

## Proposed Yamhill County Immediate Relief Grant Program

Yamhill County's small businesses are in a state of uncertainty and economic strain due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The county believes it should take immediate action to assist small, independent businesses to stay afloat during the pandemic, with a focus on the most vulnerable businesses.

While nearly all businesses are facing economic losses right now, businesses that are under mandatory change-in-service and closure orders are experiencing additional, extenuating circumstances. Our goal is to keep as many of these businesses in place and able to reopen following the pandemic. We believe that emergency relief assistance to sustain them through this short-term (4-6 week) gap in normal service, is our most direct and effective approach to assistance. Businesses are encouraged to only apply for these funds if they are in true need of relief at this time. These funds are not intended to address future, anticipated needs.

In addition to providing direct support to these businesses, the multiplier effect will impact the whole community. When small businesses reinvest in their communities, through payment of rent/utilities, purchasing of materials, and employment of community members, those local investment dollars continue to spur economic growth.

### **Business/Organization Eligibility:**

- Business is under a mandatory change-in-service or closure order (by federal, state or local gov.)
- Business has less than 15 employees (FTE; business owner on payroll qualifies as staff)
- Business verifies they are experiencing economic loss due to COVID-19
- Business verifies that they have exhausted business resources and have pursued reasonable relief efforts such as:
  - Seeking rent/mortgage forgiveness, discounts or payment delays
  - Worked with vendors to extend/improve payment terms
  - Worked with existing lending partners to access additional capital and/or extend payment terms on current loans
  - Partnered with utility service providers to extend payment plans
- Company has been in business for more than 12 months and is registered with the state of Oregon
- National chains excluded
- A business who has been the recipient of county economic development grant in the last 12 months is excluded (Small Grants, Strategic Investment Funds Grant & Start-up Grant)
- A business who has recently received a local COVID-type relief grant from their city or adjacent county is excluded

Additional consideration will be extended to the following businesses:

- Businesses who need tooling or require assistance to become a critical material supplier, in order to serve the immediate disaster relief efforts of the state or federal emergency management programs
- Agricultural businesses who do not fall under the federal critical infrastructure industry designation, who have experienced an immediate detrimental impact related to COVID-19

**Program Operation:**

- Business submits an application online, via the county website
- If application is found complete and the applicant meets eligibility guidelines, application will be reviewed and notice of award will occur within 2 – 3 weeks
- Applications will be received in a 72 hour (3-day) window. Applications will be committee reviewed for eligibility and awardees will be selected by lottery.
- Individual awards of \$2,500 will be given
- A regional allocation model will be used to ensure equitable distribution through the county
  - If any community's allocation is not fully awarded, due to lack of participation, those funds will go back into the larger pot and a finally county-wide lottery drawing will be held to issue those funds.
- If awarded, a Letter of Commitment will be executed between both parties, serving as the grant contract
- The program is effective during Yamhill County's declared state of emergency and while funds are available

## **Proposed Administrative Execution of the Yamhill County Immediate Relief Grant Program (IRGP)**

Because access to county staff and committee members is limited, due to social distancing orders, I am proposing the following approach to allow for reasonable and timely administration of the IRGP:

1. SEDCOR will work with the Yamhill County Grants & Special Projects (G&SP) Manager to develop an application and implement an online application process, utilizing a time stamp verification
2. A “but for” component will be included in the application, directing the applicant to explain how these funds will aid in securing the business’s viability during the 4-6 week impact period
3. A three-person application review committee will be established that will be comprised of the SEDCOR Economic Development Manager for Yamhill County, the CEO of the Chehalem Valley Chamber of Commerce, The CEO of the McMinnville Chamber of Commerce and at least one industry representative from a traded sector business who will not be applying for the grant. In order to adhere to the Governor’s Stay Home, Save Lives order, meetings will be held virtually, and will commence once the application period closes
4. The application review committee will assess applications using the business eligibility criteria to confirm eligibility (to the best of their ability, given the data provided), assuming the applicant is self-declaring accurately and honestly. Businesses qualifying for additional consideration, as defined above, will receive priority funding and will not be placed into the lottery process
5. Once awardees have been selected, they will be submitted to the BOC for review and approval
6. Once the BOC has granted funding approval, the G&SP Manager will issue a Letter of Commitment to be executed between both parties
7. Upon completion of the above steps, county staff will prepare and distribute award checks to the awardees (timing – within 2-3 weeks)

