



PROSPER
PORTLAND
Building an Equitable Economy

DATE: March 9, 2022
TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Kimberly Branam, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Report Number 22-10
Update on My People's Market

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION ITEM

No action is requested; information only.

At the March 9, 2022, Prosper Portland Board of Commissioners (Board) meeting, staff will provide an update on My People's Market (MPM), a Prosper Portland initiative that creates pathways for entrepreneurs of color to connect with the travel industry and new market opportunities. The update will both provide background on the history, mission, values of MPM, as well as information on upcoming events.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT AND OUTCOMES

MPM delivers on several Prosper Portland Strategic Plan goals, including increasing equitable opportunities for small and forming partnerships. The update highlights the impact of the MPM community on participating small businesses and the power of community partnerships and private sector support.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Prosper Portland and Travel Portland launched MPM in November 2017, striving to create pathways for entrepreneurs of color to connect with the travel industry and new market opportunities. Young Gifted and Black/Brown Portlanders joined the team to support the first market in 2017 as culture and entertainment coordinators and have remained an integral part of the event.

MPM is traditionally held twice a year and as of December 2021, had hosted eight markets, one holiday pop-up, one online marketplace, and two Window Shops. The initiative brings several Prosper Portland programs together to support local entrepreneurs, including the Mercatus Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Business Directory, the Inclusive Business Resource Network, and the Affordable Commercial Tenancing program.

The MPM team makes space in each market to include cultural exhibits or performances. MPM strives to create an environment that honors and celebrates communities of color, through educational opportunities for market goers, fair payment to artist and performers, and holistic care and wellness for communities. In the past this has included Albina Queens installation, Oregon Black Pioneers, and a free wellness lounge.

Following are data on MPM events in 2021:

MPM 7 – Three-day event in the North Park Blocks (August 6-8, 2021)

Vendors each day:	75 100 85
134/260 reporting sales	\$61,625 reported, estimated total sales \$120,000
Average sales per vendor	\$460
Attendees	7,000 to 10,000

Quotes from vendors:

- “Diverse crowd, new prospective clients for us seeing friends and feeling a part of a community the excellent curated entertainment.”
- “Continuing to share our art and love of music with the community.”
- “Meeting other BIPOC business owners.”
- “I love this event, it makes me feel at home.”

MPM 8 – Three Sundays in Central Eastside at The Redd (December 5, 12, 19, 2021)

Vendors each day:	26 30 30
75/86 reporting sales	\$59,515
Average sales per vendor	\$793
Attendees	2,000

Quotes from vendors:

- “Love the eclectic atmosphere, good live music. Great vibes. Also love that you all take such good care of the vendors and all the amenities and safety.”
- “I saw some new faces. I was also next to vendors that have been in business for 10 years. They often share free advice because they see you’re still beginning [your business].”
- “What you all have created is UNMATCHED in PDX in the NW. So, keep doing what ya do!”

Window Shop Activations. The MPM Window Shop is a partnership with Portland Made and Makers Union PDX. The Window Shop was located on the corner of SW 10th Avenue and Yamhill Street in the 10Y building with retail space managed by Prosper Portland as part of its Affordable Commercial Tenanting program. The first Window Shop debuted from May to July 2021 and the holiday Window Shop opened November 2021 to January 2022. The purpose of the activation was to provide increased visibility and sales to participating businesses as well as activate a vacant storefront with high foot traffic and visibility.

The project features products from the Mercatus directory businesses on a backdrop of a mural painted by local BIPOC artists. Passersby can scan a QR code in the window and be directed to a collection of makers featured, they can then go directly to the maker’s website and purchase the item they see in the window and have it shipped to them. The holiday Window Shop featured the artwork of HeySus, who shared his inspiration for the holiday mural: “This mural I did for My People Market talks about

connecting generations and communities. Quetzalcoatl (feathered serpent) an ancestral guide. Patterns to represent movement and cosmic energy. Cool and warm colors representing duality.”

By the numbers:

- Summer window featured 75 business
- Holiday showcase included 49 brands
- 1,300 online visitors, average time on the page was three minutes

Quotes from businesses:

- “Getting to see my items up on display in the community I live in. Also getting to see all the other businesses I can support.”
- “To be able to share my products with other people.”
- “The connections and exposure.”
- “Being able to showcase our brand in an area of town with higher foot traffic than our own physical location.”
- “Great idea and very innovative.”
- “Just being included with so many makers.”
- “People learned about my business.”

Ecommerce Support. Two to three MPM vendors will have the opportunity to apply for a full scholarship valued at \$10,000 to create an e-commerce website. Established businesses that do not currently have an ecommerce site will be prioritized.

EQUITY IMPACT

MPM has intentional, direct equity impacts, including:

- Since launch, more than 400 different BIPOC businesses have participated in the event;
- The event team engages with community-based organizations, cultural museums and displays, and local BIPOC businesses and artists to help shape each event;
- Staff convened an advisory board in April 2021 to help guide strategic decisions. The advisory board consists of five members representing community organizations, businesses, and artists; and
- MPM has become a beloved community event that celebrates the multi-cultural and diverse communities of Portland, creating a space for communities of color to be together.

ATTACHMENTS

None.