central Corridor LRT Meeting Summary

April, 2013

3. Meetings with Stakeholders							
Date	Start Time	Meeting location and address	Group/Host	Topic/Purpose of Meeting	Stakeholder Attendees*	Attendees Expected	Project Contact & Phone #
5/9/13	5:00 PM	Saint Paul River Center, 175 Kellogg Blvd. West, St. Paul, MN 55102	Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation	Great River Gathering	Policy makers, corporate leaders, entrepreneurs, artists and citizens		Happel, Dana
5/9/13	5:00 PM	Saint Paul River Center, 175 Kellogg Blvd. West, St. Paul, MN 55102	Great River Gathering	Great River Gathering	Downtown Community	1200	Happel, Dana
5/13/13	5:00 PM	Rondo Library, 461 North Dale Street, Saint Paul, MN 55104	Vaughn Larry, ASANDC	Safety training for ASANDC-sponsored community meeting	residents, general public	25	Lee, Shoua
5/14/13	3:00 PM	172 East Fourth Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Twin Cities Public Television Safety Training	Staff	20	Happel, Dana
5/16/13	2:00 PM	55 East Fifth Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Alliance Bank Center Safety Training	Security and safety staff	20	Happel, Dana
5/28/13	6:30 PM	Minnehaha Rec Center, 685 Minnehaha Ave. W.	Met Council	Tentative: Safety Presentation to Frogtown Neighborhood Association	Frogtown residents and community members	20	Lee, Shoua
6/19/13	10:00 AM	445 Minnesota Street, Security Desk, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Department of Safety and Security	Management	10	Happel, Dana
6/20/13	11:00 AM	380 Wabasha, St. Paul, MN 55101	Ecolab	Ecolab Safety Fair	Ecolab Employees	200	Happel, Dana
6/26/13	9:00 AM	19 E. Exchange Street, St. Paul, MN 55101	CCPO	Safety Training McNally Smith	McNally Safety and security staff	10	Happel, Dana

Page 2 of 2 or information about a specific meeting, contact the identified outreach coordinator:

Nkongo Cigolo (651) 602-1559 Dana Happel (651) 602-1954 Jessica Hill (651) 602-1840 Shoua Lee (651) 602-1014
 Dan Pfeiffer (651) 602- 1952 Michelle Webb (651) 602-1485

