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Williston Restaurants utilize STAR Fund for Startup, Expansion



Hula Grill has relocated to 23 Main Street in Downtown Williston. The owners have received a STAR Fund grant to improve the exterior of the business. The rendering above is an example of the color scheme they are considering.

The Williston STAR Fund is helping two restaurants in Downtown Williston. The Williston City Commission approved up to \$20,000 from the STAR Fund C4 Façade program for Hula Grill to renovate the exterior of its new site. The commission approved the allocation at its meeting on June 12, 2018. Meanwhile, City Administrator David Tuan approved up to \$5,000 from the Mini Match program for Bone'z Island Kitchen to open in Hula Grill's former location.

The owners of the two restaurants are friends and worked out the arrangements. Williston Economic Development's Shawn Wenko said the STAR Fund programs will help enhance Main Street.

"What Hula Grill is planning is going to be a nice addition to the south part of Main Street," said Wenko, WED executive director. "We've seen more and more revitalization efforts in that area of Williston which is a reflection of a healthy downtown."

Hula Grill, a community favorite Hawaiian restaurant has relocated to 23 Main Street. While the move has been exciting, it has also caused owners Jerry and Sandy Wong to start from scratch when it came to the redesigning exterior of their building. To \$60,000 estimated project will get support from

the C4 Façade program. Jerry Wong estimates construction will begin as early as July.

"We have been very busy in our new location," said Wong. "As soon as it slows down a bit we will begin the renovation."

Wong has been working with Williston Planning and Zoning and Economic Development on his plans. He says the new look will brighten up the block.

"We will use the same bright colors that are inside; green, blue and yellow," said Wong.

One of Wong's employees is opening the restaurant in Hula Grill's former location. Rayan Williams hopes to open Bone'z Island Kitchen at 413 Main Street by the end of June. Construction workers are currently rebuilding the floor in the eatery's kitchen.

Bone'z is utilizing the STAR Fund Mini Match program to defray the costs of starting his first brick and mortar location for the restaurant, but he has been building a presence in Williston for some time. He has had Pop-ups at community events such as Band Day and The Taste of Williston where Bone'z won the fan favorite prize. Williams says they hope to give the community a feel for the Island with their smoothies, Caribbean food and drinks.

To learn more about the Williston STAR Fund visit www.willistondevelopment.com.