



Date: August 30, 2011

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Tom Schwetz and Andy Vobora, Lane Transit District
Subject: Item 5.c: Application of TriMet's Business Assistance Program to LTD's EmX Corridor Development

Background

Over the past year, LTD staff have met, and continue to meet, with businesses, property owners, residents, and neighborhood groups about the West Eugene EmX project.

As we have met with businesses, it is apparent that there is fear surrounding this project. Some of what we are hearing:

- Several businesses are operating on a thin margin. The economy has brought many business owners to the point of sleepless nights about the viability of their business today, tomorrow, and into the future. They are concerned about the economic impacts they expect will occur during construction.
- Some businesses have operated for decades and even generations, and want the corridor to remain the same now and into the future.
- They believe this corridor is car-oriented, and that businesses will not benefit from EmX.

With this in mind, LTD is developing a Business Assistance Program, drawing on TriMet's experience.

TriMet's Business Support Program

TriMet has developed an innovative partnership with Portland Development Commission and Portland State University to create a Business Support Program. This program provides technical assistance, marketing and retail consulting, low-interest loans, and workshops to help businesses along their light rail projects position themselves to take advantage of the new market brought by increased transit riders in the corridor, and invest in expansion and improvements for the future of their business.

For the MAX Yellow Line construction, they assisted more than 100 businesses; more than 50 new businesses opened during and immediately after construction.

Part of the Business Support Program focused on promotional opportunities through TriMet to generate traffic for businesses during construction along the corridor.

Ann Becklund, Director of Community Affairs in the Capital Projects & Facilities Division will share at the September 8 MPC meeting the partnerships, approach, and success they have had utilizing this program to keep businesses viable during construction, and help position them for growth with the new market.

LTD's Development of a Business Assistance Program

LTD is in the process of developing such a program, partnering with diverse local organizations to provide resources to minimize the effects of construction and position themselves for future success. Andy will provide an overview of the program LTD is working to develop.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: TriMet Mall Business Support Program Fact Sheet