



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney St.
Denton, Texas 76201
www.cityofdenton.com

Meeting Agenda

Economic Development Partnership Board

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

11:00 AM

Development Service Center

After determining that a quorum is present, the Economic Development Partnership Board of the City of Denton, Texas, will convene in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. in the Development Service Center Training Rooms 3, 4, and 5 at 401 N. Elm Street, Denton, Texas at which the following items will be considered:

1. PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Citizens may complete one Request to Speak "Public Comment" card per night for the "Presentations from Members of the Public" portion of the meeting and submit it to City Staff. Presentations from Members of the Public time is reserved for citizen comments regarding item not listed on the agenda. No official action can be taken on these items. Presentation from Members of the Public is limited to five speakers per meeting with each speaker allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes.

2. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- A. [EDP25-028](#) Consider approval of the meeting minutes for September 10, 2025.

Attachments: [September 10, 2025 EDPB Meeting Minutes - DRAFT](#)

- B. [EDP25-029](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and consider recommending approval to City Council for renewal of an agreement between The City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, regarding an Economic Development Program for Stoke Denton, in the amount of \$158,170; and providing an effective date.

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)
[Exhibit 2 - Stoke Proposal](#)
[Exhibit 3 - Ordinance](#)
[Exhibit 4 - Presentation](#)

- C. [EDP25-035](#) Receive a report, hold a discussion, and make a recommendation to City Council regarding a request to nominate Tetra Pak Inc., to the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism through the Economic Development Bank as an Enterprise Project.

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)
[Exhibit 2 - Draft Resolution](#)
[Exhibit 3 - TEZ Program Overview](#)
[Exhibit 4 - Presentation](#)

3. WORK SESSION

- A. [EDP25-032](#) Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding Section 2.83(c) of the City Code which

governs boards, commissions, and committees specifically related to the attendance policy.

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Attendance Presentation](#)

[Exhibit 3 - EDPB Attendance Chart](#)

- B. [EDP25-033](#) Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding the Murphy Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation from Jon McCarry of University of North Texas.

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Presentation](#)

- C. [EDP25-034](#) Staff Reports:
1. Director's Report - Brittany Sotelo
 2. Texas Legislative Update - Brittany Sotelo
 3. Main Street Program Update (Annual Report) - Kristen Pulido
 4. Future Agenda Items - Brittany Sotelo

Attachments: [Exhibit 1 - Agenda Information Sheet](#)

[Exhibit 2 - Director's Report Presentation](#)

[Exhibit 3 - Texas Legislative Update Report](#)

[Exhibit 4 - Main Street Presentation](#)

[Exhibit 5 - Future Agenda Items](#)

4. CONCLUDING ITEMS

A. Under Section 551.042 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, respond to inquiries from the Economic Development Partnership Board or the public with specific factual information or recitation of policy, or accept a proposal to place the matter on the agenda for an upcoming meeting AND Under Section 551.0415 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, provide reports about items of community interest regarding which no action will be taken, to include: expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence; information regarding holiday schedules; an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen; a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body; information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality; or an announcement involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

NOTE: The Economic Development Partnership Board reserves the right to adjourn into a Closed Meeting on any item on its open meeting agenda consistent with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, as amended, or as otherwise allowed by law.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the above notice of meeting was posted on the official website (<https://tx-denton.civicplus.com/242/Public-Meetings-Agendas>) and bulletin board at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas, on October 2, 2025, in advance of the three (3) business day posting deadline, as applicable, and in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

OFFICE OF THE CITY SECRETARY

NOTE: THE CITY OF DENTON'S DESIGNATED PUBLIC MEETING FACILITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. THE CITY WILL PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION, SUCH AS SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED, IF REQUESTED AT LEAST TWO (2) BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE SCHEDULED MEETING. PLEASE CALL THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE AT 940-349-8309 OR USE TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVICES FOR THE DEAF (TDD) BY CALLING 1-800-RELAY-TX SO THAT REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION CAN BE ARRANGED.

**MINUTES
CITY OF DENTON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
September 10, 2025**

After determining that a quorum was present, the Economic Development Partnership Board convened in a Special Called Meeting on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 11:05 a.m. in Training Rooms 3, 4, and 5 at the City of Denton Development Services Center, 401 N Elm St, Denton, Texas, 76201 at which the following items were considered:

PRESENT: Aimee Bissett, Erin Carney (previously Erin Carter/ex-officio), Brian Danhof, Kerry Goree, Leo Morales, Aaron Roberts, Jason Tomlinson, and Clyde Rick Woolfolk

ABSENT: Jeremy Fykes, Sara Hensley (ex-officio), Gerard Hudspeth, Jill Jester, Lee Ramsey, and Susannah O'Bara (ex-officio), Ron Crockett

STAFF: Scott Bray, Christina Davis, Vanessa Esparza, Christa Foster, Chris Lutrick, Clay Parker, Tony Puente, Kristen Pulido, Brittany Sotelo, Erica Sullivan, and Matilda Weeden

1. PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Citizens may complete one Request to Speak "Public Comment" card per night for the "Presentations from Members of the Public" portion of the meeting and submit it to City Staff. Presentations from Members of the Public time is reserved for citizen comments regarding item not listed on the agenda. No official action can be taken on these items. Presentation from Members of the Public is limited to five speakers per meeting with each speaker allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes.

No presentations from members of the public.

2. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

A. EDP25-023 Consider approval of the meeting minutes for August 13, 2025.

Woolfolk made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 13, 2025, as presented. Roberts seconded the motion. Motion carried (7-0).

AYES (7): Bissett, Danhof, Goree, Morales, Roberts, Tomlinson, Woolfolk
NAYS (0): None

B. EDP25-025 Receive a report, hold a discussion, and make a recommendation to City Council regarding a request to nominate United States Cold Storage, LP, to the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism through the Economic Development Bank as an Enterprise Project.

Staff presented the item. Tomlinson made a motion to approve recommendation to City Council as presented. Woolfolk seconded the motion. Motion carried (7-0).

AYES (7): Bissett, Danhof, Goree, Morales, Roberts, Tomlinson, Woolfolk
NAYS (0): None

3. WORK SESSION

A. EDP25-027 Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding the Texoma Logistics Innovation Engine from Dr. Terrance Pohlen of University of North Texas.

Guest speaker presented the item and discussion followed.

B. EDP25-024 Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff feedback regarding the City of Denton utility billing programs.

Staff presented the item and discussion followed.

C. EDP25-026 Staff Reports:

- 1. Director's Report - Brittany Sotelo**
- 2. Future Agenda Items - Brittany Sotelo**

Staff presented the items and discussion followed.

4. CONCLUDING ITEMS

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

Brian Danhof, Chair
Economic Development Partnership Board

Vanessa Esparza
Administrative Assistant

Minutes Approved On: _____



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

ACM: Christine Taylor

DATE: October 08, 2024

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and consider recommending approval to City Council for renewal of an agreement between The City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, regarding an Economic Development Program for Stoke Denton, in the amount of \$158,170; and providing an effective date.

BACKGROUND

Since December 2017, Stoke Denton has been managed and operated by Hickory and Rail Ventures LLC (HRV), with the company responsible for all operations, programs, member management, marketing, events, and staffing. The City of Denton provided the rented space, furniture, fixtures, and equipment until the lease ended on June 30, 2021. City staff engaged in discussions with HRV representatives about the long-term future of Stoke Denton, leading HRV to submit a proposal for continued support through a program agreement in late 2020.

The proposed agreement includes a one-year term to continue the partnership with HRV to provide support to the entrepreneurs, startups, and freelancers in the community. The partnership provides a solid platform for the city to support entrepreneurs, remote workers, small businesses, and startup companies while helping to build businesses, create jobs, and strengthen the culture and economy of the City of Denton.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the agreement.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (Council, Boards, Commissions)

October 13, 2020 – Staff presented the program proposal to the City Council and received direction to move forward with drafting a program agreement.

November 11, 2021 – Economic Development Partnership Board (EDPB), staff presented the program proposal to the EDPB and received direction to move forward with drafting a program agreement.

April 20, 2021 – The City Council approved adoption of an ordinance approving an agreement between the City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, regarding an economic development program for Stoke Denton, providing an effective date.

April 13, 2022 – The Economic Development Partnership Board (EDPB), staff presented the program proposal and updated agreement and the EDPB recommended the City Council approve the one-year renewal

of the contract between the City of Denton and Hickory and Rail Ventures, LLC.

May 3, 2022 - The City Council approved adoption of an ordinance approving an agreement between the City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, regarding an economic development program for Stoke Denton, providing an effective date.

June 14, 2023 - Economic Development Partnership Board (EDPB), staff presented the program proposal and updated agreement, the EDPB recommended the City Council approve the 15-month renewal of the contract between the City of Denton and Hickory and Rail Ventures, LLC. This agreement was a 15-month contract to align with the City's fiscal year.

June 27, 2023 – The City Council approved the adoption of an ordinance approving an agreement between the City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC regarding an economic development program for Stoke Denton, providing an effective date.

September 11, 2024 – The Economic Development Partnership Board recommended approval the adoption of an ordinance approving an agreement between the City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC regarding an economic development program for Stoke Denton, providing an effective date.

October 15, 2024 – The City Council approved the adoption of an ordinance approving an agreement between the City of Denton and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC regarding an economic development program for Stoke Denton, providing an effective date.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – Stoke Proposal

Exhibit 3 – Ordinance

Exhibit 4 – Presentation

Respectfully Submitted,
Brittany Sotelo
Director of Economic Development



hickory & rail ventures

“Stoke is the heartbeat of Denton’s startup scene, providing a hub for entrepreneurs near downtown amenities. Embracing and strengthening these anchor institutions will not only attract growth but also ensure that the creative elements at the heart of Denton’s culture will continue to thrive.” - TIP Strategies from Economic Development Strategic Plan

“I find so much value by officing at Stoke. Not only do I get instant access to a community of professionals and entrepreneurs, it allows me to access ideal space for my business without having to manage an office. I am able to have resources that can grow along with my business.”
- Member survey response - January 2024

Proposal

Hickory & Rail Ventures LLC proposes a continuation of our partnership with the City of Denton in which H&RV operates Stoke Coworking to provide support to the entrepreneurs, startups, and freelancers in our community. The partnership provides a solid platform for the city to support entrepreneurs, remote workers, small businesses, and startup companies while helping to build businesses, create jobs, and strengthen the culture and economy of the City of Denton.

Our track record over the last eight years demonstrates our ability to successfully build the entrepreneurial ecosystem of Denton through our programs, events, partnerships, and marketing efforts. Through our partnership H&RV can help the City of Denton meet the goals by executing the strategies and actions laid out in the Economic Development Strategic Plan adopted by Denton City Council in 2021.

Our proposal is for the City to renew our public/private partnership with H&RV in which the City commits to continue its support for Stoke (October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026). We are requesting \$158,172.00 to support our programming and help the City of Denton meet its Economic Development goals. During that time frame, Stoke will generate a minimum of \$300,000 from membership dues and space rentals.

H&RV would continue to report to the city on similar deliverables and metrics that we have been since December 2017, and H&RV management will provide an annual report and be available to present to EDPB and City Council on an annual basis or as requested.

Programming Support

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	NOTES
Events	\$57,505.00	<p>Allows H&RV produce our existing annual events such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FlintConf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual conference for entrepreneurs, startups, and creatives. ○ Includes the kickoff event First Strike that we host the evening before the conference. ● Spark Creative Mixers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Quarterly networking and education event for creative entrepreneurs to connect and learn. ● Global Entrepreneurship Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Host a series of events to celebrate and support entrepreneurship held during Global Entrepreneurship Week.. ○ Support efforts towards GEW North Texas for increased regional awareness.
Programs + Curriculum	\$49,845.00	<p>Supports H&RV to maintain current programming efforts and support the ideation and development of other educational programming, mentorship, and curriculum that are targeted at serving current or aspiring technologists, women, and minority entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Current offerings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coffee + Convos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly small group mentorship with local subject matter experts and veteran entrepreneurs ● Denton Pitch Competition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote and vet applications, select 15-20 entrepreneurs to provide business and pitch coaching to, and then determine the 10 finalists that will pitch in front of the panel of judges
Marketing + Content	\$19,960.00	Funds would help H&RV create valuable content that works to raise awareness around the entrepreneurship community and the positive

		<p>impact it has on the economy and culture of Denton. Content created would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphics • Video Content • Blog posts • Press releases • Digital downloads + print resources
Ecosystem	\$30,860.00	<p>Funds support our efforts to participate in partner events and initiatives throughout the region with DISD, DMSA, Chamber of Commerce, Greater Denton Arts Council, etc. Our relationships and collaborations with regional and statewide organizations such as TWU CWE, UNT, Her Texas, GEW NTX, and others are supported by this funding.</p> <p>Additionally, the funds aid in our continued efforts to develop and convene the entrepreneur ecosystem through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stoke member events • Member directory • Entrepreneurial ecosystem map and that includes resources and companies in our local ecosystem
Total	\$158,170.00	

Economic Development Strategic Plan Goals

Through the public/private partnership with the City of Denton, H&RV can provide support and alleviate the time and energy required by city staff in pursuit of the goals laid out in the new Economic Development Comprehensive Strategic Plan. Stoke programs, established partnerships, and community-building efforts put us in a position to be highly impactful in meeting these goals, specifically around the Strategic Growth Area of Creative Denton.

[See attachment for goals and related work items completed.](#)

What success looks like

If we are able to accomplish the items listed above, we would be able to see success through

- A more diverse group of members and mentors at Stoke and more job and business creation in tech and creative industries.
- Increased regional awareness around the startup and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Denton.

- Increased support, resources, and connectivity for female and minority entrepreneurs.
- Video, audio, and written content that can be used to market Denton's creative and tech entrepreneurs that help tell the story of Denton.
- Growing engagement and followers on all social platforms and newsletters, further establishing Stoke as an expert resource for entrepreneurs.
- More connectedness between anchor institutions throughout the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in Denton.
- Increased awareness locally about the individuals and businesses that are making Denton a creative and unique community.
- A growing and more connected network of entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, and students.

What we have done

Hickory & Rail Ventures LLC has been managing Stoke Coworking since December 2018. Since then, we have helped educate, inspire, and empower entrepreneurs in Denton while providing a professional, collaborative, and engaging place for startups, freelancers, and remote workers to work.

We took over the lease on the 9,216 sq ft space in 2021 and negotiated with the building owner to build 12 private offices to accommodate more entrepreneurs. The additional offices made it possible for us to stay in our location and increase our membership numbers and revenue. Currently we have 20 private offices, 30 dedicated desks, and over 25 hot seats in our coworking space.

We recently signed a new 5 ½ year lease that includes an expansion into the suite next door. This 2,725 sq ft space includes 8 additional offices, two gender neutral restrooms, an improved mail center and copy room, and a multi-purpose Community Room that will allow us to grow our program capacity. The Community Room will be able to easily accommodate 25-30 people for workshops, larger meetings, and trainings hosted by Stoke and will also be available to rent to the community at large. When not being used for those purposes, it will serve as overflow coworking space as our current space is consistently close to capacity.

This expansion will mean we have a total of 28 private offices and lease a total of almost 12,000 sq ft of space to serve the small businesses, creatives, freelancers, and remote workers of Denton.

Over the years we have grown our team significantly. **What started as 1 FTE is now a team of 4 FTE positions to maintain the operations of our coworking space, our programs and events, and the marketing necessary to support continued growth.**

Membership

The work that our member companies perform is diverse. Stoke members work in a range of industries and their work includes software development, web and app design and development, digital marketing and sales, instructional design, content creation (podcast, video, photography, writing), cybersecurity, legal, bookkeeping, and IT support.

Through our member surveys we know that Stoke members have watched their businesses grow in a range of ways. Direct impact to the business growth due to being a member of Stoke includes gaining education and connecting with resources, networking with a diverse network of peers, hiring and getting hired from within the member community, and finding co-founders and collaborators.

Membership Outcomes:

- Currently have 99 member companies and 123 individual members
- 72% of members have reported experiencing business growth
 - Exceeding revenue goals
 - Landing new clients
 - Hiring new employees
 - Raising funds
 - Filing their LLC
 - Launching new product/service
- 8.9 Member satisfaction rate
- 7.5 Net Promoter Score

Programs and Event

Stoke has launched programs and events with content focused on the needs of small businesses and startups including business planning, content marketing, fundraising, product development, taxes, website design and development, sales, and more. **In 2024 alone we hosted 43 events with 646 attendees. Highlights include:**

- Global Entrepreneurship Week consisting of a Lunch & Learn, Big Ideas Creative Mixer, and the culmination of the third annual Denton Pitch Competition.
- The 7th annual FlintConf was held at the Patterson Appleton Arts Center in May. The kickoff event for the conference, First Strike, the evening before at Stoke.

- Launching quarterly AccelerateHER Denton alumni meetups and hosting a networking event for women entrepreneurs.
- Hosting five Spark Creative Mixers since kicking that series off in spring of 2024
- Hosting 9 Coffee + Convos sessions with 62 attendees (90+ events and 450+ attendees since inception in 2020)

Program Impacts:

- 95.7% give our program effectiveness an 8 or higher (out of possible 10)
- 7.8 Net Promoter Score
- Business outcomes include
 - Increased revenue/new revenue stream
 - New customers
 - New business partners
 - New hires
 - New services
 - Product launch
 - Started a new business
- Business skills gained include
 - Business financial literacy
 - Business planning
 - Improved workflows
 - Exposure to new customers and partners

The Denton Pitch Competition has become one of our largest events and programs that we do, with incredible outcomes for some of the winners of the event. Below are highlights of growth for some of the winners of the competition over the years.

Denton Pitch Competition Outcomes:

- Business
- 83% of survey respondents experienced business growth including
 - Increased Revenue
 - New Customers
 - New Partners
 - Job Creation
 - New Services and Products
 - New Business Launched
- 67% experienced customer growth
- 100% of survey respondents experienced growth in their teams
- Net Promoter Score is 8.7

Marketing + Content

Through our content creation and marketing efforts, we have provided a platform for both our members and the startup community of Denton to share their experiences through highlights on our blog, member spotlights.

Since launching in April of 2018, we have published 164 blog posts highlighting our services, events, and members, as well as providing helpful tips and information for entrepreneurs, freelancers, and remote workers. Additionally we have:

- Received earned media in the Denton Record Chronicle and Dallas Innovates on multiple occasions. Featured in Shoutout DFW, Denton County Magazine, NT Daily, North Texas INNO.
- Published a playbook to accompany FlintConf starting in 2021 and have created one each year since then.
- Created a digital resource guide for entrepreneurs into a downloadable resource on our website available for free.
- Created a YouTube channel to house the video content we've produced from our programs and events
- 2 professionally shot and produced videos by local entrepreneurs highlighting FlintConf and Denton Pitch Competition
- 12 blog posts written since October 2024 (164 written since 2018)
- 63% growth in newsletter subscribers since September 2024

Over time we have grown our presence online through our social media presence. We use both paid ads and organic content for our channels. Highlights include:

- Following on social media platforms to over 5,170 (21% growth over previous year)
- Monthly average reach of over 39,878 (77% growth over previous year)
- Average monthly engagement of 1,869 individuals (122% increase over previous year) .

Partnerships + Ecosystem Development

Stoke has adopted the tagline “cultivating community & empowering entrepreneurs,” and we collaborate with partners to amplify the impact of our efforts. We have partnered with community stakeholders and organizations including TWU Center for Women Entrepreneurs, UNT, NCTC, DISD, Denton Chamber of Commerce, TechMill, Denton Main Street Association, Denton Black Film Festival, Discover Denton, Stronger Denton, the Small Business Development Center, Denton Public Library, Her Texas, Greater Denton Arts Council, and others.

Through these partnerships, we have hosted and supported hackathons, networking mixers, panel discussions, tech-focused career fairs, business workshops, code schools, and a range of tech and business focused meetups. We are constantly working to develop new ways to work with these existing partners as well as pursue new partnerships.

Ecosystem outcomes:

- Thought leaders participating as mentors and workshop leaders for AccelerateHER and Coffee + Convo
- Partner participation as judges for Denton Pitch Competition
- Input being engaged for Innovation Summit
- Stoke members and program participants expanded networks

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF DENTON APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF DENTON AND HICKORY & RAIL VENTURES, LLC, REGARDING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR STOKE DENTON, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$158,170; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Denton (“City”) deems it is in the public interest and serves a municipal and public purpose to enter into an agreement with Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC (“HRV”), for the purpose of providing for a program to promote economic development through the joint effort of the City and HRV; and

WHEREAS, to achieve this public purpose, the City created Stoke Denton in 2016 to offer a co-working space and access to resources to support entrepreneurship, small business development, and the development of tech and tech-enabled businesses and workers; and

WHEREAS, Stoke Denton is focused on the recruitment and support of tech and tech-enabled startups, as well as memberships of businesses in other sectors that are complementary to a healthy startup community; and

WHEREAS, the City contracted with HRV on November 14, 2017 for the management and operation of Stoke Denton, and

WHEREAS, HRV has submitted a proposal to the City for the continued support and management of Stoke Denton and entrepreneurship focused programming beginning October 1, 2025 in the amount of \$158,170; and

WHEREAS, Article III, Section 52-a of the Texas Constitution and Chapter 380 of the Texas Local Government Code authorize the City to enter agreements that promote local economic development and stimulate business and commercial activity in the City of Denton; and

WHEREAS, the City agrees that HRV is uniquely positioned to continue management of Stoke Denton and can assist in the City’s strategic goals to support entrepreneurs, startups, and other small businesses and support the recruitment and growth of tech and tech-enabled businesses and workers;

WHEREAS, City Council deems it in the public interest to authorize such a payment and program agreement; NOW THEREFORE,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DENTON HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The findings and recitations contained in the preamble of this ordinance are incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2. The City Council finds that the Agreement between the City and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference (the “Agreement”) serves a

valid municipal and public purpose and is in the public interest.

