



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

Strategic Planning Workshop Report
and
Plan Recommendations

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BACKGROUND

The Pantego Town Council and Pantego Economic Development Corporation (PEDC) held an Economic Development Strategic Planning Workshop on Saturday, October 24, 2015, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to discuss the strategic direction of the Town's economic development initiatives. The purpose of the workshop was to determine an aligned vision for Pantego's economic future so that economic development initiatives might be appropriately targeted in a systematic, measurable manner. It was the Town administration's goal to develop a business recruitment strategy to focus Economic Development resources, efforts, and programs on targeted initiatives. The workshop was facilitated by consultant Angela E. Fritz and was intended to be an initial step in a multi-step process to develop economic development programs in Pantego targeted at achieving the group's defined twenty-year vision.

Present at the public meeting were:

Town Council and PEDC Members

Melody Paradise, Mayor and PEDC Member
Fred Adair, Councilmember and PEDC Member
Don Funderlic, Councilmember
Don Surratt, Councilmember and PEDC Member
Stephanie Springer, PEDC Member
Gloria Van Zandt, PEDC Member

Pantego Staff

Matthew Fielder, City Manager
Julie Arrington, City Secretary
Scott Williams, Public Works Director
Dennis Jobe, Community Development Director

The session was focused on determining the "why" of Pantego's economic development efforts, in order to align business recruitment and economic development strategies with what the Town's values and beliefs in order to help drive trust, loyalty, and ultimately, behaviors. Discussion centered around key ideas, themes, and values in order to develop a framework for the Town's economic development strategy and to inform key components of the strategic plan. The workshop was intended to be an early stage of strategic and resource alignment and general assessment of Pantego's economic development vision, program, and initiatives, and an opportunity to look more in depth at objectives, strategies, tactics and potential initiative evaluation metrics. The goal was to envision what the desired future looks like so that realistic strategies might be developed to achieve that vision.

PURPOSE OF INITIAL PLANNING DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to outline key areas discussed at the workshop and to provide general recommendations and direction regarding potential areas of focus for the Town's economic development efforts over the next one to three years in accordance with the general vision identified in Town's 2012 Comprehensive Plan. The document is intended to empower the Town of Pantego and the PEDC in their economic development and business recruitment strategies as a general guide and idea generator, not to restrict them, and this plan will have to be revisited and revised at regular intervals.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP RECAP

The morning began with attendees sharing thoughts on two separate items: 1. What is special about Pantego? And 2. What is the number one missed opportunity in Pantego? In general, the discussion revolved around a few central themes: revitalization, promotion, preparation, improvement/growth, and the importance of Pantego's residential component. A summary of some of the specific responses follows:

Most special: safety, security, sense of pride, convenience, quality of life (size, services, connection), central location, schools, taxes, utility rates, housing, neighborhoods, and cleanliness, park, ability of Town to provide one-on-one attention allows for the "best of both worlds".

Missed opportunity: external promotion of the community; hopscotch nature of previous non-residential development (platting or lack thereof, layout of existing retail spaces, missed/blocked vacant tracts of property); more does not always equal better – target incentives and programs toward particular industries/services; beautification of medians, retail areas, etc. and lighting (creating a safe sense of place and ambiance).

Golden Circle concept – Simon Sinek: www.startwithwhy.com

As context for the day, participants viewed two video excerpts from author, Simon Sinek, based on his book, "Start with Why," focused on outlining Sinek's concept of a *golden circle* for communications in which everything begins with the innermost circle, or the WHY, and progresses outward. Please see the handout included in the appendix for further explanation of this concept*. The *golden circle* framework allowed participants to discuss core values and vision (the "why") initially, to help ensure alignment of purpose with strategies and actions, and to create shared understanding and trust to drive particular economic development actions.

Sinek's central argument: "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it..." formed the premise for the day's discussion and strategizing. Determining the "why" (to what ends, specifically) of Pantego's economic development needs in order that strategies may best aligned with the purpose, rather than simply going from tactic after tactic. It was important in this instance to go back to the central purpose in order to ensure alignment of the participants and parties that must successfully converge to positively affect change in regard to the development of Pantego's economy, and to discuss the "why" in more detail in order to better focus the how and what of achieving the expressly desired outcomes.

*Attached download overview courtesy of Simon Sinek, www.startwithwhy.com.

From here, the discussion turned to core community values and the vision for Pantego 2035.

Core Values

Attendees brainstormed and discussed core values that define Pantego in order to create a foundation for discussing a twenty-year vision and for determining the "why" to lead economic development efforts. Core values discussed included: ***family, entrepreneurial spirit, trustworthiness, transparency, communication, collaboration/partnership/business engagement, neighborliness, community connectedness on a personal level, stability and consistency, approachability and availability, and proactivity.*** In general, participants expressed a commonality in desiring to see others succeed, supporting a continued entrepreneurial spirit, and creating a "lifecycle" of sorts for businesses in terms

of growth and change, similar to how residents remain in the community as they age, however, may move to different buildings/spaces to suit their particular needs.

In discussing the vision for Pantego, participants shared core strengths including a drive for improvement, location, a large market area, multiple generations, and strong schools. They also discussed the fact that Pantego's catering to small businesses, quick service response times, and willingness to see others succeed sets the community apart from others in the area. General speaking, when discussing where Pantego is headed, attendees expressed a general theme of providing "peace of mind" for the future of Pantego as a family-friendly community with a diversified tax base, sense of place, and nightlife/evening entertainment options. There was also a general consensus in comments that the Town wants to find ways to make Pantego a PREMIER business location (not just somewhere with low rent).

Pantego 2035 Vision

Core themes in the vision discussion included the desire for stability and sustainability well into Pantego's future.

The consensus of the attendees was an expressed vision to see the caliber of commercial properties and tenants continually improved to provide a strong economic base of diverse offerings to compliment the outstanding residential components of the community, and to ensure Pantego's continued long-term vitality as a premier place to live in the area for future generations. Members present emphasized a desire to focus efforts on doing more than simply maintaining the status quo, and to promote businesses and the advantages of Pantego in order to attract established tenants and/or higher (although still competitive) rent properties.

Some specific ideas expressed included:

- A vibrant residential enclave providing premier retail and commercial opportunities to residents and the surrounding communities.
- A regional destination for shopping and entertainment with a distinct appearance and feel.
- Sustainable commercial and residential areas with continually increasing property values in order to decrease overall Town tax burden.
- A destination for people to live and do business by ensuring quality and cost-effective municipal services and by offering convenient opportunities for shopping, restaurants and personal services.

Participants also discussed the importance of adding significant employment opportunities to provide added customer base for local businesses and working to facilitate better use of limited space and land available (whether developed or not).

From here, participants moved on to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the Town. Some of the responses are outlined below.

- **Strengths:** stable, established, municipal financial security and bond capacity, friendly/neighborly, good parks, desirable, beautiful, small, location, safe, caring, sense of community, wealthy, quiet, convenient, small town atmosphere, personal touch, low taxes, good schools

- **Weaknesses:** water taste/odor; comfort/complacency; aging infrastructure and/or lack of existing infrastructure; perception of Pantego as a speed trap; lack of economic diversification and dependence on sales tax; limited infrastructure; small; sometimes overly caring to point of distraction; residential; center space visibility; landlords (often absentee and/or unwilling to invest in properties); low rents
- **Opportunities:** space availability, desirability, engaged, friendly, affordable, prepared, water/utility rates (competitive advantage), open dialogue with businesses and incorporate lessons learned into ED planning, raise the “bar” and couple with available resources/programs to encourage better service; fun times (Town events); Town economic development tool refinement and program development to achieve targeted goals; Arlington Chamber; non-Pantego patrons and reputation beyond residents (idea of reputation/status of “76013” zip code)
- **Threats:** signs/banners; City of Arlington development “leftovers”; comfort/complacency; awareness; impact of zoning changes - both short and long term; limited staff and resources doing double duty (playing catchup while trying to be proactive); geographically undefined (sense of place); potential loss of any large sales tax generator due to lack of diversification; quality of available space; limited geographic confines and lots (mostly built out, but many odd infill lots remaining)

The group then broke for lunch, at which point a representative from the **Arlington Chamber** provided an overview of ongoing changes at and services offered by the Chamber, as well as potential areas of strength and strategic focus for Pantego. These included: focusing on potential retailers that will no longer be targeted by Arlington for recruitment and/or incentives and determining a recruitment strategy based on Pantego demographics and spending habits related thereto (see Arlington Chamber data re: five categories of potential retail business growth for Pantego – apparel, education items, entertainment, food and beverage, and gifts). Some potential Pantego advantages identified include superb schools, retail incentives, successful businesses and their stories, and the simplicity of business interactions with the Town.

The Chamber representative also discussed the Chamber’s partnership with the Small Business Administration, the small business incubator at UT Arlington, the potential of utilizing Chamber awards to acknowledge local businesses and help get the word out about Pantego, and online data and research tools available through the Small Business Development Center that provide important insights into market area, demographics, spending habits, etc. (<http://www.tarrantssbdc.org/sizeup-widget>).

Following lunch, a **proposed “why” statement** was presented to formulate targeted objectives, strategies and tactics around. The general consensus of the group was that the statement proposed was representative of their morning discussions and their reasons for wanting to further strengthen and diversify Pantego’s economic base. Pantego’s “why” is as follows:

To strengthen Pantego’s economy through targeted economic development initiatives in order to provide for the future vitality of the Pantego community; a future in which businesses and residents thrive in a symbiotic manner that cultivates and encourages community development that enforces Pantego’s core values – family, community, and continual improvement.

