

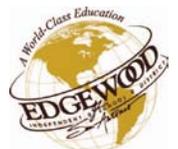


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Westside Education and Training Center *2020*

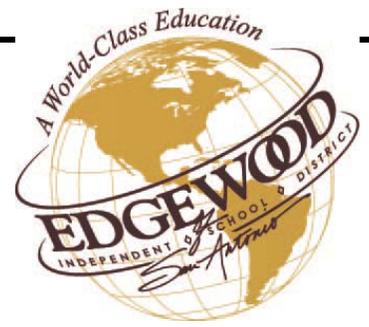


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Westside Education & Training Center Strategic Assessment Workshops Recap Report

Workshop Goal: To assess the need, access, and value of the Westside Education & Training Center from the perspective of local community members, business, and education leaders.

Facilitated by



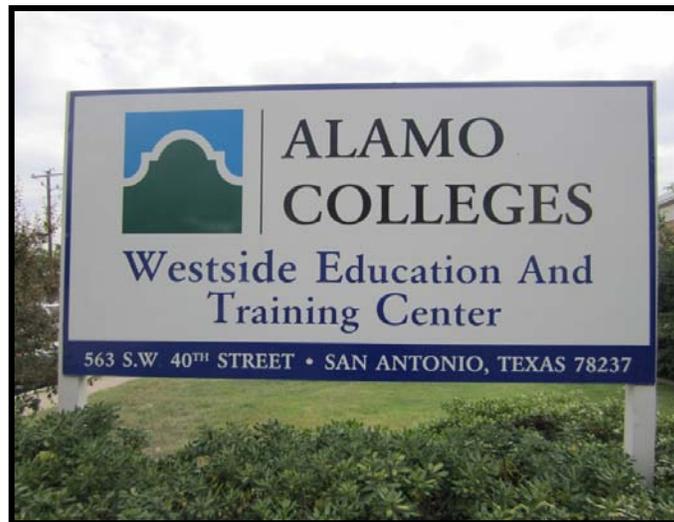
June 2014

DISCLAIMER. The following is a preliminary report and should not be considered final.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Alamo Colleges' Westside Education and Training Center (WETC) engaged the Westside Development Corporation (WDC) to facilitate a series of community conversations as part of a larger strategic planning effort to develop a long-term vision.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

In January 2014, the WDC initiated the first of three meetings with former students, residents, businesses, and education leaders to involve them in the process and garner their input and ideas. The discussions identified a number of insights and provided detailed participant feedback.

The key questions posed were:

- What facility improvements are needed at the WETC site?
- What education programs should be offered at WETC?
- Who are the key stakeholders to include in the process?
- What are the best methods for promoting the WETC campus?

A summary of the town hall findings were:

Community

Community leaders and former students strongly support the work of the WETC and can speak to the impact it has had on their lives. However, they believe the WETC must be promoted better and positioned as a valuable resource for the surrounding community. They would like to see the WETC serve as a community resource providing benefit to all.

Businesses

Business leaders, while less familiar with the WETC and its offerings, also stated that it can, and should, play a key role in developing the workforce. This should not only entail the required technical skills, but the highly valuable soft skills that are essential to a successful career.

Educators

Education leaders stand ready to meet the challenges and issues that must be addressed to better prepare students for today's workforce. They echoed a need for infrastructure and marketing improvements, but also made a case for increasing use and awareness of existing resources that could be brought to bear in this effort.

Supplemental research related to the town hall meetings is provided in the addendums.



WETC SITE PROGRAM

In addition to these conversations, the Westside Development Corporation engaged the University of Texas – San Antonio (UTSA) College of Architecture to help WETC visualize the look of a future campus, based on commentary and feedback received during the past three months from the town hall discussions. A preliminary campus program was developed with the WETC staff to highlight the needs of the future campus.