SECTION 3. The Agreement shall be effective on October 1, 2025 and shall remain in full force and effect until September 30, 2026.

SECTION 4. The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute the agreement between the City and Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC, and the expenditure of funds and transfer of property pursuant to the Agreement is hereby authorized.

SECTION 5. The City Council hereby expressly delegates the authority to take any actions that may be required or permitted to be performed by the City under the Agreement to the City Manager of the City, or the City Manager's designee.

SECTION 6. This Ordinance shall become effective upon its passage and approval.

The motion to approve this ordinance was made by _____ and seconded by _____, the ordinance was passed and approved by the following vote [____ - ____]:

	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Mayor Gerard Hudspeth:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vicki Byrd, District 1:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Brian Beck, District 2:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Suzi Rumohr, District 3:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Joe Holland, District 4:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Brandon Chase McGee, At Large Place 5:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jill Jester, At Large Place 6:	_____	_____	_____	_____

PASSED AND APPROVED this the _____ day of _____, 2025.

GERARD HUDSPETH, MAYOR

ATTEST:
INGRID REX, CITY SECRETARY

BY: _____

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:
MACK REINWAND, CITY ATTORNEY

BY:  _____

October 8, 2025

STOKE PARTNERSHIP

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Brittany Sotelo
Economic Development Director

The Stoke logo features the word "Stoke" in a brown, serif font. The letter "o" is replaced by a stylized flame or drop shape with concentric layers of orange, yellow, and blue.

Stoke

Cultivating Community + Empowering Entrepreneurs

PRESENTED BY :
HEATHER GREGORY
www.stokedenton.com

HISTORY OF STOKE

July 2016

- City of Denton 5 year lease at 608 E Hickory St Suite 128 begins

December 2017

- Hickory & Rail Ventures, LLC and City of Denton enter into public/private partnership to operate Stoke. City pays rent and handles maintenance and repairs.

June 2021

- City's lease at 608 E Hickory St Suite 128 expires.

July 2021

- H&RV signs lease with Martino Group, adds 12 new private offices
- City/H&RV partnership shifts to focus on entrepreneurship program support.

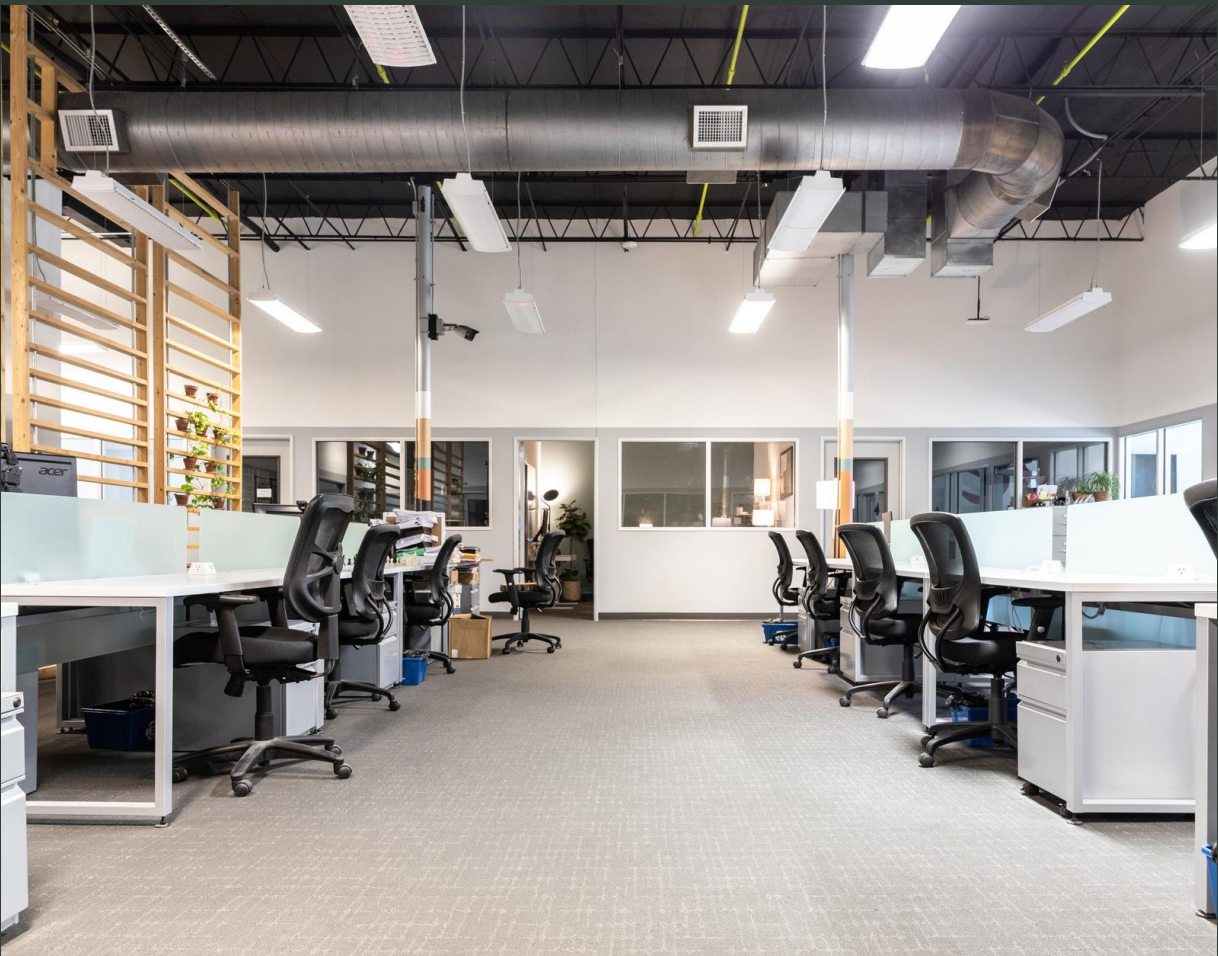
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024

- Unanimously approved by EDPB and City Council to continue support entrepreneurship program via our public/private partnership.

2025

- H&RV renewed lease on Suite 128 with expansion into an additional 2,725 sq ft
- H&RV adds 8 private offices, 2 unisex restrooms, and a large multiuse community room

EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025




MEMBER EVENTS

by **Varsity Sports Massage**

STOKE PRESENTS

BYOC: ULTIMATE CHEESE PARTY



**FEB 14
12PM**

THE SEQUEL

**BRING A CHEESE OR
ACCOMMODATION WE'LL BRING
THE BEVS.**

Stoke's Annual

Festivals & White Elephant

Wednesday, 18th December 2024
4pm-5pm at the Community Table.
\$20 and under white elephant gift.

MEMBERSHIP IMPACTS

- 100 monthly member companies on average
- 72% of member survey respondents over the last 24 months say their business has experienced growth
 - Sales growth
 - Job growth
 - New clients
 - Raising funds
 - Service/product expansion
- 8.9/10 Member Satisfaction Rate
- 7.5/10 Net Promoter Score

I think the staff at Stoke do a tremendous job of creating community among the people using the space!

Stoke Member

[since becoming a member at Stoke] I've increased my number of clients from 3 to 50; I have 3 part-time employees with one more soon to join; I have 4 volunteers; and won the community award for the Pitch Competition.

Stoke Member

PROGRAMS + EVENTS



DENTON
PITCH
COMPETITION



GLOBAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
WEEK
NORTH TEXAS



DENTON, TX

GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK



LUNCH + LEARN

SKY MCCLURE
Improve Google Ads
NOV 18
12PM-1PM



COFFEE + CONVO

ANITA O'NEAL CPA, CFA
Business Finances
NOV 19
9AM-10AM



BIG IDEAS CREATIVE MIXER

NOV 20
6PM-8PM



DENTON PITCH COMPETITION

NOV 21
4:30PM-7:30PM



FREEBIE FRIDAY FREE COWORKING

NOV 22
9AM-5PM



stoke



BIG IDEAS

creative mixer

November 20 6pm - 8pm
Denton County Brewing Company

stoke



GLOBAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
WEEK
NORTH TEXAS



- Hosted 5 events with over 175 attendees throughout the week
- Showcased 9 Big Ideas at the Creative Mixer including the forthcoming Art-O-Mat machine
- Showcased 15 businesses through the Pitch Competition + Entrepreneur Expo

EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025

stoke





DENTON PITCH
COMPETITION

+ ENTREPRENEUR EXPO

COME OUT AND SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR DENTON'S
ENTREPRENEURS AND SMALL BUSINESSES AS TEN
INNOVATIVE DENTON-BASED COMPANIES PITCH FOR
THEIR CHANCE TO WIN CASH FOR THEIR BUSINESS
GOALS.

AT THE ENTREPRENEUR EXPO - LEARN ABOUT DENTON'S
ENTREPRENEURS AS THEY COME TOGETHER TO
SHOWCASE THEIR BUSINESSES AND IDEAS.

NOV
21

SUNAGO BELL
101 S LOCUST ST
8TH FLOOR
DENTON, TX 76201

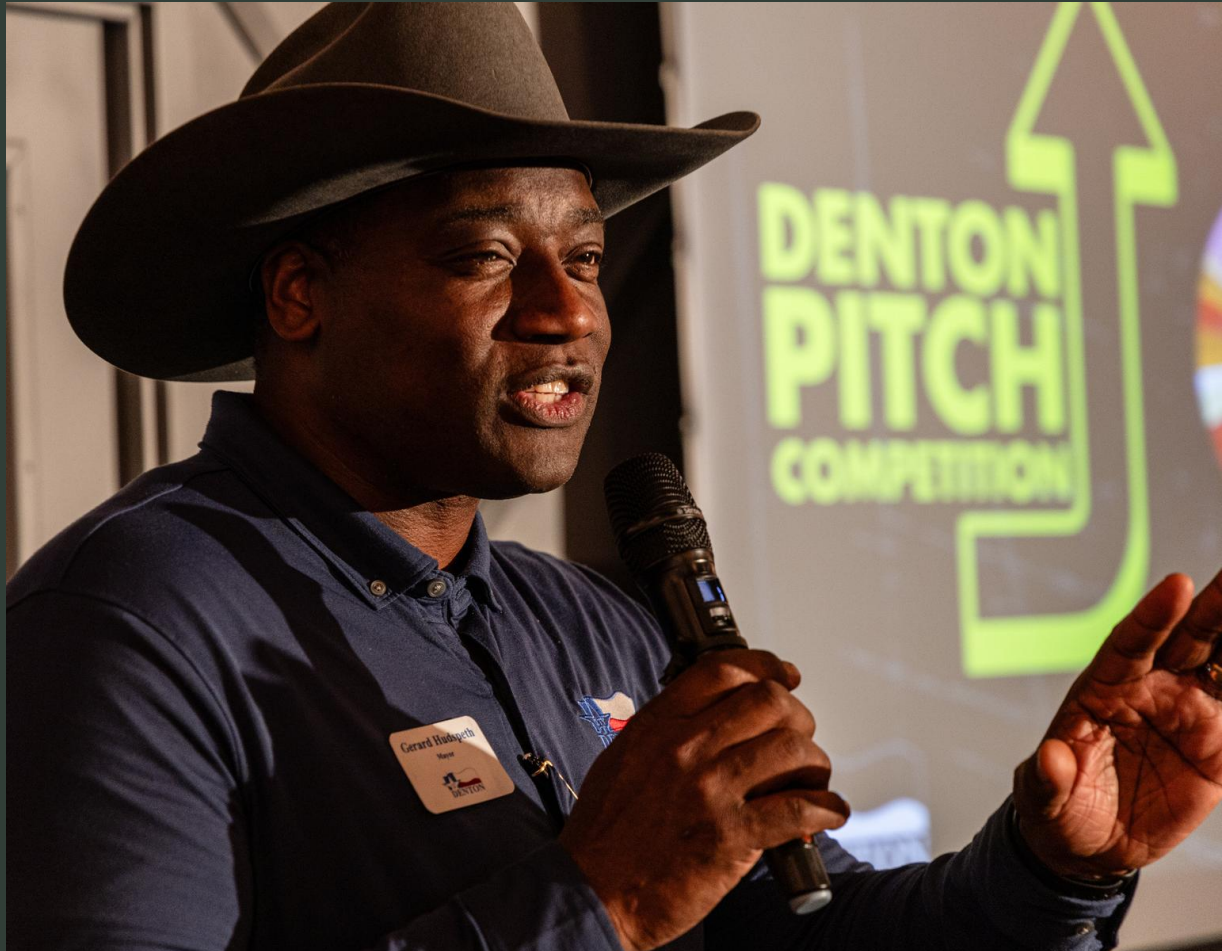
4:30-
7:30 PM

DOORS: 4:30 PM
PITCHES: 5:00 PM
NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR & EXPO: 6:30 PM

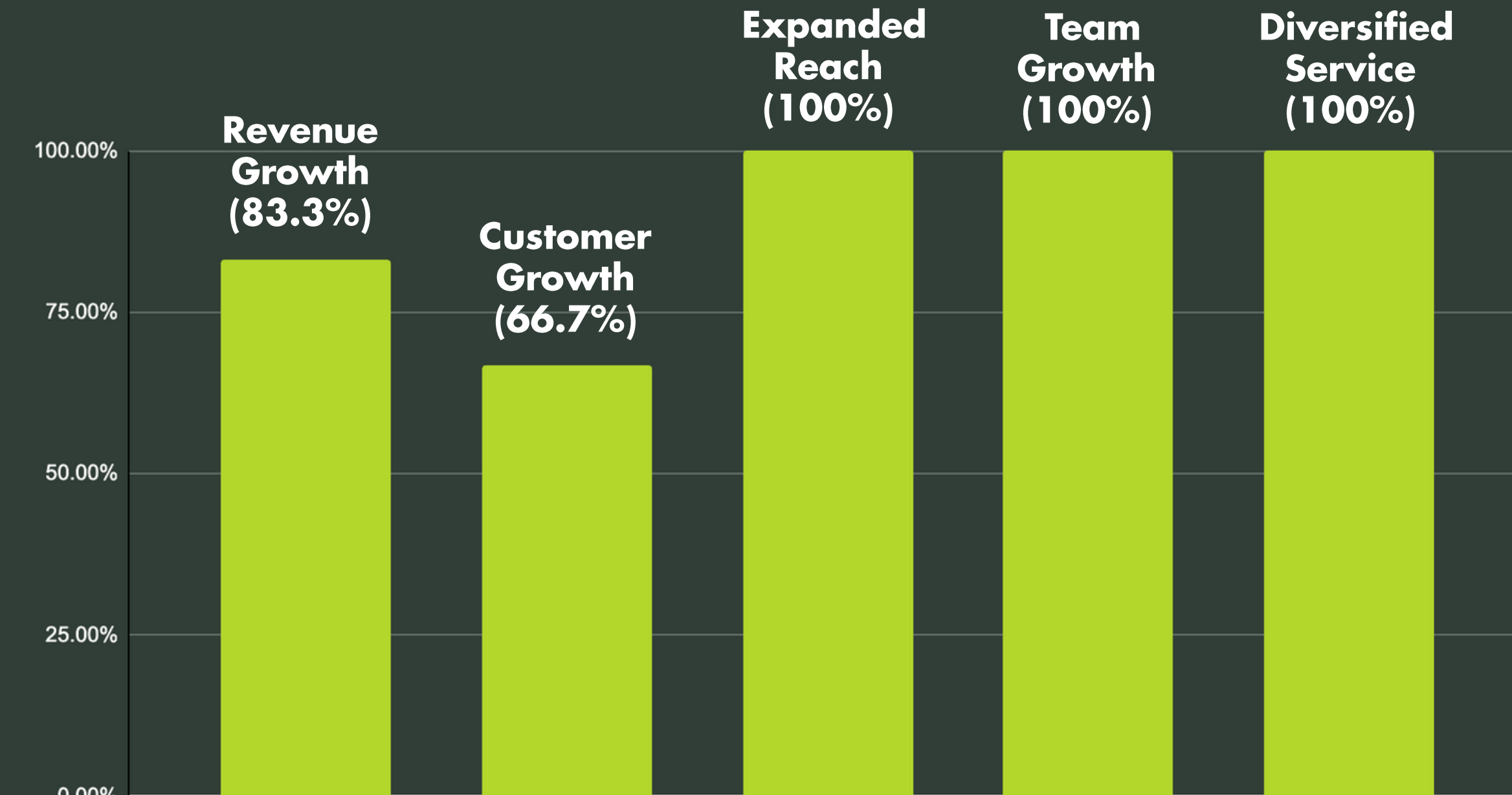
FREE TO ATTEND, RSVP:





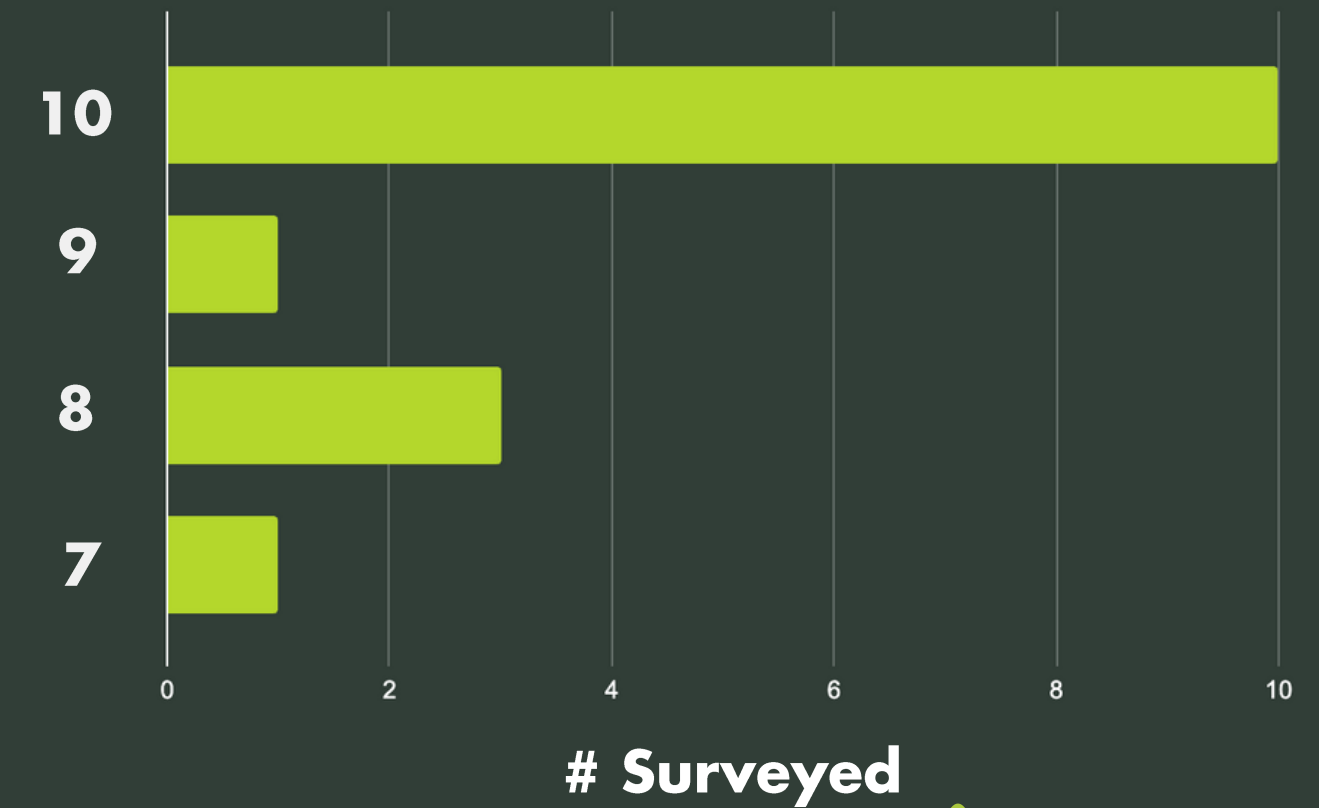


- Coached over 40 entrepreneurs
- \$30,000+ awarded to Denton businesses
- 80% of winners have been women
- 40% of winners have been BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+