Participants agreed to structure the planning around *three main focus areas* – **buildings** (items related to codes, infrastructure, landlords, property owners, developers, etc. that might affect built spaces); **marketing** (image, awareness, growing customer base, identifying and targeting appropriate audiences); and **businesses** (identification and recruitment, incentives, development, retention, education, vetting).

They then briefly reviewed the **resources available** to assist in achieving the stated vision including Arlington Chamber partnership; Small Business Development Center; potential Pantego Business Council; building codes; community events; PEDC and/or Town incentive program; volunteers; Pantego Youth Leadership Council; University of Texas - Arlington and associated business incubators and educational resources; community service/leadership organizations; and existing Pantego business successes.

Potential example cities and/or programs were also briefly brainstormed and included: Nassau Bay, West University Place, Trinity Groves, Magnolia Street, Addison, Main Street case studies/example programs, and other cities with walkability, streetscapes, and connectivity. Additional consultant suggestions for consideration are Alamo Heights, Bastrop, and Sunset Valley.

In the remainder of the afternoon, participants then divided into smaller groups to brainstorm and discuss **objectives, strategies, and tactics** related to three core areas of concern expressed in the morning session: **buildings** (built spaces, building inventory and available lease spaces and/or land for development); **marketing**; and **businesses** (recruitment, development, and retention). From these small group discussions, and a combined large group discussion, the following goals and associated objectives, strategies, and tactics are presented for consideration as recommendations for Pantego's strategic economic development initiatives.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA 1: BUILDINGS

Objective: Improve core retail building space and inventory in order to attract and retain retailers who serve the greater region, and who enhance the local tax base through continued development and growth within Pantego.

Potential evaluation metric: Increase local rents to within ___% of regional class __ commercial properties by ____ (date) in order for property owners to generate more revenue potential for property reinvestment and improvements, and to reach a different class of tenants. *

**Conduct market research on commercial properties for lease in the surrounding area, and strategize/set goals on improving local lease market (e.g. raising rents) a certain % a year (based on quality of space and improvements included w/new leases, etc.) and/or set an overall target % to be within (in what % of cost/sq. ft. lease space does Pantego want/need to be in, and what time period is reasonable to attain) to attract certain types of retailers with established (or identified) business/clientele?*

Potential evaluation metric: Decrease amount of business/tenant turnover by ___% by ____ (date).

Potential evaluation metric: Increase sales tax generation of existing businesses by ____% by ____ (date).

Strategy: Upgrade quality of existing businesses and lease space to encourage higher rents and more upscale tenants.

Tactic: Work with PEDC and Town Council to develop a master vision for the main retail corridor areas, and to envision what a new, livable/walkable ground-up mixed use space might look like. Consider the possibility of acquiring properties and partnering with a developer to complete projects in order to maximize currently un/under-utilized spaces. Refer to the 2012 Comprehensive Plan for additional details and possible starting points.

Tactic: Utilize Town's comprehensive plan to formalize vision for future business development

Tactic: Identify areas and/or properties for potential PEDC purchase and/or developer partnerships (see Comprehensive Plan).

Tactic: Build relationships with commercial lenders, brokers, and realtors

Strategy: Improve and revitalize buildings for higher scale and more prosperous businesses.

Tactic: Strategize retail cluster areas – things that benefit from one another (gym/spa/tanning salon/beauty for example) and work with landlords to develop building plans accordingly.

Tactic: Create a “lifecycle” of sorts for local businesses so they don’t locate OUT of town when they outgrow available space (or willingness of existing landlords to complete renovations to meet needs).

Tactic: Strategize and facilitate the development of mixed use/high-density areas that include retail on lower levels (see Comprehensive Plan and examples that follow)

Example: Alamo Heights recent code revisions for Broadway through town – greater pedestrian traffic, slower vehicular traffic, zero setbacks, wide sidewalks with extra space for tree plantings, retail under/housing over, parking behind. <http://www.expressnews.com/real-estate/article/Changes-coming-to-Alamo-Heights-Broadway-6623498.php> (see appendix)

Tactic: Identify developers with the capacity to handle significant infill/redevelopment project and begin dialogues regarding what they would need to make something like what is desired happen (demographics seem to be there, just no available space and/or existing space doesn't meet needs of desired businesses).

Tactic: Identify/inventory what is missing in terms of available spaces and amenities, necessary infrastructure, etc.

Tactic: Utilize code enforcement tools improve quality of commercial areas

Tactic: Encourage upgrades to buildings to meet and exceed current code requirements; utilize available incentive programs to do so with added incentives possible by going above and beyond minimum requirements to provide the necessary structure for Town-targeted tenant categories and/or businesses.

Tactic: Improve lighting in shopping centers/parking areas/street corridors

Tactic: Improve/fix street infrastructure

Objective: Create an environment in which property owners and landlords can easily maneuver and prosper to enhance properties

Strategy: Work to identify and partner with willing landlords on building improvements that may enhance their lease space, and increase rents.

Tactic: Evaluate commercial realty market by commissioning a study or consulting with commercial realty specialists to determine “sweet spot” for rent rates of particular property types in Pantego and the surrounding areas. Study rents, space availability and classifications, and typical tenant types.

Strategy: Create incentive program for landlords/property owners. Target cooperative property owners and landlords with incentives for desired improvements and potential rent “subsidies” rent for retail-incentivized businesses.

Tactic: Partner with developers and the commercial property community to develop a program or programs specific to landlords and building enhancements (educate regarding small investment in improvements = large increase in rents and “better,” longer-lasting tenants).

Tactic: Create understandable zoning codes.

Tactic: Make basic courses on commercial property (or at least information on them) readily available to local property owners/landlords.

Tactic: Investigate possibility of maintaining digital property and business information via web mapping program (Civic Plus “facilities” capability?) in order that existing businesses and existing spaces were each separate layers in GIS mapping system that one could toggle between or look at simultaneously, and with portal to the database where proprietors could maintain themselves.

FOCUS AREA 2: BUSINESSES

Objective: Position Pantego as a magnet for successful small businesses in the area. Work to make Pantego to “go to” location for top-notch retail services.

Potential evaluation metric: Reduce sales tax leakage by ____% (or to ____%) by 20____, or, Increase sales tax revenues by ____ % by 20____.

Strategy: Develop and implement proactive recruitment strategy and tools for area businesses who meet targeted criteria. Structure incentives and programs to assist targeted types of business (consider linking to landlord/property owner incentive/referral program; i.e. if selected for this, locate here and receive additional benefits). Make sure you’re using the carrot as a “stick” also – don’t incentivize “just because” – use incentives to recruit and retain what the community wants, needs, and can support in terms of businesses, services, etc. Structure and/or develop complementary incentives and programs to assist landlords/property owners who provide space that meets above minimum requirements for said targeted businesses. Make receiving a grant or incentive from Pantego a prestigious honor - use sparingly to fit specific criteria and then talk it up (program, Town, and recipient/s). Use awards as public relations opportunity for further recruitment, and to draw people to the business and peak interest in the grant/small business development program as well as the Town in general.

Tactic: Fill vacant areas; enhance types and diversify businesses in order to increase revenues and continually improve area consumer demographics.

Survey existing businesses and customer needs

Confirm Chamber statistics regarding gaps

Target businesses that fill gaps and meet local needs

Plan/forecast future requirements and needs (community and businesses)

Survey deficiencies in existing facilities

Partner with landowners/landlords for improvements

Tactic: Define target industries, services, and retailers and cross reference with building inventory assessment data (gap analysis).

Tactic: Define target clients/customers and assemble necessary demographic data to support their presence in Pantego. Spell out retail trade area for prospects (speak their language.) Strong, viable candidates will get it and incorporate into their business plan or will already have considered and added to their discussion/insights.

Tactic: Utilize Arlington Chamber and its associated resources for data-driven retail and business recruitment.

Tactic: Work to develop partnership with Arlington Chamber to educate and promote local businesses, and to recruit appropriate Arlington retailers to Pantego in identified areas of sales tax leakage (data).

Tactic: Require retail incentive applicants to be “vetted” in some way: basic business plan; SBDC counseling; financing approval; etc.

Build basic business development resource on Town/PEDC web page and require minimum items be completed before being eligible to apply for incentive programs through Town/PEDC (business plan, minimum amount of counseling, etc.) Utilize SBDC resources.

Make business development resources readily available via Town/PEDC website (research/data links, SBDC, incubator, Arlington Chamber, etc.)

Tactic: Develop/revamp business incentive program toward targeted new and expanding businesses

Thoroughly screen applicants for viable prospects

Determine potential businesses in surrounding area which might be looking to relocate

Tactic: Require recipients to continue development of entrepreneurial and business skills

Tactic: Require recipients to get a Chamber membership (include the first year as part of incentive award?)

Tactic: Require recipients to “give back” in some way (B2B mentorship program, service on business council/PEDC, etc.)

Tactic: Make the incentive/award program prestigious and competitive to be a “chosen” Pantego business. Consider naming program accordingly so it doesn’t look like a hand-out, but rather, an award

Tactic: Make exclusive support programs available through program (University/incubator partnerships; mentor/coaching with established business person)

Tactic: Make it a “best of the best” and highlight successes as part of content marketing strategy (see below)

Tactic: Highlight recipients upon award and utilize their story to form the foundation of a content marketing campaign to recruit similar businesses.

Tactic: Consider utilizing highlighted businesses as guest bloggers and/or social media account takeovers (see Bastrop Main Street website blog with downtown business alliance entries)

Tactic: Consider requiring incentive pay-back if relocate out of Pantego within certain time frame (what are calculated sales tax revenues considered when applying for incentives? formulate/track similar to tax abatement agreements; incentives for exceeding?)

Objective: Create a self-perpetuating culture of success, innovation, and improvement amongst local small business owners. Help create a culture and identity that perpetuate themselves, regardless of particular tenants. Build off entrepreneurial spirit and initial low rents to build a culture of successful, independent businesses.