This semester-long project concluded on April 30th when the architecture students presented their final presentations to WETC staff during a formal presentation. The dozen concepts presented by third-year architecture students revealed massing, adjacencies, function, and aesthetic issues for WETC to consider when the task of creating a durable comprehensive master plan is launched in earnest by WETC's Board and Alamo Colleges. All designs were significant in that they embraced the surrounding community and incorporated unique learning environments.

The process has illuminated a number of issues, challenges, needs, and opportunities the Alamo Colleges and WETC must consider as they develop a strategic plan to help the center take its next steps.

Highlights from the site analysis program were:

- Better campus visibility
- Improved security, lighting, and ADA accessibility
- Career counseling and soft skills training center
- Modular teaching and instruction areas

The WETC site designs from the UTSA College of Architecture studio will be made available pending institutional approval and release. Supplemental research related to the site program is provided in the addendum.





ANALYSIS

Overall, the recommendations resulting from this process can be summed up in the following opportunity matrix:

Community

Issue:

The Westside Education and Training Center (WETC) provides the community with an effective and valuable resource to continue their education, but awareness of the WETC remains low.

Input:

WETC is often seen as a hidden gem in the community that needs to be further promoted and showcased. Community members would welcome a more permanent and formal presence center, in the form of a campus.



Solution:

Therefore, a comprehensive marketing initiative needs to be developed and implemented to better inform the community of the resource that already exists in their backyard.

Business

Issue:

Employers in San Antonio have an existing need to find qualified and trained employees for a number of open positions, but they find the current workforce lacks the required skills (both soft and technical) to meet their demand.

Input:

Awareness about the WETC and the services/training it provides is not well known in the business community. There is a need for a better trained and better prepared workforce, and the WETC can help businesses identify the requested talent employers seek.

Solution:

In constant working consultation with the business community, the WETC can work to ensure the programs and offerings it presents match those stated needs. Businesses should be consulted up front about the training needs and gaps they are seeing in the workforce to ensure the WETC offerings match up and help satisfy the existing needs. A separate WETC business workforce counsel is viewed as being an important element to this facilitation.





Educators

Issue:

The obstacles facing adult students are varied, but removable.

Input:

The education roundtable echoed many of the same issues and concerns raised throughout the process: the need for improved facilities, a more effective marketing/awareness campaign to promote the WETC, and the creation/implementation of targeted programs and opportunities that best match up with the needs of students and employers.

Additionally, they delved deeper into some of the challenges they face from the academic side: credit for continuing education, financial aid, and policy limitations.

Solution:

By working closely and constantly with community partners, business leaders, and other educational stakeholders, solutions can be developed to clear the path to further education for the Westside. A reinvigorated and reenergized WETC advisory counsel is viewed as being a healthy component to the process.

The WETC can play a defining role in education, workforce training, and real estate redevelopment of the Westside of San Antonio. However, answers to remaining questions need to be discussed during the next steps of the planning process.

CONCLUSION

In defining the remainder of the planning process, a comprehensive outline toward a master strategic plan is apparent. This base information is provided under the following headlines: 1. Physical and Logistical Improvements; 2. Programmatic Improvements and Additions; 3. Key Stakeholder; 4. Activities to Pursue; and 5. Next Steps. A detailed bullet point outline is provided below.

1. Physical and logistical improvements that should be considered for a new WETC campus:

- Campus needs improved security and lighting
- A daycare facility should be located on site to assist students with children
- Improved ADA accessibility must be addressed
- Technology improvements for the classrooms and labs are needed
- A separate community space or auditorium should be considered, as well as modularized classrooms
- Cafeteria or other food/beverage options are requested by students and faculty
- General facility improvements also include bathroom upgrades (including steady hot water)



- Improved campus signage

2. Programmatic improvements and additions that should be considered for a new WETC campus:

- Identify and implement best practices for soft skills training
- Augment case management / career counseling for students
- Align with existing Alamo College programs and offering Department of Rehab Services (DARS)
- Training programs that should be implemented must match the existing opportunities in the workforce
 - Construction
 - Electrical Work
 - Health Care
 - Logistics
 - Solar
 - Restaurant Services
 - Financial Services
 - Manufacturing
 - International Trade
 - Emerging Markets
- Increased staff resources for assisting students that encounter obstacles to learning
 - Tutoring
 - Social Services
 - Financial Aid
 - Emotional growth development
- Dual-Credit programs with local school districts must be strengthened and improved to allow students to start earlier on their post-secondary plans
 - WETC can play a role with a partner institution to help teachers at EISD pursue the required Master's degree and other certifications.