Attachment C
CCLRT Business Support Fund
Status Report

CCLRT Business Support Fund April 2013 Status Report



\$289,825

Cedar-Riverside
North and South

\$221,994

Stadium Village

\$345,324

Prospect Park

\$169,616

\$514,149

Emerald-Hampden North
Emerald-Hampden South

\$524,750

\$180,217

Hampden -Aldine North
Hampden - Aldine South

\$222,621

\$270,326

Aldine -Syndicate North
Aldine -Syndicate South

\$63,079

\$14,557

Syndicate-Lexington North
Syndicate-Lexington South

\$169,827

\$203,793

Lexington-Dale North
Lexington-Dale South

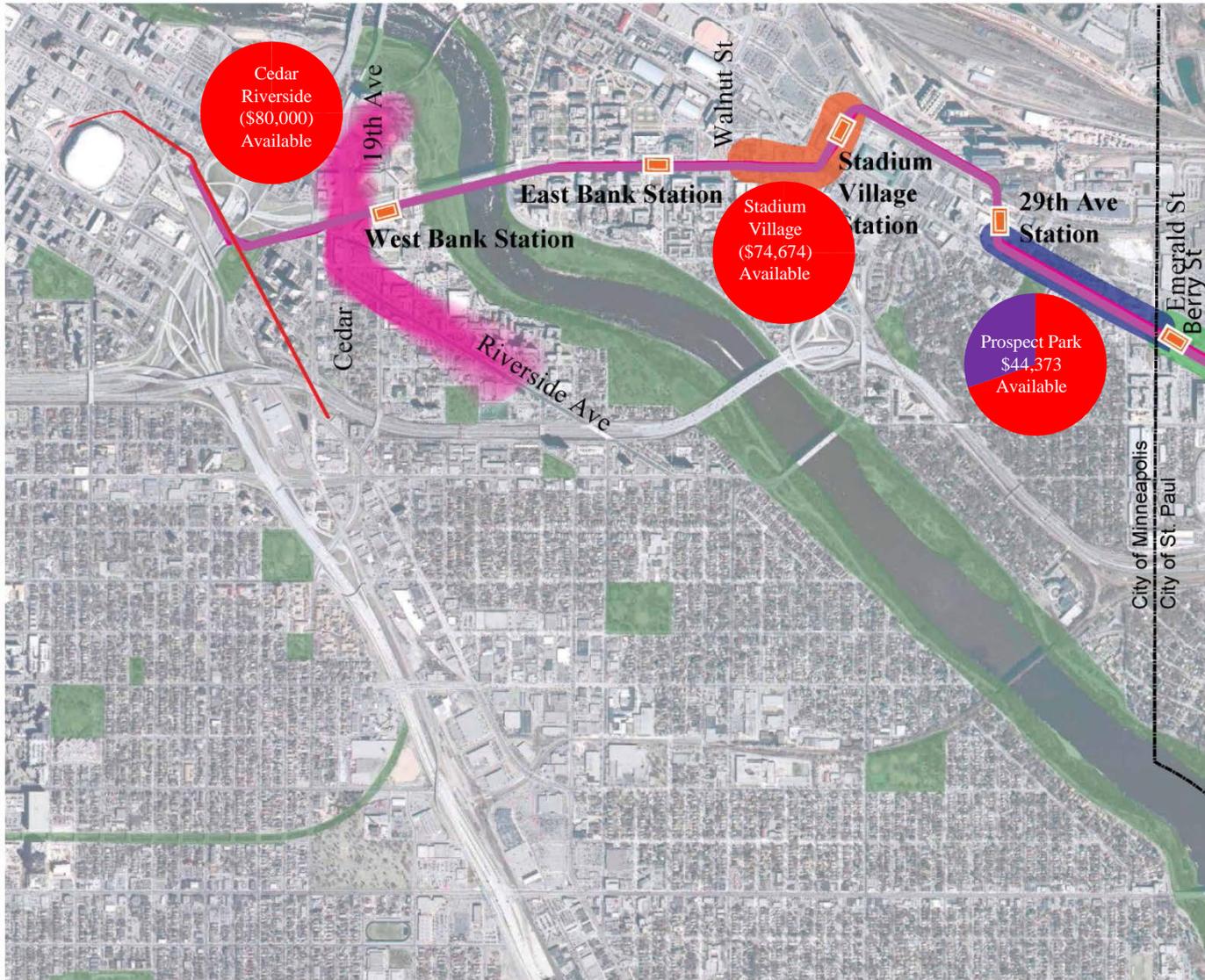
\$150,418

\$373,620

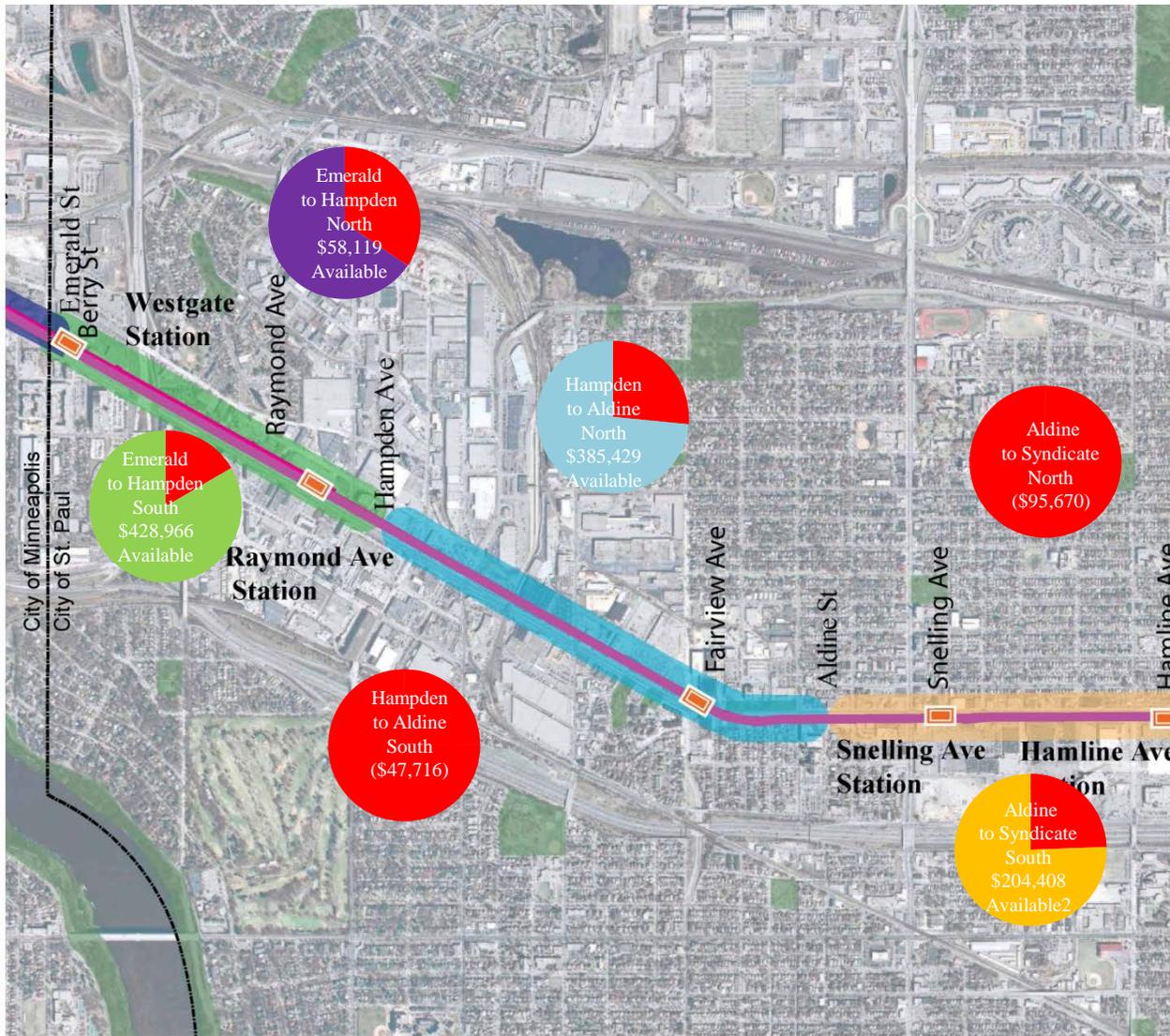
Dale-Rice North
Dale-Rice South

\$95,409

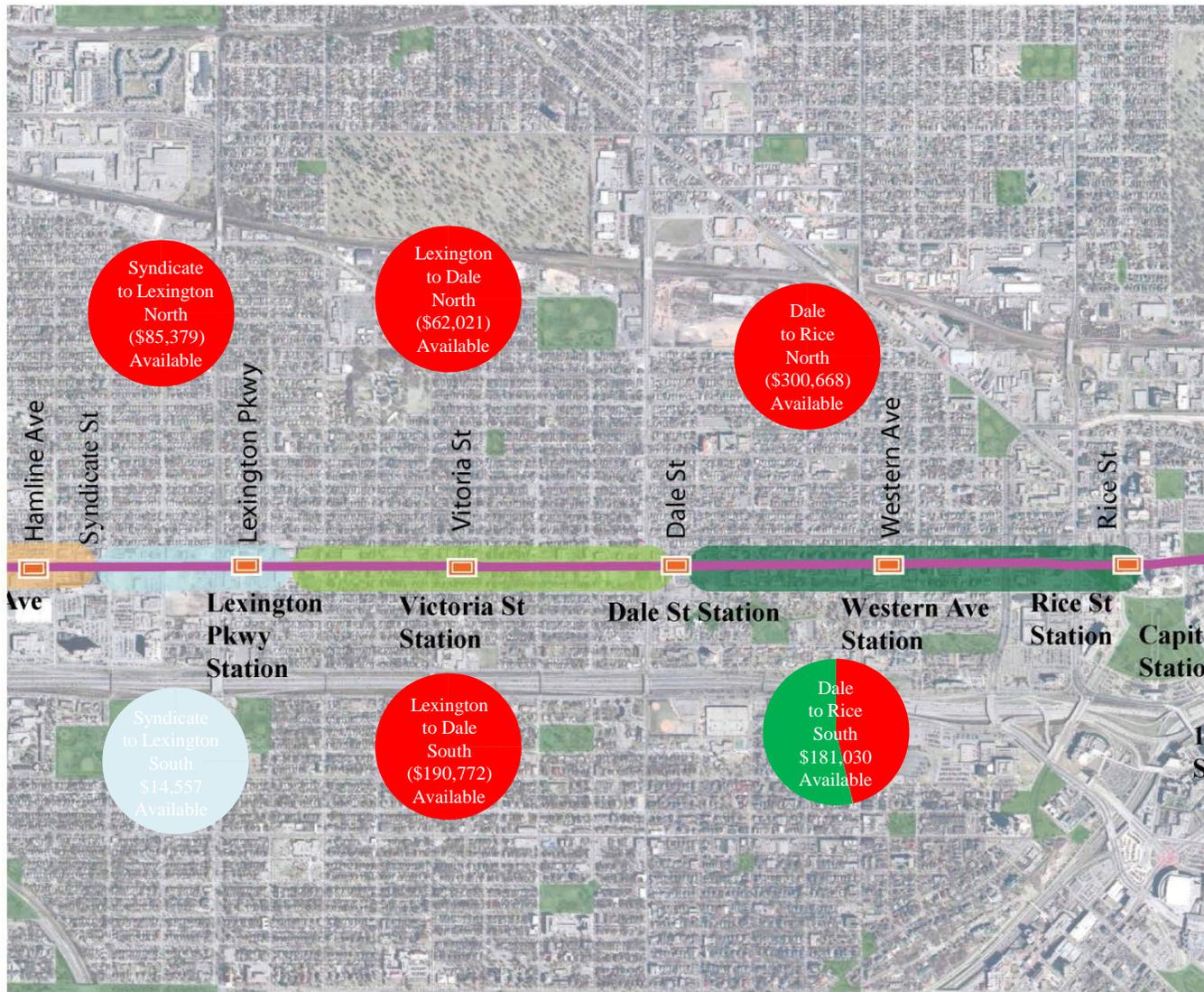
Lowertown



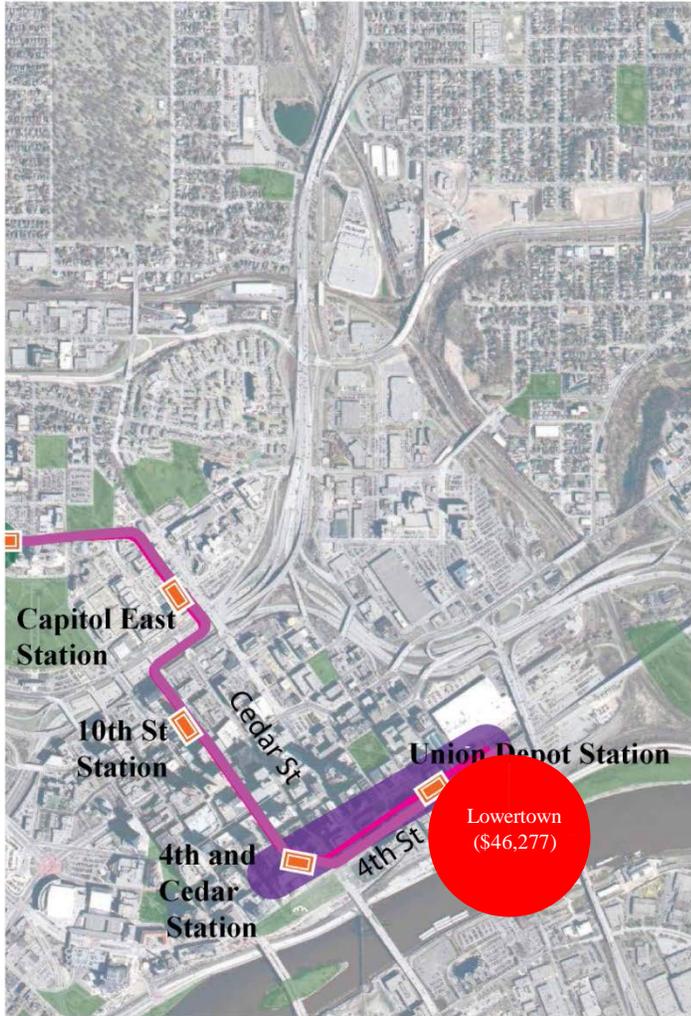
\$289,825	Cedar-Riverside North and South
\$221,994	Stadium Village
\$345,324	Prospect Park
\$169,616	Emerald-Hampden North
\$514,149	Emerald-Hampden South
\$524,750	Hampden -Aldine North
\$180,217	Hampden -Aldine South
\$222,621	Aldine -Syndicate North
\$270,326	Aldine -Syndicate South
\$63,079	Syndicate-Lexington North
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\$169,827	Lexington-Dale North
\$203,793	Lexington-Dale South
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\$95,409	Lowertown