Proposed funds allocation model – Given the limited funds available at this time, and the BOC’s commitment to equitable distribution of the video lottery economic development grant funds, the following funding model is being recommended for consideration. This model assumes that the County will commit \$250,000 toward this proposed IRGP fund and utilizes a population-based percentage of allocation to each municipality, as well as outlying rural areas of the county. A date will be established to conclude the grant program and any city/county allocated, un-accessed funds (at that time), will be made available to the business community at-large

	Population	% of Pop	GRANT FUND \$250,000	\$2,500 awards No less than 2 Rounded	# of Grants
Yamhill	860	1%	\$2,241.33	\$ 5,000.00	2
Carlton	1,805	2%	\$4,704.20	\$ 5,000.00	2
Dayton	2,495	3%	\$6,502.48	\$ 7,500.00	3
Newberg	23,570	25%	\$61,428.20	\$ 60,000.00	24
Dundee	3,075	3%	\$8,014.07	\$ 7,500.00	3
McMinnville	32,930	34%	\$85,822.26	\$ 85,000.00	34
Willamina	1,885	2%	\$4,912.69	\$ 5,000.00	2
Amity	1,675	2%	\$4,365.39	\$ 5,000.00	2
Sheridan	6,025	6%	\$15,702.37	\$ 15,000.00	6
Lafayette	3,920	4%	\$10,216.31	\$ 10,000.00	4
Rural/Uninc YC	17,685	18%	\$46,090.70	\$ 45,000.00	18

Check: 95,925    100%    \$250,000.00    \$ 250,000.00    100

\* Population census data from 2010, prepared by Population Research Center, PSU

### Marketing:

The Yamhill County Board of Commissioners and SEDCOR are committed to ensuring that businesses throughout the county have fair and reasonable access to the information regarding this grant program and the application itself. For this reason, SEDCOR has built a three-tiered press packet (detail attached). This press packet will include email blasts, social media posts and a press release targeted at the three most circulated independent publications in the county.

Email blasts – We will be creating a standardized email announcement that will be sent to all SEDCOR business partners (not just members), local chambers of commerce, downtown associations, tourism associations, main street organizations, Economic Development partners, and agency partners such as the COG and SBDC.

Social media – Our social media campaign will include a copy/paste message for our partners which will also include a Spanish translation. In addition to the above list of partners, we will also be sharing our social media templates with our local cities for posting on their Facebook pages and other public forums such as their library or community center pages. Our hope is that businesses who are not connected to the traditional economic development partners will receive this information through this more localized approach.

Press release – We will be sending a press release to the Newberg Graphic, the News Register and the West Valley Bulletin. We are currently working to coordinate our grant opening date with their publication print date. We will also work with these print media partners to utilize our social media messaging as well. We are also pursuing use of a local Hispanic radio station to help broadcast the program announcement.

**Timeline:**

April 9<sup>th</sup> – BOC approval of the proposal  
April 10<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> – Program marketed throughout the county  
April 20<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> – Applications accepted  
April 24<sup>th</sup> – Committee review and lottery  
April 27<sup>th</sup> – Funding recommendation submitted to the BOC  
April 30<sup>th</sup> – BOC review committee’s recommendation at formal session – Seeking funding approvals  
May 14<sup>th</sup> – Pending BOC approvals on 4/30, this would be the target date for issuance of checks to awardees

In order to move this proposed program forward, I am respectfully asking the Board to approve an allocation of \$250,000 from O&C funds, to fund this program. I am also seeking approval of the program structure, attached marketing plan and proposed timeline.

Sincerely,



Abisha Stone  
SEDCOR  
Economic Development Manager - Yamhill County  
April 21, 2020

Accepted by Yamhill County  
Board of Commissioners on  
4/9/2020 by Board Order  
# 20-125