Strategy: Create coalition to advance the Town’s vision and promote shopping Pantego (internally and externally) – local business owners, chamber members, schools, etc.

Strategy: Figure out how best to assist and encourage day-to-day operations of local businesses.

Tactic: Research/conduct surveys or focus groups of sample businesses regarding needs and wants in order to determine parameters of continuing education/training and Town services.

Once baseline needs are established, facilitate roundtables, training, and/or working groups based on main concerns...

Ask for feedback and LISTEN to successful existing businesses – What did they do? What didn’t they do?

Tactic: Research/conduct a survey or focus groups of existing property owners to gauge barriers to Town’s desired goals... begin a dialogue on what Pantego 2035 will look like and build buy-in/partnerships with those who see it also, and who are willing/able to come along.

Tactic: Structure Pantego Business Council (through Chamber) to provide insights/suggestions regarding continuing education opportunities for local businesses, and working groups for brainstorming solutions for collective problems small businesses face. (Town can’t really ensure that businesses succeed, but Town can provide an environment in which successful businesses can thrive).

Tactic: Consider funding/incentivizing continuing education opportunities for local businesses. Example: John Schallert’s Destination University - <http://jonschallert.com/>.

Tactic: Partner with Chamber and SBDC incubator to develop a program specific to Pantego retailers.

Tactic: Join Google “Let’s Put Our City on the Map” program for basic internet business training

<http://www.bizjournals.com/sanantonio/news/2015/11/09/google-aims-to-put-san-antonio-small-businesses-on.html> (see appendix)

<https://www.gybo.com/tx/pantego>

<https://www.gybo.com/tx/arlington>

<https://www.gybo.com/tx/pantego/partners>

Tactic: Consider annual awards recognition to recognize businesses and enforce key initiatives/programs.

Tactic: Continue to explore ways to utilize Arlington Chamber partnership to achieve desired goals – B2B, Pantego Business Alliance, identifying potential business relocations to Pantego, etc.

Tactic: Consider membership in Texas Downtown Association (lots of relevant resources on small business development and shop local strategies).

<http://www.texasdowntown.org/regional-roundtable.html>

Tactic: Consider utilizing available resources through Texas Friendly Hospitality Program (focused on fostering best practices in customer service) to promote customer-friendly services. <http://agrillife.org/texasfriendly/>

FOCUS AREA 3: MARKETING

Objective: *Create, perpetuate, and disseminate the desired image of Pantego as shopping and entertainment destination throughout trade area through marketing programs directed at targeted consumers and industries and based on based key data and effective content marketing strategies.*

Strategy: Develop and implement strategic marketing plan directed at attracting key targeted retail enterprises to locate to/in Pantego (those that Pantego needs, and which would prosper in Pantego).

Tactic: Define target audience (use SBDC and Arlington Chamber data) and develop a digital strategy to reach effectively.

Tactic: Define targeted industries and associated trade areas/demographics of relevance

Tactic: Develop content (make it so it is easy to use across platforms) regarding WHY Pantego (key demographics for each industry). Develop recruitment materials directly targeted to specific retail sectors, touting the benefits of Pantego (not local benefits, think benefits to RETAILERS – SBDC data regarding trade area demographics, etc. It takes significantly more than Pantego’s 2400 residents to support local retailers!)

Tactic: Work B2B channels through Chamber, etc. to identify potential tenants who meet desired profile

Tactic: Identify landlords who understand vision are willing to work with Town to achieve. Consider partnering/featuring them and/or their properties in recruitment information. I.E. recruit tenants for particular places/spaces, not just for Pantego at large (think complimentary clusters, places that already have a “vibe,” etc.)

Strategy: Develop and implement a strategic marketing plan directed at creating a core customer base with a habit of shopping Pantego both internal and external to the Town proper. Undertake external strategic marketing initiatives to build a loyal customer base and awareness.

Tactic: Expand Pantego’s consumer base by marketing to people beyond Pantego residents.

Tactic: Develop digital strategy based on content marketing concept.

Tactic: Utilize social media data to better target and reach the desired audience.

Tactic: Utilize QR code, or something similar for Pantego B2B and awareness marketing... if you like this, maybe you’ll like... (location-based push apps – Key Ring, etc.); tie in with event marketing, etc. – ONE RESOURCE ON ALL THINGS PANTEGO

Tactic: Target print pieces in defined trade area to create/increase awareness of Pantego opportunities (know your audience and develop content accordingly) – USPS Every Door Direct Mail makes this quite affordable now (seek mail houses that are permitted for, and understand dynamics of EDDM for quotes).

Tactic: Create specific pieces for specific targeted industries/retailers. Spell out retail trade area for prospects (speak their language). Consider creating “microsites” within

web resources to highlight same. Incorporate as part of marketing strategy, tie to digital content, and track “zero moments of truth” with QR code, coupon code, or something similar to gauge impact/return on investment (ROI.)

Tactic: Consider placing ads in movie theaters. This is quite affordable and allows them to be directly targeted to audiences with very specific demographics.

Tactic: Create “listicles” to highlight shops/entertainment opportunities in Pantego. Highlight local businesses and key demographics. Complete in sets of 7 or 9, not 10!

Tactic: Review existing business listing resources.

Conduct “blind” web/app audit with focus groups of targeted users on items created for SHOP Pantego data – usability, usefulness, etc. Adjust accordingly!

Consider enhancing SHOP PANTEGO campaign and business data by developing an outreach program for business involvement (QR code window stickers, etc.).

Check viability of initially using Civic Plus’s (Town website vendor) facilities listing tool to show/map local businesses (should already be mobile optimized and should have “friendly URL” capability). Already have available spaces for purchase/lease on website – could these be mapped alongside existing businesses? Is there a way to utilize Google Maps (business data) to “auto fill” via API so businesses only have to maintain one set of data?

Consider ways to “gamify” local business patronage (Foursquare-esque) through an app or mobile site... QR codes, mobile site, rewards, coupons, badges, bragging rights, etc.

Consider ways to include short survey/review capability in conjunction with above, on Facebook (depending on Town following), or via Survey Monkey or something similar about shoppers perceptions, wants, experiences and impressions (positive and negative), and incorporate feedback into small business educational offerings, and incentive programs.

Strategy: Develop targeted marketing plan to include potential customer base and to build an identity for future retailer and customer recruitment. *Fun, communal, young (?), "elite," hip (?), different, unique, entrepreneurial...* (remember, the community's internal identity and the identity to "outsiders" may be different because you have two different audiences).

Tactic: Consider referring to specific areas with nicknames (not Pantego specific) to increase their draw. Think "Park Row District," or something similar (who's your audience?). You want the "district" to take on a feeling/reputation of its own, regardless of the specific retailers/tenants, or location in Pantego).

Don't be afraid to embrace the "kitsch" (think S. Congress in Austin, some of the revamped storefronts in downtown Arlington, etc.). Embrace the "foodie" and pop-up culture (trucks, etc.).

Tactic: Consider the possibility of restaurant "incubators" and/or clusters with associated businesses such as microbreweries (USDA grant possibilities:

Batavia "FreshLab" restaurant incubator:

<http://www.thebatavian.com/howard-b-owens/microbrewery-planned-for-downtown-batavia-as-part-of-new-restaurant-incubator/96884>

"The board had to turn down several requests to provide low-interest loans to proposed restaurants because of either undercapitalization or inexperienced aspiring owners. With the incubator concept, aspiring restaurant owners can get started with a smaller initial investment and there will be advisors available to help them plan their concept, get up and running, manage the operations and hopefully, eventually, expand into a bigger, stand-alone location.

"Opening a restaurant is a big undertaking," Pacatte said, "60 percent fail within the first two to three years. This will provide those owners with a more affordable space and more coaching and guidance..."

Part of the driver for creating the incubator is marketing surveys that show a lot of the entertainment and dining dollars spent by Batavia residents is flowing out of the county. Economic development officials hope to create a stronger cluster of restaurants in Batavia to help keep more of those dollars in the local community."

USDA Rural Development Division grant assistance for local sourcing –
[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF GRANTS](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_GRANTS)

Dallas – Trinity Groves: <http://www.trinitygroves.com/restaurants-entertainment/>

San Antonio

"Break Fast and Launch" incubator: <http://www.breakfastlaunch.com/>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/11/16/455904599/tech-gurus-teach-food-entrepreneurs-the-recipe-for-success> (see appendix)

"The program pairs emerging food entrepreneurs with technology mentors who teach them business. The tech mentors don't have culinary backgrounds, but they know how to get a startup off the ground. The idea behind Break Fast and Launch is to take some of that vibrant startup energy and inject it into San Antonio's food scene. It's one of several

"culinary incubator" models springing up across the country... Break Fast and Launch was started last year with city and federal funding. Thirty entrepreneurs went through the competitive program last spring."

Café Commerce: <http://www.cafecommercesca.org/programs/>

US Small Business Association Growth Accelerator Fund Grant:
<http://www.ussourcelink.com/media-center/newsroom/2014/09/08/caf%C3%A9-commerce-receives-sba-growth-accelerator-fund-grant>

Denver: <http://303magazine.com/2015/06/culinary-culture-first-look-avanti-denvers-restaurant-incubator/> (see appendix)

"By allowing local chefs and restaurateurs to experiment with lowered risks, this first-of-its-kind project could potentially lead to a renaissance of Denver's restaurant scene.... "The goal is to create a culinary think tank, where chefs can work with their peers and the public to really dial in their concept" explained O'Neill "It's like a [co-working space] for chefs"

Los Angeles: <http://la.eater.com/2015/4/7/8364283/la-prep-food-incubator-lincoln-heights-open-today> (see appendix)

Strategy: Instead of one-time, annual events, develop a "pop-up" event of sorts that showcases various areas/merchants in Pantego, and that encourages people to come out of their homes and businesses to congregate (think "park" in parking lot). Rotate around and enlist help of area businesses/merchants to plan/own.