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\$180,217	Hampden - Aldine South
\$222,621	Aldine -Syndicate North
\$270,326	Aldine -Syndicate South
\$63,079	Syndicate-Lexington North
\$14,557	Syndicate-Lexington South
\$169,827	Lexington-Dale North
\$203,793	Lexington-Dale South
\$150,418	Dale-Rice North
\$373,620	Dale-Rice South
\$95,409	Lowertown

Attachment D

U7 and NDC Corridors of Opportunity Report

ITEM: Projects funded with Corridors of Opportunity loan resources

SUBMITTED BY/STAFF CONTACT: Mary Kay Bailey, The Saint Paul Foundation

PURPOSE AND ACTION REQUESTED: The purpose of this item is to inform the Policy Board of several loans that have been approved or closed by our lending partners (Neighborhood Development Center (NDC); LISC, Family Housing Fund, and Twin Cities Community Land Bank). No action requested.

BACKGROUND: Through Living Cities, our region has received \$10 million in commercial debt and \$3 million in Program Related Investments (PRIs) which are low interest loans for a charitable purpose. These funds are being used in the following ways:

Small Business Loan Fund

NDC is deploying \$700,000 of PRI to support to businesses along University Avenue to:

- a) Buy their buildings in order to secure building ownership in advance of future land value appreciation
- b) Make improvements to and/or grow the business for the purposes of:
 - i. Making visual enhancements that showcase the long-term potential for small, local, often minority or immigrant-owned businesses to anchor sites along the Central Corridor.
 - ii. Invest in the business so that it may expand and bring additional jobs to the Central Corridor.

Affordable Housing/Transit Oriented Development Loan Fund

A \$14.3 million pool comprised of \$10 million of commercial debt (managed by LISC) and \$4.3 million in PRIs (\$2.3 million from Living Cities and an additional \$2 million from the Family Housing Fund) supports affordable housing preservation and development and new mixed use TOD projects along Central, Hiawatha, and Southwest LRT corridors.

SMALL BUSINESS LOANS - APPROVED

May's Building, 377 University Avenue

May's Building was built in 1920 and has three floors with a total 18,542 finished sq ft. There are five store fronts on the main level with the remaining units on the second floor. Tenants include May's Market, Thai Café, Liberty Tax, Hmong American Partnership/Asian Economic Development Association, University Home Health, a massage and a hair salon.

The building is located at the intersection of Western and University Avenues (Western Avenue Green Line station) and is across from the historic Old Home building and a few blocks west of The State Capitol. The purpose of the loan is to improve and increase the value of the property.

The owner will add new signage, paint, doors, windows, lighting, awning to the south and west sides of the building. The improvements to the building will reflect the vision of the Little Mekong District.



NDC is providing a \$50,000 COO loan and \$60,000 façade grant. In addition, the City of Saint Paul awarded May's Building a \$20,000 parking lot improvement grant.

A-1 Vacuum Cleaner & Appliance Co., Inc, 666 University Avenue

A-1 Vacuum Cleaner & Appliance Company is a family owned business that has been located on University Avenue since 1952. The building is near the Dale Street Green Line station. Loan funds will be used to replace the HVAC system, refinish the roof, add new front entry doors, signage, awning and lighting to the north and west end of the building, and install a new garage door with a conveyor belt in the rear to support shipping and receiving.



City of Saint Paul recently resurfaced and landscaped the surround areas of the parking lot that is being shared by A-1 Vacuum and Shuang Hur grocery. NDC is providing a \$10,000 façade grant and a \$50,000 loan.

X-Treme Beauty Salon, 500 North Dale Street

X-Treme Beauty Salon is moving into a 1,225 sq ft space at the Frogtown Square development at the Dale Street Green Line station. This salon will complement the Grooming House barber shop which caters predominantly to men. X-Treme Beauty Salon will rent the stations to independent contractors. \$20,000 of NDC loan funds will be used to support the build out of the space



Ha Tien Grocery Store, 353 University Avenue

The Ha Tien grocery is an 8,000 sq. foot grocery and deli located in an architecturally distinctive building at 353 University Avenue near the Western Avenue Central Corridor LRT station. Funds will be used to renovate and redesign the store for better navigation, aisle spacing and an overall positive customer experience as well as purchase new energy efficient equipment and HVAC systems. This project is also in the Little Mekong District. NDC is looking to make a \$200,000 loan to the owner and a \$30,000 façade grant.



Attachment E

January 2013 U7 Report of Technical Assistance

Small Businesses on the Green Line

Providing a model to survive light rail construction

The U7 Project + January, 2013

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Introduction

History of University Avenue

University Avenue was *the* early to mid-20th century thoroughfare connecting Minnesota's two major cities. It was an entertainment and retail destination as well as a major industrial corridor. Everything from Model T's to airplanes, to caskets to refrigerators were built on the avenue. It had a well-developed street car system that residents used to shop, work and play. Soon after World War II, however, those tracks were paved over and the newly built Highway 94 carried much of the east to west traffic. The face of University Avenue and its businesses changed from the inevitable march of progress.

Building a transit system

Today, the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul have the 16th largest metropolitan population in the United States. Still vibrant, the faces and businesses along University Avenue have changed dramatically from a half century ago with the arrival of immigrants from Africa and southeast Asia. For being as large as it is and while home to such a successful global business climate, the Twin Cities had built just a few miles of light rail or commuter rail tracks.

It was in June of 2006 when the Metropolitan Council approved construction of the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Line — the Green Line — to connect the eleven miles between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis, primarily along University Avenue. Construction began more than four years later. In late December, 2012, all heavy construction is complete, and the first train is set to run in the Spring of 2014.

Most Minnesotans believe that public transportation is the logical course for its cities. Yet unless construction of a project like a light rail transit way is built on a new or abandoned road, businesses are likely to suffer from disruptive construction and loss of parking. And University Avenue, home of independent and family

run shops, or owned by Minnesota's newest immigrants, were on fragile footing to begin with. This project would be a delicate operation: **keep existing small businesses alive — even thriving — before, during, and after the construction of the Central Corridor Light Rail project.**

Survive and Thrive

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman charged Mihailo Temali, CEO of Neighborhood Development Center with heading up that mission. From there, NDC invited a group of seven community development organizations to form the University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative (U7). These partners had had a long successful history of supporting the growth and development of small businesses, collectively having originated over 800 loans to over 700 small businesses representing capital of over \$10 million. These members had also collectively provided more than 28,000 hours of technical assistance to more than 1,200 small businesses.

It was the strong belief of these organizations that there was a two-part equation required to achieve the best possible results for the small ethnic and "Ma and Pa" businesses that line this corridor by the hundreds, and which make up the face, the economic heart and social vitality along University Avenue:

1. To prepare each business owner, with help from U7 and other business support providers, with careful financial planning, expanding a customer base and increasing sales through more effective marketing before LRT. These improvements would then create financial reserves prior to an expected drop in sales and the ability to reach customers and generate sales even during construction.
2. Additional solutions by Metropolitan Council and other government entities are necessary. The on-street parking losses, decreased customer access, and predicted loss of sales during

and after construction may, in some cases, be so extreme, that well-funded loans and grants would be necessary to be available to individual business owners to ride out the construction storm.

About this project

The following essays profile 10 such Green Line businesses. All are small and independently owned; all felt the effects of light rail construction and all have received some level of assistance from U7.

