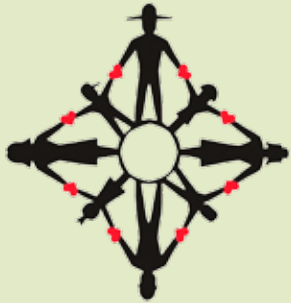


Silver City Food Co-op

established 1974



www.silvercityfoodcoop.coop

Store Hours

575-388-2343

Mon-Sat 9am-7pm

Sunday 11am-5pm

Vision Statement

Promoting the inherently healthy relationship between food, community, and nature.

Seven Cooperative Principles

- Voluntary and open membership
- Democratic member control
- Member economic participation
- Autonomy and independence
- Education, training and information
- Cooperation among co-ops
- Concern for community

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Cup o' Joe

by Joe Z



Soon after I arrived at our Co-op in 2013, it became obvious that we had outgrown the space that we were in. It was a case of too much success for a place that can no longer accommodate it.

This only happens to the best. Successful places tend to expand to accommodate more people as those folks discover a great place. Since we started, the Silver City Food Co-op has continued to grow.

So during my first year here, I drove all around Silver just pretending where the perfect place for the Co-op could be. It did not matter what was on the property – it was a conceptual exercise melding market, visibility, convenience and the ability to offer other services such as being a recycling depot (just random idealistic thoughts).

I finally determined when all was said and done – the space at College and Pope probably is in the top five locations and close to the 1st spot – if not being the first spot. We decided to make a few inquiries because maybe they had too much space and we could trade buildings or work out some deal or something like that. No. After checking – that wasn't possible as they had great plans for further development. They've been there for years and they had what they needed. And that was totally fine with us.

You see, LifeQuest was an institution in this town and incredibly admirable as what they offer to the challenged was incredible, especially in an area that offers little to this select population. We were LifeQuest fans. An incredible bright spot in our town.

My stomach turned when I heard the news that their funding shifted and they needed to immediately shut down (the story can be found at the Daily Press: <http://www.scdailypress.com> Search onsite for "LifeQuest").

Though exceedingly unexpected and quite sad, our Co-op must look at the opportunity that this presents to our future. None of us at this point would predict how well a move to that location would turn out. We need to study deeply and quickly.

We can imagine a Co-op where there is room in the aisles to shop, more cashier lanes; a fresh meat and fish section; a Café and sit down area to eat; a salad bar; a bakery; an outlet for local products; a focal point of community activity; a force large enough to have voice.

What fun that would be!

But wait – while it would indeed be fun and great – it is really not why we would consider this investment and move. It's much, much more than that.

Our Co-op – as are all Co-ops – is about service. Service to our communities as well as service to our Members. At our heart, we believe that all people – without exception – deserve health. By expanding, we will be able to offer more to our community. It's really that simple.

Did you know that 17% to 18% of our revenues come from folks who are on EBT. That's pretty high for a Co-op but normal for our town. Personally – I wouldn't mind seeing that number increase.

Folks on limited budgets often cannot afford the quality foods the Co-op offers. As a matter of fact, that is why we increased

our Co-opBasics Program – to help folks with lower financial means gain access to healthy foods. And it also helps others stretch their food budgets.

Expectant moms, new moms and children deserve the best foods that are available. The limited physical space of our current store makes it difficult for these groups to easily navigate. That holds true for those with physical handicaps as well.

We have already targeted the diabetic situation in our community – helping folks control their intake and to lose weight with healthy foods that they need.

It also means that our support of local would keep growing as we help local producers sell their wares. This strengthens our community as a whole – helping small businesses get off the ground – you make it, we'll sell it for you. Who else in our

community does that? We have more local than anywhere else in Silver but we've run out of room for more.

But this is just the start of the list! This list is actually so long that it cannot be contained in this small article space. I think that all of you reading this can fill it in a lot more.

The tricky part is how to financially accomplish what we want. We certainly

do not have the funds on hand, so the obvious way forward is get loans.

The great thing about Co-ops though, is that faced with these opportunities, Co-ops typically borrow from their Membership first. As I write this, this opportunity is so new that we don't even have an exact cost of the property. But to do everything we want for an entire move – we would need a minimum of .5 million to a million dollars.

Sounds like a lot and it is. But I also know of many Members over the years that have said to me that they have dollars sitting in banks doing nothing for anyone. They would love to invest in the Co-op if there was some mechanism set up.

Hang onto those dollars right this moment as it will take us time to set these things up and that is, of course, dependent on whether we decide to pursue this opportunity.

There's so much to discuss and way too little space here although we'll have more in the next newsletter. We are also looking at setting up space on our website (silvercityfoodcoop.coop) to keep everyone informed as events may start happening quickly.

Please don't jump to any conclusions as we are still in information gathering and planning stages. There are a zillion questions to still be answered and we are working diligently to get them. But – at its very basic core: the means to do this does exist here and if we want this – it can and will happen! ✨

