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Certi-pie-ably sweet: Kyle looks to local businesses to sell city as 'Pie Capital of Texas'?



Hays County Pct. 2 Commissioner Mark Jones (center) proves no method, no matter how comical, is off limits when you're in the thick of a timed pie-eating contest. (photo by Moses Leos III)

BY KATERINA BARTON ON JANUARY 24, 2018 | Originally published by *Hays Free Press*

Kyle is looking to its local businesses to help push and build support around its brand as the 'Pie Capital of Texas'.

The city's branding initiative was rolled out Jan. 23 when the city's administrative team gave a presentation on its effort and how it will impact the community and boost economic opportunity.

The city currently doesn't have an official brand, and proponents say this will make Kyle a destination city, improve tourism and increase civic pride.



With a mouthful of blueberry pie and a little whip cream accent on his face, Kyle City Council member Dex Ellison shows a sassy smile to reveler during a pie eating contest at the Kyle Train Depot Tuesday. (photo by Moses Leos III)

Rolling out the brand city-wide is still an ongoing effort. Kim Hilsenbeck, Kyle communications specialist, said they want to see local business members joining the branding team, giving feedback and helping spread the word.

Kyle applied with the United States Patent and Trademark Office to become the "Pie Capital of Texas" in 2017.

Victoria Vargas, Kyle Economic Development specialist, said "it's looking promising" for the trademark to come through within the next couple of months. She said the trademark office really wants to see you using the brand before giving any official documentation.

The city has also joined the American Pie Council and is looking into hosting the annual National Pie Championship. This year's championship will be held in Orlando, Florida in April.

There is also the second annual Kyle Pie in the Sky hot air balloon festival, which will be hosted over Labor Day weekend. Additionally, the city wants businesses to become "Certi-pied," meaning they are participating in the branding process.

"We've put together a recipe to make Kyle a real destination city, and we hope that you'll agree with us that it's a little bit more than half-baked."
Jerry Hendrix, Kyle chief of staff

Another event the city plans to take advantage of is National Pi day on March 14. The day will encourage Kyle residents and businesses to "teach someone to make a pie" and incorporate the math and fractions relating it back to pi day.

Although it may seem like a niche market, Vargas said businesses "don't have to make a pie to be part of the brand, you can still benefit from the brand."

Many local businesses in the area have tried to incorporate the brand, despite not selling pie related goods.

Allen Deaver at Sky Realty said he sends clients a pie with his logo on it. The Hampton Inn Kyle has started giving out pie-shaped candles at check-out and Broadway Bank is looking into giving out pie-shaped piggy banks.

Eventually, the city would like to have a list of "Certi-pied" businesses and have a sticker in local business windows showcasing the new brand.

"We've put together a recipe to make Kyle a real destination city, and we hope that you'll agree with us that it's a little bit more than half-baked," Kyle chief of staff Jerry Hendrix said.

[See photos from Tuesday's pie eating contest here. \(photos by Moses Leos III\)](#)