3. Key stakeholders that need to be further engaged moving forward:

- The Mayor and City Council
- City of San Antonio
 - a. VIA - Transportation
 - b. SAHA - Housing
- Business Leaders, particular from industries looking to expand hiring
- Chambers of Commerce
- Education Partners (school districts)
- Area non-profits



4. Activities to pursue to promote WETC:

- The most often repeated comment from the entire process centered on



the need for improved marketing and awareness about the WETC and its offerings.

- A small marketing committee should be created to review the existing marketing activities and plan to further promote the WETC to potential students, employers, and the community
- A business advisory council should be formed to include stakeholders from area businesses that are leading the economic development of San Antonio. This will ensure the programs and offerings at the WETC meet the local employer demands and ultimately close the skills gap

5. Next steps:

- Alamo Colleges should enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the following partners to ensure buy-in towards strategic goals:
 - City of San Antonio
 - Edgewood I.S.D
- Alamo Colleges and WETC staff should conduct a retreat/planning session to review findings of this report and answer remaining questions:
 - What can the WETC do to stand apart in comparison to other San Antonio educational institutions?
 - What is the target area for a future WETC campus?
 - Current Inner Westside versus Far West side
 - What is the target enrollment size for this type of campus?
- Alamo Colleges master plan for the future WETC campus and targets for awareness, fundraising, and budget can be set

The Alamo Colleges and the Westside Education and Training Center have undergone a thorough and informative gathering process to better inform its next steps in the strategic planning process. The needs and next steps identified are all ones that can be addressed and resolved as the WETC evolves to its next iteration.

After successfully navigating through this planning process and once the center evolves into a full-fledged campus, the key beneficiaries will be found in the community. The surrounding community will continue to benefit by having a campus where students, old and young, can come and receive the training and education they need to reach their personal career goals, while setting an example for generations of San Antonians to follow.





ADDENDUM

A. WETC – WDC Background

A series of public meetings were hosted in January and February 2014, by the Alamo Colleges' Westside Education and Training Center (WETC) at 563 SW 40th Street in San Antonio, Texas. The invited participants for these meetings included local community members (January 22), business leaders (January 30) and education leaders (February 26) from the entities most involved with the WETC.

The Westside Development Corporation (WDC), a local government corporation created by the City of San Antonio for the purpose of economic development in a 15-square mile target area in the near West side, served as the role of facilitator for these discussions.

The Alamo Colleges' Westside Education and Training Center, commonly referred to as "The WETC", is one of nine off-campus sites of the Alamo Colleges. WETC is a workforce specialty center implemented under Dr. Federico Zaragoza, Vice Chancellor of Economic and Workforce Development. It was opened in 2006 for the purpose of being "an avenue for community residents to attain entry-level occupation skills, to increase technical skills, or to connect to jobs or higher education opportunities." WETC is not an independently-accredited campus, but offers college credit courses through affiliation with the five accredited colleges in their system.

The WETC operates on the site of a former elementary school campus of the Edgewood Independent School District. It is a collaborative effort between Alamo Colleges, Edgewood Independent School District, the City of San Antonio, and numerous area community organizations.

After eight years of successful operations, WETC is undertaking an effort to reassess the current needs of the residents, the accessibility of their campus, and its value to the community. As part of this process, WETC engaged the WDC to assist in its future campus redevelopment planning process.

As part of this effort, a series of three public meetings were conducted with distinct target audiences in mind: community, business, and educators. The first was a community town hall, attended by over 40 local residents. Participants were first assembled in a large group to hear a presentation on the history of the formation of WETC and its current programming. This presentation was delivered by site manager, Eugene Gonzalez.

