

Food and Agricultural Products Center



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Bricktown Offers Market Opportunity for Entrepreneurs

STILLWATER, Okla. - The Metropolitan Area Projects or MAPS multi-million dollar renovation of Oklahoma City's Bricktown area has made it the fastest growing entertainment district in the Southwest.

New retail activity is increasing in this energetic and vibrant area of Oklahoma City, said Chuck Willoughby, business marketing and planning associate for the Oklahoma Food and Agricultural Products Research and Technology Center.

"Shopping, dining and touring in the restored area draw more than four million visitors annually," Willoughby said. "Small business owners and entrepreneurs can capitalize on the popularity of the area through the Bricktown Marketplace."

The Bricktown Marketplace LLC is a high-quality, open-air market targeting both Oklahoma City residents and visitors to the downtown area. Beginning in 2004, the market will run each Saturday from May through October. Vendors will be serving a new and growing group of customers in the attractive areas surrounding the Bricktown Canal.

The Marketplace provides many services for the vendors, Willoughby said.

"A substantial advertising campaign to develop event awareness is currently running and will run through October," he said. "Promotional support is provided through *The Oklahoman*, News 9, Kiss 98.9 and a Web site dedicated to Bricktown. Plentiful parking, ongoing events and dining options will enhance the

experience of Bricktown Marketplace visitors."

Potential vendors include flowers and produce, exhibits and demonstrations, pre-prepared and pre-packaged food, book traders' market, arts and crafts, orchids and others.

"This is a great opportunity to reach new visitors in Oklahoma," Willoughby said. "The market is suited to up-scale gourmet products, which many of the Food and Agricultural Products Center clients offer."

Vendors receive free parking, 100 square-foot booth space, waste removal, administrative staff, insurance and security. Setup occurs at 6 a.m., and hours of operation occur between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. Discounts are available for multiple booths and current Made in Oklahoma companies.

For further information contact Norm Bekoff, general manager of Bricktown Marketplace LLC, at nbekoff@watertaxi.com or (405) 234-8263.

The Food and Agricultural Products Center business planning and marketing associates are available to visit with clients about market opportunities and marketing strategies. To speak to a business planning and marketing associate, call (405) 744-6071.

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