The business people profiled represent the diversity that is University Avenue. There are five women and five men, two Asians, two Africans, two whites and four African Americans, with storefronts that span the Green Line from Rice Street to Highway 280. There are three hair salons, one market, one restaurant, one yoga studio, one bakery, one automotive shop and one health care facility.

These owners were asked about their history as business owners, the effect of light rail construction on their bottom line, how they met representatives from U7, what services they were provided and how those services made a difference in their ability to stay alive during construction.

Through a combination of business assistance from U7 and an enormous amount of perseverance, patience and sweat equity, all profiled here have survived the worst of the construction, some better than others, but all, with U7's assistance, with a stronger infrastructure than when they went into construction.

Business owners cited:

- ✦ New logo, branding, marketing and an understanding of social media.
- ✦ Printed materials such as flyers, menus, business cards, stationary and wayfinding signs.
- ✦ Loans that have begun to cover the losses suffered during construction, as well as loans for façade improvements, new parking lots, energy improvements, business expansion.

- ✦ Working with U7 Small Business Consultants (SBC) to learn new accounting software and financial record keeping.

It had been U7's mission from the start to not think of University Avenue businesses as a whole. It has been critical that one-by-one, businesses have been treated individually with unique character, histories and needs. To this end, we believe, the U7 experiment has been a success.

Glossary of Terms

U7

The mission of U7 is to help existing small businesses, through stronger management and marketing practices, to “survive and thrive” before, during and after construction of the Green Line. Emphasis is placed on independent businesses within the areas of Rice Street to Emerald Street, and Lowertown and Downtown in St. Paul. In January 2008, a group of seven community-based development nonprofits officially formed the University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative (U7).

SBC

Small Business Consultant provides outreach, direct services, such as financial and accounting reviews and recommendations on marketing to small businesses along the Green Line. He or she will coordinate with the U7 Graphic Design department to set up marketing, branding and social media services.

NDC Small Business Training

An 11-week course designed to help graduates of NDC’s small business training build vibrant businesses that create employment opportunities, provide needed goods and services, serve as role models, and establish community gathering places that contribute to community revitalization. The program is offered in 20 neighborhoods and ethnic communities throughout the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area and focuses on teaching entrepreneurs how to create a viable business plan.

City of St. Paul Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan

Was created to be a modest safety net for for-profit small businesses with no more than \$2 million in annual gross sales and could show a loss in sales due to the construction of the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Line. The forgivable loan may be used for basic business expenses, including payroll, inventory, rent/mortgage, utilities, taxes, marketing, and insurance. Up to \$20,000 is available per business. Distributions are structured as 0% loans that are forgiven at the rate of 20% for each year for a total of five years the business stays on the Central Corridor Light Rail Line.

Façade Improvement Matching Grant

Funded by federal award and the City of Saint Paul’s 2010 Neighborhood STAR fund and Living Cities

Grant dollars, these monies are used to provide opportunities for physical improvements and revitalization of commercial properties along University Avenue before, during and after the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) construction.

Living Cities

Living Cities harnesses the collective power of philanthropy and financial institutions to improve the lives of low-income people and the cities where they live. The Living Cities Loan fund is a new tool to help NDC achieve its mission and is a powerful tool for change.

Living Cities Loan Fund Purposes:

Small Business Expansion Funds

Assists a small select group of targeted businesses on University Avenue who have a significant long-term growth opportunity and who can serve as a more visible anchor for the avenue, symbolizing the strong long-term potential for ethnic and minority-owned businesses in this district.

Small Business Building Ownership Fund

Assists targeted locally and minority owned small businesses in purchasing their own building for the sake of promoting the long-term presence on the corridor.

U7 People and Partners

Neighborhood Development Center

President and CEO Mihailo Temali

U7 Project Staff

Project Manager

Isabel Chanslor

Small Business Consultants (SBC)

Jason Allen

Sia Lo*

Pangia Vang

Maria Kuria**

NDC Loan Officer and U7 SBC

Sai Thao

NDC Training and Communications

Maren Misner

Design Team

Ryan Kidder (lead)

Steve Olson*

Kirsten Zache**

Kim Urban**

Nou Vang**

*former employees at U7

** contract employees

Small Businesses on the Green Line author

Emily Blodgett

U7 Board Members and Partners

Gene Gegelu, African Economic

Development Solutions

Nieeta Presley, Aurora/St. Anthony NDC

Jill Henricksen, Greater Frogtown CDC

Dave Chapman, Metropolitan Consortium of

Community Developers (MCCD)

Matthew Ides, SPARC

U7 Funders

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative

The St. Paul Foundation

F. R. Bigelow Foundation

Small Business Administration Assistance Support,
federal loan secured by U.S. Rep Betty McCollum

Living Cities Catalyst Fund

City of St. Paul STAR funds

for façade improvement program

Midway Chamber of Commerce

City of St. Paul

Craig Blakely, Economic Development;

Parking Improvements

Nancy Homans, Policy Director;

Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan

Ellen Muller, Economic Development Manager,

Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan

Craig O'Brien, STAR program

May's Market, located just east of the Western Avenue Green Line stop, is the oldest Asian market in the Twin Cities. For 22 years, it has sold groceries, medicinal teas, and items for Asian celebrations. May carries hundreds of dried herbs that when combined properly will produce remedies thousands of years old, yet still in demand today. Many within the Asian community use May's Market as an apothecary for medicine. If it is a complex remedy, May requires a prescription from a Chinese herbalist.

May Vang, the Hmong owner, is patient with curious customers. He speaks English and Chinese, as well as some Thai and Vietnamese. May purchased the 18,500 square foot building on the corner of Western and University Avenue in 2005. He has multiple tenants including a non-profit, retail, service and a restaurant. May purchased the building unaware of the impending light rail construction project.

The summer of 2012 has been the most difficult time for him. University Avenue was torn up and Western was closed, making May's Market nearly impossible to get to. In a normal month, May said his revenues averaged \$18,000 to \$19,000. During construction, he averaged about \$13,000 — a 31 percent loss.

Meeting U7

In 2010, May said that SBC Sia Lo and Sai Thao stopped by to talk with him about the imminence of the light rail construction and to discuss the services U7 could provide to help him and the other small businesses in his building. He signed on eagerly and said he was open to any help they could offer.

Business solutions provided by U7:

May said that U7 has been a consistent presence these last two years. Present SBC Pangia Vang stops by two to three times a month or "whenever I call." May has received approximately 120 hours of services, most of that financial and facade improvement advice. Other projects included:

- ♦ Offering financial advice, and giving information about an inventory tracking program. He was told to collect email addresses to contact his customers about detours and sales and specials within the market.
- ♦ Consulting on local media advertising options.
- ♦ Helping restructure his mortgage with a \$60,000 façade



grant and \$50,000 Corridor of Opportunity loan from NDC. These loans enabled him to upgrade his façade with new exterior signage reflecting the Little Mekong district design guidelines. In fact, the May's Market project has served as a model for Little Mekong and other cultural districts along the corridor.

- ♦ Facilitating a Ready for Rail Forgivable loan and a City of St. Paul Parking Improvement Forgivable loan which went toward upgrading the parking lot behind his building.
- ♦ Designing a new simplified logo. He and U7 are in the process of launching a May's Market website.

Bottom Line:

Though May saw a decrease in revenue during construction, the uniqueness of his store, his stature in the community and the services he received through U7 has given him confidence that he will thrive. The loans U7 helped facilitate to increase his property values, and May's investment in both his business and his tenants, has far reaching implications for how businesses in economic distress and in a cultural district can survive a major infrastructure project.

Doing business in the time of the light rail:

After initial hesitation about the project, May is excited about the prospect of a train stopping right outside his door. He hopes that a more ethnically and regionally diverse crowd will discover his shop and be interested in the herbal medicines and products May's Market has to offer.

After more than two decades and a challenging construction project, May is confident that May's Market can survive anything now.

Foundations Health Care Academy

225 University Avenue
Rachelle Simmons, Owner

Graduate of NDC's
Small Business Training

Foundations Health Care Academy (FHCA) is an inexpensive, no-frills school founded to teach students the skills to pass the certification test to become a nursing assistant or home health aide. In 80 hours spread over 16 days, Rachelle Simmons trains an average of six students for \$950 a person. A similar program through the Red Cross costs upward of \$1,500. With the vast majority of her clients lower income, immigrant, and minority women, the difference is significant.