Following the presentation, Westside Development Corporation President, Leonard B. Rodriguez, briefed the audience on the purpose of the meeting and the format agenda. The audience was then split into small groups averaging six persons each and led through a series of questions. Two groups were provided with Spanish-fluent facilitators.

The second and third public meetings were held with business and education leaders, respectively. They followed a similar structure as the first, but since the group of



attendees was more manageable, Mr. Rodriguez led the whole group in a roundtable discussion, rather than splitting them into smaller groups.

Alongside the community feedback process, the WDC brought the WETC together with the UTSA College of Architecture to begin the process of developing a visual representation of what the future of WETC could look like. The process would incorporate the feedback from the public meetings, along with the direction from WETC staff and outside experts.

Alamo Colleges will use this assessment of information as they deliberate future programming and consider real estate improvements to the WETC. The feedback obtained through these three meetings is included in the adjoining addendums.



ADDENDUM

B. Community Town Hall

General Observations

Before the conversation focused on three key themes – Needs, Access, and Value -- the discussion began with a few general questions about the participants and their observations of the WETC. Some of the initial observations included the following:

- Most agreed the WETC offers high-quality education
- The demographic characteristics that exist in the area (high poverty rates, low high-school graduation rates, immigrant population, etc.) make post-secondary education opportunities vitally important
- WETC offers a great learning opportunity, but there is not enough awareness about its programs and services
- An awareness campaign should be executed to better promote the WETC
- The message should be conveyed that WETC is a valuable resource, a career stepping stone
- There is a cycle of dependency on safety net programs that must be broken by inspiring families to stand on their own two feet by working smart and achieving higher education

Needs Assessment

As part of the needs assessment portion of the discussion, participants were asked to identify barriers – real or perceived – to post-secondary education that exist in the community surrounding the WETC.

They identified the high poverty rate, along with the need for increased accessibility, financial assistance and lack of encouragement as just a few of the present barriers.

They stated that WETC has a need for a child development center, more financial assistance, student orientation services, and technology training classes.

When asked what would be needed if they were to attend/return to school, members of the community stated a place to study, tutors, tuition assistance, and/or weekend and evening classes.

The following are the common themes that arose from the discussion having to do with key issues limiting post-secondary education opportunities:

- Familial responsibilities (child or elder care)
- Full-time work schedules



- Inadequate wages to fund education
- Reluctance to assume liability of a loan
- Lack of role models in the home
- Lack of prominent culturally-relevant role models in the community

Throughout the conversation, additional community resource needs were identified, though it is unclear how the WETC could play a role in this process. These included healthier food nutrition programming, more health and wellness clinics, and libraries.

Access Assessment

The community then evaluated the level of access and opportunity available through the WETC, including an evaluation of existing facilities.

They rated the importance of technical skill programs for adult education, computer literacy, financial literacy, welding programs, carpentry programs, tourism and hospitality industry programs, customer service programs, community health programs, health related occupations, forensics, peace officer training, and EMS/EMT programs as most important.



Overall, community colleges and WETC are viewed as excellent college preparation centers. They are viewed as affordable alternatives to public and private four-year universities. Some additional observations during this portion of the discussion included:

- There is a need for an established career services department or staff to help coordinate outreach to local businesses and ensure WETC programs are in line with job opportunities
- Staff can coordinate on-site interviews, job fairs, and internships workshops
- Further promote financial literacy programs
- Implement student mentoring programs
- All technical skill programs, except for those in the hospitality and tourism industry, were perceived to be important.
- More nighttime scheduling options
- Dual credit programs at local high schools would facilitate enrollment

As it related to the WETC campus, there was much input to improving the WETC facilities. Security is one area where improvement is needed. Also, better signage so the community can recognize and locate WETC more easily was mentioned frequently.

