



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For more information, please contact:**

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**City Accepting Applications For Loans to Small Businesses, Nonprofits, Cultural Groups**

**Bloomington, Ind.** - Starting at 2 p.m. today, the City of Bloomington will begin accepting applications for financial support through its Rapid Response Fund (RRF) for Bloomington businesses, nonprofits, and cultural organizations that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This funding source and additional resources (please see below) were developed by the City's Economic Stabilization & Recovery (ES&R) working group, convened at the directive of Mayor John Hamilton March 23 to oversee the City's response to the economic effects of the pandemic. The Rapid Response Fund application portal may be found at [bloomington.in.gov/business](https://bloomington.in.gov/business). Bloomington-based businesses, nonprofits, and cultural organizations may apply for Rapid Response Fund low-interest loans.

The following options are available for more information about the loan program:

- **Media may attend a Q&A today (April 9) at 4:15 p.m.** via Zoom Meeting here:  
<https://zoom.us/j/829947757?pwd=WVOrYnlLdkhkNGNmRGk1SUNCbzgvZz09>

Meeting ID: 829 947 757

Password: 458590

One tap mobile

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- In the coming days, a tutorial will be posted at [www.monroecountycovid-19.org](http://www.monroecountycovid-19.org) where prospective applicants may learn more about their eligibility and the application process.
- Applicants may send questions to the City's Economic and Sustainable Development department at [economicvitality@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:economicvitality@bloomington.in.gov).

This funding aims to fill gaps in immediate working capital for small businesses and cultural organizations as they wait to receive Small Business Administration (SBA) loans and other disaster relief funding made available by the federal government or until they can resume more normal operations. Using \$2 million of the City's share of Food and Beverage Tax funds that the Bloomington Common Council approved for expenditure April 7, plus \$500,000 of additional support approved by the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association on April 8, the City is providing these immediate loans of up to \$50,000 each to sustain area businesses in the short term and foster the regional economy. Nonprofit applicants may be eligible for loan forgiveness based on available funds.

"Bloomington is standing up in a crisis to help businesses, nonprofits, and cultural groups that define and sustain our community -- they and their employees need our immediate help. I want to thank the working group and all the partners who have worked tirelessly over the past 18 days to make this possible," said Mayor John Hamilton. "Thanks to the City Council and the BUEA, and our whole community, we can encourage all of our local treasures to explore this new, rapid funding option."

Local employers and individuals are also encouraged to access the following support mechanisms, which were developed by the ES&R working group and partners in response to the needs in the community:

### **Centralized information resources:**

- [MonroeCountyCOVID-19.org](https://monroecountycovid-19.org) provides a library of resources available to employers and community members, ranging from community business updates, to HR and legal resources, nonprofit help, ways to give back, and beyond. This community effort is hosted by the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.

### **Technical assistance:**

- **The Bloomington Navigation Center** provides small business owners and entrepreneurs information on how to navigate available resources. Hosted by The Mill. <https://www.askthemill.org/>
- **The Indiana Small Business Development Center** provides technical assistance for employers on Small Business Administration loans and other small business sustainability needs. <https://isbdc.org/>

### **Ways to support businesses and nonprofits:**

- [OpenForBloomington.com](https://openforbloomington.com) allows patrons to locate open restaurants and other essential businesses to support.
- **Bloomington Online Farmers' Market:** <https://bloomington.in.gov/onlinefarmersmarket>
- **Bloomington Volunteer Network:** <https://www.bloomingtonvolunteernetwork.org/covid19/>

**About the Economic Stabilization & Recovery Working Group:** Convened by Mayor John Hamilton on March 23 to oversee the City's response to the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Bloomington Economic Stabilization & Recovery Working Group includes local community leaders representing the City's Department of Economic and Sustainable Development, the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation, the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, Dimension Mill, Inc., and CFDI Friendly Bloomington. The working group presented its first report of rapid response recommendations to the City Council's Sustainable Development Committee on Tuesday, March 31. The third draft of the [report](#), published April 6, identifies local economic impacts, business needs, resources and gaps, and establishes a mechanism for providing local government funding relief, wraparound services, and facilitating community partnerships.

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