Examples:

Nassau Bay Street Eat Party: <http://www.nassaubay.com/index.aspx?NID=492> (see appendix)

Duncanville duncanSWITCH Street Market:
<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/best-southwest/headlines/20140711-duncanswitch-street-market-is-part-of-a-grassroots-effort-to-revive-duncanville.ece> (see appendix)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

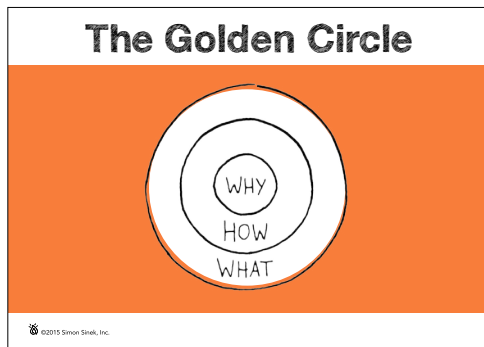
Pantego's elected and appointed officials, along with staff, are dedicated to creating a bright future for the Town. The time has never been better to develop and implement a targeted economic development strategy to achieve the Town's desired vision, and the impetus to do so increases each day due to the buildout of the community and surrounding areas.

The ideas from the October 24, 2015 Workshop, along with those outlined in this plan, should be utilized to strengthen and refine ongoing economic development programs and create new initiatives by keeping a keen eye on the "why." The key to success will be a clear direction (the "why") coupled with flexibility, iteration, and honest evaluation of the economic development programs and initiatives used to attain that vision.

This report, and the ideas contained herein should be utilized to begin discussing prioritization, implementation, and allocation of the appropriate resources to achieve desired agreed-upon results. After gaining consensus, a three-year plan that identifies and outlines specific targeted economic development initiatives with associated metrics aimed at gauging whether or not Pantego is "moving the needle" on the overall objective, should be developed and finalized.

The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 1

slide 1



Why is it that some leaders and organizations are able to inspire greater loyalty and engagement among their customers and employees alike? How are they able to achieve and sustain inordinate amounts of success for years on end?

Whether they realize it or not, all great and inspiring leaders and organizations think, act and communicate in the same way... and it is the complete opposite from everyone else.

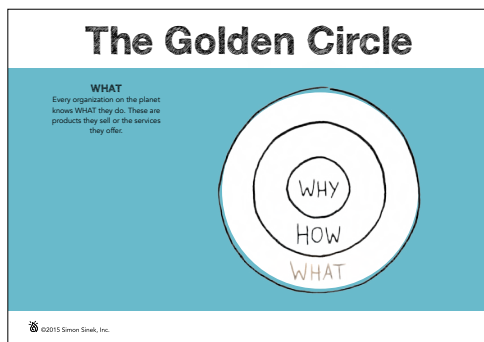
Every single organization on the planet, even our own careers, function on three levels:

1. What we do
2. How we do it, and
3. Why we do it.

When those three pieces are aligned, it gives us a filter through which to make decisions. It provides a foundation for innovation and for building trust. When all three pieces are in balance, others will say, with absolute clarity and certainty, "We know who you are," "We know what you stand for."

This simple idea is The Golden Circle. It is a concept discovered by optimist and author Simon Sinek.

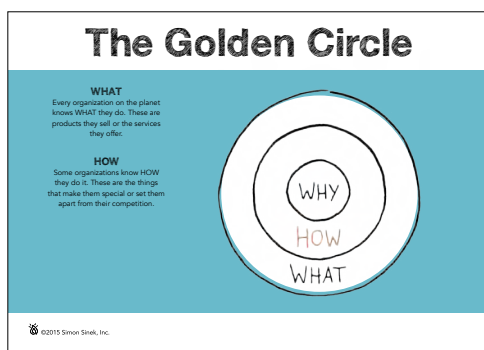
slide 2



Every organization and individual knows What they do. For an organization, these are the products they sell or the services they offer. For an individual, it is their job title or roles.

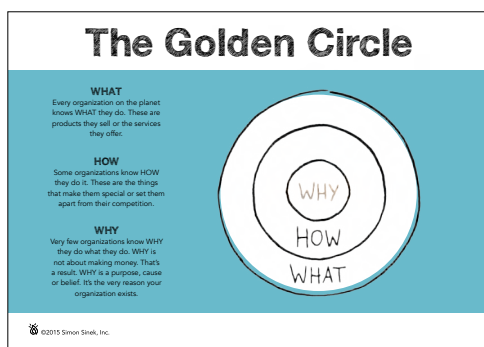
The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 2

slide 3



Some organizations and individuals know How they do what they do. They may call it their “differentiating value proposition,” “proprietary process” or “unique selling proposition (USP).” The Hows are an organization’s or individual’s strengths, values or guiding principles. These are the things they feel set them apart from their competition; the things they think make them special or different from everyone else.

slide 4

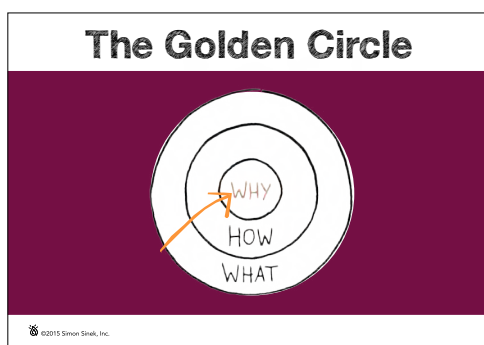


Very few people and very few organizations can clearly articulate Why they do what they do. Why is a purpose, a cause or a belief. It provides a clear answer to the questions, “Why do you get out of bed every morning?” “Why does your organization exist?” and “Why should that matter to anyone else?”

Making money is NOT a Why. Revenues, profits, salaries and other monetary measurements are simply results of what we do.

The Why is about our contribution to impact and serve others. The Why inspires us.

slide 5



People naturally communicate from the outside-in; they typically go from what is easiest to understand to what is hardest to understand and explain. They tell people What they do, tell them How they are different or better, and then they expect a behavior like a purchase, a vote or support.

Here is how most organizations market and communicate:

What: “Here is our law firm.”

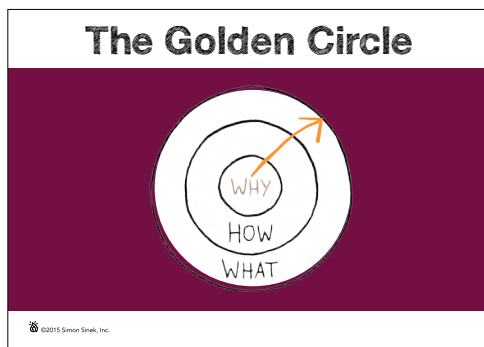
How: “We have the industry’s most intelligent lawyers, who graduated from the world’s top schools. Have you seen our client list? Only from the Fortune 500! And, check out our offices – they are absolutely pristine.”

Behavior: “Come do business with our law firm!”

The problem is that What and How do not inspire action. Facts and figures make rational sense, but people do not make decisions purely based on facts and figures. Starting with What is what commodities do. Starting with Why is what leaders do. Leaders inspire.

The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 3

slide 6



Leaders and organizations with the capacity to inspire all think, act and communicate from the inside-out. They start with their Why. When they communicate their purpose or cause first, they communicate in a way that drives decision-making and behavior. It literally taps the part of the brain that influences behavior.

Here's an example with the same law firm, starting with their Why:

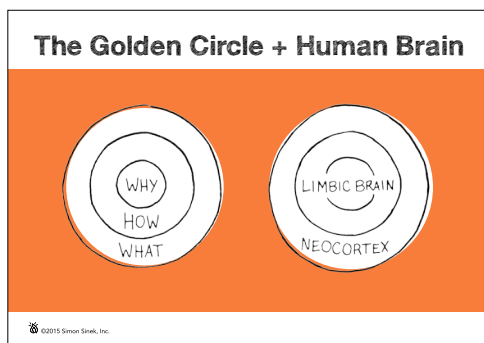
Why: "We believe in servicing the needs of others so that they can focus on the difference they need to make."

How: "We do so by bringing on some of the most intelligent legal professionals who graduated from the world's top schools. We work with top performing organizations, most of which are on the Fortune 500 list, so that we can help them make a larger difference in the world. And, we like to go above and beyond, so we have built pristine offices."

What: "We are a world-class law firm. Come see for yourself."

If the people at this firm actually believe in their Why and think, act and communicate starting with their Why, they will attract people who believe what they believe and who want to be a part of their cause.

slide 7

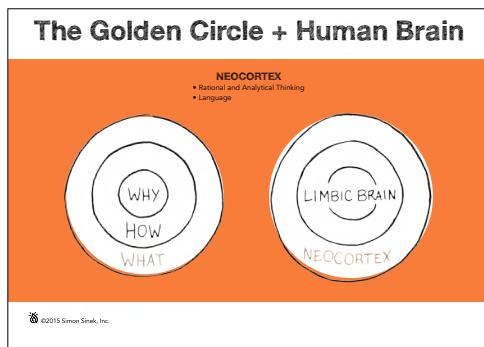


None of this is opinion. It is all grounded in the tenets of biology.

A cross-section of the human brain shows that its layout perfectly correlates with the three major components of The Golden Circle.

