

APPENDIX H: BUSINESS SURVEY

From June to November 2008, a survey was distributed to business and vacant property owners who attended the September 23rd, 2008, Business and Development Meeting. The purpose of the business survey was to help accurately assess how business owners in the community view the area and to allow them an opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the business environment in the Eastern Triangle Community Plan area. Eight completed surveys were received. These eight surveys received may not accurately represent all businesses in the Eastern Triangle.

STRENGTHS

The strengths of the Eastern Triangle identified by respondents included:

- Location of our market
- Availability of workers
- Reasonable land prices
- Safety
- Traffic
- High demand for quality residential options
- People

WEAKNESSES

The weaknesses of the Eastern Triangle identified by respondents included:

- Below average economic base
- Street and drainage problems
- Police protection, crime, and gangs
- Need transit service on SE Loop 410
- Availability for quality residential options

BUSINESS TYPE

Survey respondents provide various services and products to the Eastern Triangle and neighboring communities.

Construction/Contracting	20%
Storage	20%
Rental	20%
Real Estate	10%
Auto-Related	10%
Manufacturing	10%
Agricultural	10%

Less than 1 year	0.0%
1 – 10 years.....	25.0%
11 – 20 years.....	12.5%
21 – 30 years.....	12.5%
31 – 50 years.....	37.5%
More than 50 years	12.5%

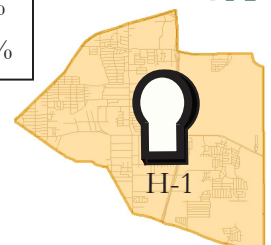
YEARS OF OPERATION

Three of the eight businesses, approximately 38%, have been in operation for over thirty years but less than fifty years. One fourth, 25%, of respondents has been in business between one and ten years. One respondent has been in business for over fifty years.

1 – 10	50.0%
11 – 30	12.5%
31 – 50	25.0%
51 – 100	0.0%
101 – 200.....	0.0%
201 – 500	0.0%
More than 500	12.5%

BUSINESS SIZE

A majority, 75%, of respondents employ one to five employees. One business reported employing between six and ten individuals and another business reported employing over fifty employees. All but one business serves less than fifty customers daily. Half serve ten or less customers per day.





BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

Seven of the respondents were business owners and one respondent serves as a business manager. All respondents currently own the property where their businesses are located. Five of the eight respondents are members of professional organizations which include: San Antonio Board of Realtors, Texas Association of Realtors, National Association of Realtors, Garageman’s Association, Small Business Association, Texas Residential Construction Committee, and the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce

BUSINESS INCENTIVES

The majority of the businesses that responded to the survey were unaware that incentives and other forms of business assistance existed and indicated that they would be interested in receiving additional information on programs provided by the City and other entities. Direct financial assistance for operations, money for improvements to buildings and structures used operationally, and tax abatement programs were mentioned as topics of interest to the business community.

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Respondents feel that their businesses have improved or remained the same over the past five years. This improvement is attributed to sales and marketing efforts, street improvements, targeted advertising, and improvement in the overall economy. Three out of five (60%) respondents stated that if they were to relocate they would choose to remain in the Eastern Triangle. Those choosing to remain in the area cited their business core market in the area and proximity to his or her residence. The reasons provided for why some would choose to relocate outside the Eastern Triangle attributed this to the growth on the northern side of the city.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The surveys received indicate that a number of business improvements are planned. The top two business improvements planned are attend business training classes or continued education and hire more employees. Other proposed improvements are listed below in the table:

**TABLE 4:
PROPOSED BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS**

TYPE OF IMPROVEMENT	RESPONSES	% OF TOTAL
Attend business training classes/ continuing education..	3	16.7%
Hire more employees	3	16.7%
Remodel interior	2	11.1%
Purchase new equipment	2	11.1%
Purchase new technology to increase efficiency	2	11.1%
Apply for business loan	1	5.6%
Repainting/rehabbing the exterior	1	5.6%
Expand product line	1	5.6%
Improve Landscaping	1	5.6%
Improve Utilities	1	5.6%
New training techniques	1	5.6%
Rehab/fix old equipment	0	0.0%
TOTAL	18	100.0%

PLANNED EXPANSION

Six out of seven or approximately 86% of the surveyed businesses indicated that they plan to expand their businesses within the next five years. The businesses plan on increasing sales, the number of employees, the square footage or facilities, and or activity. Most plan to expand on site.

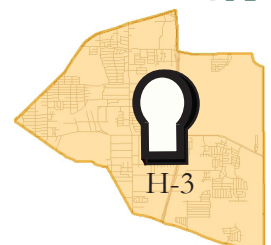
**TABLE 5:
WHERE BUSINESSES PLAN TO EXPAND**

LOCATION OF PLANNED EXPANSION	RESPONSES	% OF TOTAL
On-site	4	57.1%
Outside the Eastern Triangle	2	28.6%
Outside of San Antonio	1	14.3%
Within Eastern Triangle boundary	0	0.0%

CONCLUSION

The last section of the survey allowed residents to write in additional comments and concerns that may not have been addressed by the survey. One business owner stated, “San Antonio needs to invest in this corridor to bring in bigger and stronger businesses to this side of town.” Another stated that they would like to see progress and completed projects. One also recommended a landscape beautification program for homes and businesses.