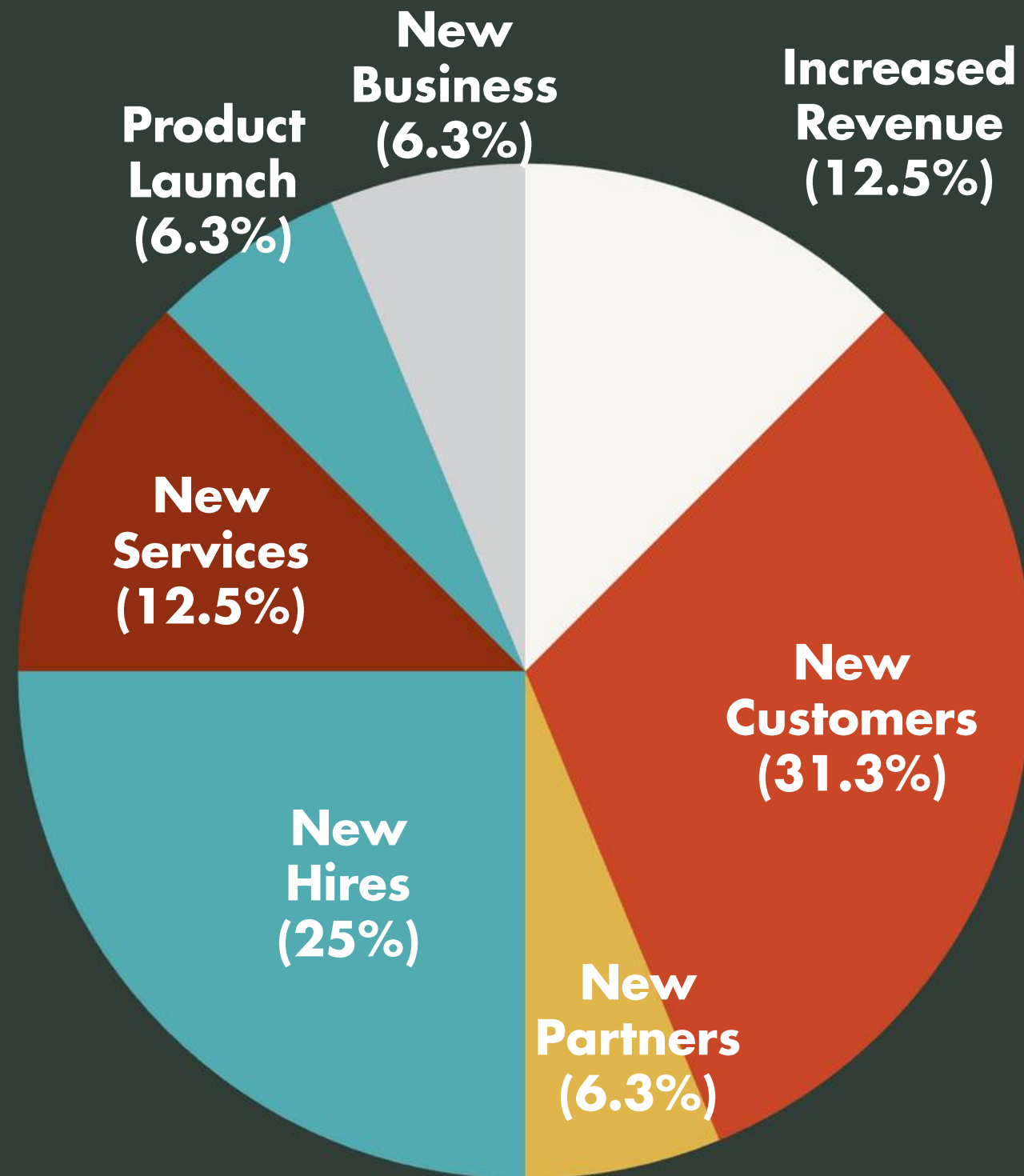
EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025

Effectiveness



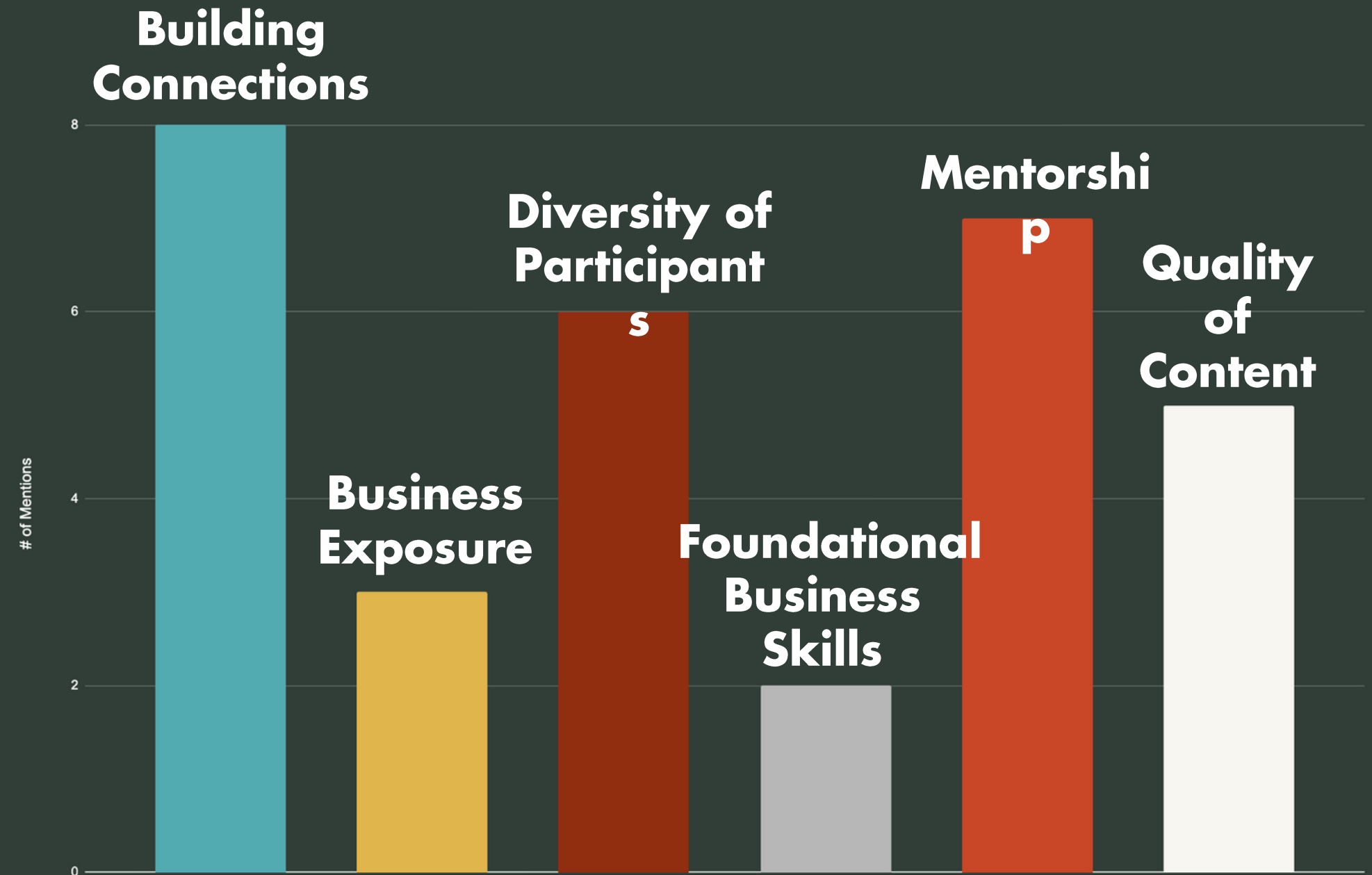
**DENTON
PITCH
COMPETITION**

DPC + ENTREPRENEUR EXPO IMPACTS



Reported Business Growth

EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025



Most Beneficial
Aspects

2022 WINNER UPDATES



- Used funds to purchase improved equipment to enhance offerings
- Launched new branch of business, creating an entirely new customer base and acquiring 19 new customers to date
- Revenue Growth: Projected 26% revenue growth (YoY) for 2025
- Client Growth: 21% increase in customers over last year (with 4 months left in the year)
- Job Growth: Hired first full time staff in March 2025. Over 20 independent contractors engaged annually
- Expanded Service Offerings: Added video content packages and social media management services to meet evolving client needs

2023 WINNER UPDATES

- Used funds to go from private pay only to accepting insurance.
- Currently accepts 6 insurance carriers with more in the works
- Revenue Growth: 400% revenue growth since 2023
- Customer Growth: 350% increase in patient visits per week
- Job Growth: 300% increase in staff
- Improved Efficacy: 92% of patients that are discharged are discharged for having met goals vs attrition for moving
- Expanded Service Reach: Between 150–200% growth in school screening services
- Customer Validation: Best of Denton in 2024. Nominated for 3 Best of Denton categories in 2025



2024 WINNER UPDATES

- Used funds to furnish second therapy office in order to hire a second therapist for the practice
- Revenue Growth: Projected 68% revenue growth (YoY for 2025)
- Customer Growth: 45% increase in clients
- Job Growth: 100% increase in staff
- Expanded Service Reach & Service Diversification: Pursuing EMDR training, providing more services and expanding clientele
- Enhanced Community Impact: Newfound ability to regularly donate to community causes, pay for sponsorships, and attend more tabling events



AccelerateHER

2025 Cohort



Monique Segovia
The Brown Thumb



Alex Murray
Unleash You Coaching



Julie Pavelek
Denton Classic Pilates



Cat Colonna
Varsity Sports Massage



Katina Butler
Hood Sensory



Angela Brewer
Plot Your Path Travel



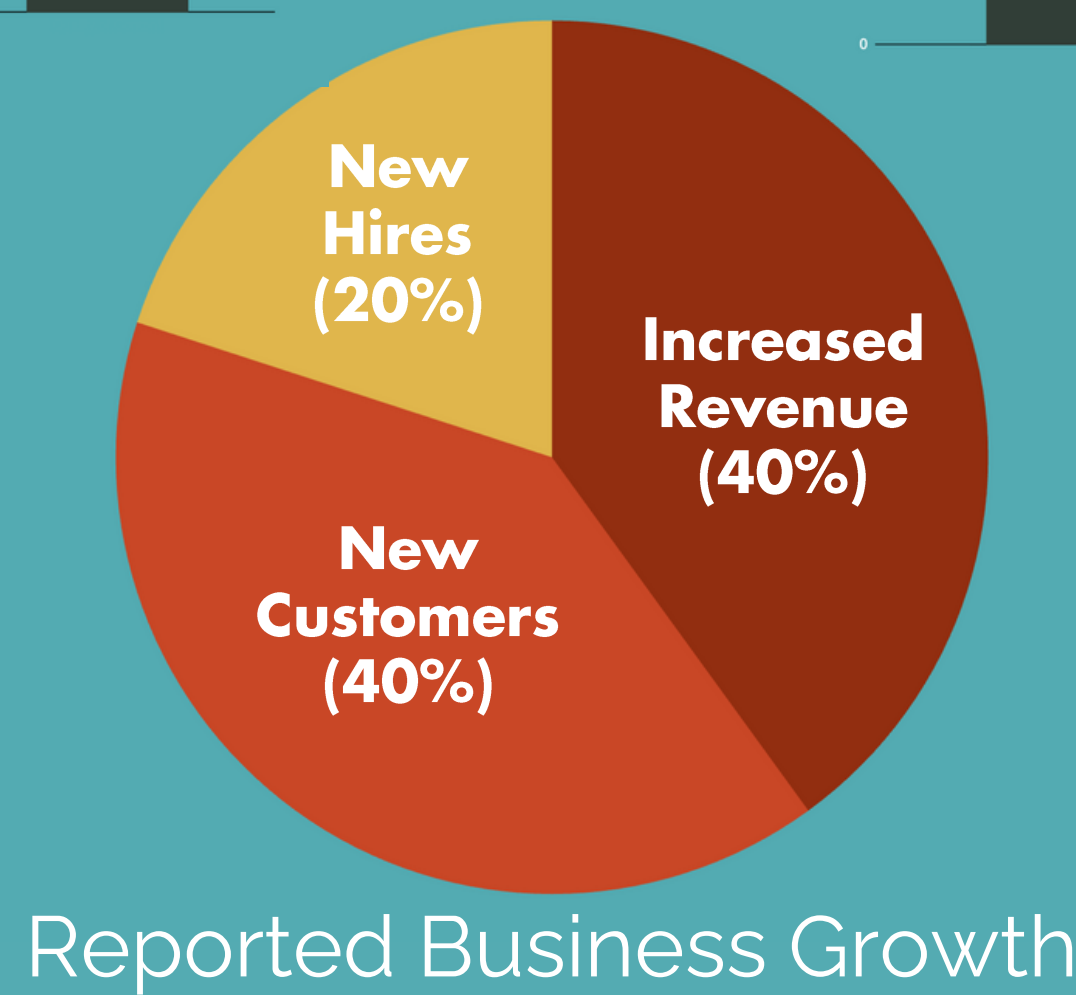
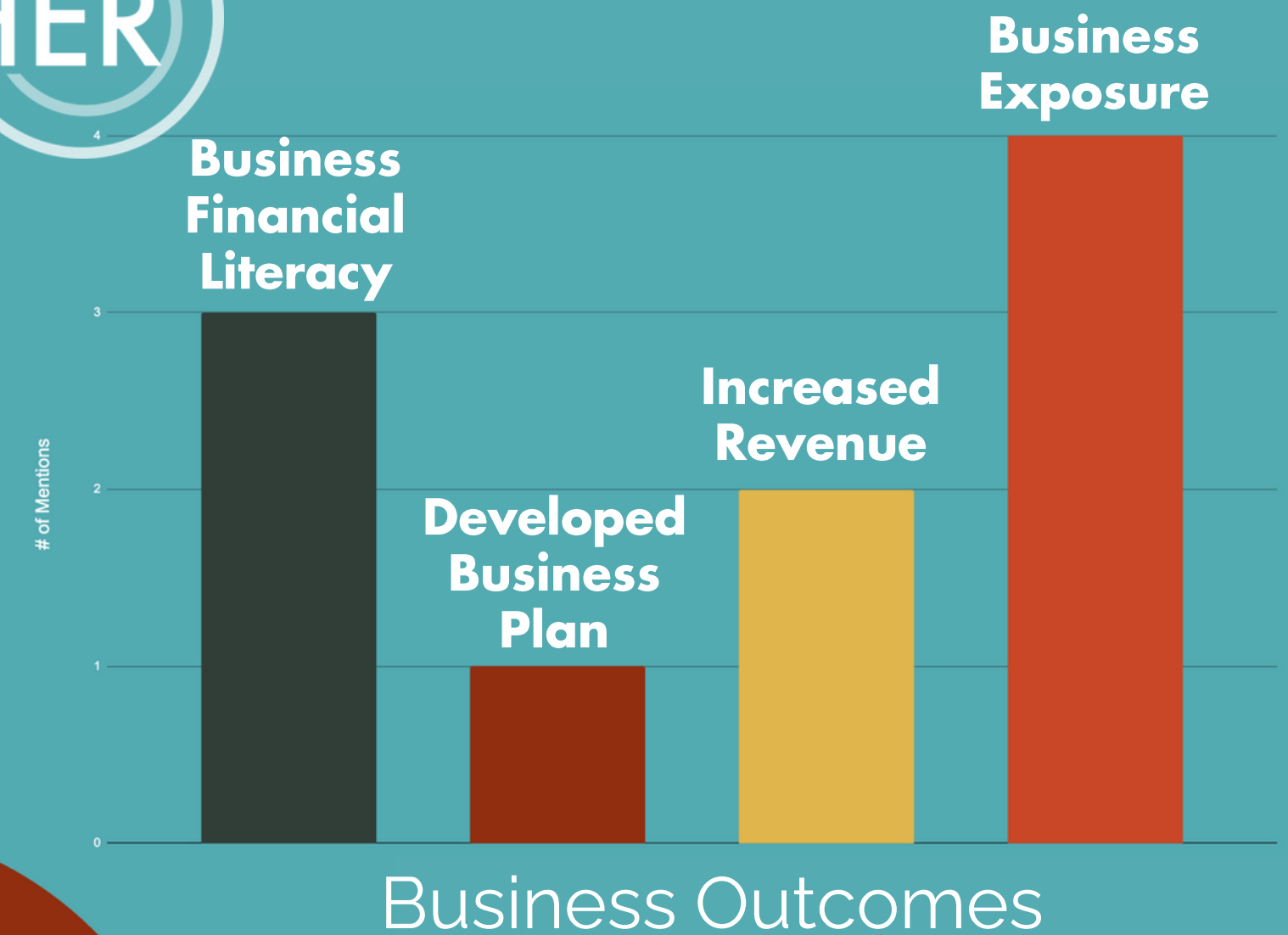
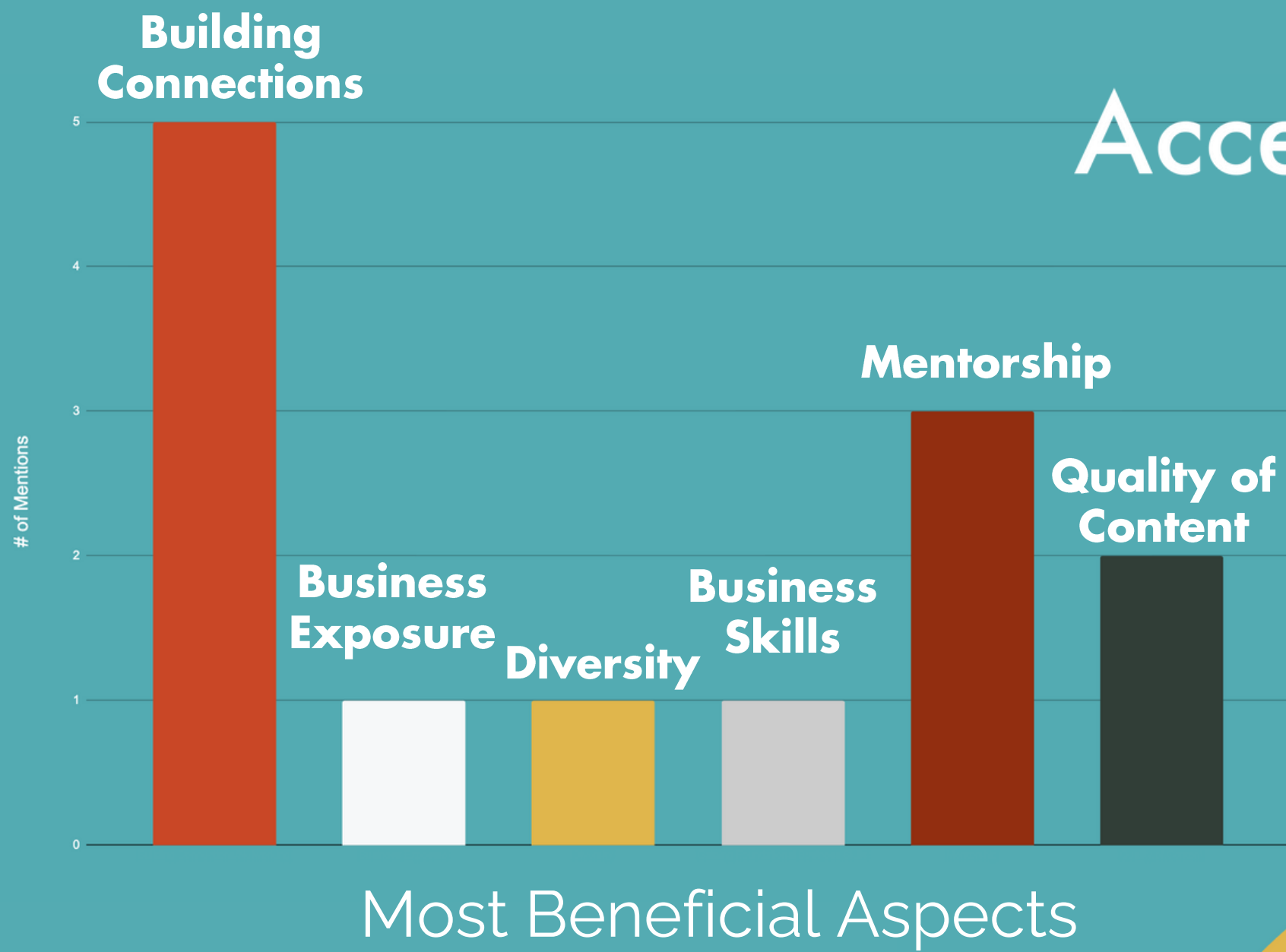
Gisella Glasgow
Events GK



stoke



- 5 cohorts completed since 2020
- 34 female founders in total have completed the 5 month program
- Began hosting Alumni meetups on a quarterly basis
- 2025/2026 cohort of 7 begins in September



