

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager to execute the attached grant agreement (Attachment 1) with Willamette Workforce Partnership in the amount of \$198,000 for Phase I of Salem’s COVID Small Business Grant Program.

SUMMARY:

The grant agreement includes \$188,000 in funding for small business grants and up to \$10,000 for Willamette Workforce Partnership’s (WWP) related administrative costs. A second grant agreement with WWP for an anticipated \$200,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for business grants will be presented to City Council in June. WWP regularly receives and administers federal and state funds for various programs and have administered three recent COVID grant programs, including one program for Marion County. Partnering with WWP to administer Salem’s COVID Business Grant Program will provide for an efficient delivery of the assistance funds and build from WWP’s experience with administering other COVID grants.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

Phase One of Salem’s COVID Small Business Grant Program (Attachment 2) will be launched in June to help businesses with re-opening, rent, utilities, protective personal equipment, staffing, and inventory. Priority will be given to businesses that have not accessed other COVID financial assistance programs and need assistance preparing to re-open. Significant outreach will be completed prior to making grants available to ensure Salem’s diverse small business owners are aware of the program.

Funding for Phase One is \$100,000 in General Fund, \$73,000 in Enterprise Zone funds repaid to the City by non-performing businesses, and \$15,000 in Marion County grant through the Community Prosperity Initiative.

BACKGROUND:

The WWP, a private, non-profit 501(c)(3), is the workforce organization serving Linn, Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties, with offices in Salem.

Annie Gorski
Economic Development Manager

Attachments:

1. Grant Agreement with Willamette Workforce Partnership
2. Draft COVID Small Business Grant Program Guidelines