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CLDI'S RAIL//LINE COFFEE SET TO OPEN IN AUGUST; JOB APPLICANTS SOUGHT

BILLINGS, MT—Construction of Community Leadership and Development Inc.'s new Rail//Line Coffee is on track, with a community-wide grand opening slated for Saturday, August 22.

The new shop, at 104 S. 29th Street on Billings' South Side, will employ local residents and provide an apprenticeship program for new baristas. Applications will be accepted starting June 15. Successful applicants will take part in paid skills training in July, so that baristas are well prepared for the shop's formal launch in August.

According to CLDI Executive Director Eric Basye, "We are ecstatic to launch both the shop and the new job development program this summer," acknowledging that construction in the midst of a pandemic has been challenging but not insurmountable. "In light of COVID-19," Basye said, "we delayed our grand opening about a month."

Basye expects construction to be finished by the end of June. Already, the building framing, windows, insulation, electrical, and plumbing work are done, along with final finishing of the concrete floors. Outside, a new parking lot is paved and striped, while work continues on landscaping, fencing, and patio. Once construction is complete, furniture, kitchen equipment, and fixtures will be installed.

Rail//Line Coffee, Basye noted, is "a redemptive coffee house, combatting the cycle of poverty one cup at a time by fostering and connecting with the community." Rail//Line will employ at-risk women and youth, helping transform lives through job development and training. In addition to providing jobs and a needed service on Billings' South Side, it will help reduce blight where a vacant gas station once stood. Basye said, "We seek renewal of the South Side, through the gospel, by cultivating economic growth and equipping youth and adults to make a positive imprint on their relationships, workplaces, and communities."

Project funding was secured from the St. Vincent Healthcare Mission Fund, Gianforte Family Foundation, Mary Alice Fortin Foundation, Treacy Foundation, First Interstate BancSystem Foundation, and private donors. The new facility was designed by Collaborative Design Architects of Billings; Langlas & Associates is the general contractor.

The new coffee shop will offer indoor and outdoor patio seating as well as a drive-through. Hours of operation will be Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. CLDI is a faith-based, non-profit organization that has been working since 1981 to transform lives by investing in Billings' South Side community.

All interested job candidates should reach out to Colin Sauskojus, colin@raillinecoffee.com, for an application and more information on the hiring process. More information on CLDI and Rail//Line Coffee is available at 406-256-3002 or cldibillings.org. To support the initiative, visit <https://cldibillings.org/donate/>.

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