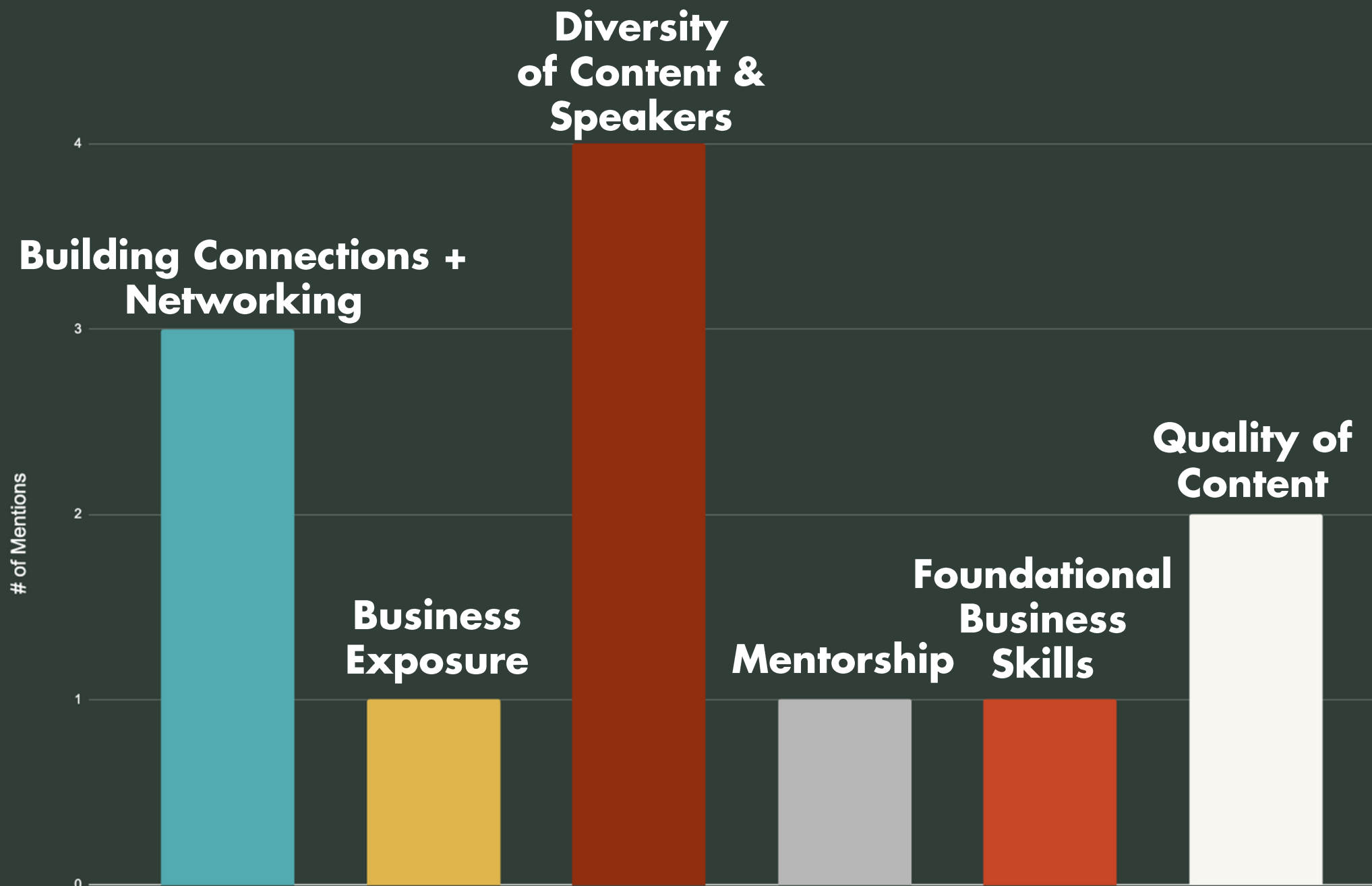


- Focus is networking + education for creative entrepreneurs
- 5 events since launching in March 2024
- 109 participants
- Attendees have included designers, musicians, videographers, writers, makers, artists, photographers, retail business owners and more

COFFEE + CONVO

morning meetup with **stoke**

Most Beneficial Aspects



EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025

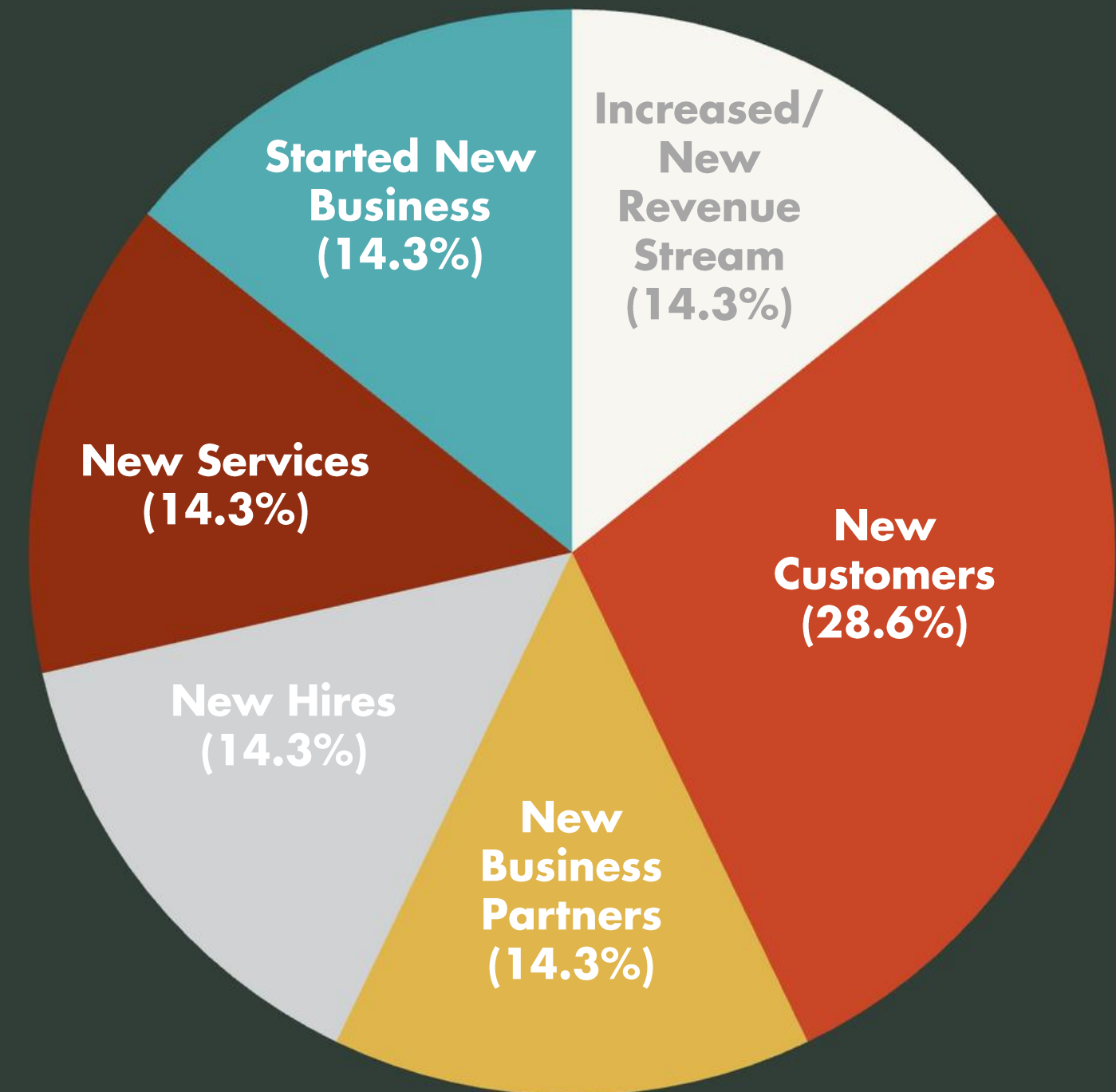
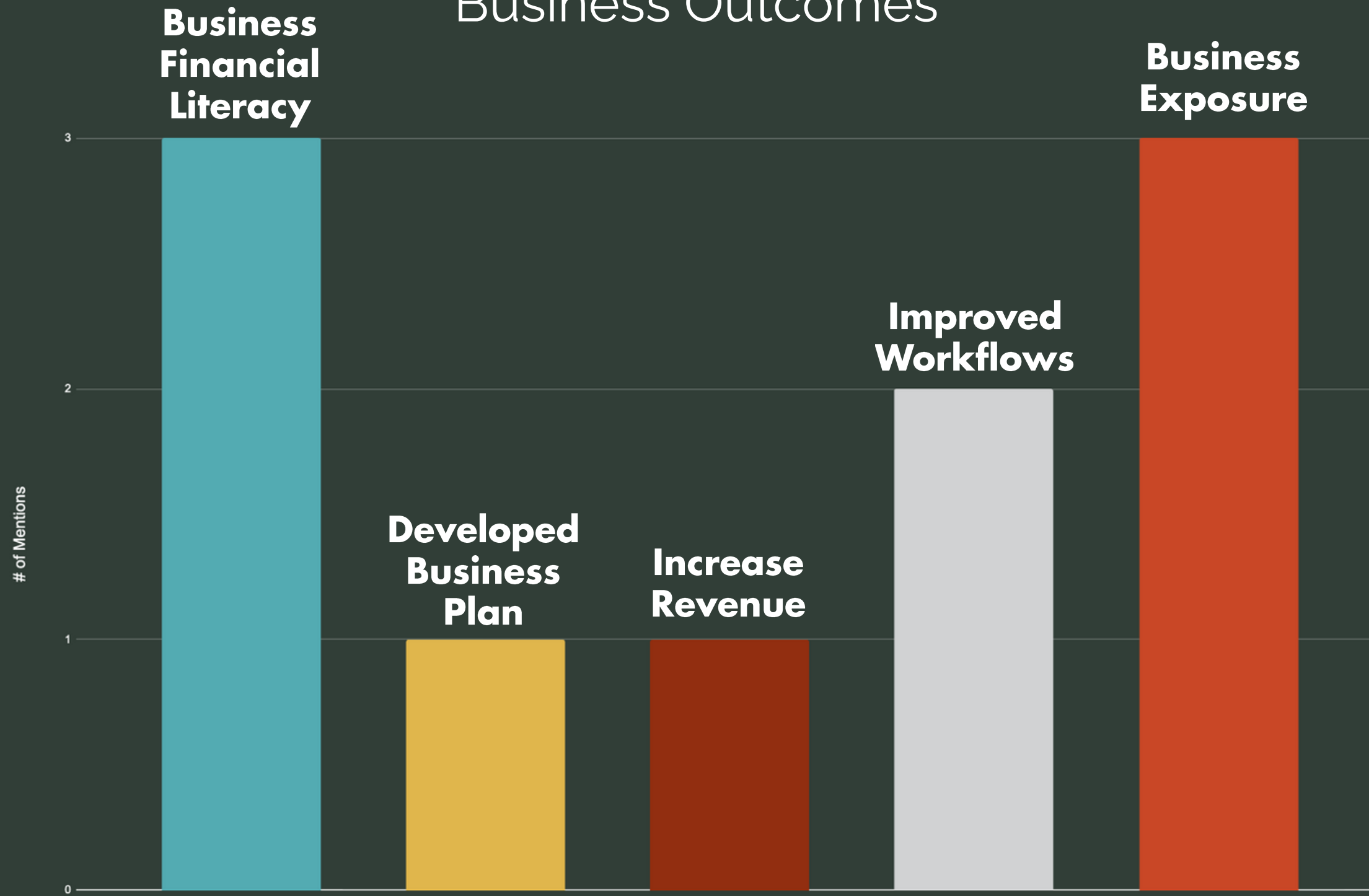




morning meetup with **stoke**

Business Outcomes

Reported Business Growth



stoke presents **MAY 8**

flint conf

DENTON'S CONFERENCE FOR
CREATIVES AND ENTREPRENEURS

CONTENT: 8:30AM - 4 PM HAPPY HOUR: 4 PM	MAY 8, 2025	PATTERSON-APPLETON ARTS CENTER 400 E HICKORY ST. DENTON TX, 76201
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 **Headshots**

 **Networking**

 **Speaker Sessions**

 **Breakfast + Coffee + Lunch**

 **Hands-on Workshop**

 **Breakout Sessions**

LEARN. CONNECT. GROW YOUR BUSINESS.

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
STOKEDENTON.COM/FLINT

@STOKEDENTON
LEARN MORE AND GET
YOUR TICKETS TODAY!





Elle Hall
(Girlfriend's, Budget LLC.)



Juli James
(EqALL)



Monique Segovia
(The Brown Thumb)



Janette Orona
(Azul Therapies LLC.)



Briana Wucinski
(SUNSEV Creative)



Jacqueline Hayes
(Empowered Living Group)



Lillia Whittington
(Denton Sewing School)



Neil Foote
(emcee)



stokedenton.com/flint

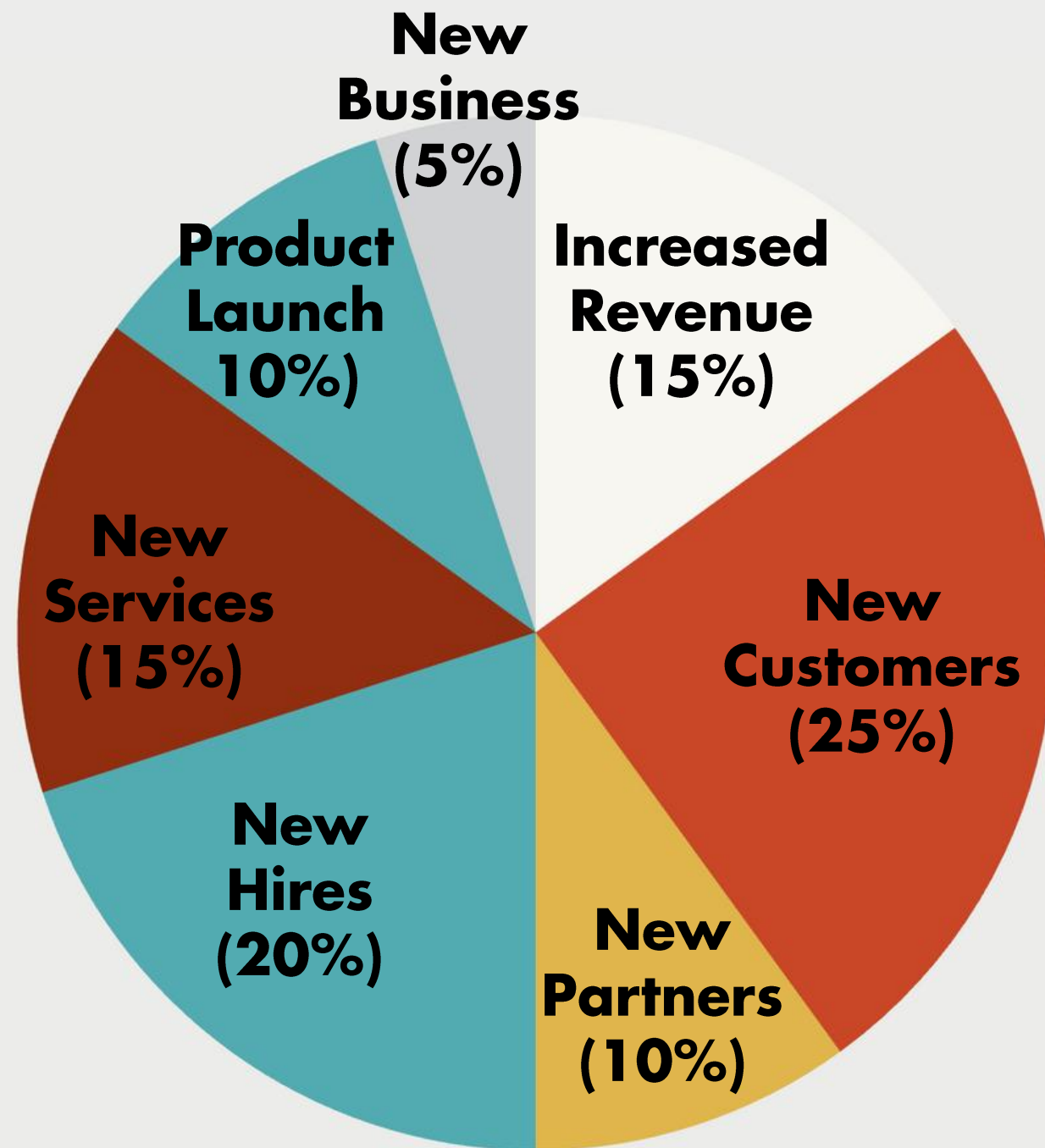


Emily Roden
(ReadyRosie, Frankly)

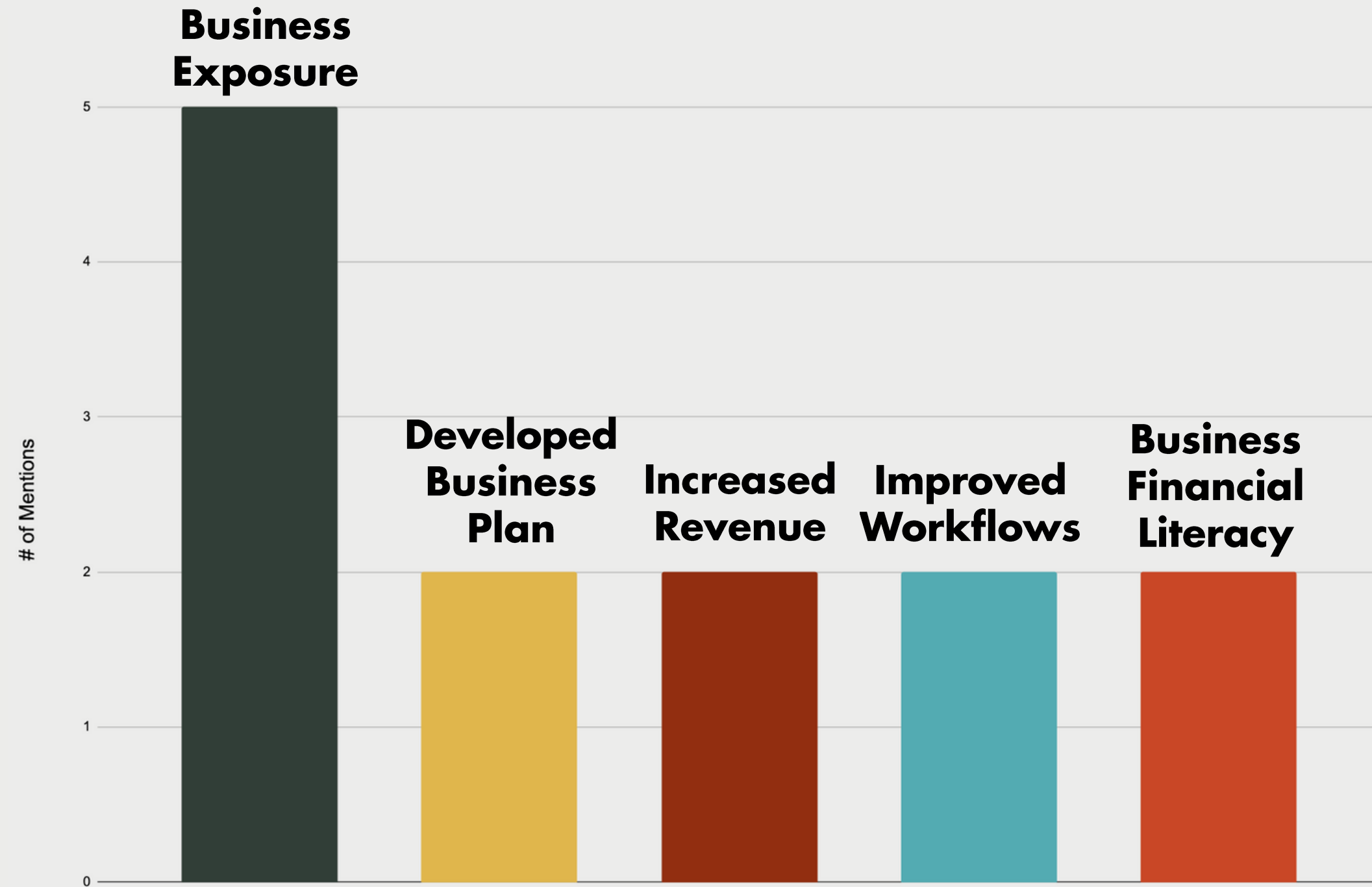
- 85 attendees
- Lineup included 6 speaker sessions, 1 workshop, 2 networking opportunities, and First Strike kickoff event
- Free headshots for attendees
- Playbook provided for attendees including worksheets, resources, and networking prompts