Childcare facilities or services on-site must be considered to cater to the area needs of parents desiring to return to school or access more job training. Coordinating adequate parking and more timely bus routes can help students better access WETC classes in a timely fashion. Building improvements such as restrooms, a kitchen / lunch area, and a usable gym are all amenities the community would expect in a more enhanced campus



Lastly, persistent IT and technical issues exist at WETC. If a dedicated and trained IT professional could be located on site, he/she could address computer problems as they arise. It was noted that the support staff is not trained enough on troubleshooting and often too busy to adequately assist on technical issues.

Value Assessment

Community members expressed a high rating of satisfaction with WETC student/alumni, community partners, and staff members. “Very nice”, “wonderful” and “excellent” are some words community members used to describe WETC staff. Some of the comments most consistently expressed include the following:

- WETC is seen as a positive experience for former students and it is recognized as an important community partner with excellent staff
- WETC provides an excellent value to its students and alums when compared to the cost of traditional university experiences
- There is room for increased programming and wrap-around services (career services: resume assistance, job fairs, job placement)
- A community college or larger campus presence would be welcome

Perhaps the best value assessment commentary was said by a former student who provided the following acronym for WETC – **We Empower The Community**.

ADDENDUM

C. Business Town Hall

Overview

The stakeholders of the business roundtable focused their conversation on the following four questions:

1. What are the issues and problems our community needs to address in order to advance and grow economically?
2. What factors are causing these problems?
3. Is there a need to provide formal training and professional development (e.g. workshops/seminars/classes) for your employees?
4. Who is WETC's customer?

Issues, Problems and Factors

When describing the current workforce, several participants cited an overall inadequate proficiency in academic and vital soft skills. They identified a mindset prevalent in Westside communities that needs to be addressed in order to turn things around for the community.

For example, some notice a cycle of dependency on social service programs and a lack of desire to work with their hands. A representative from the food service industry has trouble finding qualified candidates. The prevalent issues among applicants she encounters are high school dropouts with inadequate grasp of basic math skills, and an inability to pass a criminal background check.



Some also noted that there has been a generational decline where the outputs of the current education system lack basic communication skills, interpersonal skills, and mutual respect – all of which are vital traits of a successful employee.

All agreed WETC should better engage with the local employers to ensure the business community is aware of the valuable resource/training WETC provides.

Professional Development

The numerous employers in attendance each expressed the particular needs they are trying to meet and provided constructive comments on how some are currently addressing the issue for their workforce.

VIA Metropolitan Transit: Expressed a need for customer service etiquette. They can teach someone to drive, but cannot teach someone to be nice.



University Health Systems: Employs about 5,000 employees from all different education levels. They work to match employees to jobs matching their particular skill set, paying specific attention to their guest service abilities; a crucial characteristic for dealing with patients. They strive to imitate and adapt the workforce culture of companies like Toyota and Disney to the medical services field.

In their industry, patient/guest experiences are very important and regulations are tight. Therefore, they provide employees with training and resources to improve their human capital. They discussed potentially partnering with Alamo Colleges to provide a learning resources program they could partially fund at a level of \$200 per employee.

Frost Bank: Placed a focus on employee development for over 25 years. Frost makes stipends available for employees to pursue career development opportunities.

A challenge they face is developing effective training programs that can be used to prepare their mix of older and newer workers with varying levels of proficiency to their ever-changing systems and programs.

Central Electric: Expressed concern in the lack of people skills among many of the applicants they encounter. In their field, they need employees who can not only bring the technical skills needed, but also provide good customer service.

They expressed a concern that not enough is being done for the non-college bound population. People need to attain a GED and then they can secure apprentice positions, which can pay upwards of \$50,000 annually. More needs to be done for this population, rather than another Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) program.

NALCAB: Pointed out that throughout the education experience in high school and at WETC, financial literacy/education should be included to help instill the practice of personal wealth building in the population.

Toyota: Remarked that they have trouble finding qualified workers with the proper training and cognitive skills required to fill their open positions. They often have to recruit and relocate employees from outside of San Antonio. This issue can be resolved by making an effort to close the existing skills gap. The comments from Toyota spurred a deeper conversation on the existing skills gap in San Antonio, which is presented in the following section.