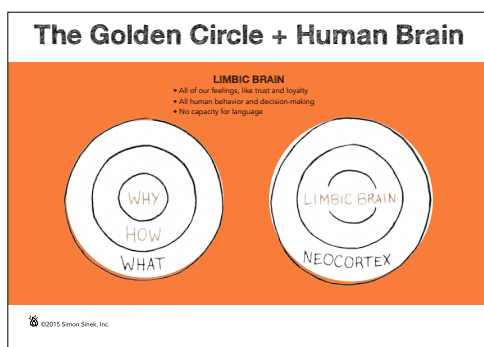
The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 4

slide 8



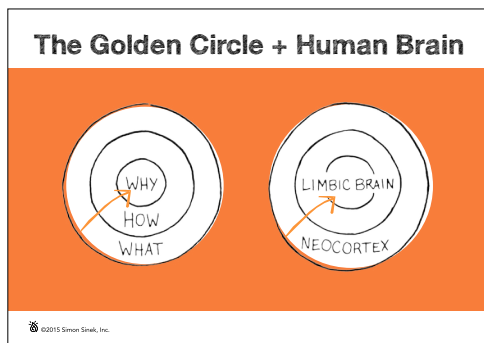
The outside of the brain is the Neocortex, which corresponds with the What level of The Golden Circle. The Neocortex is the newest brain or Homo Sapien brain. It is responsible for all rational and analytical thought and language.

slide 9



The middle two sections, the How and Why, of The Golden Circle make up the Limbic Brain. The Limbic Brain is responsible for all feelings, like trust and loyalty. It is also responsible for all human behavior and decision-making, yet it has no capacity for language.

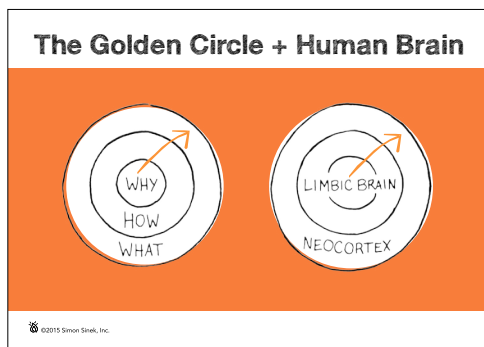
slide 10



In other words, communicate from the outside-in and people can understand vast amounts of complicated information, like features, benefits, facts and figures. It simply does not drive human behavior.

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slide 11



Communicate from the inside-out and speak directly to the part of the brain that controls emotions, behavior and decision-making.

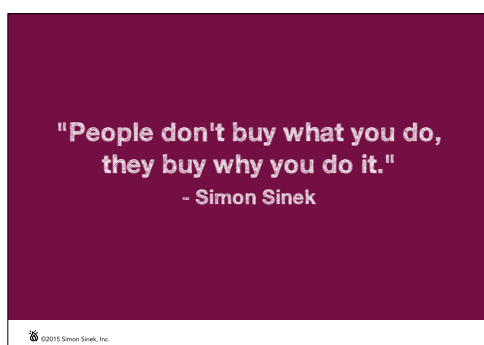
But, if asked the reason they choose one product or service over the other, the decision-maker often cites the features, benefits, facts or figures. What's the reasoning behind that?

The Neocortex, the thinking part of the brain, is always trying to understand and make sense of the world. This is the reason we think we are rational beings when we are really not. If we were, we would never buy a product or service simply because of how it makes us feel. We would never be loyal; we would always choose the best deal. We would never care about trust or relationships; we would only evaluate the numbers. We know that we don't do that. We do choose one product, service or company over another because of the way it makes us feel.

The Limbic System controls our emotions, feelings and decision-making, but remember it has no capacity for language. We make decisions using our Limbic System and then rationalize that decision with the part of the brain that can communicate with words, the Neocortex.

There is a difference between repeat business and loyalty. Repeat business means that someone is willing to continue to do business with you. Perhaps because of your price, a feature or some sort of convenience. As soon as that convenience is no longer available, the customer complains or leaves to meet their needs elsewhere. Loyalty is quite different. Loyal consumers may choose to suffer some sort of inconvenience to continue doing business with you. They will pay more, travel further, proudly defend and champion your brand, even if your product or service is more expensive, further away or somehow less convenient.

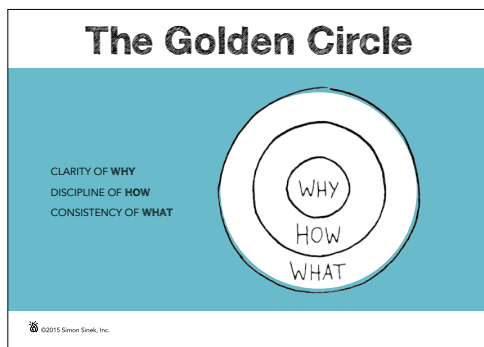
slide 12



This is the reason we can say that people don't buy What you do, they buy Why you do it and What you do simply serves as the tangible proof of what you believe.

The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 6

slide 13



For The Golden Circle to work properly, you must have:

1. Clarity of Why,
2. Discipline of How, and
3. Consistency of What.

No one section of The Golden Circle is more important than the other. The most important thing is a balance across all three.

WHY:

If you don't know Why you do What you do, how can you expect anyone else to know? For others to know your Why, you must first have clarity of your own Why.

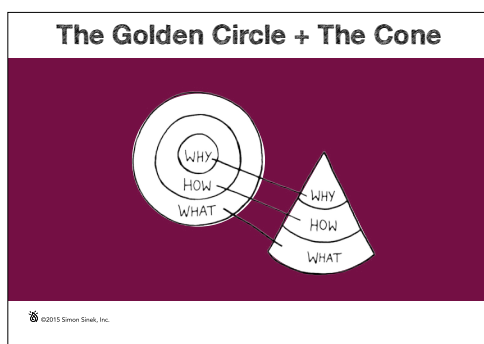
HOW:

The actions that you and your people take to bring your cause to life must be aligned with your values, guiding principles, strengths and beliefs.

WHAT:

And everything you say and everything you do must be consistent with what you believe. After all, we live in the tangible world. The only way people will know what you believe is if you say and do the things you actually believe.

slide 14

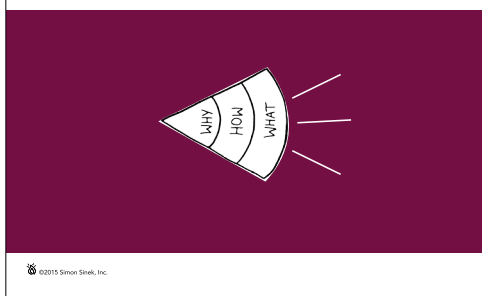


The Golden Circle is not just a communication tool; it also provides some insight into how great organizations are structured. If we imagine The Golden Circle as a three-dimensional model, it's a top down view of a cone.

The cone represents a company or an organization, an inherently organized system. At the top of the system, representing the Why, is a leader. She or he articulates the Why and points to a vision of a better future. The next level down, the How level, includes the people who are inspired by the leader's cause. They give their blood, sweat and tears to build and bring the vision to life. The What, at the bottom of the cone, are the things the organization says and does that breathe life into the Why. They make it tangible. An organization communicates its Why through everything it says and does; the marketing, the products and services the company provides ... everything.

The Golden Circle Presentation Notes / Page 7

slide 15 The Golden Circle as a Megaphone



For a message to spread, it must be loud AND clear. Like a megaphone.

Loud is easy, just drive sales or buy marketing. Clear is harder.

When an organization is clear about its purpose or its WHY, everyone, from employees to customers, can understand it. This clarity invites everyone who interacts with the organization to become champions of the cause, should they choose. Ideally, this clarity starts at the top of the organization and moves through the company. It can inspire people to create products, services, solutions and marketing that brings the Why to life. When everything you say and do echoes what you believe, you end up with a message that's loud AND clear.


slide 16

Inspire someone every day.
With everything we say,
and everything we do,
we can...

Start With Why

Resources to learn more about The Golden Circle and to live your Why.

- Take steps toward discovering your Why with the Friends Exercise.
- Enroll in the online course to learn your Why.
- Read the books.
- Present these concepts to inspire others with the Speak to Inspire Action Guide.
- Take a course on Skillshare on How to Present: Share Ideas That Inspire Action.



©2015 Simon Sinek, Inc. Design by TAB, The Art of Branding Learn your Why at startwithwhy.com

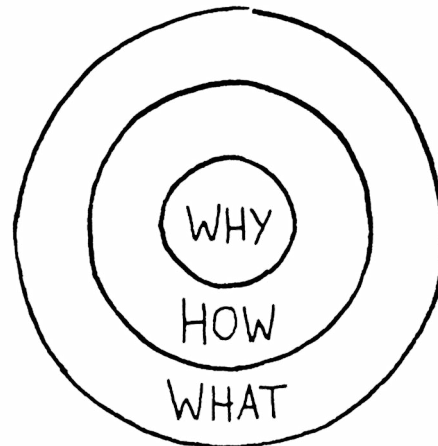
Imagine a world where nearly everyone wakes up each day inspired to go to work, feels safe and valued while they are there, and returns home at the end of each day fulfilled - feeling as though they are contributing toward something greater than themselves. We believe The Golden Circle can help bring us closer to this brighter world.

A movement only exists when people are inspired to move, to do something, to take up the cause as their own. On behalf of Simon Sinek and our team at Start With Why, we thank you for progressing the movement to inspire and live in service to others.

On this slide, we have provided some additional resources to help you feel inspired and inspire those around you.

If you are interested, below is further background on the origin of The Golden Circle.

Origin of The Golden Circle



In 2006, Simon Sinek owned and operated his own marketing firm. Although his business was financially successful, he had lost his passion for what he was doing. He knew **What** he did and he knew **How** he did it different or better than others. However, he had no clarity as to **Why** he was doing it. With no purpose behind his work, he began to burnout and he became depressed.

The tips and advice he received from others, like, "Do what you love!" were not working. He became obsessed with finding the missing link - his **Why**. This is the driving inspiration that is there when everything is right and missing when at our worst.

