



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **\$4 Million in Forgivable Loans Available to Small Businesses Along Central Corridor Light Rail Line**

*Neighborhood Development Center in Saint Paul and Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers in Minneapolis selected to administer loans of up to \$20,000 per business*

**SAINT PAUL, MN** – In 2010, the City of Saint Paul, Metropolitan Council, and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative announced a loan program in the amount of \$1.5 million in response to the needs of business owners along Central Corridor where Light Rail Transit construction is underway. Today, these funding partners are pleased to announce that the loan program is being increased by \$2.5 million for a total of \$4 million in forgivable loans and grants, giving qualified small retail businesses access to up to \$20,000 each.

Loans to eligible small businesses will be interest-free and forgiven in equal installments over five years if the business can certify its operation on Central Corridor each year. Funds may be used for working capital and current business expenses.

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

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

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

Through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process the City of Saint Paul selected Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) and Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) to administer the funds to small businesses throughout the corridor. MCCD will administer loans to Minneapolis businesses while NDC will serve businesses in Saint Paul. Loan information can be found at <http://bit.ly/CCLRTLoan> or by contacting the loan administrators directly.

**Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers – for businesses in Minneapolis**

Phone: 612-789-8448

Email: [forgivableloanprogram@mccdmn.org](mailto:forgivableloanprogram@mccdmn.org)

Web: [www.mccdmn.org](http://www.mccdmn.org)

**Neighborhood Development Center – for businesses in Saint Paul**

Phone: 651-379-8118

Email: [R4Rforgivableloanprogram@ndc-mn.org](mailto:R4Rforgivableloanprogram@ndc-mn.org)

Web: [www.ndc-mn.org/ReadyForRailForgivableLoan](http://www.ndc-mn.org/ReadyForRailForgivableLoan)

NDC will begin administering loans immediately.

Neighborhood Development Center will offer informational sessions for Saint Paul applicants at the Central Corridor Resource Center at 1080 University Avenue in Saint Paul.

Thursday, June 23 – 8 am to 10 am

Thursday, June 30 – 6 pm to 8 pm

Tuesday, July 5 – 8 am to 10 am

Thursday, July 7 – 6 pm to 8 pm

Tuesday, July 12 – 8 am to 10 am

Thursday, July 14 – 6 pm to 8 pm

Tuesday, July 19 – 8 am to 10 am

Thursday, July 21 – 6 pm to 8 pm

The forgivable loans are made possible through contributions from the Metropolitan Council, City of Saint Paul and the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. The program is available to independent for-profit businesses with four or fewer locations, gross annual sales not exceeding \$2 million, and a business focus on retail services. The business must be located in the Central Corridor Light Rail construction zone or within a block of construction where businesses can demonstrate a significant barrier to access during construction.

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