Located in one large room on the top floor of the Hmong Professional Building, at the corner of Rice Street and University Avenue, Simmons has created a clinic "laboratory" with beds, blood pressure cuffs, and other nursing equipment. "The academy is a labor of love," she said. Once a specialist nurse "making six figures," Simmons dipped deeply into her savings and retirement accounts to make FHCA happen. Her graduates have a 97 percent success rate in passing the certification tests. She loves telling her students, many of whom come from challenging life situations, "after this class, you'll have something no one can ever take from you... an education and job skills."

Simmons moved to her site on University Avenue in March 2012, literally weeks before bulldozers tore apart the street. It was a difficult start, to say the least. Though her building has a parking lot, she estimates that approximately 65 percent of her students take public transportation. Though convenience was her goal in choosing the University Avenue site, there were months this summer when she couldn't cross the street with her class to get to the nursing home where they intern.

Meeting U7:

Simmons went through NDC's Small Business Training to learn the next steps after deciding to open FHCA on University Avenue. Wanting her to succeed with such a positive business plan, they put her in touch with the U7 staff. At their first meeting, Simmons was advised of all of U7's services and was told what she had to do on her end to receive help, particularly getting all the financials in order to be eligible for the Ready For Rail Forgivable Loan.

Business solutions provided by U7:

Simmons believes that her students and graduates are potentially her best advertising for more students, but the 320 hours U7 has put in toward her business have been incredibly important in promoting Foundations' name and services. U7 projects included:



- Facilitating a \$1,000 micro-grant in 2011 that she used for relocating costs.
- Creating a website that has attracted new students, kept them informed, and created a community by congratulating and encouraging her graduates. U7 staff have photographed some graduations and posted photos for her site. Both Simmons and her students are grateful for the attention and recognition.
- Instructing Simmons on the importance of social media — setting up her Facebook and Twitter accounts where she has been an active poster and tweeter.
- Helping secure a grant from Valspar Paint to repaint the interior of the large, one-room classroom and a matching grant of \$400 for façade improvements.
- Advising Simmons to approach her landlord about reducing her rent during construction. Though this never happened, she said the building owners agreed to creative lease payments.

The Bottom Line:

U7 branded FHCA to "a whole new level." They helped her with legal issues, flyers, branding, her website, Google Maps, Facebook page, printed materials with address changes. These, in turn, have brought in new students and greater visibility in the Twin Cities medical community.

Doing business in the time of light rail:

Simmons thinks light rail will be definitely be good for her students, but also good for the Twin Cities. "We're not two cities. This makes us one city. There are so many more options for people to get to where they need to go," she said.

Thai Cafe

371 University Avenue
Ya Poophakumpanart, Owner and Chef
www.thaicafemn.com

Located on the north side of University Avenue in the Frogtown neighborhood, Chef Ya Poophakumpanart is taking a well-deserved rest at a sunny table after the afternoon lunch rush. Through sheer will, 95-hour 7-day work weeks, and assistance from U7, Ya finally believes that Thai Café will survive. U7 was able to provide for the immediate needs so she could continue her work in the kitchen and with customers. And this is where Ya shines: Thai Café has already earned a reputation on Yelp for delicious Thai food and thus a loyal clientele willing to brave light rail construction.



Ya is a professionally trained chef who traveled her country of Thailand to gather unique recipes and flavors. She opened Thai Café in early 2011, two years after she arrived and just a year before construction started in earnest. She speaks Hmong, Thai, and only a little English. We conducted this interview through an interpreter.

Meeting U7:

Ya was visited by Sia Lo, a former U7 Small Business Consultant, who stopped in a month after she opened to explain what services U7 could provide. Sia, who is Hmong, was able to communicate in more detail the light rail construction schedule, other pertinent information, and what it might mean for her business. Immediately, the U7 team introduced Ya to general business management, marketing and graphic design projects.

Business solutions provided by U7:

Ya received approximately 120 hours of U7's assistance, including the full complement of U7's marketing and branding expertise. Other projects included:

- + Creating Thai Café's colorful and modern brand, working with her on design and pricing of her menu and business cards, and building a website using a City of St. Paul's Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan
- + Facilitating a \$1,000 micro-grant in 2012 to follow through with more marketing and branding.

- + Maintaining, along with Ya's high school-aged daughter, her Facebook page and website. Though clients must annually pay for the domain name and hosting, all other "backend" services are provided by U7. Lo suggested early on to gather e-mail addresses of patrons so she could contact them with the most up-to-date parking and detour information.

- + Pushing catering to survive the times when getting to her restaurant was nearly impossible to get to.

- + Posting way-finding signs that pointed patrons to her restaurant with parking suggestions.

- + Creating 500 flyers that were passed out in nightclubs and church parking lots (but the return was very small on this.) Maintenance of her website, which was completed before construction, encouraged phone orders for pick up.

- + Coordinating façade improvement and new signage through her landlord May Yang, owner of May's Market.

The Bottom Line:

Ya believes that the expectations of bad business due to construction were worse than the reality. Even at the height of disruption, her income and sales count were greater this summer than last. Part of this, no doubt, is due to Thai Café's reputation, but Ya credits U7 as well, a service she said that has saved her time and money.

Doing business in the time of the light rail:

Ya is confident about the future and thinks that ultimately the light rail will be good for the Twin Cities and very good for her business. She knows that she provides delicious food that people will seek out; a train running by her door can only help but bring them to her. With the light at the end of the tunnel, she believes that she can hire more employees. She'd like to make the modest restaurant feel more high end, and thus more attractive for business lunches and a more affluent clientele.

Embodied Health

2506 University Avenue
Lucinda Pepper, Owner
www.embodied-health.com

Graduate of NDC's
Small Business Training

Embodied Health, a yoga and massage business, is an oasis of calm on a street that has seen much chaos. In 2007, Lucinda Pepper fell in love with the location and space in the large brick building on the north side of University Avenue near Highway 280. She has loved it there — even during the summer of 2011 when construction and detours made getting to her studio nearly impossible.



Pepper is an evangelist for the transformative powers of massage and yoga, and has made it a mission to reach out to as many who need it as possible. Growing her business before she started working with U7, was “person to person,” pursuing free media, creating a website, and sending out an email newsletter. Success was painfully slow: gross revenue her first year was slightly more than \$5,000 a year. “It was nerve-wracking.”

Meeting U7

Pepper took Neighborhood Development Center’s entrepreneur class in 2005, two years before she opened the doors to Embodied Health. As a graduate of this program, she became eligible to receive a small business loan. NDC loan officer Sai Thao introduced Pepper to U7’s Isabel Chanslor and Ryan Kidder. “I remember them giving me their slogan: ‘Offering marketing and financial services to help businesses survive and thrive light rail construction at a free or low cost rate’ and thinking, “Yes. That’s what I need.”

Business solutions provided by U7:

Pepper said that after she had assembled some qualitative data, U7 dove in and began on the Embodied Health project. Projects included:

- + Facilitating a \$1,000 micro-grant in 2011 that she used for marketing to new clients.
- + Creating a new brand and logo, and helping facilitate getting a new awning and written materials such as gift certificates, post cards, and business cards. She also

received instruction of the importance of using her branding consistently.

- + Setting up a photo shoot to provide art for her website and written materials.
- + “Tutoring” Pepper in social media, Twitter, and Facebook. She uses these to promote workshops and keep in touch with her clients. She now tweets 2-3 times a week and posts on Facebook daily. She keeps the social media guidebook assembled by the U7 design team in her purse and uses it daily.
- + Launching her new, attractive website in July 2012. U7 designed and printed 1,000 postcards announcing the launch. She sent out approximately 500 to her clients, and delivered another 500 to coffee shops, restaurants, businesses, etc.
- + Facilitating a City of St. Paul Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan Pepper used to pay back debts incurred during construction.
- + Providing continuing mentorship on an as-needed basis, particularly for website or social media issues.

The Bottom Line:

She said that within one week of sending out the postcards announcing her website, her scheduled doubled; six months later, that uptick has been maintained. “I was inundated with calls. It was a quality problem.” This year, Pepper says, gross revenue should top \$46,000. “It was astounding how helpful working with NDC and U7 has been for me.”