Skills Gap – WETC Customer

The skills gap between available job opportunities and the current workforce has been an issue facing communities across the United States for many years, including



San Antonio. Employers at the roundtable with job openings in more technical fields like construction, manufacturing, and electrical engineering reported a continuing struggle to fill vacant positions. This conversation prompted perhaps the most important question of the roundtable discussion: Who is WETC's customer?

The question posed included a discussion about the type of workforce pipeline WETC operates. The characteristics of this pipeline were described as being analogous to a push-and pull system, and being one or the other:

- **PUSH SYSTEM:** In a push system, such as the roundtable participants believe WETC operates, the programs and certifications offered to students are determined primarily by Alamo Colleges and the Edgewood ISD.
- **PULL SYSTEM:** In a pull system, those entities would better engage local businesses looking to hire graduates to ensure they are enrolled in the jobs and certifications that are in demand.

In response, it was noted that currently WETC serves the following populations:

- Those that are looking for employment
- Students looking for pathway to college
- Businesses looking to find employees

Furthering this conversation, it was observed that not every student needs to pursue a college degree. Oftentimes, a certification program or job training program can lead to a fulfilling and lucrative career, such as some offered by Toyota (upwards of \$80,000). Less than 10% of the jobs at Toyota require a degree. What is of higher importance to Toyota is proficiency in technical and soft skills.

Attaining a GED is a fundamental baseline requirement but not necessarily the most important need. For some of the area major employers, the big need in San Antonio is a better trained and more diverse (in terms of skills) workforce. A skilled employee is often viewed as a more valuable employee when compared to an educated employee (at times). This is because of the time, value, and money proposition employers face when facing workforce shortages.

As a solution to this dilemma and included in the discussion, Texas House Bill 5 aims to correct the policy changes that resulted from the No Child Left Behind Act, which was damaging to the trade industry because it prevented students from taking vocational technology or trade classes if they didn't pass all of their math and science classes. It is hoped that these new state regulations should help open vocational training opportunities again, and help curb the trade skills gap.

In conclusion, a three-tier workforce solution strategy was advocated by the business participants. This could be pursued where Tier 1 addresses the immediate, short term needs (current workforce). Tier 2 would address the medium term which would better prepare junior and high school students. Finally, Tier 3 would address the long-term and prepare the future workforces (Pre-K and elementary students).



ADDENDUM

D. Education Town Hall

Overview

The size of the group that attended the education roundtable allowed for a productive conversation on what education leaders, with a vested interest in the work done by the WETC, feel are the critical workforce development issues at play in San Antonio.

The conversation focused on four key discussion points / questions. The questions and observations are summarized below.

1. What are the issues with post-secondary education in our community?

One issue cited was lack of persistence. Adult students already have busy lives with competing priorities and obligations (work, childcare, transportation). It is important to impart a sense of persistence (“stick-to-itiveness”) that can inspire them to keep pursuing their education goals in spite of the challenges.

Additionally, the WETC exists (and should be promoted) as a resource for those who are undereducated to attain the education and training they need to find a fulfilling career. This includes help attaining a GED (A statistic was cited stating that 50% of those over 25 have no GED in the surrounding community) or specific training in a field with existing job opportunities.

2. What are barriers to adults continuing their education?

Some of the barriers that limit an adult students’ opportunity to continue their education are:

- Lack of affordable, easily-accessible child care
- Lack of non-traditional class schedules (evenings / weekends)
- Inadequate financial aid for non-traditional students who need to continue supporting their family.
- Inadequate awareness of existing opportunities and resources
- Despair– adults that are trying to re-enter the education world can be discouraged by the process. A college introduction, or program that helps build confidence and establish easy ‘wins’ could prevent some discouragement.

3. What other factors/issues need to be addressed?

The following areas received additional discussion, regarding how they could positively influence what is happening at the WETC:

Marketing – A proposal was made on the creation of a small marketing committee that would meet and develop a plan that would help the WETC and Alamo Colleges reach a wider audience.



