

Business Visits

December, 2008



Sam is committed to local businesses in Portland. He has long been heralded as a small business champion on city council and has identified supporting large employers in the region as a focus of his mayoral agenda. In an effort to continually reach out to the business community, Sam went out into neighborhoods and business districts during 2008 to welcome new businesses and witness the process of doing business in Portland.

Sam visits ranged from retail stores to manufacturing facilities to restaurants where he cut ribbons during grand openings, entered a pizza crust throwing competition for charity, enjoyed a traditional “cupping” coffee experience, and witnessed the assembly lines of steel manufacturing. These visits provided for a face-to-

face conversation between your elected official and real business people who were able to demonstrate the workplace successes and needs in various industries.

Sam was extremely excited to visit Old Town Pizza, which opened a location in the new development on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Vanport Square. Vanport Square is a hard-fought triumph for developers Ray Leary and Jeana Woolley, for the Portland Development Commission, and for Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard – and Sam is grateful to them for that fight. The result is a project that supported 75 jobs and 16 businesses that have the opportunity to own a business AND build equity in their property on MLK. At the same time, the large plaza will be a gathering place for the entire community and a focal point for the boulevard as it expands beyond a commuting thoroughfare.

Studies show that 28,000 cars drive along MLK Jr. Boulevard each day, which is a tremendous opportunity for businesses located along the boulevard. This amount of traffic also provides for an opportunity to get people out of their cars and onto the Streetcar system. Sam envisions, in the not too distant future, the Streetcar line extending from downtown to the Central Eastside and Lloyd District all the way up MLK. This will help reduce the congestion on the Boulevard, and will also make it a more walkable street, which is what retailers along here need to grow and thrive.

With the success of Vanport Square and businesses like Old Town Pizza, the stage is set for new commercial activity, new vitality, and new development on MLK.

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