“Knowing me, I’d still be slogging along had I not found NDC and U7, but I’m sure I would have had one foot off the cliff and be close to having to close.”

Doing business in the time of light rail:

Pepper is a light rail advocate. Transit means community connectivity, a strengthened infrastructure, and a better environment. Already, she sees University Avenue looking better, with new lights and sidewalks. For Embodied Health, she envisions commuters seeing her awning from the train and one day stopping in.

Ultimate Look

1455 University Avenue
Dominique Wells, Owner
www.ultimatelookmn.com

Ultimate Look is a full service African American beauty and nail salon and barbershop located west of the Hamline Street rail stop. Though more than 20 years old, it gives off a modern, sleek feeling, both in the shop and on the website. This is primarily due to the young owner who took over the family business when the founder, his aunt, got sick and turned to him for help. Only 28, Dominique Wells, is a skilled businessman, juggling being owner, manager, and even barber in the shop.

Ultimate Look has survived the worst of the construction. The biggest construction-related nightmare was in the summer of 2011 when the sidewalk in front of Ultimate Look “disappeared.” He said that the customers who actually braved University Avenue and came for a cut or beauty service were sometimes 45 minutes or an hour late. Sales dropped dramatically; down 50 percent for four or five months. Despite all this, he optimistically believes that better days are ahead.

Meeting U7

Wells said that a year before construction began, many representatives of U7 came to him — small business consultants Sia Lo and then Pangia Vang, and graphic designers Ryan Kidder and Steve Olson gave him details about the upcoming construction schedule and suggested he attend more city and transit meetings.

Business solutions provided by U7:

The most important thing that Wells heard from U7 was to keep in good contact with his existing customers. He began collecting email addresses and building his database so when getting to his shop was the trickiest, he would be able to contact them, and provide them with detour and parking directions. U7 has provided approximately 215 hours of assistance since partnering with Wells. Projects included:

- ✦ Designing the branding for Ultimate Look. “They gave us a new design, a new way to reinvent ourselves,” Wells said. “We got some new business cards and promotional things done, including a new website.”

- ✦ Preparing and applying for the forgivable loan. “If they hadn’t pushed me, it probably wouldn’t have gotten done.” “The loan,” he said, “went toward catching up on bills, new furniture, and other remodeling.

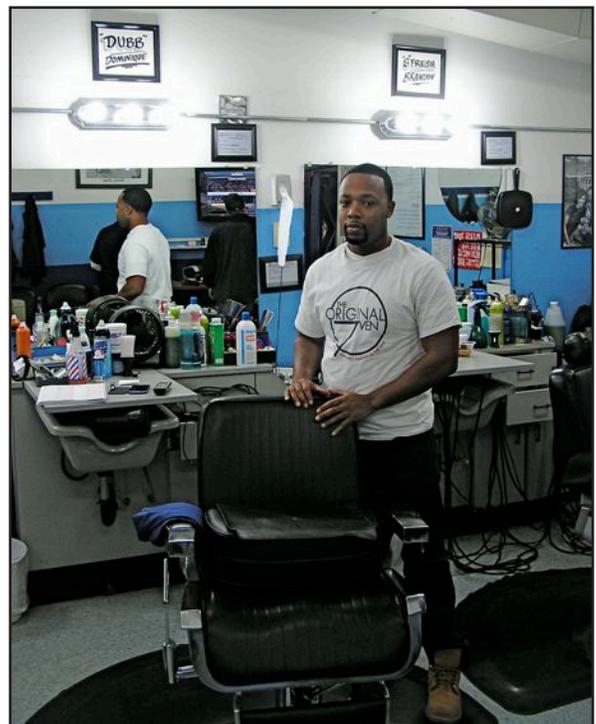
The Bottom Line:

Wells said the overall impact of his work with U7 had been very positive. “They provided me with a more consistent structure from the business standpoint of branding, marketing, and tracking loss and gains. Because they helped me set and meet my goals, I definitely feel we’ll grow and survive,” he said. On the positive side the majority of his old customers are back now that his shop is easier to access, and better yet, new people are coming in as well.

Doing business in the time of the light rail:

Wells believes that ultimately the light rail will be good for his business and the others along University Avenue. “We should bounce back for the better.” Though he does question whether this project was the best use of St. Paul’s money. However, as the Twin Cities are “moving up” it’s probably time they connected with each other in a modern way.

“This has been a tough time. I had to figure out a lot of stuff about how to make this business work, but I pushed through,” Wells said. “I wouldn’t have willingly done it, but then I didn’t have that option.”



Flamingo Restaurant

1277 University Avenue

Shegitu Kibede and Frewoini Haile, Co-Owners

www.flamingorestaurantmn.com

Graduate of NDC's
Small Business Training



Flamingo is a three-year old East African restaurant located a half block north of University Avenue near Hamline. The owners are Shegitu Kebede and Frewoini Haile, two women from Ethiopia and Eritrea respectively. When they decided to bring their unique tastes to St. Paul's Midway area, they were unaware a gigantic construction project would add one more stress to an already rocky first year.

The worst of the construction was the summer of 2012. "For a while, it didn't look like life existed out here," Shegitu said. "Except for the construction workers, people couldn't get to us. We were running out of nails to bite." Instead, Flamingo ramped up its catering and delivery services. "They opened our eyes," Shegitu said. "They told us not to just sit and wait for people to come to us." But now, Shegitu seems to radiate calm and relief. With an Urban Spoon rating of 92 percent, Flamingo is past the worst of construction and has become a go-to spot for delicious, unique dining in the Twin Cities.

Meeting U7

"I can't remember if we looked for them or they came to us. I think, though, that God sent them to us," Shegitu said.

Business solutions provided by U7:

U7 has spent more than 450 hours, primarily on marketing and branding and accounting assistance. Projects included:

- Advising Shegitu and Frewoini to look for cheaper groceries, start a savings account, start collecting e-mail addresses to "create relationships" and to contact customers

about specials and navigating detours and to grow their catering services.

- Providing far-reaching financial and accounting services. U7 SBC Mary Kuria taught them bookkeeping skills, instructing them to pay special attention to cost of goods in order to reduce expenses and increase revenue. She also taught them to file their own taxes, has them using new and more efficient accounting software and is offering advice in renegotiating their lease.

- Designing the uniquely fun and attractive logo of a one-legged flamingo fit into the African continent, menus, signage, business cards, but also with advice how to consistently use their new branding.

- Facilitating the City of St. Paul Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan to offset construction losses in addition to a façade improvement matching grant.

- Helping Flamingo navigate at least two major setbacks. The first was the restaurant's original and poorly installed street sign that crashed to the ground in a wind in the early morning hours. Fortunately no one was hurt. Also, the restaurant was a victim of a nearby power surge that burned out every appliance in the restaurant. They went into debt to purchase new stoves, ovens, refrigerators, etc., because the mishap was not covered by insurance. U7 assisted in rallying customers and clients to raise funds to keep the restaurant going.

- Erecting wayfinding signs to direct people to the restaurant and parking were very helpful.

Bottom Line:

There was a time, she said, when they thought that the restaurant was the worst decision they had ever made. "We are now very confident we will make it," Shegitu said. "We want to be a success story for U7."

Doing business in the time of light rail:

Shegitu, a world traveler, knows that a train system is the mark of a healthy city. "When I travel, I never take the bus. I take the train everywhere. The Twin Cities is growing, becoming more diverse and is economically very sound." In addition, she said she is very happy that the train station is close to Flamingo.

East African Bakery

786 University Avenue
Francisco O'Ryan, Owner
www.eastafricanbakery.com

Francesco O'Ryan is the unlikely name of an Eritrean mechanical inventor turned wholesale bakery owner working on University Avenue. But O'Ryan and his bakery are filling a niche that's far from unusual. East African Bakery is the second largest provider of two traditional breads — hambasha and injera — to restaurants and groceries (like Flamingo and Ashama) in the Twin Cities. And that's saying something: the Twin Cities has the nation's highest population of residents originally from East Africa.