Through personal reflection and sharing what was becoming clear with others, Simon found his **Why** – to inspire people to do the things that inspire them so that, together, we can change our world. He began to use his **Why** as a filter, choosing only to do things and get involved with projects that would bring his **Why** to life. His passion restored to levels he had never experienced before.

What do we do when we find something we love? We share it with the people we love. Simon started sharing this little idea and his discovery with his friends. His friends started making crazy life changes for the better, inspired by Simon's discovery and articulation. Friends would invite him to their apartments in New York City to tell their friends about **The Golden Circle** and they would share the concept with others. This was the beginning of the **Start With Why** movement.

The ideas **The Golden Circle** illustrates are certainly not new. Simon did not invent purpose. What he has been able to do is capture this idea, that has been around for millennia, in a way that is simple, easy to understand and actionable. It is our hope that people use and share these ideas with others so that, together, we can change our world.

Inspire on!

Publication: San Antonio Express; Date: Nov 11, 2015; Section: Main; Page: A1

Alamo Heights maps new Broadway

Move is part of plan to narrow the street

By Benjamin Olivo STAFF WRITER

Hoping to reshape a 1-mile stretch of Broadway into a pedestrian-friendly corridor, Alamo Heights' City Council has approved changes to its building code that sets newly constructed multifamily buildings flush with the sidewalk.

The amendments coincide with similar plans by San Antonio officials. Eventually, if the plans spearheaded by the Texas Department of Transportation are carried out, Broadway would become a narrower road with slower traffic and wider sidewalks from downtown — U.S. 281, past Mulberry Street, past Hildebrand Avenue, past Austin Highway — all the way to Albany Street.

In Alamo Heights, the changes approved this week apply to Broadway from Burr Road to Albany Street. Along that stretch, new multifamily buildings — that have to be flush with the sidewalk — will have to put the parking area in the back. The changes also include requirements for 10-foot-wide sidewalks and 5-foot-wide spaces for trees, and retail on the street level of every project. The height limit would increase from three to four stories.

"The goal of this was to create more of an urban environment for portions of Broadway that run through Alamo Heights," said Jason Lutz, Alamo Heights' director of community development.

After Jan. 1, Lutz said, Alamo Heights officials will begin to look at similar code adjustments for commercial and office structures.

But the changes have many in the neighborhood afraid that Alamo Heights will become too urban, perhaps mimicking the level of multifamily development happening on Broadway around the old Pearl Brewery.

"There is a lot of concern in the community that if developers turn Alamo Heights into the canyon that is now Broadway and Josephine, that it will kill Alamo Heights," said John Joseph, founder of the Alamo Heights Neighborhood Association.

Joseph's comments reflect the wave of opposition from Heights' residents against a 252-unit apartment building at Broadway and Austin Highway by developer Broadway Ellwood.

Plans for the development later were adjusted and approved by the City Council in April, but some residents still weren't satisfied.

Mayor Louis Cooper, who says the code changes reflect Alamo Heights' 2009 comprehensive plan, expects multifamily projects to be kept to a minimum in the affluent enclave.

"In Alamo Heights, we have such a small area for multifamily to begin with," Cooper said. "We just don't have the room for that type of development in the city."

The changes come as the Texas Department of Transportation is getting ready to relinquish portions of Broadway it still owns to San Antonio (from around the Pig Stand to Burr Road) and Alamo Heights (from Burr Road to Austin Highway).

As part of its "Turnback Program," TxDot is working with each municipal entity on identifying improvements before handing over portions of streets it still owns.

For San Antonio's 2.1-mile stretch of Broadway, where attractions such as the DoSeum and the Witte Museum are expected to grow in popularity, TxDot is contributing \$5 million for bike lanes, additional landscaping and other rights-of-way improvements. Additional funding could come from the private sector and the 2017-2022 bond program, said Mike Frisbie, director of the city's Transportation and Capital Improvements Department.

Although Alamo Heights and TxDot are just beginning to negotiate upgrades, Alamo Heights also plans to make changes. Officials want to narrow the thoroughfare. bolivo@express-news.net Twitter: [mySAowntown](#)

Online

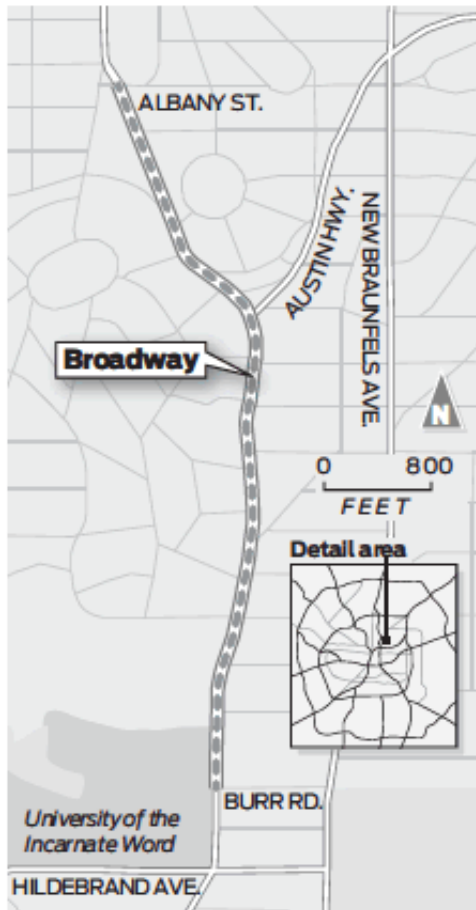
More: Go online for an interactive look at the Alamo Heights code changes, and a streetview tour along Broadway. Find it at [Express News.com](#)



William Luther / San Antonio Express-News

New Alamo Heights building code rules require multifamily buildings on Broadway to be set up against the sidewalk, like the commercial structure that houses the Broadway 5050.

Changes to Broadway



Amendments to the Alamo Heights multifamily building code:

- ▶ Zero setbacks from facade to sidewalk (parking in the rear)
- ▶ 10-foot sidewalks
- ▶ 5-foot planting space for trees
- ▶ Retail on street level of new multifamily buildings
- ▶ Max height of four stories

San Antonio Express-News



From the San Antonio Business Journal:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/sanantonio/news/2015/11/09/google-aims-to-put-san-antonio-small-businesses-on.html>

Google aims to put San Antonio small businesses on the map

Nov 9, 2015, 3:03pm CST Updated: Nov 9, 2015, 3:20pm CST

There are an estimated 5 million Google searches worldwide each day but most of them are for local services according to the tech giant. The question is how to get more San Antonio small businesses included in those local searches.

Google Inc. and U.S. Rep. William Hurd, R-San Antonio, worked together on a workshop that encouraged small business owners in the San Antonio area to get on the Internet as a way to build their business.

Each small business owner that participated received one year free website hosting from StartLogic. San Antonio is one of 250 cities the Google 'Put Cities on the Map' group has visited so far since its launch earlier this year.

"It's those micro-moments, you know sitting in the car at the traffic light," said Anastasia Kudrez, a speaking manager at Google told the crowd of more than 100 local business owners this morning at the San Antonio Central Library. While there are dozens of technology companies that offer search engine optimization services, one way to increase the likelihood of being found on Google or Bing is just to have reading or visual material on the site.



CARLOS JAVIER SANCHEZ | SABJ

Stasia Kudrez a Google SEO expert helps small business owners create their own websites and Google listings for free. Participating businesses will received a customized domain name, free web hosting for one year, a local business listing on Google Maps, free tools, training and resources.

“At the heart of every SEO strategy is content — but this is assuming that Google can actually read your pages with content on it,” Kudrez said. “Nobody can guarantee you any position on Google — at the end of the day that is what makes the search results so good because you can’t artificially influence who is what is going to appear on each page.”

Kudrez encouraged business owners to create their own content, by adding photos, blog posts or links to interesting articles frequently that give visitors a reason to return. Business owners should consider using their area of expertise and offer unique insight to readers and answer common questions.

“You need to think of your website not as an online brochure, but a living breathing, resource that grows over time,” she said. There's also an online tool where Google tells website owners how it is read by the algorithm.

There are pay-per-click advertisements on Google, where companies that pony up for a position at the top of the page but the website owner only gives Google money when customers visit their website.

One major change in Google’s algorithm this year is that it will take into account the mobile capability of a website for its ranking results when a user is on a mobile device. Many small businesses don't even fill out their Google Maps listings but that can be a major fault, organizers said.

“Today we don’t go online anymore, we live online and we use whatever device is handy,” said Patrick Nolan, an engineering manager in Google’s Austin office. “Even though that seems obvious, 55 percent of small businesses don’t even have a website.”

U.S. Rep William Hurd, R-San Antonio, co-hosted the event.

“People know us as Military City USA but we have more cyber-security professionals than any other city outside of Washington D.C. area — we can be on the cutting edge of technology,” Hurd said. “When you look at some of the challenges they have they are going to have to look at industry to do that — a lot of companies are now growing up to support those missions, that is where we are building upon.”

Kristen Mosbrucker

Reporter

San Antonio Business Journal





the salt

eating and health foodways producers food for thought

for foodies

PRODUCERS

Tech Gurus Teach Food Entrepreneurs The Recipe For Success

Updated November 16, 2015 · 2:22 PM ET

BRENDA SALINAS



Last year, Munirah Small quit her job as a customer service representative to start a cake business. She had lots of repeat customers, but after accounting for her expenses, she found she didn't have much money left over — certainly not enough to pay herself a regular salary. So she applied to Break Fast and Launch to figure out what she could be doing better.

Brenda Salinas for NPR

San Antonio is one of the country's emerging tech hubs. It's also home to a rich culinary scene. Now city officials are trying to bring both communities together through a program called Break Fast and Launch.