flintconf

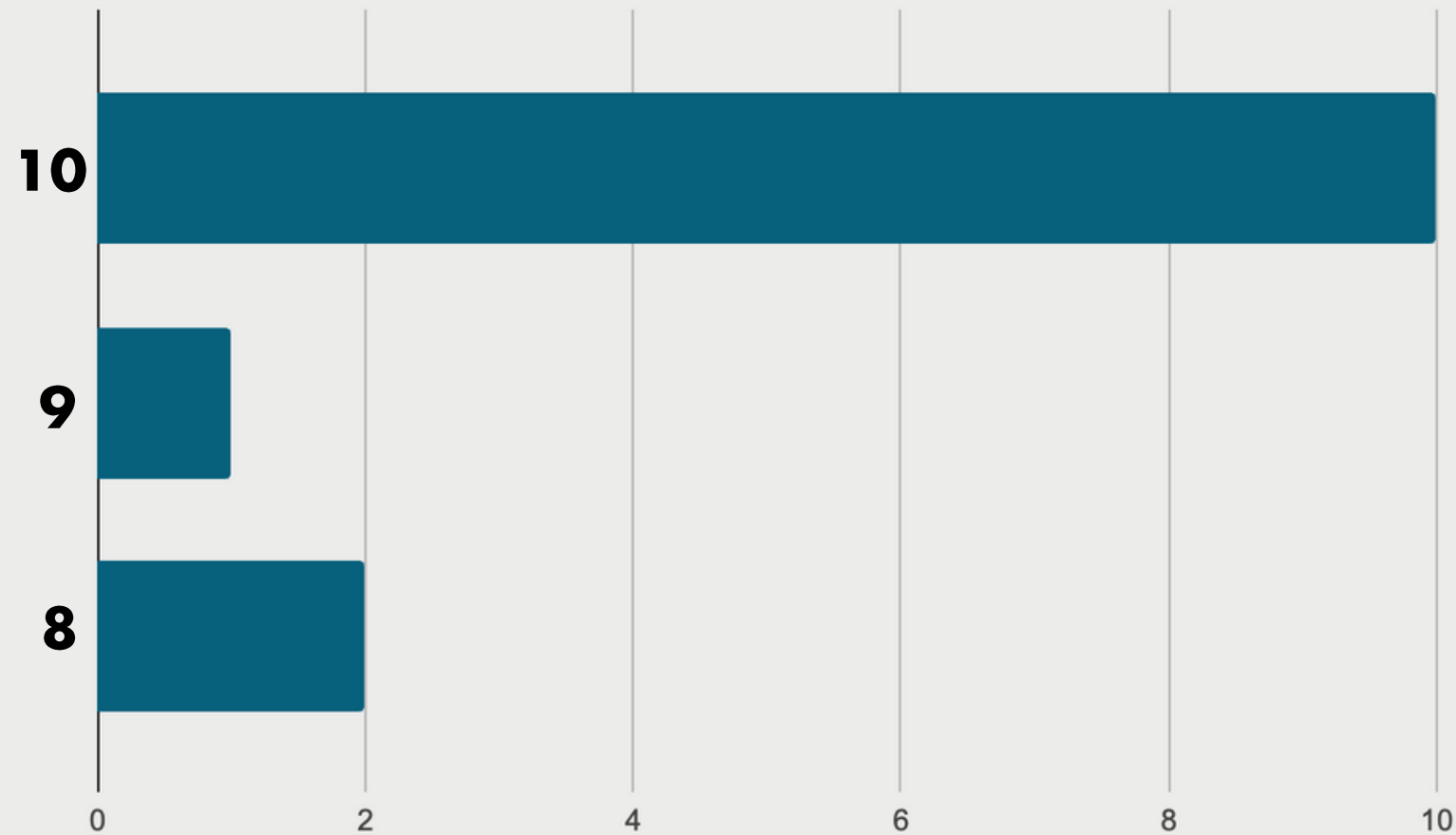




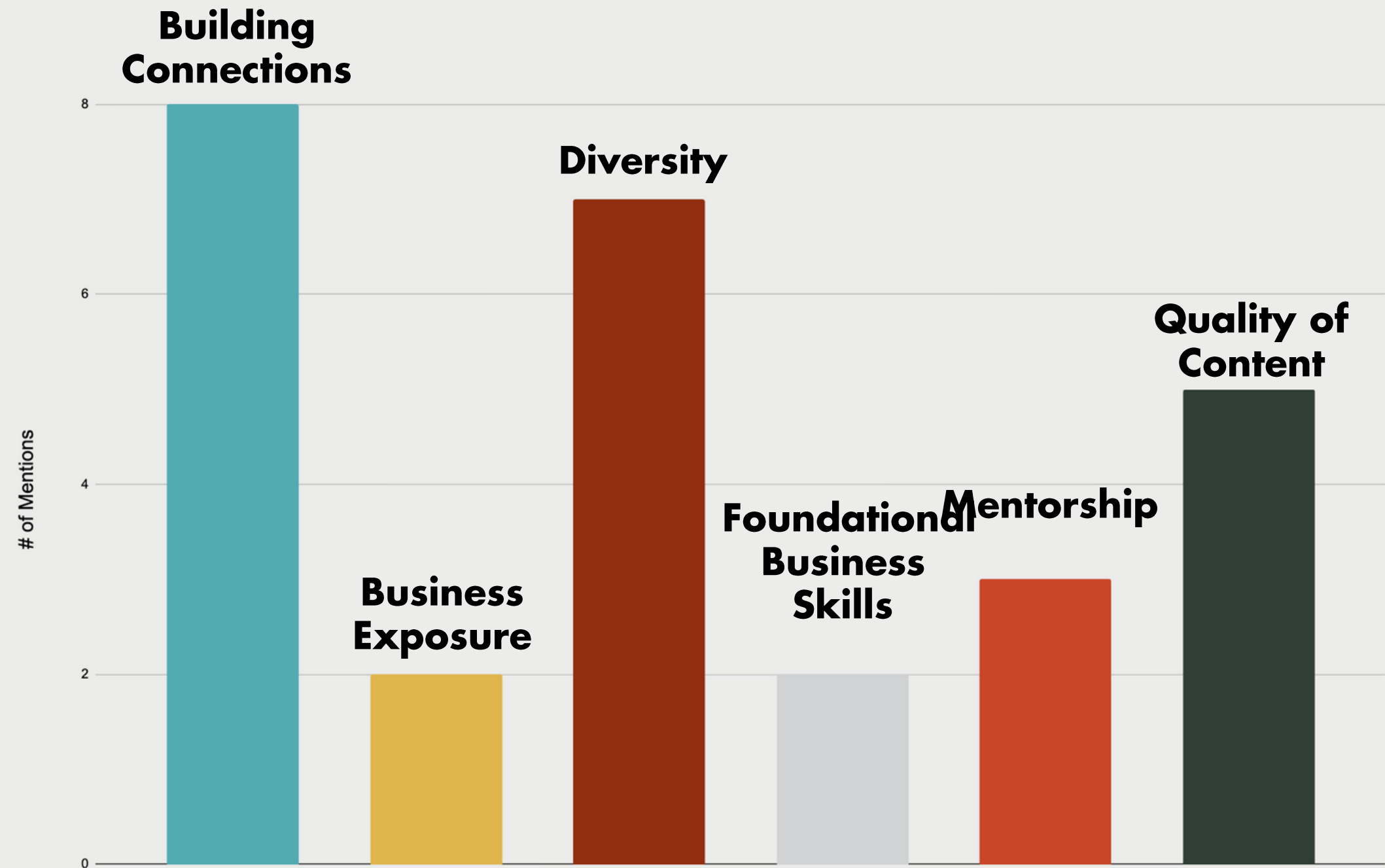
Reported Business Growth



Business Outcomes



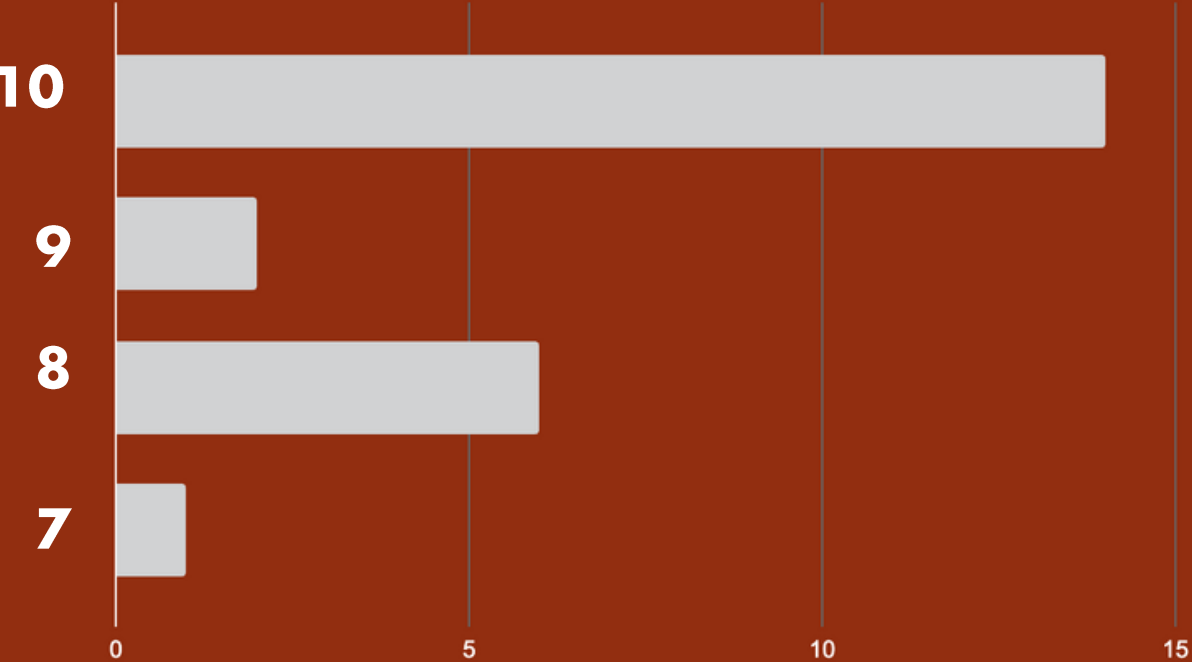
Effectiveness



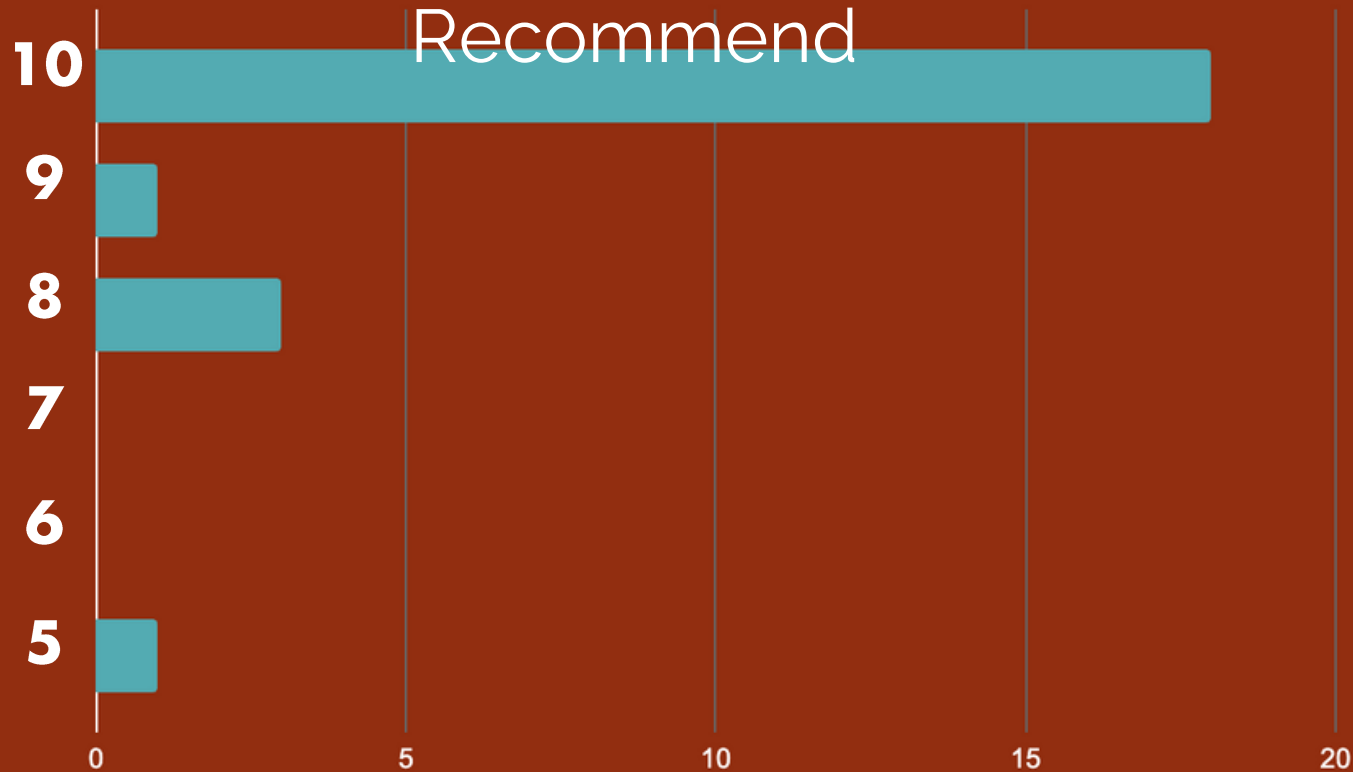
Most Beneficial Aspects

PROGRAM IMPACTS + OUTCOMES

Overall Program Effectiveness

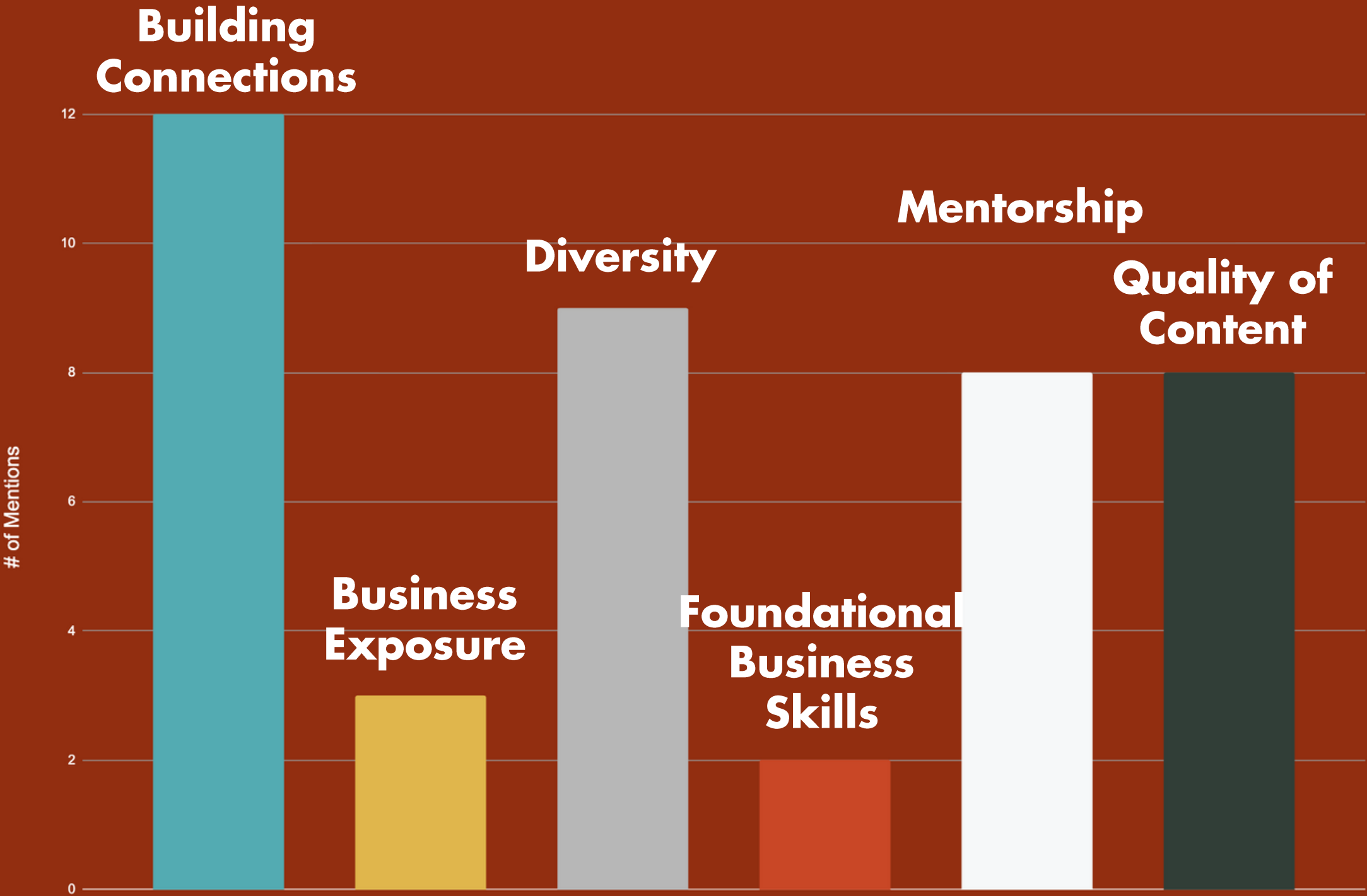


of Surveyors
Likelihood to Recommend



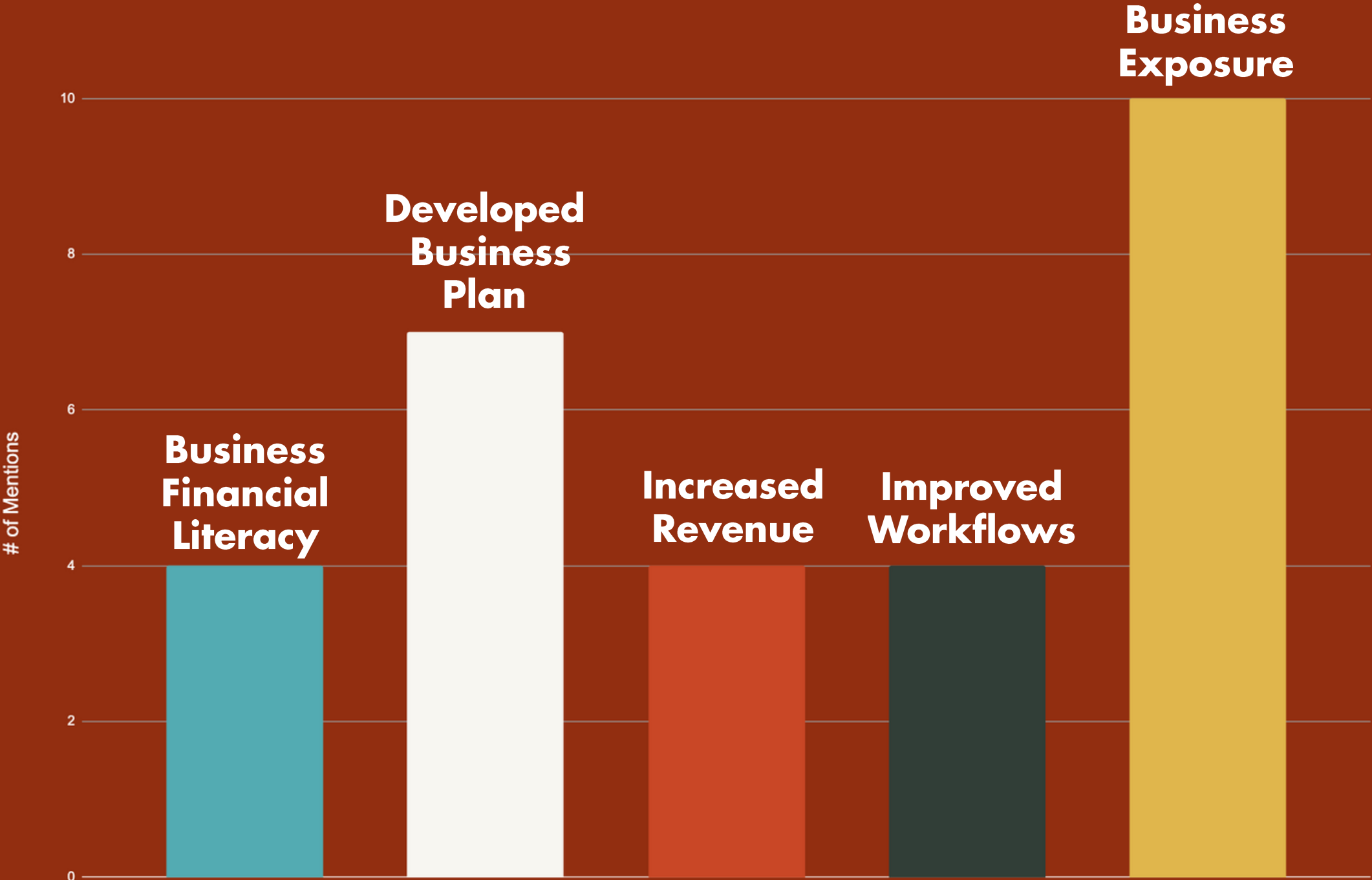
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Most Beneficial Aspects of Stoke Programs

