



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, Community Development Director

DATE: November 4, 2013

SUBJECT: **Economic Development Activities Report for October 2013**

Business and Development Activity

Downtown Urbana

- Sitara Indian Restaurant and Lounge held their Grand Opening and UBA Ribbon Cutting on October 30th at 114 South Race Street. They were also awarded a \$1,000 Business Opening Grant.
- Dr. G's BrainWorks, The Brain Fitness Store and More, will have a UBA Ribbon Cutting on November 8th and will hold their Grand Opening on November 9th at 114 Lincoln Square.
- The Urbana Butcher Shop at 119 West Main Street will hold their opening and UBA Ribbon Cutting November 9th. The Butcher will also receive a \$1,000 Business Opening Grant.
- A new vintage furniture, clothing and jewelry store called Bohemia plans to open in mid-November at 135 West Main Street, the former location of the Wooden Hanger.
- CoLab and Cafeteria & Company jointly hosted a Grand Opening Celebration on October 11th including ribbon cuttings for six new businesses at 206 and 208 West Main Street.
 - On the Cafeteria & Company side: Pizza M and Flying Machine Coffee each received \$1,000 Business Opening Grants.
 - On the CoLab side: NORDEN, Urbana Land Arts, HandsOn, and Cathedral Consulting each received \$1,000 Business Opening Grants.
 - CoLab also hosted a pop-up retail store by NORDEN in mid-October and is currently hosting a pop-up retail store by the Neutral Cycle Workshop.
 - The opening of 208 West Main Street marks the completion of the second phase of the Redevelopment Agreement between Cake Design Development and the City. Per the agreement, Matt Cho has been issued an incentive of \$42,000 toward this \$220,000 portion of the project.
 - Work is underway for the third and final phase of the Development Agreement, the renovation of 210 W Main Street which is the 2nd floor of 208 W Main Street and will include offices for creative industry tenants and offices for creative industry tenants.
- Remodeling work continues for A-Plus VIP Lounge at 214 West Main Street
- Primelight Studio has relocated to Champaign from its former location at 126 W Main Street.
- Renovations are underway for a new restaurant at the former Morning Cup space in the Stratford Apartments at 202 North Race Street.
- Some preliminary demolition has occurred at the Stephens Building which is tentatively planned to have first-floor commercial and six residential units on the second floor.

Philo Road

- Renovation is underway for a new Dollar Tree at 1303 Colorado, the former True Value location.

University-Medical

- Fira, a new women's boutique at Gregory Place, is now open.
- Café Bene, Korea's largest coffee franchise, will open its first Illinois location at Gregory place later this fall.
- Dear 72, a clothing store that features products from Korea and the United States both for men and women plans to open at Gregory Place East this winter.
- Plans are under review for a new Wendy's restaurant at the Gateway Shoppes at Five Points.
- The renovated Pawn King / Bass Pro Shop is now open.

East Urbana

- Building construction continues at the new Birkeys Farm Store on High Cross Road.

Marketing and Events Activity

- The International Beer Tasting and Food Truck Showcase took place in Downtown Urbana on October 5th. The event was well-attended and marks the 12th year of this beer festival.
- The Champaign-Urbana Folk & Roots Festival is taking place November 1-2 at twelve locations in Downtown Urbana.
- Urbana's 180th Birthday Celebration was held on October 5th in the Landmark Hotel Ballroom. The event was well attended and a great success.
- 1,200 "Welcome to Urbana" brochures were sent to various Illinois Tourist Information Centers.
- This month, twelve visitor packets were mailed out based on information received through leads from the City's advertisement in the Illinois Travel Guide.
- The "Living in Urbana" brochure was redesigned and 3,500 of the brochures were mailed to off-campus students living in Urbana.
- City information and materials were provided at the Fall 2013 Housing Fair. Staff distributed over 300 each of the "Welcome to Urbana" brochure and the Urbana app flyers.

Urbana's Market at the Square

- The sixth and final Sprouts at the Market event of the season was held on October 5th. "Composting for Kids" was presented by guest educators from Common Ground Food Co-op. Over 60 children participated in the event.
- The Market Director recorded an "Eat Local" promotional video with Urbana Business Association staff. The video will be posted on social media and appear on UPTV.
- A no-carve pumpkin decorating event was hosted at the Market with the assistance of the Urbana Business Association on October 26th. The event was a great success, lasting an hour longer than planned and required staff to increase the table space to accommodate all the participants.
- Estimated attendance for October Markets: October 5: 4,210; October 12: 5,082; October 19: 3,621; October 26: 2,245.

Arts Related Activities

- The 2014 Arts Grants Materials are now available online at <https://urbanapublicarts.wufoo.com/forms/urbana-arts-grant-application/> Applications are due January 17, 2014 by 5:00 PM.
- Applications for hiring a new Public Arts Coordinator closed Friday October 18th. Nearly 100 applications were received in total.
- The new Artist of the Corridor Meredith Foster will have her series of drawings "Elemental" installed Friday, November 1st. Meredith and Chris Carl are the co-owners of Urbana Land Arts who recently opened a studio at CoLab at 206 West Main Street.

Other Activities

- Sixteen businesses have completed the City's Business Development Grant program since the program went into effect at the beginning of 2013. Evaluations have been received by eleven of these businesses. The feedback for the program has been very positive with the average business scoring the overall helpfulness of the program with a score of 4.8 out of 5 points. All of these businesses completed business counseling and nearly all the businesses received their counseling from the Small Business Development Center at the Champaign County Economic Development Corporation. As with the program overall, the feedback on counseling with the SBDC was very positive and staff look forward to a continued partnership with SBDC and the EDC.
- Staff attended the fall Illinois Tax Increment Association and Illinois Municipal League conferences in downtown Chicago. Staff also attended the Illinois Enterprise Zone Association conferences in Decatur.