

University Avenue Business Association (UABA)

Our mission is to ensure that a viable and diverse business environment is sustained and enhanced on University Avenue. We are dedicated to the development of a strong collaborative relationship among the business community, residential community, local government, and the people we serve.

For more information about the University Avenue Business Association: www.universityavenuebiz.com or contact Linda Winsor, linda@universityavenuebiz.com or 651.641.0334

UABA Call for Action

March 4th, 2009

Process:

All parties accept UABA as representative of small businesses along University Avenue and agree to communicate directly with UABA.

Can some of the Met Council / BAC outreach budget be given to UABA to set up informational meetings for small businesses along University Avenue?

March 2009 – December 2010 Expenses:

15 hours staff time / month: \$400

flyers, handouts, coffee, and bagels / month: \$50

Total: \$9,350

Met Council, BAC

UABA requests a matrix/ chart of who is responsible for what issues. For instance – list the people responsible for parking and business construction mitigation with a methodology, process, timeline, and deadlines.

Karri Plowman (BAC) & Robin Caufman (Met Council)

UABA needs to receive information in a timely fashion in order to properly engage in the process.

UABA has been relying on paid consultants it has retained, U-PLAN, and volunteers to gather information. Can the Project Office provide UABA with requested information and graphics at its expense? (The project can retain U-PLAN for some of this work).

Questions will be sent in writing by UABA and answers will be posted on the UABA website.

Met Council

UABA needs regular updates on the status of the overall project with important milestones, deadlines, a summary of decisions made, and those that are still pending.

Can the Project Office provide detailed information on a monthly basis to UABA?

Met Council

Issues:

Mitigation: Construction mitigation money for small businesses should be included in the Project budget.

How much mitigation money is available for small businesses along University Avenue?

How will mitigation money be allocated to regular businesses and property owners other than large organizations such as the University of Minnesota or MPR?

Can some of the mitigation money be in the form of grants to create incentives for customers, additional advertisement, or delivery services for small businesses?

Met Council

Parking: The proposed extensive loss of street parking is unacceptable. Preserving as much street parking as possible should be a priority. Temporary parking solutions during construction will help businesses survive construction.

What percentage of street parking was lost in other cities?

Was lost street parking replaced by off-street and at whose expense?

What would be the impacts of reducing to one lane in each direction to preserve street parking and provide a buffer between traffic and the pedestrian environment?

What would be the impacts of creating bump outs or expanding the public right of way to preserve more street parking?

What temporary parking arrangements will be in place during construction?

What will the neighborhoods do with the flow of traffic and parking one block off University during construction?

What post-construction parking solutions are being considered?

Will there be any relaxing of the zoning to allow for private development of small parking areas in and around the Central Corridor line?

Met Council, Cities, Counties

Design: In order to preserve more space for street parking and streetscape, design the light rail line as narrow as possible.

Before the design is selected, will there be any additional reviewing of that design by the public?

Met Council

Construction Process: UABA needs sample contracts – both locally and from other cities.

In other cities, what was the method of bids – design build or contract?

Have preliminary bids been done yet?

How is the estimated budget prepared?

Does the downturn in the economy mean lower construction costs?

Met Council

Information dissemination during construction:

- Timely and understandable in multiple languages
- Schedule, scope, and sequence of road construction
- Staging construction a major factor in reducing impacts
- Advance notice on utility disruption
- Schedule, scope, and sequence of streetscape construction

- Hotline number

Met Council, Contractors

Signage: Directional signage for access to businesses and business marketing signage should be in the Project budget.

Does the Project budget include directional signage and business marketing signage during construction?

Met Council

Construction disruption: UABA will give input to ensure that construction will cause the least disruption to small businesses.

- Incentive to compress construction time
- \$ incentives awarded to contractor based on periodic community evaluations
- A public coordinator should be assigned to work with the contractor and property owners at least as an introductory service and should be prepared for some language translation issues
- UABA works directly with contractors

In other cities, how much time were the street and / or sidewalk torn up in front of businesses?

How much advance notice was given before construction started in front of each business?

How many blocks were dug up at any one time?

How many construction shifts? Was construction work done with one eight-hour shift or multiple shifts? Will the Project Office consider three 8-hour shifts in key areas?

How much lost revenue occurred during construction? (20% - 50% loss of revenue during construction)

How many businesses failed?

Met Council, Contractors

Streetscape: Small businesses will benefit from a well-designed façade to façade streetscape with betterments.

Do projects in other cities do a façade to façade reconstruction?

What was the design-review process?

Was the work done as part of the LRT contract?

What parts of the streetscape are being paid for by the Met Council?

What parts will be paid for by the Cities and Counties?

What street furniture items and other streetscape elements are being considered for University Avenue?

Met Council, Cities

Maintenance: Maintenance of the public realm will benefit the small businesses.

How will the street be cleared of snow?

What steps does Mpls. currently take in and around the Hiawatha light rail for snow removal?

What additional maintenance is required / requested near station areas on the Hiawatha line?

Can UABA talk with the Met Council and Mpls. staff regarding maintenance of the Hiawatha line?

Met Council, Cities

Property Tax & Special Assessments: Higher property taxes and special assessments will increase the heavy burden on small businesses.

Can property taxes be capped for small businesses?

Can there be a property tax holiday for small businesses?

Is it possible to reduce or freeze property taxes along the Central Corridor until the line is operational and the benefits are realized?

Will property owners have to pay special assessments? If so, what kinds of assessments will be levied? When will the assessments come due? What are the options for payment? Can property owners receive public assistance to help pay for the assessments?

Cities, Counties, State

Zoning & Regulations: Zoning and regulations will increase the heavy burden on small businesses.

- Relax parking requirements

Cities

Financial Support: Small businesses will need financial support to compensate for lost revenue during construction.

- Grants, loans
- Direct aid

Public & Private Sources

Business Planning: Small businesses will need technical assistance to compensate for lost revenue during construction.

- Technical assistance

Public & Private Sources

Marketing / Branding: Small businesses need resources for local and regional marketing / branding.

- Radio
- Signage
- Print

Public & Private Sources