



From Strategy to Revitalization: Sweet Auburn Bread Co.

As **one of Sweet Auburn's longest-standing businesses**, Sweet Auburn Bread Co. represented more than a neighborhood bakery. It was **a cultural landmark** and community gathering place with decades of history. As investment returned to the neighborhood, the bakery faced a common challenge among legacy businesses: **modernizing the customer experience while preserving the identity and community trust that made it a neighborhood institution.**

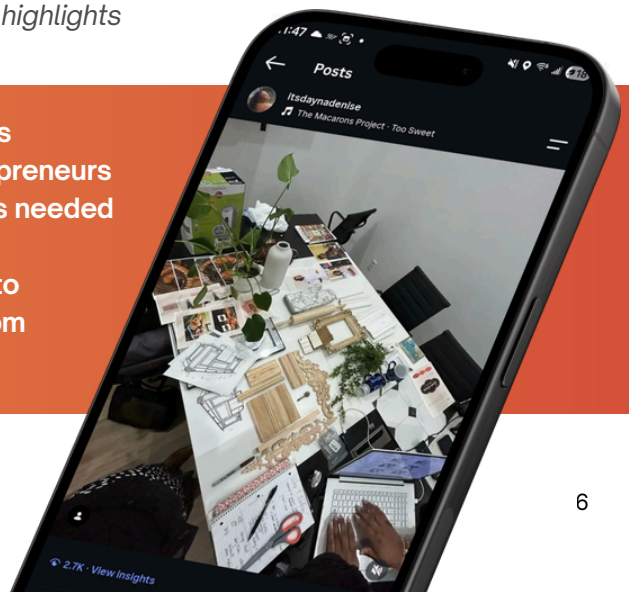
The Challenge:
The physical environment **no longer reflected the quality and legacy** of the brand, operational improvements were needed, and the customer experience required revitalization. Like many legacy businesses, the challenge was not creating something new, but **thoughtfully evolving without losing the character that made it meaningful to the community.**

Key opportunities included:

- Modernizing the storefront experience
- Improving customer flow and functionality
- Strengthening brand presentation
- Preserving the business's historic identity
- Positioning the bakery for long-term sustainability

Led **storefront revitalization from concept to implementation**, coordinating budgets, vendors, environmental design, stakeholder engagement, and experience improvements.
Scan to view project reflection featuring process highlights

This project validated the flexibility of the SPARK framework across different business types and growth stages. While emerging entrepreneurs often needed support bringing new ideas to life, legacy businesses needed support reimagining established ones. Together, these projects demonstrated that a structured entrepreneur journey could adapt to distinct business needs while maintaining a consistent pathway from assessment to implementation.



APPENDIX D

Sweet Auburn Bread Co. - Before & After











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Sweet Auburn Bread Co. - Award Submission

For over 25 years, Sweet Auburn Bread Co. has kept the historic Sweet Auburn district “sweet”! In Fall 2021, a SCAD Serve course at Savannah College of Art and Design made up of students from various disciplines worked to propose a refreshed design for the bakery's storefront, brand identity, and interior.

The designs were to be implemented through the Sweet Auburn Works’ program, Spark Innovation Lab, backed by Bank of America. After months of several bids above budget, a recent graduate student from SCAD joined the Sweet Auburn Works team in the summer of 2022 to mobilize ideas beyond the classroom. Through creative problem-solving, storytelling, and community fostered relationships the Sweet Auburn Bread Co. experience became even “sweeter”!

The re-emergence of this project evoked a mass of emotions and cultural connections. Reflecting on the profound significance of the “kitchen as a haven” within the Black community inspired design decisions by weaving tradition with innovation. Utilizing insights drawn from interviews with Sweet Auburn Bread Co. and collaborating closely with the brand guidelines, the design team embarked on a journey to reimagine the space and tell a story through design.

Pulling from the creativity of our ancestry, southern African Americans styled spaces culturally influenced by what was accessible to them. The intentional nodes of French ornamentation collided with joyous colors to give the warmth and safety of a family kitchen. With gentle reminders of soulfulness and resilience derived from the struggles of enslavement, the little southern Parisian bistro greets you like a folktale. The diverse team, consisting of four passionate African American women in design and construction, alongside dedicated local contractors worked diligently to bring this vision to life.

