



The City of



Economic Development

MEETING NOTES

San Diego Promise Zone

Economic Activity Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 15th, 2023 | 2:30 – 4:00 PM | Via Zoom (Meeting ID: 161 915 3978)

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

In Attendance

Accessity (Formerly Accion), Bowlegged BBQ, California Coast Credit Union, City of San Diego—Council District 4, City of San Diego—Council District 9, City of San Diego—Economic Development Department, County of San Diego—Health & Human Services, Diamond Business Association, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GOBiz), International Rescue Committee—SBDC, Logan Heights Community Development Corporation, Los Angeles Promise Zone, mohuman, Office of Juan Vargas, 51st Congressional District, South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z), University of California San Diego

Meeting Notes

Welcome, Introductions & Culture Share

- Co-chairs welcomed Partners and invited them to introduce themselves and the organization they are representing, and to share any announcements they have. Co-chairs also asked an optional culture share question: What is one black-owned business that you'd like to recommend to the group?
 - Responses included Ali's Chicken and Waffles, Asmara Café, Bowlegged BBQ, Café X, Cane Patch Kitchen, Eight16 Culinary Therapy, Farida's, Harold & Belle's (L.A.), Kabob Craft, Kids in the Spotlight (L.A.), One Way Up Safe Housing, Maya's Cookies, Mental Bar, Mrs. Clean SD, Muzita Abyssinian Bistro, Project New Village, Sip and Sonder (L.A.), Soul Swap Meet, Sweet Treats by Thick, The Hamlett Coffee Shop & Apothecary, and Tote and Carry.

Partner Announcements

- The **City of San Diego** and **Cyber Center of Excellence (CCOE)** is hosting a [virtual information session](#) and FBI Briefing on March 2 from 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (PST) for its Cybersecurity Awareness Program which was created to help small businesses increase their cybersecurity awareness and preparedness to bolster the region's economic resiliency. The program is FREE to participating small businesses, made possible by a grant from the City of San Diego. **RSVP: By February 24, 2023.**
- The [Accessity Academy for Entrepreneurial Success \(AAES\)](#) starts on February 28 and will run on Tuesdays from 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM until May 2.

Click the following links to stay connected to the San Diego Promise Zone

[Newsletter](#) | [Website](#) | [New Website](#) | [Email](#) | (619) 236-6700 | 1200 Third Ave, 14th Floor, San Diego, CA 92101

- **San Diego SBDC** is hosting a free, [virtual workshop on export classification and export licensing requirements](#) on February 28 at 11:00 AM (PST). Who should attend: Small businesses with little to no experience exporting, but an interest in accessing international customers.
- The **City of San Diego Economic Development Department** has a [new web page for small businesses](#) and a new web page for its [Outdoor Business Grant](#).
- The **Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation** is now [accepting applications](#) for the Spring 2023 Cohort of its free 4-month [business accelerator program](#).

Staff Updates

- Partners can now [submit their events](#) to be displayed on the [San Diego Promise Zone Events Calendar](#).
- The San Diego Promise Zone is applying to the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund grant to provide more opportunities when it comes to financial empowerment. Staff will share updates as it comes available.

Voices of the Community

- Co-chairs introduced owner, Carlos Stance, of [Bowlegged BBQ](#). The family-run business comprises of three—Carlos, his brother, Ken “Bowlegged” Stance, and his sister, Maria J Reese.
- Some early challenges in the business were lack of restaurant experience, going through the City and County, financial responsibilities, and the fact that everything was a new learning experience.
- Mr. Stance emphasized that it takes a collective effort to build resources together and start small. Bowlegged BBQ has received a tremendous amount of support from the San Diego community. Mr. Stance thanked all those that visited and supported during the height of COVID in 2020. Their famous saying is, “You come in as a customer, leave as a friend, and come back as family.”
- Partners asked the following questions towards Mr. Stance
 - **On His Favorite Part of Owning a Business**
 - Mr. Stance enjoys having control and empowerment; being able to provide jobs for family members; being able to say, “This is the hardest thing I’ve ever done, but also the most rewarding.”
 - **On Challenges He Has Faced that the Group May Be Able to Help With**
 - Mr. Stance does not have flexibility in attending meetings, so it has been very helpful that Roosevelt, San Diego Promise Zone’s Program Specialist, has been coming to him and suggesting resources.
 - **On Advice for Other Families Considering Starting their Own Family Business**
 - Mr. Stance shared that sometimes family can be the best and the worst. It can be difficult to learn how to work together with family. Sometimes you do not get an immediate investment and instead, get your return on investments later in the road. Appreciate the journey.
 - **On Steps Taken to Begin his Journey of Owning a Family Business**

- Mr. Stance shared that owning the land has helped with the starting up of their business. He owned a franchise once but there were more rules when it came to running it. It was a great learning experience but he found that he can control profit more now with his own business.
- **On Self-Care as a Business Owner and Keeping Things Balanced**
 - Mr. Stance stays in the moment and takes each week as it comes. He takes turns with his siblings on taking a break and going on vacation.
- **On What He Would Say to a Table of Decision Makers**
 - Mr. Stance would talk about the benefits of investing in a small business. He added that getting investments early on would have helped a lot with purchasing equipment for requirements on code regulations, permitting fees, and everything that comes with opening a new restaurant.

ATM Walking Audit Findings

- Staff shared findings for the data gathered from the ATM walking audit conducted by Staff and California Coast Credit Union. [Click here](#) to view the findings.
- The data collected on ATMs in the Promise Zone include ATM fees, dollar bill increments provided, hours of operation, languages provided, and the types of ATM (bank owned, credit union owned, or independently owned).
- The ATM walking audit is phase one of understanding the banking assets in our communities. This activity specifically falls under Priority Project #1 which is to work with California Coast Credit Union to expand the presence of banking resources to the Promise Zone.
- Feedback from Partners:
 - A Partner mentioned that the ATM fees is a limitation and that these findings are a great start to a bigger project that will help push financial literacy forward in Promise Zone communities.
 - A Partner brought up that access to small bills is important if people do not have the full amount in their account.
 - A Partner commented that these fees do not help to promote small business activity. If customers are unable to withdraw sufficient funds to engage with a business that accepts only cash, then that is completely limiting.
 - A Partner mentioned that the findings helped reveal that accessibility of ATMs is just as important as availability.
 - A Partner proposed the idea of reaching out to the banks with ATM fees in business corridors and asking them to waive fees within a certain radius of the Promise Zone.

Economic Development Strategy Overview

Monica Hardman, Deputy Director, City of San Diego Economic Development Department

- The Economic Development Strategy is updated every three years and the 2023 update will have a focus on equity and comprehensive community development.
- Stakeholder engagement, consisting of over 10 different focus groups across the City of San Diego and all partner organizations, found that the focus should be on the rising cost of living, infrastructure investment, and housing affordability.

- The four main goals in the strategic framework are supporting families and workers, supporting small and local businesses, bolstering trade and innovation, and strengthening neighborhoods.
- A deep dive analysis was conducted to ensure alignment with the City of San Diego's Strategic Plan (2022), Climate Action Plan (2022), and the State and Federal Legislative Platform (2021-2022).
- There is a priority for implementation funds to be spent in the Promise Zone.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

- Co-chairs thanked those who attended the meeting and encouraged them to leave any feedback through the Digital Comment Box: <https://us16.list-manage.com/survey?u=e913b9d30ca18b3436360cf47&id=62c8f5dc2f>

Next Meeting

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