



San Diego Promise Zone

Economic Activity Working Group Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 14th | 2:30 – 4:00 PM

Via Zoom (Meeting ID: 979 7737 1015 Passcode: 486144)

Working Group Goal: Increase and improve access to capital, promote e-commerce systems, market neighborhoods, and improve infrastructure

In Attendance:

Access Inc., Accessity, Asian Business Association, Central San Diego Black Chamber of Commerce, City of San Diego, Council District 9, City of San Diego's Information Technology Department, City of San Diego's Mobility Department, City of San Diego's Planning Department, County of San Diego Health & Human Services, International Rescue Committee, Logan Heights CDC, Office of Mayor Todd Gloria, San Diego & Imperial SBDC, San Diego Futures Foundation, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Meeting Notes:

Partner Announcements:

- Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation:
 - San Diego & Imperial SBDC will go forward with applying for the SBA Community Navigator Program grant. SBDC will apply with 16 other community-based organizations. The deadline was extended until July 23rd.
 - [Connect All](#): Applications open next Monday. Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation will focus on garnering LMI founders for the program.
- San Diego Promise Zone:
 - The Economic Development Department is hiring for four positions. One position is a Promise Zone Coordinator. To apply, click the link below.
 - <https://www.sandiego.gov/empopp/current>
- Accessity:
 - The Accessity Academy for Entrepreneurial Success (AAES) will recruit participants for the program. The program is a 10-week series of practical, hands-on training accompanied by one-on-one business counseling that will also be offered in Spanish. The program will start on August 24th.
- IRC Center of Economic Opportunity
 - Microenterprise Loan rates have been adjusted. Please refer to the flyer for more information.

Voices of the Community

- Meri Birhane, Meri Consulting Services, Community Navigator for the Community Navigator Pilot Program

- Meri offers sales consulting and social media marketing services.
- She founded [Empowerment Mastermind](#), a network of over 500 business owners, entrepreneurs, and leaders. The network works to help diverse founders and business professionals obtain mentors, access to social capital, and increase diversity in underrepresented industries.
 - Empowerment Mastermind hosts free events that take place every 3rd Wednesday. Click [HERE](#) for a video of their June 2021 meeting.
- Community Navigator Pilot Project
 - She was recruited to be a community navigator through her work and participation in Connect All.
 - During her time as a community navigator, she made five referrals, one being Iconic Beauty. This business was about to pay for services to get funding but through Meri, Iconic Beauty received \$5,000.
 - Meri's feedback on the program includes step-by-step guidance, social media engagement, the need for more time to apply, and technical difficulties.
 - To promote information, Meri emphasized tagging on social media and partner newsletters.

Spaces as Places: Parking Reform

- Parking Reform
 - The City of San Diego requires that businesses provide a certain number of parking spaces, which can lead to an oversupply of parking spaces. This adds significant costs to local businesses, which then pass the cost on to customers. The City of San Diego is considering parking updates to reduce or eliminate these parking requirements.
 - By reevaluating parking design, the City can create more spaces for businesses; and improve other outcomes like traffic levels and traffic emissions.
 - The planning department has recently shared this with various small businesses and other organizations for input and will continue to do so.
- Spaces as Places
 - Spaces as Places seeks to offer options for creating and sustaining outdoor dining and create pedestrian and bike-friendly streets.
 - The menu of options are streetaries, social curb, outdoor dining within private property, and promenade.
 - The Planning Department will be open to connect and work on offering wi-fi for the promenade option.
 - Parking Reform and Spaces as Places will offer more flexibility in the use of space for businesses.
 - If partners need any support that may fall under the jurisdiction of the Parking Reform and Spaces as Places, presenters offered direct contact. Presenters also plan to work on public outreach and FAQ page.
 - To ensure equity in resources and funding, the Spaces as Places presenter emphasized the value of conversations with stakeholders to ensure the inclusion of equitable practices.
 - An idea shared by the working group is establishing train the trainer for Spaces as Places so the CBOs that already have existing network business can work with the City.

10 Steps to Starting a Business

- Economic Development Department staff solicited feedback on the existing legacy document to ensure that the document refresh will be useful to business.
- Initial Feedback included the following:
 - The businesses that need more support usually reach out to CBOs for assistance and libraries may not be an effective touchpoint for businesses.
 - The City will work with CBOs that provide relevant assistance and resources and add these CBOs to the document.
 - The document may not be useful, especially if these businesses are unsure how to navigate the system, and need step-by-step guidance.
 - Other suggestions are adding color, being more concise, offering the resource in multiple languages, making it a one-pager checklist, and making sure links work

Logic Model Planning. Next Steps & Closing Remarks

- The Community Navigator subgroup will continue meeting to carry out the logic model process and asset mapping with support from Promise Zone staff. Please fill out [this Doodle Poll](#) by Friday, July 23rd to determine when the subgroup will meet.