The storefront is nestled in the center of a historic landmark, The Odd Fellows Building, where various Black-owned businesses, professional offices, meeting spaces, and social clubs have contributed to Auburn Avenue’s economic and cultural vitality since 1914. Despite the many setbacks that come with renovating historic buildings, the team utilized efficient strategies to cut costs without sacrificing quality.

Throughout the years, like many legacy businesses on Auburn Avenue, Sweet Auburn Bread Co. has endured numerous challenges, including the economic crisis of 2008, the disruptions of the streetcar development, and more recently, the impact of COVID-19 in 2020. When many businesses were forced to close due to a lack of commercial retail activity, the bakery continued to persevere.

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In recognition of this perseverance, hard work, and delicious sweets that bring joy to the community, Sweet Auburn Works Inc. awarded the bakery with being the pilot project to begin a long line of overdue investment in the revitalization of this “Beloved Community”.

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Kerene Souverain | Project Engineer

Karhtat Wallace | Interior Architect

Dayna Edmonds | Creative Lead | MFA SCAD

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Department of
CITY PLANNING

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JAHNEE PRINCE
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DOUG YOUNG
Director, Office of Design

TO: Dayna Edmonds
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FROM: Matt Adams, CNU-A, Executive Director, Atlanta Urban Design Commission
Assistant Director, Office of Design, DCP

DATE: May 8, 2024

RE: **Atlanta Urban Design Commission Design Awards 2024 (46th Annual Awards of Excellence): Sweet Auburn Bread Co.**

It is my pleasure to inform you, on behalf of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission, that your nomination has been selected to receive an Award of Excellence at the Commission's Design Awards 2024 (46th annual Awards of Excellence). This year's award ceremony will be held on Friday, May 31st, in the Atrium of Atlanta City Hall located at 55 Trinity Ave. SW Atlanta, GA 30303 at 6:30 PM.

As the nominator for the award, we must ask you for assistance in preparing for the ceremony. If you are unable to assist with these tasks, we ask that you provide us with the name, email, and telephone number of a contact person for the award.

The information below covers the basic information on the awards ceremony. This information will answer many of the questions we usually receive, but if you have others, please feel free to contact Leslie Battle-Williams lnbattle-williams@atlantaga.gov. We appreciate your assistance in making this year's event a memorable one.

The Ceremony: The awards portion of the evening begins promptly at 6:30 pm. The exact order of the projects receiving awards has not yet been determined. If you have any questions as to where your project is placed on the program, please contact this office **after May 24th**. Due to the 6:30 pm starting time, business attire is the norm.

Award Certificates: The award itself is a framed certificate, which is made out in the name of the project. We provide two additional unframed certificates which will be made available at the time that the award is issued. Please note that we will not be able to provide any additional certificates other than those given out at the ceremony.

Invitations: The Office of Design Staff will email out invitations to all those on our Awards of Excellence email list. You are welcome to invite others to the ceremony. In your announcement, please remember to tell potential attendees to RSVP using the following web address: https://forms.office.com/g/xAGc074dfN **by May 24, 2024.** In addition, we will be using social media and other outlets for announcing the event.

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Images: At the Awards Ceremony itself, images of the project will be shown as a description of the project is read. We usually use the images submitted with the nomination from which we select some to go along with the written script, which the Staff prepares. If we need additional or different images, we will contact you.

Recipients: We need to know the names and titles of those persons who will physically receive the award at the ceremony. These names and titles are announced as part of the presentation. A phonetic spelling tip for the presenter would be greatly appreciated. Please also note that the recipients are receiving the award on behalf of the project; the award is for the project itself. Any last-minute changes to the list of recipients will be made at the Commission Chair's discretion. Lastly, if there was more than one nominator for the same project / person, please try to coordinate your list of recipients. All names and titles are due by **May 17th.**

Recipients do not make any remarks but may be asked to pose for a group picture.

Email: All of the above information can be emailed to [redacted] with the subject line reading "Design Awards 2024 – Award Winner Information".

Publicity: In years past, various media outlets have done pieces on the Design Awards / Awards of Excellence ceremony, so we would ask that any press releases or public announcements referring to receiving an Award of Excellence take place after the ceremony. You are welcome to send general announcements about or invite people to the event.

Sincerely,



Matthew D. Adams, CNU-A
Executive Director, Urban Design Commission
Office of Design, Department of City Planning