The business owners that participated in this survey expressed similar sentiments that residents had regarding the Eastern Triangle area. All respondents have invested in the Eastern Triangle area through providing a product or service to the community. Most would like to stay in the area and plan to expand or increase their business in the near future. Like residents, business owners would like to see improvements to crime, public transit, drainage, housing market, and economic development.





Eastern Triangle Business Survey

The Eastern Triangle Planning Team in partnership with the City of San Antonio Planning and Community Development Department is currently working on a future plan for the area. (For more information about the community plan, visit: <http://www.sanantonio.gov/planning>). An important part of this process is understanding the community from many different perspectives. Your participation in this survey will help us produce a community plan that can best serve the community's needs. Responses will only be revealed in aggregate form and will not include personalized information. Thank you very much for your participation and we look forward to working with you.

1.) What type of business is it? (Circle one or more)

a.) Non-Profit	e.) Construction/Contracting	i.) Grocery/Food Mart	m.) Restaurant
b.) Real Estate	f.) Information Technology	j.) Auto-Related	n.) Manufacturing
c.) Retail Sales	g.) Medical/Dental	k.) Educational	o.) Agricultural
d.) Warehousing	h.) Banking/Financial	l.) Professional office	

Other: _____

2.) How many people do you currently employ?

- a.) 1 – 5
- b.) 6 – 10
- c.) 11 – 30
- d.) 31 – 50
- e.) 51 – 100+

3.) How long has your business been in operation?

- a.) Less than 1 year
- b.) 1 – 5 years
- c.) 6 – 10 years
- d.) 11 – 20 years
- e.) 21 – 30 years
- f.) 31 – 50 years
- g.) 50+ years

4.) How many customers do you serve on an average day?

- a.) 1 – 10
- b.) 11 – 30
- c.) 31 – 50
- d.) 51 – 100
- e.) 101 – 200
- f.) 201 – 500
- g.) 501+

Per month? _____

5.) What is your relationship to the business?

- a.) Employee
- b.) Manager
- c.) Owner
- d.) Other: _____

6.) Over the past 5 years, has business improved or declined?

- a.) Improved
- b.) Declined
- c.) About the same

If your business has improved/declined, list some of the factors why you think this has occurred:

7.) Do you own or lease the building where your business is located?

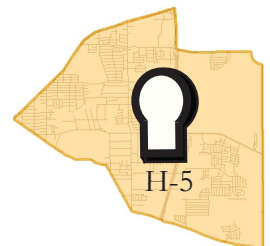
- a.) Own
- b.) Lease

8.) Are you a member of any business organizations?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

9.) What do you think are the strengths of the Eastern Triangle affecting your business?





10.) What are the weaknesses of the Eastern Triangle affecting your business?

11.) Do you have any plans to improve your business? (Circle all that apply)

- a.) Attend business training classes/ continuing education
- b.) Apply for business loan
- c.) Repainting/rehabbing the exterior
- d.) Remodel interior
- e.) Purchase new equipment
- f.) Rehab/fix old equipment
- g.) Purchase new technology to increase efficiency
- h.) Hire more employees

12.) Do you have plans to expand your business within the next 5 years?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

12a.) If yes, where are you planning to expand? (Circle all that apply)

- a.) On-site
- b.) Within Eastern Triangle boundary
- c.) Outside the Eastern Triangle
- d.) Outside of San Antonio

12b.) How are you planning to expand? (Circle all that apply)

- a.) Through an increase in sales
- b.) Increase the number of employees
- c.) Increase square footage of operation in the same lot
- d.) Increase the square footage of operation onto neighboring lot(s)
- e.) Relocate to a larger facility

13.) If you were going to relocate your business, would you stay within the Eastern Triangle area?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

Why? _____

14.) Are you aware of any incentive programs for businesses?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

If yes, do you participate in any incentive programs for your business?

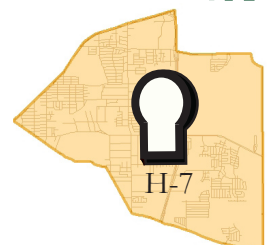
- a.) Yes
- b.) No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

15.) Would you want more information regarding economic development incentive programs?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No

If yes, what type of business incentives are you looking for?





16.) What do you like best about the Eastern Triangle? _____

17.) What do you like least about the Eastern Triangle? _____

Additional Questions, Comments, Concerns regarding business development in the Eastern Triangle Plan Area:

Thank you for your participation!

Please drop survey in collection box or mail by Nov. 1, 2008 to:

Rebecca Paskos
Planning and Community Development Department
City of San Antonio
P.O. Box 839966
San Antonio, TX 78283