The program pairs emerging food entrepreneurs with technology mentors who teach them business. The tech mentors don't have culinary backgrounds, but they know how to get a startup off the ground. The idea behind Break Fast and Launch is to take some of that vibrant startup energy and inject it into San Antonio's food scene. It's one of several "culinary incubator" models springing up across the country.

Break Fast and Launch was started last year with city and federal funding. Thirty entrepreneurs went through the competitive program last spring. Munirah Small is part of the fall cohort that started in September. Last year, the 44-year-old mom quit her job as a customer service representative at AT&T to start a cake company called Sweet Themes.



THE SALT

For Food Startups, Incubators Help Dish Up Success

"The best way to describe my cakes would be a delicious edible centerpiece," Small says.

She says she found a lot of business through church and community groups. Baking is now her full-time job, and she has plenty of repeat customers. But after accounting for her expenses, there's not much money left over — certainly not enough to pay herself a regular salary, she tells me. So Small applied to Break Fast and Launch to figure out what she could be doing better.

The eight-person cohort meets once a week in a designated part of a public library to talk business strategy with different mentors. When I first met up with the group in October, they were talking to Mike Girdley, the founder of a popular programming boot camp called Codeup.

Girdley has no experience in the food industry. In fact, he's never tasted anything whipped up by the entrepreneurs before him. Today they're talking about a common business mistake: pricing your product too low.

"You're going to price it way too low, Girdley tells them, "because you're seeing it from the price of a technician. You're not necessarily seeing it from the perspective of a customer, right?" The question these entrepreneurs need to ask themselves, he says, is "what value are you giving to the customer?"

Small sells her cakes for between \$35 and \$175 each, depending on the size, ingredients and design. That puts her in the same price range as a grocery store bakery — not her gourmet competitors. Girdley says if Small accounts for the value of her time, she's actually losing money on every cake. He tells her, you need to be charging *three times* as much.



A sampling of Munirah Small's cakes. "The best way to describe my cakes would be a delicious edible centerpiece," she says.

Courtesy of Munirah Small

Girdley says another lesson food entrepreneurs can pick up from the tech world is how to market their products with a story — the way Apple has long marketed its products to the creative class.

"People don't necessarily buy what your product is. They're buying into your story — the vision of how you're making the world a better place, or how you're changing people's lives," Girdley says.

Small might be a baker, but Girdley says she's not actually selling cakes: She's selling a complete experience. "They're not buying cakes from you, they're buying interactions with you," Girdley says.

After two hours at Break Fast and Launch, Small walks out with optimism and Kanye levels of confidence. She proclaims, "I'm the best cake service in the city!"

Three weeks later, I visit Small in her small apartment kitchen to see whether she has implemented the changes her mentor advised her to make.



THE SALT

San Francisco Kitchen Lends Low-Income Food Entrepreneurs A Hand

As Small mixes the buttercream frosting, a cloud of sugar rises from her stand mixer, making her entire apartment smell sweet. Her little oven has been working around the clock. And there are so many cakes cooling in the fridge that she doesn't have any room for her own food. It's a sign that business has really picked up.

A lot has changed since we last met. Small has almost tripled her prices, and she's started marketing herself as a designer of custom, gourmet cakes. She's been targeting the market for weddings and quinceañeras — a coming-of-age tradition, popular among many Latinos, to celebrate when a girl turns 15. These affairs can be as lavish as weddings, and Small has been going to expos, convincing women that her gourmet creations will impress their guests.

She's also using social media to promote herself and hosting cake tastings for potential clients. Earlier this month, she was the subject of a feature story in her local newspaper.

Small says something surprising happened when she raised her prices. "People were more apt to be interested than before, when I was undercharging myself," Smalls says. "It's kind of crazy how that works!"

At first, Small was worried about how her repeat clients would react to her price hikes. She explained to them that now that she's an established business, she needs to charge more. It turned out, most of her repeat clients were OK with the new prices, she says. Overall, the demographics of her clientele are shifting: She's now making larger cakes for weddings, quinceañeras and big corporate parties.

Of course, not every customer was on board with the higher prices. "I have some that have dropped off, they're like 'you're too expensive,' " says Small. "And that's OK, because when I'm at the mall, I can't shop at every store — not right now, sure can't. And it's no harm, no foul."

Small is baking nine cakes in the next 48 hours. The smallest — a two-layer chocolate cake that feeds eight people and takes her two hours to make — used to go for \$35. Now she's selling it for \$85.

"I've stopped taking that relaxed approach to it," Small says of her business strategy. And she says she's glad she reached out to the tech community for help.

"Analytical strategy is universal. You just have to have a system — whether it's computers nerds, cakes and cookies — you still need to have a system in place to make it work," Small says.

And, yes, she's now paying herself — and making a 35 percent profit, she says.

She's still getting mentoring from Break Fast and Launch — only now, the focus is on what to do with her newfound profits. Her next goals: to get out of her tiny kitchen and into a commercial kitchen space, and to hire five people to work for her company full time.

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**CULINARY CULTURE: IN-DEPTH LOOK AT AVANTI, DENVER'S RESTAURANT INCUBATOR -
OPENING JULY 13**



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[http://303magazine.com/wp-
content/uploads/2014/09/AvantiRendering_3.jpeg](http://303magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/AvantiRendering_3.jpeg)

Rendering of Avanti

What: Avanti Food + Beverage, A Collective Eatery. (Opening July 13)

Where: 3200 Pecos St., Denver

Neighborhood: LoHi

Pro: By allowing local chefs and restaurateurs to experiment with lowered risks, this first-of-its-kind project could potentially lead to a renaissance of Denver's restaurant scene.

Con: If not curated correctly, the space could feel like a food court. The design of the space, as well as the participants, will be incredibly important in order to keep the project elevated and focused.

The Restaurants

(Updated: June 25, 2015)



(<http://303magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DSC06772.jpg>)

Marco Gonzales of Bixo. Photo by Roman Tafoya.

1. **Souk Shawarma** *Who: Jon Robbins at Bistro Barbes; What: a Lebanese-inspired shawarma shop.*
2. **PoCo Tortaria** *Who: Kevin Morrison of [Pinche Tacos](http://303magazine.com/2013/06/thirsty-girl-pinche-tacos/) (<http://303magazine.com/2013/06/thirsty-girl-pinche-tacos/>); What: a Mexican torta concept*
3. **Quiero Arepas** *Who: Igor and Beckie Panasewicz, owners of Quiero Arepas Food Truck; What: Venezuelan "sandwiches" known as arepas.*
4. **Brava!** *Who: David Bravdica of Brava!, a pizza joint located in Lannie's Clocktower; What: wood fired pizzas*
5. **Bixo, Mediterranean Bites** *Who: Marco Gonzales, known for his work in Michelin star-restaurants such as Le Calandre in Lyon, France; What: Inventive tapas inspired by Mexican and Mediterranean cuisine . [Read our interview with Gonzales here](http://303magazine.com/2015/01/culinary-culture-first-look-bixo-avanti-food-beverage/) (<http://303magazine.com/2015/01/culinary-culture-first-look-bixo-avanti-food-beverage/>).*
6. **Mijo** *Who: John DePierro and Michael Nevarez of Bones; What: Globally inspired rice and noodle bowls.*
7. **Farmer Girl** *Who: Chef Tim Payne, formerly of Z Cuisine; What: A farm-to-table concept featuring local and sustainable foods.*

UPDATE: The Drinks: The beer program will highlight *Dogfish Head* (<http://www.porchdrinking.com/venue-preview-avanti-food-beverage/>) whereas the wine & cocktail list was created by Chad Michael George and Allison Widdecombe of Williams & Graham. According to Michael George, the menu will feature craft cocktails made with fresh ingredients with a few on draft. The wine list will be by the glass with a diverse list of old and new world wines.

The Concept



(http://303magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/AvantiRendering_2.jpeg)

Restaurants are fragile creatures. With high failure rates (60 percent of them don't last a full year, whereas 80 percent don't pass the five year mark (<http://cqx.sagepub.com/content/46/3/304.abstract>)), these establishments need a lot of dedication and care to survive. Nursing a restaurant to adulthood often takes a massive team of driven chefs, talented cooks, savvy PR teams and knowledgeable waiters to bring the concept to full term. Even then there is a lot of risk and chance involved in its success. From construction delays to bad Yelp! reviews, just one unfortunate circumstance can bring a place to its knees. So when veteran developers Brad Arguello, Patrick O'Neill and Rob Hahn came up with the idea to create a program that provides an "incubation" period for these budding culinary concepts, it seemed practically ingenious...

Avanti Food + Beverage, this "restaurant incubator" will nourish fledgling projects by providing small, rented test kitchens in a shared space that is open to the public. This collective eatery will host up to seven concepts, with each project receiving a fully equipped, state-of-the-art kitchen encompassed in a singular shipping

container. Here restaurateurs, chefs, food truck owners and more will have the chance to battle it out for the crowd's attention during their short term lease. Appendix

“The goal is to create a culinary think tank, where chefs can work with their peers and the public to really dial in their concept” explained O’Neill “It’s like a [co-working space] for chefs”

But the concept isn’t just meant to benefit their creators. Rather, Avanti aims to be a fully immersive experience for diners. Here patrons are encouraged to have an interactive meal with communal seating, similar to a school lunchroom. The two-storied space will also host a lounge and a bar that will develop various beverage programs. Upstairs will have a rooftop view that boasts the “best unobstructed view of Denver” that overlooks Coors field and the Denver skyline. They even suggested putting up stadium seats for people to watch the game from afar...