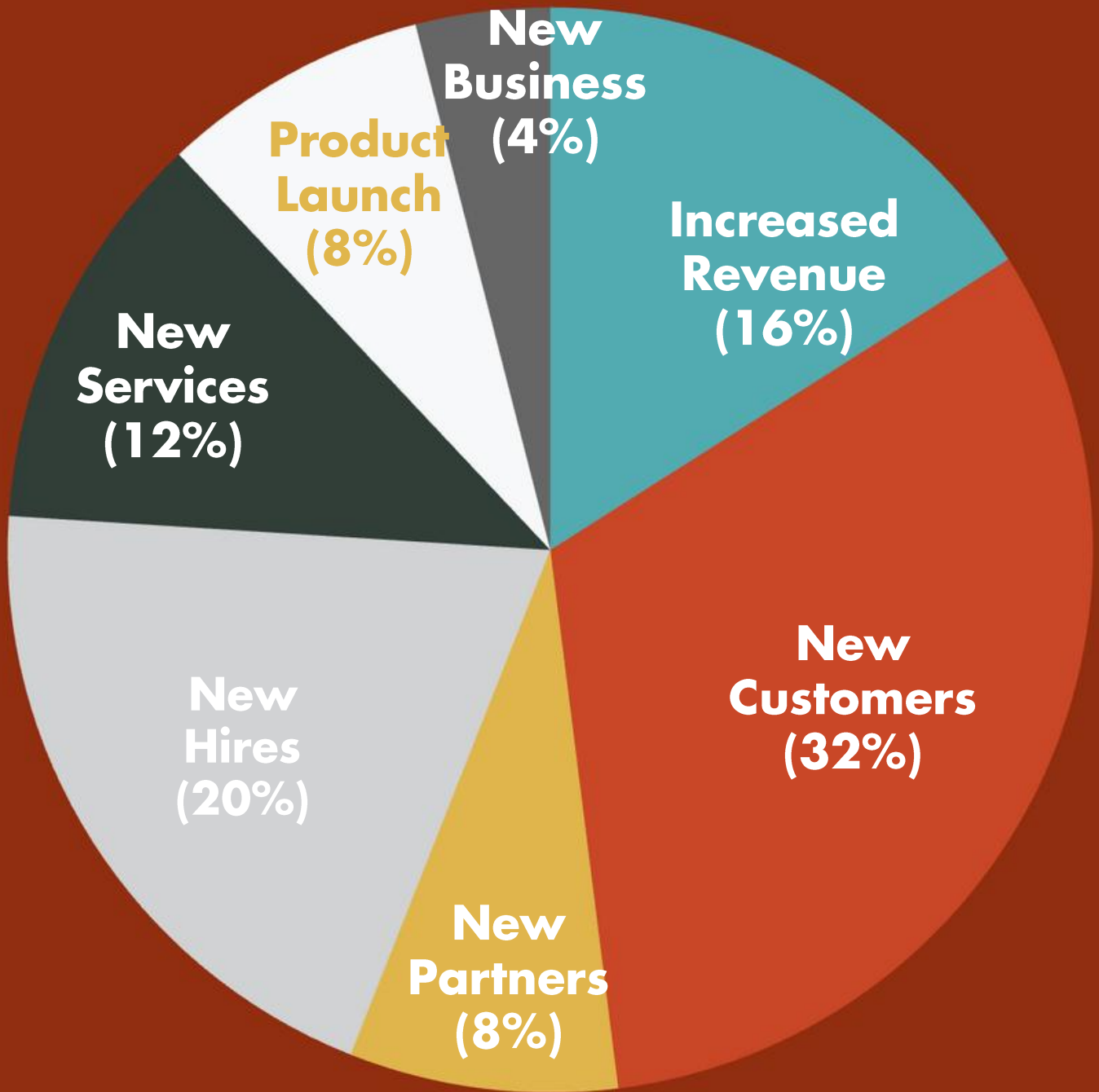


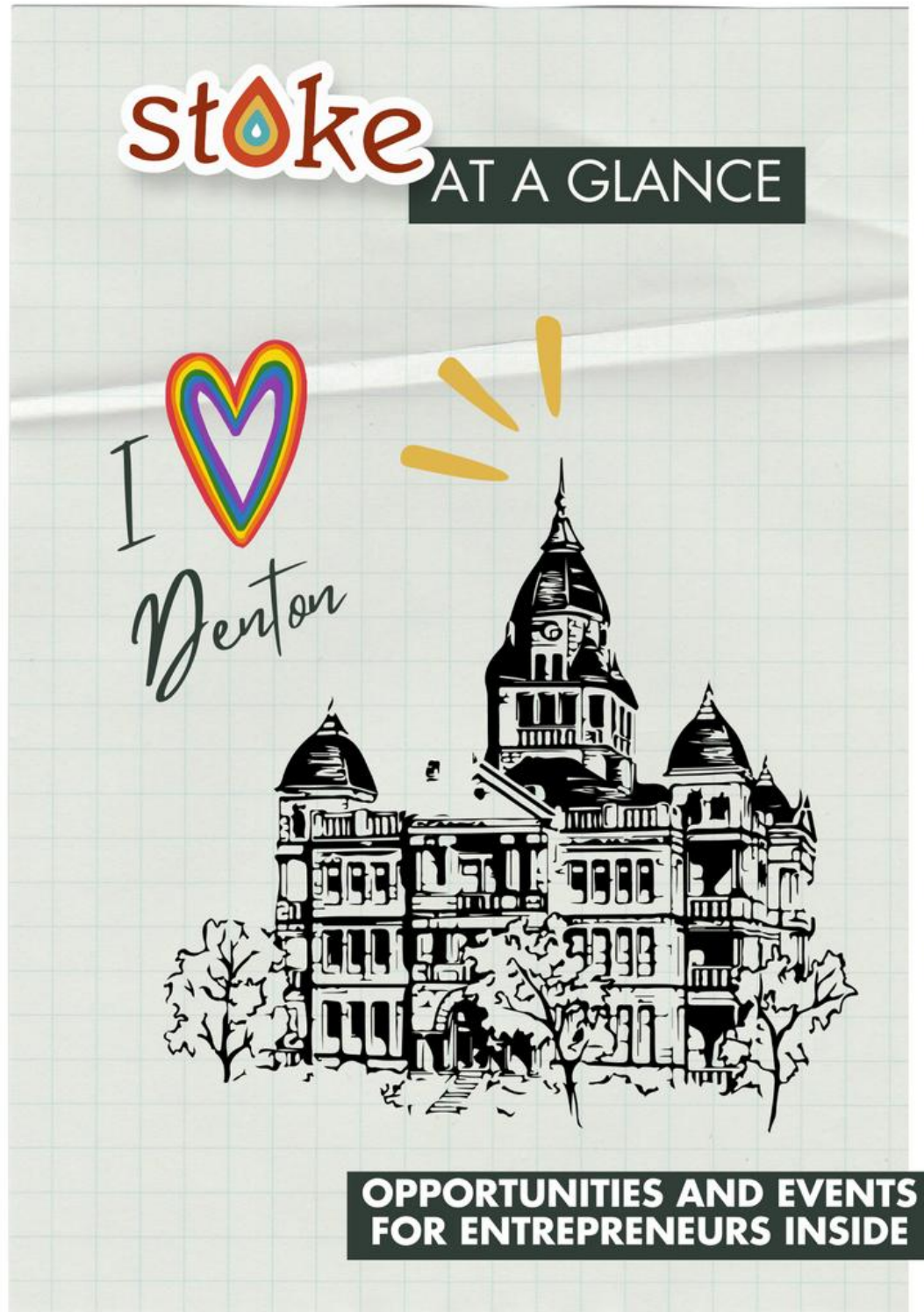
PROGRAM IMPACTS + OUTCOMES

Business Outcomes for Stoke Programs



Reported Business Growth from Stoke Programs





THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

EDP25- 029; October 8, 2025

CONTRACT BACKGROUND

- The City seeks to support, encourage, and promote the public purpose of driving new business creation and job growth by fostering a sustainable startup community for entrepreneurs primarily in early-stage tech and tech-enabled businesses.
- In 2016 the City created a co-working space (Stoke) with access to resources to support entrepreneurship, small business development, and the development of tech and tech-enabled businesses and workers.
- In 2017 the City contracted with Hickory Rail Ventures for the management and operation of Stoke.
- The proposed contract is for one year with a not-to-exceed amount of \$158,170

PROPOSED CONTRACT UPDATES FY25-26

- Added:
 - “Generate earned media” – Item was included in the work plan, but not the agreement.
 - Tracking economic impact (sales tax, property tax, etc.) of the businesses Stoke serves including competition awards recipients and member companies.
 - Additional reporting metrics
- Changes in FY 25–26 contract include removal of completed items and items no longer relevant.
 - “Revise the funding requirements for the EDP Investment Fund to be more inclusive of innovative startups that might not meet current thresholds for employment and capital investment .”
 - Investment Fund was updated in 2022.
 - “Launch maintain accelerator program that focuses on women entrepreneurs in partnership with Texas Woman’s University.”

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- 2B: Creative Denton
- Goal 3: Strengthen Community Inclusion

NEXT STEPS

- City Council – October 21

2B. CREATIVE DENTON



THE VALUE

Denton's reputation for arts and culture makes it a standout destination within the DFW Metroplex. Its cultural assets not only foster quality of place but also create an economic advantage. Over the past decade, a budding creative economy has attracted entrepreneurs to Denton, making the City a hub for big ideas and innovation. Denton has a vibe unlike any other community in the region. By continuing to nourish this creative ecosystem, the City can flourish and become a vibrant destination for talent and investment.

THE ANCHORS

From higher education to coworking spaces, Denton's creative economy is anchored by diverse and thriving institutions. TWU and UNT are catalysts for innovation and drivers of the City's talent pipeline. Stoke is the heartbeat of Denton's startup scene, providing a hub for entrepreneurs near downtown amenities. Embracing and strengthening these anchor institutions will not only attract growth but also ensure that the creative elements at the heart of Denton's culture will continue to thrive.

THE ECOSYSTEM

In recent years, a strong cluster of education technology companies has emerged in Denton. The presence of two universities along with strong support for entrepreneurs has made Denton an ideal location for edtech startups. Events such as the Denton Black Film Festival have also drawn tourists to Denton and strengthened community ties. However, Denton's creative economy requires additional support, including stronger connections to the DFW tech scene and venture capital. The City can nurture Creative Denton by cultivating relationships with DFW capital sources and raising public awareness of Denton artists and entrepreneurs.

Photo by Annie Spratt via Unsplash

GOAL 3 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY INCLUSION



Align economic, workforce, and community development efforts to meet critical community needs and to strengthen community inclusion.

Many in the economic development field are beginning to recognize the importance of inclusive economic growth to provide opportunity for all residents, particularly those with lower incomes or levels of educational attainment. An economic development strategic plan that does not address how to deliver broader prosperity to all constituents would be shortsighted. This is especially imperative for Denton, which has a larger share of low-income residents than its peers. The median household income in Denton is \$56,500, falling below the overall median household income in Denton County of \$83,400 (American Community Survey, 2018 5-year sample).

Efforts to grow Denton's existing industries and attract new business investment will not guarantee that Denton's vulnerable communities will be able to share in this prosperity. Denton cannot afford to leave existing residents behind. Addressing the challenges and barriers that low- and moderate-income residents face will be crucial to creating a more economically vibrant and resilient community.

The City's Economic Development Department and Community Development Department teams already recognize this reality and are collaborating on efforts to expand affordable housing in Denton. This collaboration should be expanded on and integrated with workforce development priorities. Expanding affordable housing options and building career pathways in high-demand industries are two central ways that the City can align its economic, workforce, and community development efforts to benefit Denton's most vulnerable residents.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

3.1. WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE. Successful communities across the US are focused on aligning the needs of businesses and creating workforce pathways for residents. Denton should convene businesses, training providers, and nonprofits to work together in creating meaningful career pathways in critical sectors.

3.1.1. Build off the workforce collaborative, detailed in Strategy 1.4, to focus on workforce needs during the period of economic recovery.

- Convening a workforce collaborative should be an ongoing task of the City's Economic Development Department team.
- Connect any efforts of a Denton-specific workforce collaborative to the work of the DCWSLT focused on the ALICE population.

3.1.2. Continue to convene regular meetings with major employers, Workforce Solutions, NCTC, and other providers to identify business needs and connect unemployed residents to jobs.

THANK YOU



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

ACM/CFO: Christine Taylor

DATE: October 8, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and make a recommendation to City Council regarding a request to nominate Tetra Pak Inc., to the Office of the Governor Economic Development and Tourism through the Economic Development Bank as an Enterprise Project.

BACKGROUND

Texas Enterprise Zone Program

The Texas Enterprise Zone Program is a State of Texas economic development tool to promote job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas of the state. Successful applicants are eligible to apply for state sales and use tax refunds on qualified expenditures, based on their capital investment and number of jobs created/retained. The possible value a project could receive is determined by multiplying the maximum number of jobs allocated by the maximum potential refund in the level of capital investment category.

Level of Capital Investment	Maximum Number of Jobs Allocated	Maximum Potential Refund	Maximum Refund Per Job Allocated
<i>Half Enterprise Project</i> \$40,000 to \$5,000,000 or more	250	\$625,000	\$2,500
<i>Enterprise Project</i> \$5,000,000 to \$149,999,999	500	\$1,250,000	\$2,500
<i>Double Jumbo Project</i> \$150,000,000 to \$249,999,999	500*	\$2,500,000	\$5,000
<i>Triple Jumbo Project</i> \$250,000,000 or more	500*	\$3,750,000	\$7,500

**Double and Triple Jumbo Projects may not count retained jobs for benefit.
A Double Jumbo and Triple Jumbo Project must create at least 500 jobs.*

To apply for the TEZ program, a project must first seek a nomination from a local community. Communities have a limited number of project designations (Denton has 6) and the state has a maximum number of designations that can be awarded per biennium (105). This is the second project nominated this biennium by Denton. If both projects are approved, this would leave 4 nominations for the biennium.

A project can be located either inside or outside of a designated Enterprise Zone. For projects within an Enterprise Zone, the company must commit that 25% of new/retained employees will meet economically disadvantaged criteria, or be residents of an enterprise zone, or are veterans. For projects outside of an Enterprise Zone, the company must commit that 35% of new/retained employees will meet economically disadvantaged criteria, or be residents of an enterprise zone, or are veterans.

Key aspects of the Texas Enterprise Zone (TEZ) Program are:

- The local city or county must nominate the qualified company as an Enterprise Project.
- Projects may be physically located in or outside of an Enterprise Zone. The location determines the percent of new employees that must meet economically disadvantaged or Enterprise Zone residence requirements.
- The Enterprise Project must be nominated for a designation period of not less than one year and up to five years, non-inclusive of a 90-day window prior to the application deadline. Employment and capital investment commitments must be incurred and met within this timeframe.
- Applications are scored on criteria that reflect the distress of the area, state priority, and local and private effort.

A simplified graphic of the TEZ process is included below.



Proposed Nomination: Tetra Pak Inc.

Tetra Pak Inc. is an existing Denton business, which provides its clients with aseptic and other packaging products. The company is a multinational food packaging and processing sub-company of Tetra Laval, with head offices in Lund, Sweden, and Lausanne, Switzerland. Tetra Pak Inc. offers packaging, filling machines and processing for dairy, beverages, cheese, ice-cream and prepared food, including distribution tools like accumulators, cap applicators, conveyors, crate packers, film wrappers, line controllers, laminators and straw applicators.

The City nominated Tetra Pak Materials for a Texas Enterprise Zone project in August of 2018, which involved an additional investment of \$15 million in business personal property at their Denton facility, as well as retaining their existing workforce of 375 full-time employees, at that time. This investment consisted of installing a new laminator machine that enabled Tetra Pak to meet increasing demand for aseptic screw-top sports nutrition, protein drink and other containers. Tetra Pak originally received a four-year 65% tax abatement for expanding their facility (32,000 square feet) and relocating their corporate headquarters operations from Chicago to Denton in 2013. The company created a total of thirty-two new jobs with the expansion.

About the Project

Tetra Pak Inc. plans on investing over \$12 million in upgrades to their current facility, which includes the following:

- \$1.5 million to replace gas-powered rooftop HVAC units with more energy-efficient electric alternatives
- \$7 million for facility enhancements such as employee breakroom upgrades, new sprinkler systems, and replacement of roofs, doors, and windows
- \$3.5 million to complete the build-out of the Customer Innovation Center, which will serve as a collaborative space where Tetra Pak partners can meet directly with clients to develop innovative and customized product packaging solutions

If designated as an Enterprise Project by the State of Texas, Tetra Pak Inc. commits to hiring twenty-five percent (25%) economically disadvantaged persons, enterprise zone residents or veterans, for its new or replacement personnel for certified jobs, during its Enterprise Project designation. Tetra Pak Inc. currently employs 593 employees and plans to create 20 new jobs that will qualify for program. The company may qualify for up to \$1,250,000 under the program (Enterprise project: 500 (cap) new and retained jobs x \$2,500 = \$1,250,000 maximum potential refund).

The benefits of nominating Tetra Pak Inc. to the TEZ program:

- To Tetra Pak Inc.:
 - Company can apply to receive a state sales and use tax refund
- To Denton:
 - 25% of new jobs created or existing positions that turn over will be filled by people who are either economically disadvantaged, are residents of an enterprise zone within the City's jurisdiction, or are veterans.
 - This nomination has no fiscal impact to City.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Nominating Tetra Pak Inc. as an Enterprise Project has no fiscal impact to the City.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – Draft Resolution

Exhibit 3 – TEZ Program Overview

Exhibit 4 – Presentation

Respectfully submitted:
Erica Sullivan
Economic Development Program Administrator

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF DENTON NOMINATING TETRA PAK INC, TO THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM THROUGH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK AS AN ENTERPRISE PROJECT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Denton (“City”) has previously passed Ordinance No. 2016-213, electing to participate in the Texas Enterprise Zone Program (“Program”) authorized by Chapter 2303, Subchapter F of the Texas Enterprise Zone Act, Texas Government Code (“Act”), and the local economic development incentives available in the City are the same on this date as those outlined in Ordinance 2016-213; and

WHEREAS, the City amended Ordinance No. 2016-213 to revise the City’s liaison for communications and to clarify the list of possible incentives that the City may offer through Ordinance 18-1366; and

WHEREAS, the local economic development incentives offered under this resolution and available in the City are the same on this date as those outlined in Ordinance 2016-213, as amended by Ordinance 18-1366; and

WHEREAS, the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and Tourism (“EDT”) through the Economic Development Bank (“EDB”) will consider the project proposed by Tetra Pak Inc. (“Tetra Pak”) as an enterprise project pursuant to a nomination and an application made by the City; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to create the proper economic and social environment to induce the investment of private resources in productive business enterprises located in severely distressed areas of the City and to provide employment to residents in such areas and to other economically disadvantaged individuals; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Act, Tetra Pak has applied to the City for designation as an enterprise project; and

WHEREAS, the City finds that it meets the criteria for designation as an enterprise project as required by the Act based on the following factors:

1. Tetra Pak is a “qualified business” under Section 2303.402 of the Act because it will be engaged in the active conduct of a trade or business at a qualified business site within the governing body’s jurisdiction located outside of an enterprise zone and at least twenty-five percent (5.0%) of the business' new employees will be residents of an enterprise zone, economically disadvantaged individuals, or veterans; and
2. There has been and will continue to be a high level of cooperation between the public, private, and neighborhood entities in the area; and

3. The designation of Tetra Pak as an enterprise project will contribute significantly to the achievement of the plans of the City for development and revitalization of the area.

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that Tetra Pak meets the criteria for tax relief and other incentives adopted by the City and nominates Tetra Pak for enterprise project status on the grounds that it will be located at the qualified business site, will create a higher level of employment, economic activity and stability; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is in the best interest of the City to nominate Tetra Pak as an enterprise project pursuant to the Act; NOW, THEREFORE,

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DENTON HEREBY RESOLVES:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are adopted as findings of the City Council.

SECTION 2. The City Council nominates Tetra Pak, to the EDT, through the EDB, as an enterprise project that shall take effect on the date of designation of the enterprise project by the EDT and terminate five (5) years after the date of designation.

SECTION 3. Tetra Pak, is a “qualified business”, as defined in Section 2303.402 of the Act, and meets the criteria for designation as an enterprise project, as set forth in Section 2303, Subchapter F of the Act.

SECTION 4. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

The motion to approve this resolution was made by _____ and seconded by _____, the resolution was passed and approved by the following vote [___ - ___]:

	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Gerard Hudspeth, Mayor:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vicki Byrd, District 1:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Brian Beck, District 2:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Suzi Rumohr, District 3:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Joe Holland, District 4:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Brandon Chase McGee, At Large Place 5:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jill Jester, At Large Place 6:	_____	_____	_____	_____

PASSED AND ADOPTED this the _____ day of _____ 2025.

GERARD HUDSPETH, MAYOR

ATTEST:
INGRED REX, INTERIM CITY SECRETARY

BY: _____

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:
MACK REINWAND, CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
Deputy City Attorney

TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRAM



Economic Development & Tourism | Office of Texas Governor Greg Abbott

Program Objective

The Texas Enterprise Zone program is an economic development tool for local communities to partner with the State of Texas to encourage job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas of the state.

Participation

For a business to receive state tax incentives under the Texas Enterprise Zone Program, the local community must nominate it for enterprise project designation. Each local community has a limited number of projects allocated and the state has a maximum number of 105 that can be awarded per biennium. Applications are accepted quarterly with the deadlines on the first working day of March, June, September, and December. Applications received after 5:00 p.m. for each quarterly application deadline date will not be considered for that current round.

FY 20-21 Biennium Project Deadlines

Quarterly Deadline	90-Day Window	Expiration Date	Job Certification
9/1/2021	4/26/2021	9/1/2026	3/1/2028
12/1/2021	7/21/2021	12/1/2026	6/1/2028
3/1/2022	10/18/2021	3/1/2027	9/1/2028
6/1/2022	1/24/2022	6/1/2027	12/1/2028
9/1/2022	4/26/2022	9/1/2027	3/1/2029
12/1/2022	7/22/2022	12/1/2027	6/1/2029
3/1/2023	10/14/2022	3/1/2028	9/3/2029
6/1/2023	1/24/2023	6/1/2028	12/3/2029

Participation Requirements

- Enterprise project designation is up to a five year period, in addition to a 90-day window prior to the quarterly deadline application/designation date as outlined above. Employment and capital investment commitments must be incurred and met within the 90-day window through the designation expiration date.
- Projects may be physically located inside or outside of an Enterprise Zone.
- If located within a zone, the company commits that 25% of their new employees will meet economically disadvantaged, enterprise zone residency, or veteran requirements.
- If located outside of a zone, the company commits that 35% of their new employees will meet economically disadvantaged, enterprise zone residency, or veteran requirements.
- Jobs must provide employment of at least 1,820 hours during a 12-month period.
- Jobs must exist through the end of the designation period, or at least three years after the date on which a state benefit is received, whichever is later.