O'Ryan owns the building that both East African Bakery and University Furniture are housed in. Where University Furniture's windows are covered with signs advertising sofas and bed sets, there is nothing to mark the presence of the bakery. His six East African employees work through the night in a small warehouse operation with pallets of flour, bags of teff (a tiny grain once only available from Africa, but now grown in Idaho), and two unusual, original machines O'Ryan invented to streamline the creation and baking process of his breads. His background is as a machinist, and a decade ago he and a friend, an electrician, attempted to mechanize a process that has been done by hand on another continent for probably centuries.

The damage done to East African Bakery because of light rail construction is different from many profiled here because of the nature of his business. During the worst of the construction, the summer of 2012, his drivers were able to get out of the parking lot for their deliveries, but those clients were suffering: huge amounts of hambasha and injera were coming back unsold and had to be thrown out. Businesses that had been affected took their toll on O'Ryan's bottom line. "Since construction, everything has slowed down," he said. "It's been a pain, to say the least."

Meeting U7

O'Ryan is graduate of the Neighborhood Development Center's small business training where he wrote a business plan and "learned how to go forward." His bakery was formerly located in Roseville, but he moved to the larger University and Avon spot to be closer to his customers. In 2010, he connected with U7's loan officer Sai Thao who updated him on the construction schedule and checked in with him on his finances and accounting practices.

Business solutions provided by U7:

- U7 small business consultant and accounting specialist Mary Kuria introduced O'Ryan to Quickbooks and other more efficient computer accounting programs. She visits O'Ryan about every two weeks to go over his books and helps him plan for the coming fiscal quarter.
- Kuria has helped O'Ryan focus more on reducing the cost of goods he purchases, therefore increasing his revenue.
- He is investigating with Kuria whether he would be eligible for a forgivable loan through the city to cover the losses he sustained during construction.

The Bottom Line:

The impact of U7's attention, O'Ryan said, is that "in less time, I'm more accurate with where my money is going and I can spend more time finding customers." O'Ryan believes from the NDC class and accounting, U7 has helped him get over the \$40,000 loss in revenue attributable to construction during those summer months.

Doing business in the time of the light rail:

O'Ryan is positive about the way the light rail will change the landscape of the Twin Cities, making it easier and more attractive to walk around. He believes that the restaurants and grocers buying his products will be healthier, his staff will have better transportation to work, and the value of his building will increase.



Big Daddy's Old Fashioned BBQ

625 University Avenue

Ron Whyte, Bob Edmond, Gene Sampson, Owners

www.bigdaddysbbq-stpaul.com

Graduate of NDC's
Small Business Training

Big Daddy's Barbeque is a beloved institution in St. Paul. For 28 years, Ron Whyte and his partners Bob Edmond, and Gene Sampson have been practicing traditional smokehouse barbecuing using imported hickory wood. The three have been friends – as well as rivals, always trying to out-cook each other in backyard barbecues. They joined forces and went into business when friends and family told them their food was too good not to share with rest of the community. For the years they sold their ribs and chicken out of a trailer (“we had a food truck before food trucks were popular”); this was an outdoor process and the smell was a beacon for Frogtown residents and visitors. When they moved indoors, first on the northeast corner of Dale and University, and then three years ago, across Dale to the west corner, they built an enormous silver smokehouse, which features prominently in their small restaurant.

Recently, the economy and construction have taken their toll on sales. Whyte often remembers the days when customers sometimes had to wait 20 to 30 to get to the head of the line at lunchtime. There are no lines now. Catering has been an economic savior as the walk-in business decreased. Nevertheless, Big Daddy's has a loyal following, a strong word of mouth reputation and lots of positive reviews in on-line customer comments, and local and regional newspapers.

Meeting U7

Ron was nervous when he heard that light rail construction was actually going to happen. Mike Temali, CEO of NDC and a fan of both Big Daddy's and the three men, alerted Ron about the U7 project and how it could lessen the negative impact should they contract for its help. They met with U7 for the first time in early January, 2010.

Business solutions provided by U7

“Mike told us that we better start putting aside money. We were barely making anything as it was so that was tough,” he said. Big Daddy's became an enthusiastic client of U7's, logging nearly 360 hours of both in-house and contract assistance. This included:

- Developing a marketing strategy, tweaking their branding and revising the menu using monies from a City of St. Paul's Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan.

- Pushing the owners to invest, build and rely on their catering services.

- Providing assistance in bottling and selling Big Daddy's BBQ sauce. U7 lead graphic designer Ryan Kidder spent hours creating an original look for the branding of the bottle, but this project is currently shelved.

- Improving their basic website. Business “went way up” when it was re-launched with pictures, biographies, updated menu. Ron said neither he nor his partners were interested in social media maintenance. U7 provided a volunteer willing to manage Facebook and tweet for them.

- Staging a photo shoot of three staged food scenes: holiday, graduation and picnic. These photos have been used in the restaurant's website, and have been used as flyers or sent out as mailers to bolster Big Daddy's catering operation.

- Erecting bright yellow wayfinding signs directing customers during construction.

The Bottom Line:

The first week U7 launched Big Daddy's website, they received reservations for 20 catering orders. Also, Big Daddy's re-engaged old fans when they launched their Facebook site; many posted they thought the restaurant had closed and were happy they were wrong.

Doing business in the time of light rail:

As to the impact of a completed light rail line on his business “people tell me it'll help my business, but I can't see it.”



Transformation Salon

931 University Avenue
Mary Milton, Owner
www.transformation-salon.com

It was a Thursday afternoon and Transformation Salon owner Mary Milton had had only three clients that week. Business has been painfully slow at the one-chair beauty salon located equidistant between the Hamline and Lexington rail stops. Snow had been plowed into her only parking spot behind her building, and light rail has taken all of the on-street parking her once-loyal client base counted on. Customers have told her that it's too difficult to get to her and they didn't want to be bothered with the traffic. But still, Milton, who has owned the shop since 2007, is playing it one day at a time. In addition to owning Transformation, she works in a salon and is a part-time minister at a church in Brooklyn Center to pay the bills and the \$700 per month rent on the salon. She doesn't know how long she can juggle it all.

Milton remembers as a girl watching her mother cut hair in her Arkansas living room and knowing it's what she wanted to do in her life. She moved north and got a degree from St. Paul Technical College in cosmetology and has been in the beauty business for 20 years. It was a dream come true to open her own salon, and University Avenue seemed to be just the place because of its central location and convenience to her client base, the African American community.

Meeting U7

When Milton first heard that a huge construction project would be causing huge disruption outside her store, she started talking with other nearby businesses. It was at Blessings Salon, her former employer and another U7 client, where she first heard there was a non-profit that was offering help to business owners like herself. She had taken the small business training class at Neighborhood Development Center, so she was confident anything associated with that organization would be helpful. It was in the spring of 2010 when she made a phone call to U7.

Business solutions provided by U7:

Milton sat down with Isabel Chanslor to determine what services she was eligible for and what U7 could do to prepare Transformation Salon for what was to be a devastating blow for her business. U7 has provided approximately 180 hours of assistance since partnering with Milton. Projects included:

- Facilitating a \$1,000 micro-grant that she used to purchase a new product line for the salon.



- Facilitating a Ready for Rail Forgivable Loan.

- Designing a new logo for her business, as well as new business cards and punch cards.

- Creating a new website touting Milton's prices, services, history, and glowing testimonials. U7 staff has encouraged Milton to use social media, but she has not followed through on learning how to set up or maintain a Facebook page or Twitter account.

- Helping negotiate use of a nearby church parking lot. This worked for three months, but the owner finally locked his gate citing vandalism to cars parked there.

The Bottom Line:

Transformation Salon is in a difficult financial spot, but U7 has lessened the impact of hard times and taught Milton budgeting skills to project profits and losses in the future.

Doing business in the time of the light rail:

Milton is a woman of strong Christian faith, who cares not only about the affect of light rail construction on her business, but on her neighbors. "Life has changed completely because of this. So much has been uprooted," Milton said. "People are hurting. Restoration has to happen."

Because Transformation is a long walk from either station to the east and west of it, Milton is sure an up and running Green Line will not help her business. Milton dreams about one day building a Christian women's center with a salon and spa, classes and courses to help women reach their potential. Ironically, because of its central location and great transit opportunities, she believes University Avenue is just the right spot.

