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City Launches Downtown Rogers Inc.

By Tevin Wooten - September 6, 2015

ROGERS -- The city of Rogers will soon take on a new look in its downtown district. The new sights are all in hopes of spurring economic development, and some of the changes will be seen as early as next month. Late last month, the Rogers-Lowell Chamber of Commerce announced the creation of Downtown Rogers Inc. (DRI).

It's similar to downtown organization, DBI in Bentonville, but DRI works with existing community partners.

Topping their list is overseeing implementation of the downtown master plan in Rogers.

Shonna Brown is a 5 year resident of Rogers and is better known as the 'dog diva'.

Most days, you can find her at her 'Downtown Dogs' stand on the corner of 1st & Walnut, but that wasn't always the case.



"It's a quick lunch. They don't have time to like, you know go across and wait 30 minutes to sit down and eat," said Brown.

She was attracted to the downtown district and applied for a mobile food truck permit just two weeks ago.

"Just the growing, and it's absolutely beautiful, the architecture down here, I think. I love the homey feeling," Brown describes.

The city hopes more vendors and residents like Shonna decide to call its downtown district home.

Community partners like the Rogers-Lowell Chamber of Commerce and 'Main Street Rogers' announced the formation of DRI.

City planning director Steve Glass says DRI's plan includes a larger plaza area for bigger events, bringing curb appeal to the streets, and opening up alleyways for food trucks and encouraging a vibrant night scene.

"Rogers has done real well on the retail side, over on the west side of town, but to create just another hot spot, another destination for people to come down to," said Glass.

Glass says they aren't just focusing on places for people to live and work, but with a new bike park in the works, he says it's also about creating places for people to play.

"Try to create a place where people want to live downtown, and when they want to live downtown, they'll want to work downtown, when they work downtown, you have the restaurants and the activities downtown. So it all kind of rolls up into one big synergistic package," Glass said.

These are more than just improvements to the streetscape but they're improvements to a place the 'dog diva' calls home.

Brown said "that's what I'd like to see, everybody have that like 'oh let's go downtown!'"

It will take several years for the full plan to be completed. However, if residents are eager to see a new addition to downtown Rogers, a BMX style bike park is scheduled to be completed next month.