Benefits to participation

Designated projects are eligible to apply for state sales and use tax refund on taxable items. The level and amount of refund is related to the capital investment and jobs created and/or retained at the qualified business site.

Level of Capital Investment	Maximum number of jobs allocated	Maximum potential refund	Maximum refund per job allocated
Half Enterprise Project			
\$40,000 to \$399,999	10	\$25,000	\$2,500
\$400,000 to \$999,999	25	\$62,500	\$2,500
\$1,000,000 to \$4,999,999	125	\$312,500	\$2,500
\$5,000,000 or more	250	\$625,000	\$2,500
Enterprise Project			
\$5,000,000 or more	500	\$1,250,000	\$2,500
Double Jumbo Project			
\$150,000,000 to \$249,999,999	500	\$2,500,000	\$5,000
Triple Jumbo Project			
\$250,000,000 or more	500	\$3,750,000	\$7,500

Double and Triple Jumbo Projects may not have retained jobs for benefit. A triple jumbo enterprise project must create at least 500 jobs.

Capital investment is money paid to purchase capital assets or fixed assets including but not limited to land, buildings, labor used to construct or renovate a capital asset, furniture, manufacturing machinery, computers and software, or other machinery and equipment. Property that is leased under a capitalized lease is considered a qualified capital investment but property that is leased under an operating lease is not considered a qualified capital investment.

NOTE: if using a contractor to construct the facility, a “separated contract” (a contract in which the agreed contract price is divided into separately states prices for materials and labor) must be executed. If a “lump sum” contract is executed, a claim for refund of taxes invoiced to, and paid by a third party, will not qualify for a refund under this Program. Please call the Comptroller of Public Accounts’ Office at 1-800-531-5441 ext. 51083 if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Local communities may offer benefits to participants under the enterprise zone program as well. These may include tax abatement, tax increment financing, one-stop permitting and others.

Enterprise Zone

An enterprise zone is a census tract block group that has 20% or more poverty rate based upon the most recent decennial census federal poverty level information, a distressed county, a federally designated zone or renewal community.

Fee

There is a non-refundable application fee for consideration of an enterprise project designation. Enterprise projects will be assessed 3% on the amount of any refund benefit received under the state enterprise zone program.

Contact Information

For additional information on the Texas Enterprise Zone Program call (512) 936-0100.

Revised: 2/14/2022

TETRA PAK INC. TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE PROJECT NOMINATION

ERICA SULLIVAN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

OCTOBER 8, 2025



TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE (TEZ) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- TEZ is a State economic development tool to promote job creation and capital investment in economically distressed areas.
 - The program requires a partnership with local communities through the local nomination/designation process.
- Successful applicants are eligible to apply for state sales and use tax refunds on qualified expenditures.
- The program provides reimbursements according to the level of capital investment and number of jobs created/ retained for economically disadvantaged individuals or veterans.

TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Level of Capital Investment	Maximum Number of Jobs Allocated	Maximum Potential Refund	Maximum Refund Per Job Allocated
Half Enterprise Project \$40,000 to \$5,000,000 or more	250	\$625,000	\$2,500
Enterprise Project \$5,000,000 to \$149,999,999	500	\$1,250,000	\$2,500
Double Jumbo Project \$150,000,000 to \$249,999,999	500*	\$2,500,000	\$5,000
Triple Jumbo Project \$250,000,000 or more	500*	\$3,750,000	\$7,500

**Double and Triple Jumbo Projects may not count retained jobs for benefit.
A Double Jumbo and Triple Jumbo Project must create at least 500 jobs.*

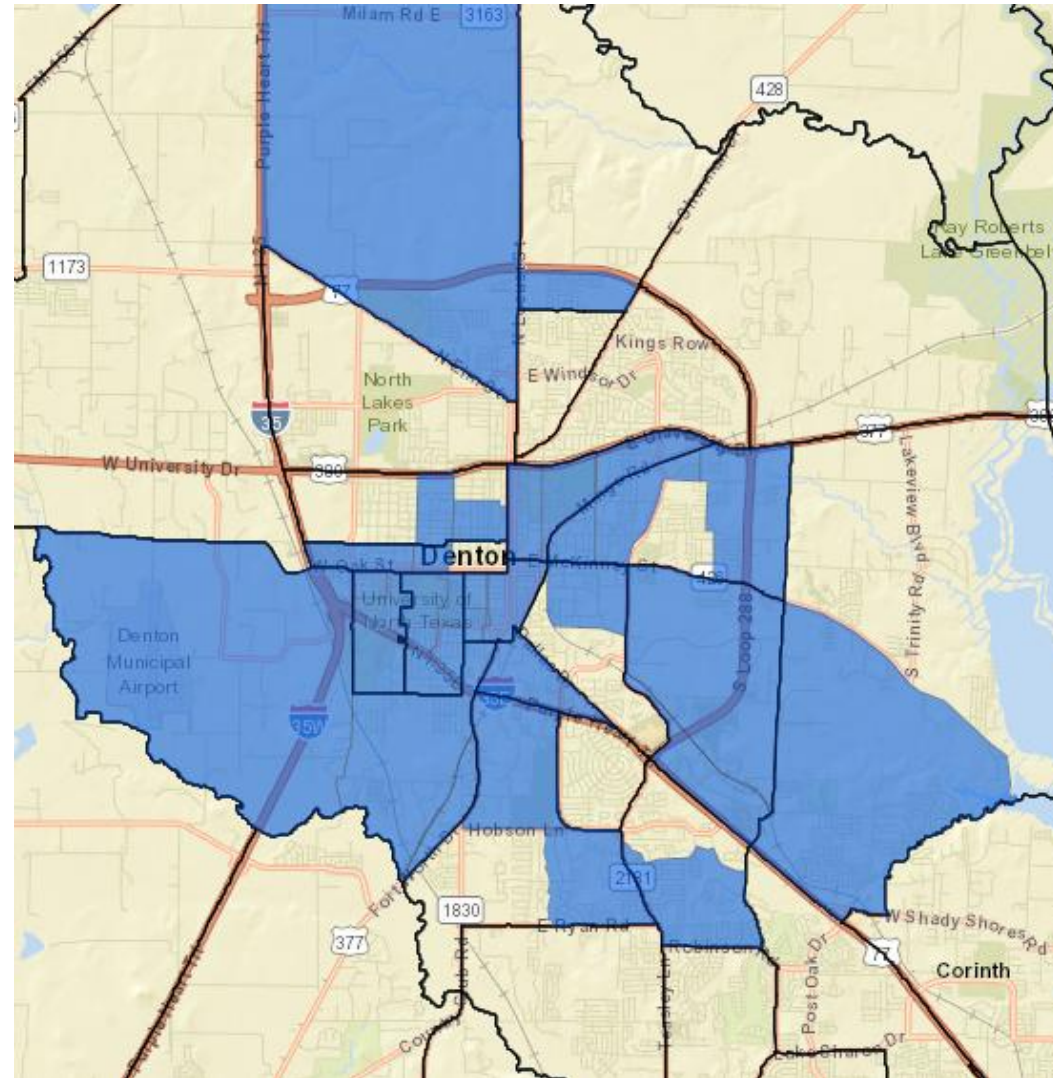
- Potential incentive value is calculated by:
 - Determining the capital investment level.
 - Multiplying the potential number of jobs created by the maximum refund per job (according to the level of capital investment).

TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRAM PROCESS

- To apply for TEZ, a project must seek nomination from the local community.
 - Communities have limited number of project designations, and the state has a maximum number of designations that can be awarded in the biennium.
- Denton held a public hearing and adopted Ordinance 18-1366 in 2018, which confirmed Denton's participation in the TEZ program and allows Denton to make nominations by resolution.

TEZ PROGRAM CRITERIA

- Projects can be physically inside or outside an Enterprise Zone.
 - **Inside:** Company commits that 25% of employees will meet economically disadvantaged criteria, be residents of an enterprise zone, or be veterans.
 - **Outside:** Company commits that 35% of employees will meet economically disadvantaged criteria, be residents of an enterprise zone, or be veterans.



TEXAS ENTERPRISE ZONE PROGRAM CRITERIA

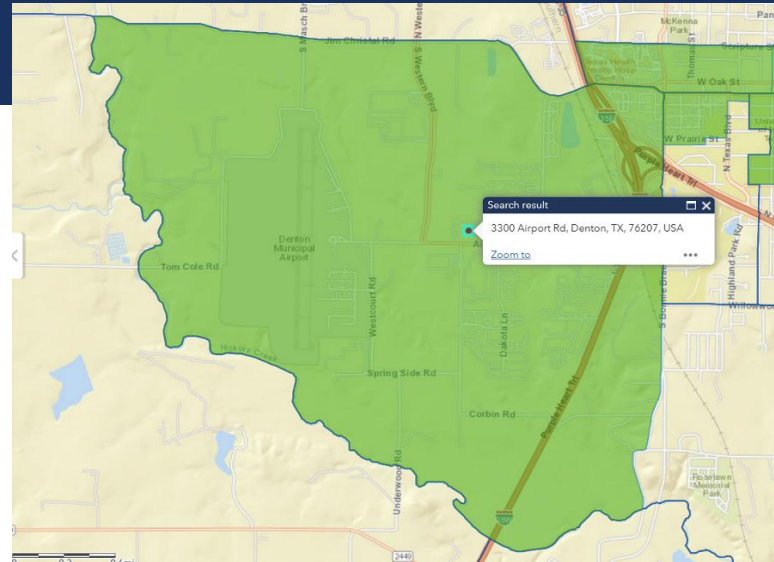
- Project designations are good for 5 years.
- Jobs must work 1,820 hours minimum per year.
- Jobs must exist through end of designation period, or at least 3 years after the date on which a state benefit is received, whichever is later.
- State application deadlines are the first working day of March, June, September, and December.

PROPOSED NOMINEE: TETRA PAK INC.

- Tetra Pak Inc. has submitted a request to the City for consideration of nomination to TEZ as an Enterprise Project.
- The company will be investing approximately \$12 million at the Denton facility.
 - \$1.5 million for gas-powered rooftop HVAC units with more energy-efficient electric alternatives
 - \$7 million for facility enhancements such as employee breakroom upgrades and replacement of roofs
 - \$3.5 million to complete the build-out of the Customer Innovation Center, which will serve as a collaborative space where Tetra Pak can meet directly with clients to develop innovative and customized product packaging solutions

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

- Current facility is located within an Enterprise Zone.
 - Tetra Pak to invest \$12 M
- Project is an Enterprise Project:
 - Investment of \$5M to \$149.99M
 - Max Jobs Allocated: 500 (\$2,500/job)
 - Max Potential Refund: \$1.25M
 - Estimated maximum refund: \$800K
- City must nominate project



BENEFITS

- To Tetra Pak:
 - A state sales and use tax refund of up to \$1,250,000 (500 (cap) full-time jobs X \$2,500 per job)
- To Denton:
 - 25% of new jobs created or existing positions that turn over will be filled by people who are either economically disadvantaged, are residents of an enterprise zone within the City's jurisdiction, or are veterans.
- Nominating Tetra Pak enables Denton to assist the company in receiving state tax refunds.
- Nominating Tetra Pak to the program has no fiscal impact to the City of Denton.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND NEXT STEP

- EDPB recommend that City Council approve a Resolution nominating Tetra Pak, Inc. as an Enterprise Project.
- **Next Step:** City Council Individual Consideration – Future City Council Meeting upon completion of the company's state application



QUESTIONS?



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

ACM: Christine Taylor

DATE: October 8, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding Section 2.83(c) of the City Code which governs boards, commissions, and committees specifically related to the attendance policy.

BACKGROUND

On May 8, 2024 the Attendance Update was presented to the Economic Development Partnership Board (EDPB). To align the Economic Development boards with other City of Denton boards, commissions, and committees, the EDPB has followed the attendance policies of the City's Code of Ordinances since then. Specifically, reporting absences and tracking the attendance of each board member.

The attendance policy for City of Denton boards, commissions, and committees is governed by [Section 2.83\(c\) of the Code of Ordinances](#). The Code states that members shall attend regularly scheduled meetings and must contact staff prior to the meeting if they are unable to attend. Absences can be excused for the following reasons:

- Personal or family illness
- Death of a family member
- Jury duty
- Service in the armed forces
- Testifying before the legislature
- Attending a seminar involving municipal matters of importance to the member's duties
- An absence necessary for the member's business or employment

If the absences do not meet one of the criteria above then the member has the ability to request the absence be excused by City Council or leave the absence as unexcused. An unexcused absence of a member for more than three meetings in a year or 50 percent of regular meetings in a year shall be considered cause for removal from the board by City Council. The City Secretary is required to report board attendance to City Council quarterly.

In order to follow City procedures, EDPB Members are required to notify staff prior to the meeting if they will be absent and complete the online Board Member [Notification of Absence Form](#) up to 10 business days after the meeting.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – EDPB Attendance Presentation

Exhibit 3 – EDPB Attendance Chart

Respectfully submitted:

Vanessa Esparza

Administrative Assistant

Attendance Policy

Vanessa Esparza – Board Secretary

EDP25-032

October 8, 2025

Economic Development
Partnership Board



Board Attendance Policy

- Originally adopted in 1966 and expanded for additional excused absences in 2000 and modified in 2020 to include procedures for absences.
- Every board member shall attend regularly scheduled meetings.
- Members unable to attend shall notify the Chair or staff prior to the meeting.
- Cause for removal:
 - Unexcused absences of **more than 3 or 50% of meetings;**
 - Regularly scheduled meetings; and
 - In any one year.

Excused Absences

- Personal or family illness
- Death of a family member
- Jury duty
- Service in the armed forces
- Testifying before the legislature
- Attending a seminar involving municipal matters of importance to the member's duties
- An absence necessary for the member's business or employment



Procedure

- If a Board Member knows they will be unable to attend a meeting:
 - Notify the Board Secretary or Staff.
 - Fill out the online [Notification of Absence Form](#) before the 10th business day deadline after the meeting has occurred.
 - If unexcused, the Board Member can:
 - Leave as unexcused.
 - Request the absence come before the City Council for consideration to excuse.

Procedure Update

[Online Notification of Absence Submission Form](#) launched on May 20th, 2025.

Please remember:

- Each meeting/absence will require a separate submission.
- To use your cityofdenton.com email (preferred).
- If the reason for your absence is "Other", select "Yes" if you would you like the City Secretary to submit a request to the City Council to excuse your absence. Otherwise, it will remain unexcused.
- Upon submission of your notice of absence, you will receive a response from the City of Denton City Secretary's Office via Smartsheet regarding your absence.

For more details, the Attendance Policy is in your EDPB Member Packet for reference.



Questions?

City of Denton City Secretary's Office

CitySecretary@cityofdenton.com

(940) 349-8309

Vanessa Esparza

Vanessa.Esparza@cityofdenton.com

(940) 349-8100



Economic Development Partnership Board (EDPB) Attendance Tracking Report

Dates Covered: January 2025- September 2025 Submitted by: Vanessa Esparza Phone #8100

PLACE NO.	MEMBER NAME																
							6/25/2025 - SPECIAL CALLED			T O T A L S							
	Last Name	First Name	1/8/2025	2/12/2025	4/9/2025	5/14/2025		8/13/2025	9/10/2025		PRESENT	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED	TOTAL MEETINGS	% PRESENT		
1	Bissett	Aimee				Present	Excused	Present	Present		3	1	0	4	75%		
2	Byrd	Vicki										0	0	0	0	N/A	
3	Crockett	Ron					Present	Excused	Present		Excused	2	2	0	4	50%	
4	Danhof	Brian	Unexcused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present		6	0	1	7	86%		
5	Fykes	Jeremy	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Excused		6	0	1	7	86%		
6	Goree	Kerry	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Unexcused	Present		6	0	1	7	86%		
7	Jester	Jill						Present	Excused		1	1	0	2	50%		
8	Morales	Leo						Present	Present		Excused	Present	3	1	0	4	75%
9	Ramsey	Lee	Present	Present	Unexcused	Present	Present	Present	Unexcused		5	2	0	7	71%		
10	Roberts	Aaron	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Excused	Present		6	1	0	7	86%		
11	Tomlinson	Jason	Present	Present	Excused	Present	Present	Excused	Present		5	2	0	7	71%		
12	Woolfolk	Clyde Rick	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present		7	0	0	7	100%		
13	Carney	Erin	Excused	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present	Present		6	1	0	7	86%		
14	Hensley	Sarah	Excused	Excused	Excused	Excused	Excused	Excused	Excused		0	7	0	7	0%		
15	O'Bara	Susannah	Excused	Excused	Excused	Excused	Present	Excused	Excused	1	6	0	7	14%			



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

ACM: Christine Taylor

DATE: October 8, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding the Murphy Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation from Jon McCarry of University of North Texas.

BACKGROUND

The Office of Economic Development actively collaborates with partner organizations and educational institutions to strengthen the city's ecosystem of resources and business opportunities. Staff will invite guest speakers to deliver comprehensive briefings on essential topics to the Board of Directors.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – Presentation

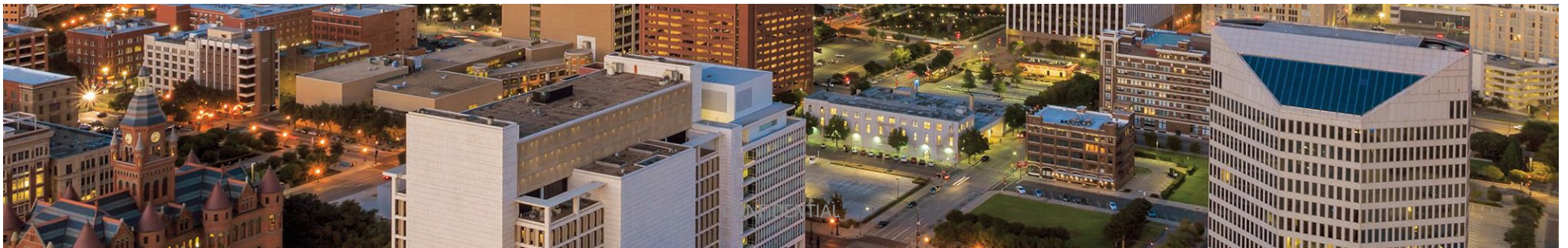
Respectfully submitted:
Brittany Sotelo
Economic Development Director



MURPHY CENTER FOR
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
AND INNOVATION
G. Brint Ryan
College of Business
UNT®

An Overview

EDP25-033; October 8, 2025



2025 Murphy Center Personnel



Jon McCarry

Executive Director – Murphy Center

Marcus Wolfe

Academic Director – Murphy Center
Professor of Entrepreneurship - UNT

David Evans

Managing Partner - Sentiero Ventures

Duffy Oyster

Serial Entrepreneur

Mark Ramirez

SCM Global Technology Innovation Lead - Genpact

Mike Bynum

Account Executive (DoD Lead) – The Outpost

Mike Sheehan

Founder / CEO - IntelliCentrics

Steven Tudor

Director, Tech Transfer Office – Univ of California Davis

Don Lovelace

CEO – Lily of the Desert

John Reed

Serial Entrepreneur & Venture Investor

Murphy Center Overview



Website: <https://cob.unt.edu/murphycenter>

Location: BLB 150 H

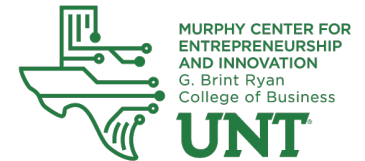
Established: 1999

Reporting: Direct report to G. Brint Ryan College of Business Dean; housed in Management Dept.

Center emphases by percentage

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Externally-funded Research | 0% |
| • Scholarship, Creative, and Performance Productivity | 20% |
| • Training and Instruction | 25% |
| • Facilities and Services that Support Research | 25% |
| • Community Engagement | 30% |

Murphy Center Overview



Mission Statement

The Murphy Center supports innovation and new venture creation for students and the UNT research community. For students, the Center provides mentoring for startups, access to entrepreneurial leaders and internship opportunities, and engages them in entrepreneurship through competitions. Additionally, the Center supports the Vice President of Research in bringing university-affiliated research to market through advising.

