

# Casual Mexican eatery preps for spicy opening, thanks to Metro East SBDC

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EDWARDSVILLE - Armed with expertise and one-on-one professional connections from the Illinois Metro East Small Business Development Center, an independently owned local restaurant will soon be opening its doors and its patio to downtown Edwardsville diners.

[Taqueria Z](#) is a locally owned and operated eatery featuring freshly-squeezed margaritas and quick, simple, bold cuisine straight from the mountains of Central Mexico. The

brand-new space, located at 109 East Park St. in Edwardsville, will offer hand-held tacos, burritos, tortas and other classic favorites, according to co-owner Mike Zanger.

“I spent a lot of time in the mountains of Central Mexico when I was young,” said Zanger, an Edwardsville resident. “It was there that I learned how to cook authentic Mexican food, and I have been cooking it for my family and friends ever since. I have talked about opening a taqueria for years, and now seems like the right time to finally do it.”

Taqueria Z represents a collaboration among Zanger, his wife, Megan Zanger, and Zach Miller – publisher of *The Main Street Beat*, a local entertainment publication.

Jo Ann DiMaggio May, Metro East SBDC interim director and small business specialist, has worked one-on-one with the couple during the past year, helping them fine-tune their business plan, find an accountant and make sure all of their required paperwork was completed according to the state of Illinois and federal government guidelines. This expertise was shared with Taqueria Z’s owners at no charge.

“We’re grateful to Jo Ann and to the SBDC for the time spent in assisting us with the great number of details involved in starting a business,” Megan Zanger said. “I attended one of the SBDC’s workshops, ‘Starting a Business in Illinois,’ and gained a lot of valuable, practical insight into the documentation and credentials required in the startup process. We’d strongly recommend the SBDC to anyone thinking of beginning a new business or facing challenges in an existing one.”

May said she enjoyed working with the owners and investors, because they have a commitment to being good downtown neighbors and operating an environmentally friendly business.

“It is wonderful to see their hard work come to fruition,” said May. “They were highly receptive to SBDC services, and I look forward to all their success. I can’t wait to eat some great Mexican food in this uniquely designed environment.”

The Zangers and Miller are grateful to the city of Edwardsville for being easy to work with. Late last year, the Edwardsville City Council approved Taqueria’s request for a special use permit, because more than 25 percent of the restaurant’s customers will be dining outside of the restaurant’s walls.

Local resident William Flach owns the 800-square-foot building. Since Flach recently worked with the city in renovating and building out Recess Brewing in downtown

Edwardsville, both Flach and architect Jamie Henderson had a familiarity with city rules and regulations. They worked together with the Zangers to keep design and construction moving and on schedule.

“Without the help, expertise and belief in our vision from Jamie Henderson and Bill Flach, this project would not have been possible,” Miller said.

“The city has been absolutely cooperative in every way,” Mike Zanger said.

Taqueria Z’s operating hours will be from 11 a.m.-11 p.m. on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 11 a.m.-3 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

The [Metro East SBDC](#) assists new ventures like Taqueria Z as well as existing businesses headquartered in the nine-county Metro East region of Calhoun, Jersey, Madison, Bond, Clinton, St. Clair, Washington, Monroe and Randolph. It is a service to the community supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, and [Southern Illinois University Edwardsville](#).

By aiding entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the Metro East by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining jobs and encouraging capital investment. It enhances the region’s economic interests by providing one-stop assistance to individuals by means of counseling, training, research and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses. When appropriate, the SBDC strives to affiliate its ties to the region to support the goals and objectives of both the [SIUE School of Business](#) and the University at large. To learn how the SBDC can help your small business, contact the Metro East SBDC at [\(618\) 650-2929](tel:6186502929) or [sbdcedw@gmail.com](mailto:sbdcedw@gmail.com).