Patience – When Alamo Colleges or the WETC attempt a new program/initiative/class, patience is required to enable a successful outcome. Oftentimes, new efforts are scrapped if they are not met with immediate success. These new efforts require time to succeed.

Remediation – Alamo Colleges is developing a remediation program to help students transition back into the education world. The Department of Rehab Services (DARS) is an underutilized resource that can help students.

Digital Gap – A segment of the target population does not have the savvy or regular access to the Internet. WETC can serve as a way to bridge that gap – though newer resources will be required.

Parental Education – An effort should be made to instill in the parents of the community a positive mindset towards higher education / training, making sure the goal is attainable for all.

CE to Credit – A pilot program should be considered wherein continuing education students can earn college credit for their class work. These ‘wins’ can build up a student’s self-esteem and a forward momentum to higher education. Continuing education programs remain an underutilized resource. One challenge is that financial aid is not available for CE programs however.

Basic Soft Skills – Despite low prioritization of state funding for programs that help students develop the following basic soft skills, they are sorely needed, and include:

- Resume writing
- Interviewing
- Invoicing
- Customer Service

Education Policy – The direction coming from policymakers in Austin and Washington, D.C., are driving the Alamo Colleges in different directions.

Career Services – There exists a need for an office/department at the WETC that can further promote the talent pool being created and encourage potential employers to provide students with internship opportunities, as well as financial support. This financial support could take the form of scholarships, paid internships, apprenticeships, etc.

One-Stop – The WETC already provides a myriad of different services and resources to the community, but it could be further promoted as a “one-stop” location where students can find:

- Tutoring
- Legal Counseling
- Internal Marketing of Opportunities



- Job Fairs
- Career Counseling
- Social Services

4. In your dream of dreams, what would a new WETC facility include?

Attendees were asked what they would like to see in a new facility, if the funding to develop a new campus can be secured. They mentioned the following:

- ADA accessibility for a 2nd floor
- Reliable hot water
- A more inviting environment
- Updated classroom technology
- Modularized meeting space
- Library
- Conference rooms
- A new wing to support the academic core

Additional sentiments shared when talking about the prospect of a new WETC facility included:

"...for too long, the Westside has accepted not having the same resources and assistance as other parts of the city."

"Why does the Westside deserve anything less..."

"We get used to not having nice things."

In terms of programming, WETC does not currently provide academic courses, only training that meets short-term needs. Long-term training needs must be considered and addressed. It was expressed that WETC can also serve as an economic development tool for the whole Westside. It can provide the community with validation and a pathway to increased education opportunities.



ADDENDUM

E. WETC: UTSA College of Architecture Concept Master Planning

Background

The Westside Development Corporation convened WETC with Professor John Hertz from UTSA College of Architecture. This meeting led to a semester long project where Professor Hertz's students would undertake an effort to design what a future WETC campus could look like, as part of a master planning process. The feedback from WETC staff, along with that of the participants in the discussions/roundtables above, was provided to the students. While their efforts are still at a mid-way point, we were offered an opportunity to see the student's progress to-date. Here is what we've seen:

Eight (8) master planning concepts were presented to WETC on April 30th at UTSA's downtown campus College of Architecture facility. The 3rd year undergraduate architecture students presented a wide variety of styles and organization of the concept master plan. Yet, all incorporated a centralized quadrangle. The central "quad" in each concept offered a way to connect WETC's programmatic elements into a coherent whole, while simultaneously offering semi-enclosed and open space. Most, if not all, of the concepts embraced re-directing vehicular traffic from 40th street to a new approach off 41st street—this singular move shifted the site and the pedestrian experience of entry from the original eastern 'front door' to a new "front face" of WETC's campus on the western elevation.

Strengths:

Some concepts offered compact, cohesive plan, potentially minimizing the costs of hard-scape, circulation, and perimeter building wall construction. More compact concept offers the ability to build two-level structure(s)—a vertical expression that would accentuate the height of the new facility and perhaps be seen from Old Highway 90—a comment that architects from Overland Partners made reference to the contextual planning of the site. The WDC and WETC staff was impressed by how the students were able to incorporate the essence of the WETC's historical significance and how their visions kept the future use and benefit to the surrounding community in mind.