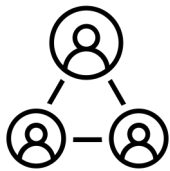
Murphy Center Overview

Achievements & Accomplishments

- External Grants:** 17 applied over last five years with two active grant applications
Purpose: fund center campus support entrepreneurship and commercialization efforts
- Enhancements:** SaaS mentoring and competition platform
Entrepreneurship competitions
Investment Banking Analyst Training Program for Student Investment Group
Building additional research commercialization capabilities
- Academics:** 27 papers published and 17 presentations given
- Student Focus:** \$ 70,000 in competition-based scholarships awarded annually
Average over 80 mentoring sessions annually
Faculty Advisor to Student Investment Group
Facilitate internship opportunities in startups and venture funds
- Community:** Engage with venture capital funds, entrepreneurs, EDCs and university ENTRE centers

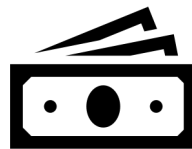
Murphy Center Overview

Achievements & Accomplishments



Over 80

Entrepreneur mentoring
sessions annually



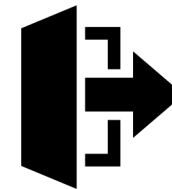
\$ 8+ M

Funding accessed by
our affiliated startups



Over 27

Student focused
marketing events



2

Trade sale exits by
affiliated startups

Murphy Center Overview

Other Activities



- Advisory:** UNT Bio-Discovery Institute
UNT Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Processes Institute
UNT NSF Texoma Logistics Engine
Stadia Ventures
Wave Ventures
Various UNT affiliated spinouts and startups
- Academic Work:** Angel Academy – certificate course educating professional athletes in venture investing
STEM Startups – semester long accelerator course for graduate students
- Econ Dev:** Adhoc advice to Frisco EDC, McKinney EDC, Denton EDP, Dallas EDC
- Representation:** Global Consortium of Entrepreneurship Centers (GCEC; Annually)
Texas University Network for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (TUNIE; Annually)
Speaker at various institutional investor conferences (Annually)

2024 Murphy Center Pipeline

Goal: Drive engagement & setup future success

Other Initiatives



Faculty Innovation Network

Newly formed cross collaboration group for faculty interested in commercializing their research



STEM Startups

Graduate level cross listed “accelerator” style course for students in STEM fields

2024 Murphy Center Pipeline

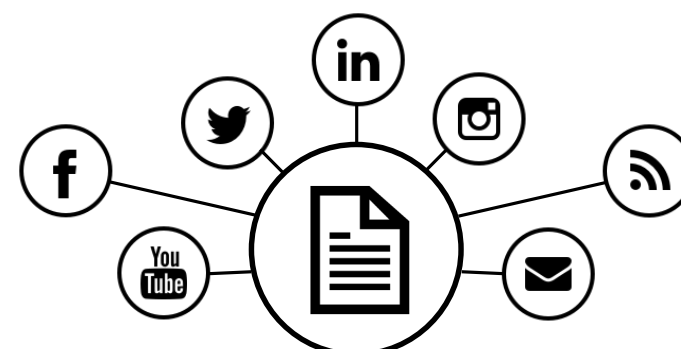
Goal: Drive engagement & setup future success

Other Initiatives



Angel Academy

Venture investing 101 for new HNWLs in a hybrid learning environment

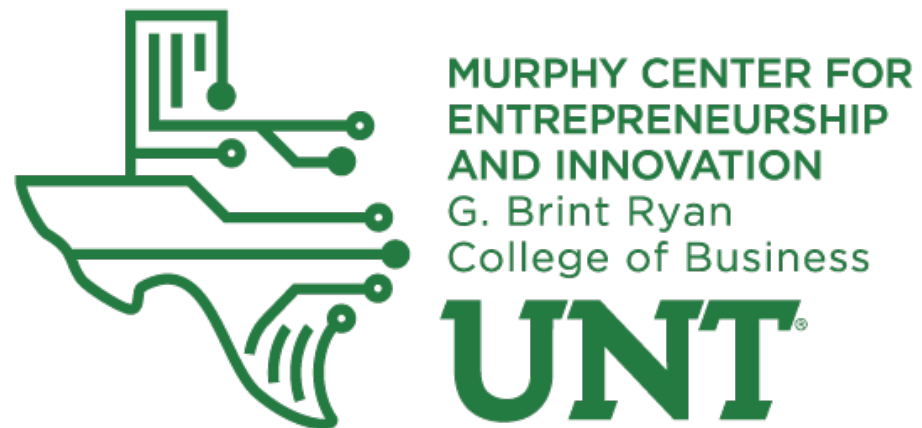
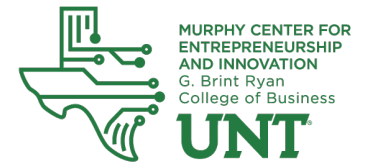


Murphy Center Newsletter

Highlighting UNT entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship thought leadership and center initiatives

Repurpose Murphy Center Advisory Board

Collaborate with UNT to identify high potential research for commercialization and guest lecture students





City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

ACM: Christine Taylor

DATE: October 8, 2025

SUBJECT

Staff Reports:

1. Director's Report – Brittany Sotelo
2. Texas Legislative Update – Brittany Sotelo
3. Main Street Program Update (Annual Report) – Kristen Pulido
4. Future Agenda Items – Brittany Sotelo

BACKGROUND

Director's Report:

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding recent Office of Economic Development activities.

Texas Legislative Update:

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding recent Texas Legislative updates.

Main Street Program Update:

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding a recap of recent and upcoming happenings within Downtown.

Future Agenda Items:

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding an overview of current items in the Agenda Queue and discussion of possible future agenda items.

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet
- Exhibit 2 – Director's Report Presentation
- Exhibit 3 – Texas Legislative Update Report
- Exhibit 4 – Main Street Presentation
- Exhibit 5 – Future Agenda Items

Respectfully Submitted:
Matilda Weeden
Economic Development Specialist

October 8, 2025

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - September

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Brittany Sotelo
Economic Development Director

DENTON JOB FAIR

Sept. 24, 2025

- 50 Denton County businesses
- 1,263 job openings
- 561 job seekers

Partners:

- Denton ISD, Denton Chamber, Easy Expunctions, Goodwill North Central Texas, North Central Texas College, Texas Veterans Commission, United Way of Denton County, and Workforce Solutions of North Central Texas



SEPTEMBER RECRUITMENT STATS

30

ACTIVE PROJECTS

- 4,282 Potential Jobs
- \$6.5 Billion Cap. Invest.

6

NEW LEADS

Lead Sources:

- Broker - 3
- Direct - 1
- EDP Website – 1
- Dallas Regional Chamber - 1

0

INCENTIVE APPLICATIONS

Active Projects Stage	Count
Lead (5%)	24
Awaiting App. (10%)	2
Qualification (15%)	1
Incentive Neg. (50%)	3
Total	30

0

RECRUITMENT VISITS

7

LEADS LOST

- (1) Did not qualify
- (1) Transferred to “Business Support”
- (5) Transferred to “Cold”

90

RECRUITMENT OUTREACH ATTEMPTS

SEPTEMBER DOWNTOWN STATS

2

BRE VISITS

1

LEADS LOST

- No longer moving forward with project

4

**DOWNTOWN
GRANT LEADS**

14

**RECRUITMENT
OUTREACH**

SEPTEMBER RFI STATS

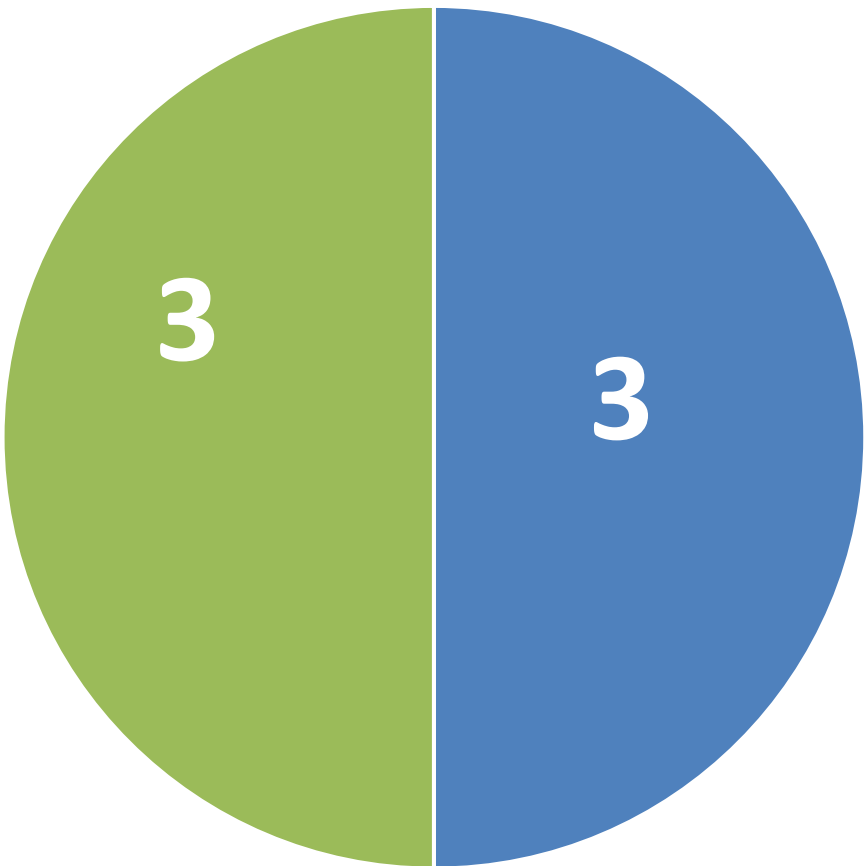
RFI's
RECEIVED
13

SUBMITTED
6

NO SUBMITTAL
4

LEAD
CONVERSION
0

RFI LEAD SOURCE



Potential
Capital
Investment

\$127M

Potential
Jobs

1,848

*Submitted RFI's

51
ANNUAL RFI'S
SUBMITTED

■ Dallas Regional Chamber ■ Governor's Office

PAST/UPCOMING EVENTS

- 9/13: National Security Cyber, Land, Air, Sea and Space Summit
- 9/16: iC3 Life Science & Healthcare Innovation Summit
- 10/23: Governor's Small Business Summit (Women-Focused)



TEDC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



TEXAS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP REPORT

Texas 89th Legislative Session

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



THANK YOU



LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP REPORT

Texas 89th Legislative Session



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 89th Texas Legislative Session has concluded, and although it wasn't a session filled with major wins, the Texas Economic Development Council (TEDC) effectively held its ground. Our primary goal entering this session was clear: to protect the economic development tools that enable local communities to control their own futures. On that front, we achieved our aim. Throughout the session, many proposals threatened local flexibility, added reporting burdens, or weakened programs like Chapter 380/381 and Chapter 312. Thanks to coordinated efforts by TEDC members, none became law. Over 50 local EDCs signed a coalition letter against a harmful proposal, sending a strong message to the Capitol. Ultimately, local control and community-driven development remain intact.

Several initiatives to enhance Texas's competitiveness stalled. TEDC raised awareness about the Jobs, Energy, Technology, and Innovation (JETI) program. In the first 20 months of this new program, only four projects have used it. Efforts to fund the Capital Access Program at the Texas Department of Agriculture, which is vital for rural areas, also failed. These missed opportunities emphasize the need for ongoing work.

Looking ahead, the interim period is vital. By working together during the interim, sharing both success and failure stories, and highlighting the importance of economic development, we will be better prepared to move from defense to offense in the next session.

Special Sessions

Governor Greg Abbott has announced two special sessions in 2025. Texas House Democrats prevented a quorum in the first called special session; therefore, no legislation was passed.

The Governor called a second special session with over 20 issues up for debate. None of these items directly impacted our economic development programs, but here is the status of items you may be interested in:

- New Congressional Districts - **PASSED** - A new congressional map aims to shift five congressional seats from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party.
- Reduced Rollback Rate - **FAILED** - Legislation that would have lowered the voter-approved tax rate (also known as the "rollback rate") from 3.5% to 2.5% for cities and counties with populations over 75,000 did not pass.
- Prohibiting Local Governments from Hiring Lobbyists - **FAILED** - Legislation aimed at banning taxpayer funds from being used to hire a lobbyist (or support an association that employs a lobbyist) did not pass.

Wrap-up Report - Texas 89th Legislative Session

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Defensive Wins – Protecting What Matters

- Economic Development Sales Tax (Type A & B) - No legislation passed that undermines these critical tools.
- Chapter 380/381 Agreements - Several bills were filed that would have severely limited local governments' ability to negotiate agreements. Thanks to a strong coalition effort, none of these bills became law. TEDC has committed to working with lawmakers during the interim to address concerns raised about potential misuse of Chapter 380/381 agreements.
- Onerous Reporting Requirements - Efforts to impose duplicate reporting to multiple state agencies were defeated.

Offensive Goals – Opportunities Left on the Table

- JETI Program Improvements - Despite broad recognition that the Jobs, Energy, Technology, and Innovation (JETI) program is underperforming, no reforms were adopted. Only four projects have used the program since its creation, far below expectations.
- Capital Access Program (TDA) - Efforts to preserve and fund this vital rural program at the Texas Department of Agriculture were unsuccessful this session.
- Enhancing Rainy-Day Fund Investments - Chairman Greg Bonnen proposed allocating a portion of the Rainy-Day Fund to innovative Texas-based companies. Unfortunately, this legislation did not pass during this session, but we will continue to work on it during the interim.



Other Notable Legislative Changes

- Changes to Open Meetings Notice - House Bill 1522 by Representative Stan Gerdes makes several changes to the open meetings notice requirements. Most notably, the bill mandates that a governmental body provide public notice **at least three business days** prior to the scheduled meeting date. Currently, law requires notice to be given at least 72 hours before the meeting.

Additionally, HB 1522 requires more detailed open meeting notices when the local government discusses or adopts a budget. Specifically, the notice must include a physical copy of the proposed budget, unless the proposed budget is clearly accessible on the homepage of the government body's website.

- Restrictions on Local Government's Use of Severance Pay - House Bill 762 by Representative Jeff Leach and Senate Bill 2237 by Senator Bettencourt prohibit local governments from offering severance packages that exceed 20 weeks of pay at the rate they were earning when terminated.
- Research and Development (R&D) Tax Credit Renewed - Senate Bill 2206 extended the state's R&D tax credit program, streamlining the application process and increasing the credit for partnerships with higher education institutions—an important win for innovative industries!



Wrap-up Report - Texas 89th Legislative Session

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Infrastructure Investments

- Water Infrastructure – This session saw the passage of transformative investments in water infrastructure! Most importantly, this will fund projects for repairing existing water systems and developing new water supplies.
 - House Joint Resolution 7 by Representative Cody Harris will ask voters to approve dedicating **\$1 billion annually** in sales tax revenue towards water projects **over the next 20 years**.
 - ***This will be Proposition 4 on the upcoming November election!***
 - House Bill 500 by Representative Greg Bonnen provides an immediate \$2.5 billion investment for water projects.
- Energy Infrastructure
 - The Texas Energy Fund received an additional **\$5 billion** appropriation, bringing the total fund to **\$10 billion**. This funding will support dispatchable power generation and critical transmission infrastructure to enhance grid reliability and stability.
 - Senate Bill 6 by Senator Phil King amended the process for large load interconnection into the ERCOT grid. TEDC will continue to advocate for an electricity policy that ensures a fair, reliable, and predictable process.

Workforce Development

- Senate Joint Resolution 59 creates an **\$850 million** endowment fund for Texas State Technical College. This permanent funding source will support capital projects and equipment purchases for workforce education programs in high-demand technical fields.
 - ***This will be Proposition 1 on the upcoming November election!***
- House Bill 3260, introduced by Representative Keith Bell, simplifies the Texas Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs Grant Program, providing the Texas Workforce Commission with more flexibility in defining qualifying programs and allowing for partial reimbursements, rather than requiring employers to wait up to 18 months for funding.

Significant Funding for Economic Development Programs

- Texas Space Commission – **\$300 million** in additional grant funding.
- Texas Semiconductor Innovation Fund – **\$250 million** in additional grant funding
- Texas Advanced Nuclear Development Fund – **\$350 million** allocated to a newly established office dedicated to advancing this technology.
- Motion Pictures Industry – **\$250 million** allocated to the moving image industry incentive program. More importantly, lawmakers committed **\$350 million** every two years to this incentive program to ensure steady funding for this capital investment.
- Texas Enterprise Fund – Although no additional appropriation was made, the Enterprise Fund was allowed to use their unexpended balances, which exceed **\$300 million**.



Wrap-up Report - Texas 89th Legislative Session

HEADLINE ISSUES

Tax Cuts

- Lawmakers appropriated **\$10 billion** in new funding for property tax relief; however, **\$6.1 billion** of this new funding is intended to cover tax relief that has already been promised. Lawmakers did approve the following new tax relief measures:
 - Senate Bill 4, by Senator Bettencourt, increases the school district homestead exemption from **\$100,000 to \$140,000** - this will cost the state **\$2.7 billion** over the biennium.
 - Senate Bill 23, by Senator Huffman, increases the senior homestead exemption from **\$10,000 to \$60,000** - this will cost the state **\$1.2 billion** over the biennium.
 - House Bill 9 by Representative Meyer increased the exemption for business personal property from **\$2.5k to \$125k**. The state held school districts harmless for lost funding due to this exemption - this will cost the state approximately **\$250 million** over the biennium.
 - *NOTE: Other local governments (Cities, counties, water districts, etc.) will **not** be held harmless. These local governments are expected to lose around **\$442 million** due to this exemption.*

Education Funding

- School Choice/Vouchers (SB 2) - A \$10,000 educational savings account per child, which can be used to pay for private school or homeschooling. The program is capped at **\$1 billion**.
- Public School Finance (HB 2) - Approximately **\$8.4 billion** in additional funding, a significant portion of which is dedicated to increasing teacher pay.
- Texas University Fund (HB 500)- Appropriated **\$1.3 billion** towards the TUF, which is an endowment fund for higher education institutions that don't receive PUF dollars.
- Community/Junior College Formula (HB 500)- **\$89.5 million** in additional funding provided to community and junior colleges to fully fund the outcomes-based formulas established last session.

2025 Constitutional Amendment Election Day – November 4th, 2025

- Proposition 1 – Texas State Technical College **\$850 million** endowment
- Proposition 4 – Dedicates **\$1 billion** in sales tax collections towards water projects every fiscal year.
- Proposition 9 – Increases the business personal property tax exemption from **\$2.5k to \$125k**.
- Proposition 13 – Increases the school district homestead exemption from **\$100k to \$140k**.
- Proposition 14 – Allocates **\$3 billion** to the Dementia Prevention Research Institute of Texas to fund research in Texas.

Find more information about all 17 items on the ballot on the Texas Secretary of State's website



Main Street Annual Report FY 24-25

Kristen Pulido
Office of Economic Development
Main Street Program Manager

Downtown Reinvestment Grant

April 15 – Downtown Masterclass

- Educate businesses within the new TIRZ 1A boundary on the Downtown Reinvestment Grant and Historic Tax Credits

Downtown Reinvestment Grant Pipeline Stage	
5% - Lead	10
10% - Awaiting Application	13
15% - Application Review	4
Lead Lost	10
TOTAL	37

FY 24/25 Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Number One (Downtown) Grants				
Owner/Business	Address	Type	Capital Investment	Amount Awarded
Green Eggs and Ham LLC	116 W. Oak	Façade	\$138,500	\$50,000
Eagle Surveying	212 W. Sycamore	212 W. Sycamore	\$1,465,728	\$50,000
The Plot Twist	227 W. Oak	227 W. Oak	\$49,605.00	\$27,148.96
		TOTAL	\$1,653,833	\$127,149

Downtown Opening & Closings

Business Opening and Closings				
	Business Start	Business Closure	Jobs (gained)	Jobs (lost)
Q1	7	0	24	0
Q2	5	4	19	99
Q3	3	6	15	43
Q4	4	2	95	15
TOTAL	19	12	153	157

Top Reasons for Closures:

1. Personal/Family Matters
2. Location
3. Zoning

Top things the city can do to support Downtown businesses:

1. Parking solutions
2. Wayfinding
3. Marketing & Promotion

Annual Business Retention, Expansion & Recruitment

37

Business
Retention &
Expansion Visits

*Avg. 3 per month

34

Recruitment
Goal: 5
businesses a
week

*Started tracking in July

18

Active Business
Support
Requests

*Started tracking in June



Downtown Engagement

- **Downtown Masterclass:** Educate businesses within the new TIRZ 1A boundary on the Downtown Reinvestment Grant and Historic Tax Credits
- **2 Downtown Safety Meeting:** Partnered with Community Services, DPD, and the Downtown Ambassadors to review the needs of the community
- **2 Public Improvement District Meetings**
- **Downtown Halloween Town Hall:** Invited Downtown property and business owners, along with Parks and Rec, and the City of Denton's Marketing team, to explore how businesses can participate in the City's 31 Days of Halloween
- **Retail Roundtable:** Downtown retailers gathered at The Dime Store, where owner Anna shared her experiences, and a UNT professor joined to discuss potential partnerships around career fairs, staffing, and integrating downtown business insights into merchandising classroom education.
- **Fire Suppression Workshop:** Partnered with the Denton Fire Department to educate Downtown businesses on the importance of Fire Suppression and to share future goals for increasing its implementation across more locations.



Training & Highlights

- Nationally Accredited Main Street Program
- Supported Downtown Utility Grant for those impacted by road construction and slower summer Downtown traffic
- Texas Downtown Association Conference – Abilene
- Basic Economic Development Course - Waco
- Richardson Regional Economic Development Symposium
- Texas Main Street Design Workshop – Waxahachie
- Women in Economic Development Meet-up
- Texas Downtown Associations Downtown Roundtable, Corsicana, TX
- Texas Main Street Retreat - Austin
- Downtown Lowdown Launch



DOWNTOWN LOWDOWN



SCAN

Questions?

Economic Development Partnership Board

Wednesday, November 12, 2025		
Item for Consideration	Minutes	Chair
Item for Consideration	Project Striped Shirt	Brittany Sotelo
Work Session - Staff Report	Director's Report	Brittany Sotelo
Work Session - Staff Report	Future Agenda Items	Staff
		Total Time
Wednesday, December 10, 2025		
Item for Consideration	Minutes	Chair
Item for Consideration	Approval of 2026 Calendar	
Work Session - Staff Report	Director's Report	Brittany Sotelo
Work Session -Staff Report	Mobility Summit Update	
Work Session - Staff Report	Future Agenda Items	Staff
		Total Time
TBD:		
Work Session	Dev Serv Business Updates	Charlie Rosendhal