

# Business Solutions Center wins Center for Digital Government Best of Texas Award

The City of Austin Small Business Development Program was honored to receive a national award from the Center for Digital Government Best of Texas for "Excellence in Technology Promoting Economic Development" in recognition of the achievements of the Business Solutions Center. The awards ceremony, held on October 14, 2008 at the Austin Hilton offered the highest level of professional acknowledgment within the Texas public sector IT community.

The Small Business Development Program's Business Solutions Center was chosen particularly for the outreach to small business owners in the Austin community encouraging the use of many services available to them. The Excellence in Technology Promoting Economic Development Award recognized that "The Business Solutions Center is comprised of an Online Plan Room for construction and related businesses, a Business Information Center for researching new or expanded business and a computer lab to conduct software or Internet training. Since 94 percent of Austin businesses employ fewer than 50 people, this free technology support for the small business owner strengthens the entire area economically".

Accepting the Project Excellence award for the Business Solutions Center was Rosy Jalifi, Assistant Director of the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office. In attendance were Vicky Valdez, Small Business Administrator; Michelle Frith, Outreach and Marketing Coordinator; Randi Jenkins, Development Information Resources Coordinator and Lewis Leff, Research Analyst.

"We are pleased and honored to have been recognized by an advisory board of key state and

local government executives, technologists and industry specialists from Texas," said Vicky Valdez, Small Business Administrator. "It's gratifying to know that not only do we offer something to the public that we believe is of great value, but industry leaders also find the Business Solutions Center to be a unique and an amazing resource for Austin area entrepreneurs as well."

The Business Solutions Center is free and open to Austin area entrepreneurs Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In the last fiscal year, visits to the Business Solutions Center have literally doubled, with more than 2,000 visits to the Center by more than 550 unduplicated customers. More than 2,500 hours were spent in usage of the Business Solutions Center and the value of contracts won by BSC customers total more than \$2,600,000.00. Any small business owner in Travis, Williamson, Hays, Caldwell and Bastrop Counties is welcome to utilize the resources in the Business Solutions Center.