Weaknesses:

Some concepts offered a spread-out plan, potentially increasing the costs of hard-scape, circulation, and perimeter building wall construction. While many of the concept plans presented an abundance of glass (floor to ceiling) for a variety of uses: in all major functions such as administration, classroom, and daycare facilities, solar heat gain presented a real challenge. By incorporating a 'brie-solei' concept, energy consumption could be substantially cut.

The Concept Master Plans developed for WETC envisioned a revitalized campus that embraced a variety of workable solutions. Using these concepts as backdrop for further analysis offers WETC a significant head start in ascertaining its refined programmatic needs and proffers WETC a conceptual framework with which to begin the task of



prioritizing a budget for a capital campaign.

Concluding ACCD, UTSA, WDC Narrative:

Celebrating over eight years since it opened its doors, the Westside Education and Training Center (WETC) has been consistent in addressing the most pressing needs of the residents it serves: training that helps them acquire the skills they need to get the kind of jobs that will pay enough to support their families. Founded in a collaborative effort by the Edgewood Independent School District, the Alamo Community College District (ACCD) and city of San Antonio leaders, WETC has adopted an holistic approach to addressing some of the grim statistics of this area of the west side of the city - fewer than half of West Side residents 25 or older are high school graduates and only four percent have college degrees; the median income of families is a little over \$25,000, far below the \$37,300 deemed necessary for a family of four; one in three children resides in a home below the poverty level; and employment levels are low.

The success WETC has enjoyed in this endeavor has led them to envision increasing their facilities to handle a growing demand for all their services. Working with the Westside Development Corporation (WDC), which is helping with the logistical and economic issues related to this possible expansion, they enlisted the help of design students at the College of Architecture at UTSA to undertake a visioning exercise to explore what the possible expansion of the existing campus might look like. The students were given the charge of reinforcing the all-important sense of community based on a network of support that makes WETC a unique experience for its non-traditional students. Working under the leadership of architect and Professor John Hertz, his class of students started by creating three alternative master plans for the expansion and then focused on the major new building that was being proposed, a 25,000 square foot general classroom building.

The students made a series of presentation in the course of developing their proposals, both in class and to their clients - WETC, ACCD, and WDC. For their final presentation, the students prepared elaborate drawings of plans, perspectives, and technical aspects of their proposals, as well as physical models. The students were unanimous in their appreciation of this opportunity to participate in a project with real-world attributes. Working with a client was new to most of them and it gave them a taste of what the professional practice of architecture is really like.

For WETC and the WDC, the process helped them refine their ideas about the real physical needs of an expanding campus. The projects will hopefully serve as a catalyst for the further development of the WETC campus in carrying out the vital services it provides a community that has historically been underserved.



ADDENDUM
F. Emerging Markets

San Antonio has all of the right industry ingredients to fully emerge economically. A cross-reference examination of the leading emerging industries and San Antonio institutions is the following:

EMERGING INDUSTRY	SAN ANTONIO INSTITUTION
Biotechnology	UTSA Health Science Center
Environmental Engineering	-----
Health Information Technology	-----
Aerospace Engineering	PSA, KAC, Brooks City-Base, DOD- USAF (2)
Pharmaceutical Sciences	DPT, KCI, Mission Pharmaceutical, Genzyme
Medical Assistants	Incarinate Word College
Financial Engineering	USAA
Geophysics	Valero, Tesoro, NuStar
Information Technology	Rackspace
Distance Learning	Alamo Colleges

Early on in this process, a working group of City, County, Chamber, Business, and Education Leaders was formed to work to identify what emerging industries will play a key role in the future development of San Antonio and what existing assets are in place to advance the city’s goals.

Workforce development programs that will close the existing skills gap will be vital to the city’s continued growth and position as a “City on the Rise.”