



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First Round of Funds Distributed to City Businesses, Nonprofits From Rapid Response Fund

Bloomington, Ind. - The first round of financial awards is being disbursed today from the City's Rapid Response Fund (RRF) to businesses and nonprofits that have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus far, \$240,600 has been distributed to seven applicants, and fifteen additional applicants have been selected for awards amounting to another \$310,170 for a total of \$550,700 in approved funding.

Applications are still being accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis for these low-interest loans. To be eligible for funds, an applicant must be a small business located within the city and supporting the tourism sector or Bloomington's Enterprise Zone, or a nonprofit serving residents within the city limits. More information is available at the RRF [application portal](#). The City strongly encourages businesses or cultural organizations operated by or serving traditionally underrepresented groups or vulnerable populations to apply for assistance through the RRF.

About the Rapid Response Fund

Since April 9, 171 applications for funding have been started and 49 have been completed at the RRF application portal. The RRF was 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 COVID-19 crisis. The ES&R working group includes representatives from the City's Department of Economic and Sustainable Development (ESD), the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation, CDFI Friendly Bloomington, Dimension Mill, Inc., and the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce.

RRF funding aims to fill gaps in immediate working capital for small businesses and nonprofits (including cultural organizations) until they can resume more normal operations. Recipients may or may not have applied for additional funding through Small Business Administration (SBA) loans and other federal disaster relief funding sources. 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.

An advisory committee was appointed by the City of Bloomington to review applications and make recommendations for funding. This committee includes representatives from banking, financial services, and community organizations. Additionally, applicants may seek support on their application by contacting the City of Bloomington at economicvitality@bloomington.in.gov.

ESD Director Alex Crowley will make a presentation of Rapid Response Fund activity to date at this evening's meeting of the Bloomington Common Council, which will be streamed live starting at 6:30 p.m. on the City's [Facebook](#) page and on [CATS](#).

Additional support for employers

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:

- [The City of Bloomington](#) has aggregated information about City facilities, policies, events and actions, the mayor's media appearances, the governor's executive orders, resources for individuals, families, businesses, and more.
- [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:

- Bloomington Online Farmers' Market:
<https://bloomington.in.gov/onlinefarmersmarket>
- Bloomington Volunteer Network:
<https://www.bloomingtonvolunteernetwork.org/covid19/>