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July 24, 2014

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Metro Board Unanimously Approves Business Solution Center for Business Owners in Crenshaw Boulevard Construction Zone

The Metropolitan Transportation Board unanimously approved a first-of-its kind business assistance program for small business owners currently struggling with the construction of the Crenshaw/LAX light rail line along Crenshaw Boulevard.

A Business Solution Center will provide direct technical assistance to businesses along the Crenshaw corridor to help them through construction activities. Federal and state law prevents Metro from providing direct cash subsidies to businesses unless access to the business is denied due to construction impacts. A Business Solution Center, staffed by paid employees, will help provide business owners an individualized plan that could include financial planning advice on small business operations as well as dealing with municipal permits and regulations, legal assistance, marketing and grant/loan application management.

The pilot program is expected to provide proactive and hands-on business assistance to more than 100 businesses between 48th and 60th Streets and other areas that are significantly affected by the construction. The establishment of a Business Solution Center is an innovative and new approach by Metro to help some small businesses endure the construction.

The 8.5-mile Crenshaw/LAX Transit Project is a \$2.058 billion light rail that will connect Metro's Expo and Green Lines with eight new stations. When the Crenshaw/LAX line opens to the

public in 2019, passengers and customers will be able to travel to work, medical care, entertainment, shopping, school and other activities all over the entire Los Angeles region. It also will help revitalize the local and regional economy.

“While this is not a perfect solution for the small businesses along this construction corridor, it is a step in the right direction,” said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. “If the Metro Board wants to pursue more rail projects in the future, we must show local small businesses that we are a committed partner during construction periods.”

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