

Breakout Sessions

Housing and Development

Small Business

SMALL BUSINESS AND THE CREDIT CRISIS:

THE BACKBONE OF OUR ECONOMY

Small businesses have kept our local economy afloat in the current down economy. What are some of the current initiatives to assist small businesses given the credit crisis? What innovative investment tools can be developed to leverage public, private, and philanthropic capital to stabilize and grow businesses in low to moderate income communities?

MARKETING & THE SMALL BUSINESS BUDGET:

LOW COST STRATEGIES FOR CASH-STRAPPED EMERGING BUSINESSES

Many small businesses operate without a marketing department as entrepreneurs take on the challenges of advertising and brand building in-house. What marketing strategies allow entrepreneurs to build their brands and outreach programs on a small business budget? What are the advantages and limitations of traditional advertising, social media, and viral marketing strategies?

URBAN AGRICULTURE: THE VALUE OF EATING LOCAL

Improving access to healthy, locally-grown food creates opportunities for individuals to make healthy food choices while stimulating the local economy. How do we provide access to high quality, affordable, and nutritious food to low to moderate income communities? What business opportunities are associated with urban agriculture, community-supported agriculture, and farmer's markets?

Workforce Development

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR GREEN COLLAR JOBS:

PREPARING AUSTIN FOR A GREEN ECONOMY

Green jobs are a growing market opportunity for the region as increased energy efficiency standards create the need for new green technologies. What are the green job skill sets that need to be developed in our workforce? What should the regional training system look like in order to develop a green economy ecosystem?

CONTINUING EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:

ADULT EDUCATION AND JOB TRENDS

The 21st century job market is continuously reinvented by emerging industries and technology. What are the fastest-growing job opportunities in Central Texas, and how do we prepare the workforce? How can we tailor programs specific to grades 9-14 (high school and community college) with an emphasis on workforce preparation?

FORECLOSURE AND NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION:

THE IMPACTS OF FORECLOSURE ON OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Foreclosure displaces families and burdens communities with increased crime, lower property values, and neighborhood blight. What are current or planned initiatives to stabilize our neighborhoods? What opportunities exist to make markets work for low to moderate income residents?

AFFORDABLE GREEN LIVING:

SUSTAINABILITY THAT PUTS MONEY IN THE BANK

Energy efficiency and increased dependence on renewable energy sources are key to a sustainable community. What local initiatives and resources are available to increase sustainability in homes and businesses? How can homeowners, renters, and small businesses take advantage of weatherization and energy-efficiency resources?

HOMES & HANDS: COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS IN ACTION (FILM)

Community Land Trusts empower neighborhood residents to create secure, affordable access to land and housing. Homes and Hands addresses housing and community development policies through personal stories told by residents in North Carolina, New Mexico, and Vermont. Discussion about our region's Community Land Trusts to follow viewing.

AUSTIN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: GUIDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The Comprehensive Plan strives to manage Austin's growth while creating new economic opportunities. How can the comprehensive plan lay the groundwork for increasing opportunity in low to moderate income neighborhoods? How does Austin's Comprehensive Plan affect equity in our region?

TRANSPORTATION: GREATER AUSTIN'S COMMUNITIES IN TRANSIT

Transportation is critical in connecting low to moderate income communities to job opportunities and services. What resources are available on both a local and state level to improve these communities' access to efficient transportation? What future plans are on the regional agenda?

Arts Economy

ART AS COMMUNITY:

FOSTERING COHESION THROUGH CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Art programs such as dance, theatre, music, poetry, and visual arts in neighborhoods, churches, and schools enable dialogue between community members and develop community spirit. What are the creative partnerships in the region that are enhancing neighborhood cohesion and cultural identity? What economic and social value do these partnerships have for low to moderate income neighborhoods?

ART AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY: THE ARTIST AS ENTREPRENEUR

The creative sector has become a cornerstone of Texas' economy as jobs in digital media, film, music, performing and visual arts, and arts-related tourism have seen faster growth and higher wages than jobs in the non-creative sector. How do artists and artisans as entrepreneurs affect the region's economic landscape? How do we shift the perception of "art as hobby" to "art as business" to create economic opportunities for artists?