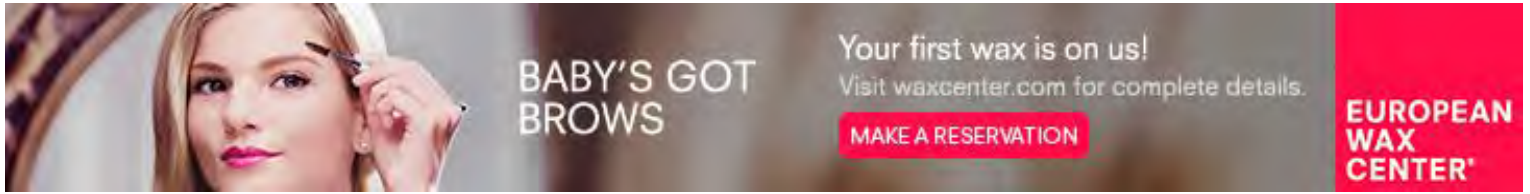


http://303magazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/AvantiRendering_1.jpeg

Rendering of Avanti's rooftop patio.

With this focus on diner interaction, it seems the idea of communal eating is much more literal. The dining experience for both patrons and vendors is now transformed by physically removing barriers and general restaurant constructs. Now everyone will be encouraged to flow in and out of the space, developing and creating their own unique impressions. And although the idea isn’t completely new — food courts, namely — the idea of funneling the concept through a chef community brings in whole new breath of fresh air. And Denver, known for its impressive restaurateurs and young and eclectic talent, is the perfect place for something like this to succeed. However, like all innovations, unforeseen problems can arise without easy resolution. It’s possible that Avanti might negate the problems of opening restaurants for their vendors to only assume the responsibilities for themselves. Hopefully the odds of opening seven restaurants at once won’t bear too much burden, as this project has a massive amount of potential not only for its own success but the development of the Denver dining scene. Just imagining what exciting projects and talent it might draw to Denver is worth the unbridled optimism and boundless daydreaming. For us, its opening couldn’t come soon enough.

Article originally published on September 3, 2015



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OPENING REPORT LINCOLN HEIGHTS

L.A. Prep Launches 56,000 Square Foot Food Incubator in Lincoln Heights

by Farley Elliott Apr 7, 2015, 10:57a @overoverunder



The warehouse space offers commercial kitchens for use by small-batch producers.

One of the biggest recent boons to California's growing [cottage food industry](#) [0] is **L.A. Prep**, a highly anticipated Lincoln Heights warehouse space that's been converted into more than 50 commercial prep zones for home cooks and bakers looking to make the next leap forward. After more than a year of red tape wrangling and construction, L.A. Prep officially opens today.

The 56,000 square foot space was built by L.A.'s [Civic Enterprise Development](#) [1] team, and is meant to be a functional mix of personal kitchen and community areas. Workers can lease their own space for whatever project they have in mind, like producing [artisanal semolina pastas](#) [2] or canning or [bread making](#) [3], while sharing walk-in space and other communal kitchen access. Rent isn't cheap of course, but for lots of home goods makers it's the only way to grow beyond the four walls of their

personal kitchen and into a larger retail market.



Places like these are commonly known as food incubators, though L.A. Prep styles itself as more of a place for mid-level companies who already have a small foothold in the market, and want to take the next step forward. As a result, the space comes fully coded by the city and will feature a USDA inspector for any of the butchers on site. Anyone leasing space on site also has access to L.A. Prep's cadre of business professionals and advice-givers, who can help navigate all of the behind-the-scenes paperwork (tenants work to earn their own permitting from the L.A. County Department of Public Health).

With 54 commercial kitchens available, L.A. Prep is now allowing those who have already signed leases to move on in, and are 50% leased. They hope to be maxed out on production space in short order, given the rise in local demand for handmade, local products.

L.A. Prep [4]

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Los Angeles, CA

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[0] <http://la.eater.com/2013/1/11/6499331/california-residents-now-legally-allowed-to-sell-home-cooked-products>

[1] <http://www.civcenterprise.com/>

[2] <http://la.eater.com/2015/1/8/7515919/kickstarter-semolina-pasta-maker-la-prep-raise-moneye>

[3] <http://kandvbake.com/>

[4] <http://www.laprep.la/>

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Nassau Bay Street Eat Party

November 14, 2015
6:00 - 10:00pm
Nassau Bay Town Square

Join us on the Town Square (1800 Space Park Drive in Nassau Bay - across from NASA and in front of the Courtyard Marriott) for some awesome food trucks eats, a free concert and lots of fun!

Several of Houston's best local gourmet food trucks will line the Town Square, including Cousins Maine Lobster, The Sauer Kraut Food Truck, Houston's Finest Soul Food, Nom Mi Street, D'Lish Curbside Bistro, Mingo's Latin Kitchen, Foreign Policy, Onolicious Hawaiian Shave Ice, and Happy Baking.

The live music stage will feature Season 6 Runner-Up of The Voice and La Porte local, Jake Worthington, and local favorite, Louis Adams.

Beer and wine will be available for purchase, including several craft beer options from Texas Beer Refinery.

Free Admission! Free Parking! Live Music! Beer & Wine!

Nassau Bay Street Eat Party

November 14, 2015 at 6:00 PM
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Best Southwest

DuncanSWITCH Street Market is part of a grassroots effort to revive Duncanville

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By NANETTE LIGHT

Neighborsgo

Published: 11 July 2014 07:52 AM

Updated: 14 July 2014 11:54 PM

One Saturday every month, business in Duncanville takes a trip back in time.

On those days, about 30 white tents rise up along the city's Main Street corridor as part of a new outdoor market called duncanSWITCH Street Market. Near the tents is the original railroad switch — the market's namesake — which gave birth to the city.

Under the shade, vendors offer homemade goods such as pickles, barbecue and refurbished wooden signs for sale. Deals are sealed with a handshake.

“It's the old-fashioned way of doing business,” said Daniel Flores, one of the market's founders and a real estate agent and project manager at Duncanville-based Options Real Estate. The real estate company focuses on creating sustainable neighborhoods in Oak Cliff, southern Dallas and northern Ellis counties.

Flores is among community leaders such as Monte Anderson, president and founder of Options Real Estate, and Steve Martin, president of the Duncanville Chamber of Commerce, who have worked since the market's debut in April to grow the movement.

Anderson, a commercial real estate developer, is well known for restoring the historic Belmont Hotel on Fort Worth Avenue in North Oak Cliff. His work has garnered

accolades from Preservation Dallas and Preservation Texas. The creation of the market is one of his latest ideas to revitalize Duncanville.

Martin said the market is a benefit for the city and its merchants, since it draws customers to the downtown area. The next market opens July 19.

City staff members in the Parks and Recreation and Public Work departments, along with the Duncanville Police Department, also have had a hand since the beginning.

The market is part of a larger grassroots effort to revive the city.

In March, Anderson and Flores formed a community organization, Duncanville Design Studio. The group of about 20 businessmen, city leaders and residents meets each month to brainstorm low-cost, small-scale project ideas.

“We have this idea in our minds of this beautiful city,” Anderson said. “But how do we make that happen? So we came together, and the design studio gives us a place to talk about those ideas.”

The street market, a partnership with the business chamber, is their first effort. Interest by vendors has grown from about 30 at the first market in April to nearly 40 in June.

Now, the market's leaders are working to recruit more shoppers. Flores hopes foot traffic will increase as regular vendors gain a following. He said a monthly doughnut-eating contest, which includes cash prizes from Main Street Donuts, has been a popular feature.

“A lot of communities in Dallas have been forgotten,” Flores said. “We just want to be rediscovered.”

The trio spoke on a recent Monday morning of more plans from the design studio: building bike lanes, renovating the city's parks, restoring old homes and painting a mural of Duncanville's history on the Duncanville Feed Store.

Simpler projects include painting residents' front doors and educating people on landscaping and updating their kitchens.

“It's the community coming together and deciding how they want the community to look,” said Anderson, who's seen similar groups arise in other cities. “None of

this is new stuff.”

The market isn't the first of its kind to make its way into the city.

But Martin, a Duncanville resident of 40 years, said unlike others, he hopes it will be more sustainable. That meant developing a concept that was simple, rather than one that involved a lot of production and manpower.

The success of the market depends on its ability to run with or without the leadership of Anderson, Flores and himself, Martin said.

“We don't want it to be a huge event where we have to shut the world down to get it done. We want it to be something that flows freely every third Saturday,” Martin said.

This means only one lane down Main Street is closed during the market to keep traffic flowing through the corridor.

Martin said much of the market's long-term sustainability will be determined in the next two months when it must weather the state's two hottest

months.

Anderson equated the market to a pop-up retail center. It's become a space for new entrepreneurs to test the market and grow a following.

"It's bootstrap retail. It's the community picking itself up," he said. "There was nothing like this."

For Vonda Pipken, a math teacher at Seagoville Middle School, that market is pickles.

She's handed out homemade jars of the crinkle-cut sweet and spicy variety for years to friends and family. Now, her Pizzazzy Pickles are a monthly feature at the market.

Until school let out for summer break, she taught by day and pickled by night in a rented kitchen space in Garland.

The public attention has led to a couple of deals with local restaurants to sell her pickles and possibly a spot at a Wal-Mart location.

At the July market, she'll feature spears, thick-cut and whole pickles for the first time. She's also

experimenting in making relish at the request of customers.

“I’m still waking up in the morning saying, ‘God, you’re using pickles to bless me,’” she said.

Neighborsgo reporter Nanette Light can be reached at 214-977-8039.

IF YOU GO

What: duncanSWITCH Street Market

When: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every third Saturday of the month. Upcoming market dates are July 19, Aug. 16, Sept. 20, Oct. 18, Nov. 15 and Dec. 20.

Where: Downtown Duncanville at Main and Center streets

Social Media: facebook.com/duncanswitch