Capital City Electric

690 University Avenue
Jeff Zrust, Owner
www.ccautoelectric.com

Capital City is an 82-year old business located in Frogtown, located just kitty corner to the U7 offices. A simple, gritty garage located behind a building housing two other businesses (including Universal Hair), Jeff Zrust does not attract clients with the ambiance of his facility. Zrust attributes Capitol City's longevity in St. Paul to two things: reputation and respect in the community, and lack of competition. Capital City specializes in troubleshooting and repairing all auto-electrical systems. Because it is so specialized with low overhead, it is less expensive than traditional garages and dealerships.

The construction has been a mess and customers have had a much more difficult time getting to him, Zrust said. But he believes that unlike many businesses along the Green Line, Capitol City Electric has not felt the impact of construction as harshly as the restaurants, salons, and retail stores. There is only one other business in St. Paul that specializes in auto-electronics, so "people go out of their way to get here."

Meeting U7

When Zrust heard that a light rail train was finally going to be a reality, he started going to every city and planning meeting he found out about and talking to anyone who knew about logistics, timing, detours, and disruption. It was at one meeting that a small business consultant from U7 approached him with information about how to weather the upcoming construction storm.



Business solutions provided by U7:

U7 Small Business Consultant Pangia Vang and loan officer Sai Thao helped Zrust devise an accounting system that has dramatically changed and simplified his billing and tax preparation so now he is "keeping better track of my money," he said. U7 staff spent approximately 45 hours assisting Zrust with his accounting practices and branding. Other projects included:

- Creating a website with information about services and classic photos of Capital City's founders from early in the 20th century.
- Facilitating a City of St. Paul Ready For Rail, Forgivable Loan through U7.
- Designing a new logo for Capital City which Zrust says he plans on using on his business cards. Capital City also had a new sign erected on the awning over University Avenue.

The Bottom Line:

Capital City's U7-driven website had only been up for about three weeks in the fall of 2012 when he started getting results: "There's a few people finding me now. I'm definitely getting some calls because of it." All in all, Zrust said in an understated way, U7 "had done quite a bit and they've been pretty good."

Doing business in the time of the light rail

Zrust does not believe that the light rail will be a positive thing for his business because people need to bring their cars to him. He is also not confident that the light rail is the right thing for the city and doesn't think it's been thought through enough.

Attachment F

Business Marketing Program Progress Report

Attachment G

For more project information, contact the construction hotline at 651-602-1404

Central Corridor/Green Line Business Marketing Progress Report from Mod and Company April 2013

Branding, Creative Development, Media

- Continued business feature advertising campaign including
 - Poster billboard (on University & Transfer Rd): We're Open message
 - Bus sides: We're Open message
 - Print ad: City Pages insert in the special 'Best of 2013' issue
- District specific commercials running through Comcast on Comedy Central, Animal Planet, BET, TBS, TLC, Travel Channel, ABC Family, Food Network, HGTV and on Xfinity.com
- 2 new photo shoots in Rice Street district, total photographed-86 businesses
- Website additions: adding more details to each district's page (including YouTube videos of the Comcast commercials, individual district maps, historic photos, fun facts about the district, safety page), adding new businesses to the directory upon request
- Green Line Visitors' Guide delivery update: Continued delivering directories, 6,000+ total.
- Along the Green Line e-newsletter: sending out 2 issues/month
- Continue with planning stages of Open Streets event on University Avenue in September; monthly meetings with the core planning team (MOD, St Paul Smart Trips, U7, AEDA, Cycles for Change, and the city of St Paul), met with St Paul Police Dept. regarding permit application process.

Public Relations, Traditional Media Outreach, Content and Messaging

- Outreach to TC media re story ideas on Green Line now open and ready for business
- Outreach to media re Sunday's Best prom/local high school promotion
- Met w/new Pio Press small business reporter Nick Woltman; discussed variety of new story ideas
- Set plans for KARE11 to do feature story in June on Flamingo restaurant
- Media strategy/plans set for Open Streets promotion in Sept.
- Outreach/collaboration with Isabel Chanslor re U7 business activities
- Finalized new HeavyTable.com post on West Bank and sample of restaurants

Social Media

- Page likes were up 10% in April (advertized more than previous months).
- As a result, page views and unique visitors were also up big in April (translation: more eyeballs on the Facebook page)
- Most popular FB ads/posts of the month (by far) were those that promoted the Green Line itself (the first test post, and the post promoting the Green Line map asking people how they plan to use it in 2014)

Facebook

- 3,677 Likes (3,355 Likes as of March 31, 2013; up 10% from March)
- Demographic trends female: 64% vs. 34%
- Page views: 1,784 (up from 1,039 in March)

- Unique visitors: 978 (up from 383 in March)
- Most popular posts (Reach; other than sponsored stories)
 - Friends and food: Find them both at Bun Mi (1,549 impressions)
 - \$1 food samples—Taste of Stadium Village (946 impressions)
 - What's the best story you've heard from Pete Lebak (917 impressions)
 - What's your favorite tap at Acadia right now? (915 impressions)

Facebook ads

- Ax-Man
 - 267 likes
 - 8 comments
 - 32,490 impressions
 - 815 clicks
 - 2.512% click-thru rate
 - \$.12 Average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 14
- On the Green Line Friday (Cupcake)
 - 117 likes
 - 2 comments
 - 41,750 impressions
 - 627 clicks
 - 1.502% click-thru rate
 - \$.16 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 23
- How do you plan to use the Green Line when it opens in 2014 (map)?
 - 84 likes
 - 42 comments
 - 54,438 impressions
 - 2,165 clicks
 - 3.983% click-thru rate
 - \$.05 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 56
- University Buffet
 - 138 likes
 - 8 comment
 - 43,334 impressions
 - 497 clicks
 - 1.147% click-thru rate
 - \$.20 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 21

- Taste of Stadium Village—The Hole
 - 17 likes
 - 0 comments
 - 34,310 impressions
 - 357 clicks
 - 1.041% click-thru rate
 - \$.28 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 11

- Taste of Stadium Village—Summit pints
 - 68 likes
 - 1 comments
 - 22,909 impressions
 - 287 clicks
 - 1.253% click-thru rate
 - \$.35 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 15

- Lowertown Art Crawl
 - 166 likes
 - 15 comments
 - 22 shares
 - 22,009 impressions
 - 577 clicks
 - 2.622% click-thru rate
 - \$.17 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 9

- First test was a success!
 - 719 likes
 - 51 comments
 - 75 shares
 - 32,169 impressions
 - 1,721 clicks
 - 5.350% click-thru rate
 - \$.06 average amount per click
 - Total spend: \$100
 - Page likes: 66

Promoted Post

- Twin Cities Reptiles
 - 39 likes
 - 4 comments
 - 1 shares
 - 5,035 total impressions
 - 4,071 paid impressions

- 341 organic impressions
- 969 viral impressions

- U Garden
 - 104 likes
 - 3 comments
 - 1 shares
 - 6,363 total impressions
 - 4,939 paid impressions
 - 501 organic impressions
 - 980 viral impressions

Twitter

- 785 followers (as of May 3; up from 757 on April 1)
- Klout score: 47 (same as March)

Attachment G

Outreach Coordinators

Attachment G

For more project information, contact the construction hotline at 651-602-1404

Community Outreach Coordinators Central Corridor LRT



Mission: *The purpose of the outreach team is to be an intermediary for the Metropolitan Council and the community on the Central Corridor LRT project. We will do this by building relationships with the public by informing, listening, and gathering feedback throughout engineering, construction and operation.*

Updated: April 2013

**Minneapolis - Downtown to Emerald
Downtown St. Paul - I-94 to Lowertown**

Stations: West Bank, East Bank, Stadium Village, Prospect Park, 10th St, Central, Union Depot

St. Paul - Emerald to I-94

Stations: Westgate, Raymond Ave, Fairview Ave, Snelling Ave, Hamline Ave, Lexington Pkwy, Victoria St, Dale St, Western Ave, Capitol/Rice, Robert St



Dana Happel
Downtown St. Paul
(651) 602-1954
Dana.Happel@MetroTransit.org



Nkongo Cigolo
St. Paul University Ave/Capitol Area
(651) 602-1559
Nkongo.Cigolo@MetroTransit.org

