

SMALL BUSINESS ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1: *Expand the customer base for small businesses using tools/resources that showcase keep them “top of mind” with existing and new customers. Develop a “Shop Local” program with a web-based directory of City businesses.*

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*

Develop a “Shop Local” program to promote small businesses in the City. These campaigns can be effective if they add content and value beyond the “feel good” message of supporting local businesses. Creating a web-based directory of City businesses allows customers to easily find businesses that serve their needs and expands the customer base for businesses.

Examples:

- City of Oakland: <https://shopoaklandnow.org/>
- Ballard Alliance: <https://www.visitballard.com/shop/>
- Capitol Hill Business Alliance: <https://supportcapitolhill.com/>
- ED Central Oregon: <http://bendmarketplace.com/products/>

Once the database is ready to launch, the following tools are needed to drive customers to the website and promotion of the website will need to be consistent and continuous.

- Press releases and news articles with local newspapers – Chamber and City public information
- Social media - Chamber
- Electronic newsletters to residents – City public information
- Public service announcements – City public information

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Shop Oakland Now” was developed by “Main Street Launch which no longer provides a service for developing and supporting a web-based shop local directory. • The estimated cost for a web-based directory for Mountain View businesses is a one-time fee \$5,000 and \$15,000 annual licensing fee (no limit to number of businesses that participate). The platform allows businesses to easily upload information. • Consultant support to manage and implement the website: \$18,000. 	<p>For a quick launch of the web-based directory this initiative could be led by the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce with the City and Downtown Committee as partners. Other potential partners include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owners of shopping centers located in the City • Owners of commercial property 	<p>Implementation: Three months to develop, populate directory with business information, and launch.</p> <p>Resiliency: Long-term</p>

RECOMMENDATION #2: *Create an interdepartmental Small Business Action Team in City Hall. Dedicate staff to regularly work with small businesses on challenges, issues and opportunities.*

SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need short-term funding assistance.*
- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*
- *Businesses need clear, consistent information about health orders that affect operations.*
- *Businesses need assistance finding and retaining employees.*

Small businesses are the foundation of the local, State, and national economy. They are the primary source of job creation and provide almost all of the jobs in the City. Most of the interaction of businesses with government involves compliance with regulation, payment of fees that add to the cost of doing business, and permitting. Create a Small Business Action Team (SBAT) in City Hall with staff (Planning, Building, Revenue Services, Economic Development) who regularly work with small businesses and is led by a dedicated staff person experienced in dealing with small business challenges, issues, and opportunities.

- The Action Team can be virtual as long as there are assigned staff who work as a team and coordinate responses to inquiries and requests for assistance.
- Implementation of the small business assistance center will require orientation training for staff.
- Explore streamlining the permit process for improvements and adaptations businesses need to make to their operations and workspace.

- Explore reducing or temporarily waiving or deferring city fees to help decrease business costs.
- Expand services of the SBAT by hiring part-time college interns who have can provide technical assistance for digital tools to promote and advertise small business products and services; guidance and information about available loans and grants and other small businesses resources.

Example: The City of San José once had a small business permit expeditor program with staff who met weekly to address any issues. The program was discontinued because of budget cuts.

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of time for planning, building, revenue, and finance staff. During shelter-in-place, the small business center will operate virtually. Other costs may include orientation training for staff. • Consultant support for development of team operating structure, including workflow plan and orientation training for staff: \$7,000. 	<p>City departments that routinely interface with small businesses.</p>	<p>Implementation: Four months for organizing and launching the team. Will require additional City resources and time as the business needs evolve.</p> <p>Resiliency: Long-term</p>

RECOMMENDATION #3: *Businesses need to receive current information about tools, resources, and programs available. E-mail is the preferred communication channel for business based on the business survey. Develop a monthly small business electronic newsletter than can be e-mailed to the City’s small businesses.*

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*

Develop a monthly small business electronic newsletter than can be emailed to businesses. E-mail is the preferred communication channel for business based on the business survey. The newsletter should be two-pages with topics aligned with the economic development web page. Newsletter information should be focused on needs of local and small businesses and kept to one or two pages.

Examples:

- City of Ventura: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Economic-Development-eNewsletter-09-03-20.html?soid=1102356663676&aid=vWgG1ARAYk>
- City of Wentzville: <https://cms.revize.com/revize/wentzville/The%20Biz%20Winter%202020%20FINAL.pdf>
- City of Cupertino: <https://www.cupertino.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=27491>

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. • Consultant support to manage and implement the newsletter for six months: \$18,000. 	Additional support and information provided by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other City departments who interface with small businesses • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee 	Implementation: Three months to launch and develop. Resiliency: Long-term

RECOMMENDATION #4: *Access to capital is the No. 1 priority resource for small businesses. Modify the City's Small Business Resiliency Program to increase loan amounts and allow use of funds that will help businesses build stronger, long-term resiliency.*

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*

If funds are still available, modify the City's Small Business Resiliency Program.

- Increase loan amounts to \$10,000 to \$15,000.
- Establish criteria for use of loan funds: working capital; improvements to business space; development of or modifications to website to expand online transactions, purchase or repair of equipment to facilitate more efficient operations.
- Give preference to most vulnerable and at-risk businesses defined by annual revenues and ownership (minority, women-owned, veteran owned businesses or other diverse populations).
- Exclude previous loan recipients and professional services.

If the City decides to implement Phase 2 of the of the Small Business Resiliency Loan Program, it is recommended that a short customer satisfaction survey be administered to previous applicants and recipients to determine what worked, what did not work, and how the loan program can be modified.

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated cost)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Street Launch (current administrator of City loan program) charges a 15% fee for administering the loan program which requires significant time to review applications and documentation and oversee repayment of loans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee 	Implementation: Three months to develop and launch. Resiliency: Long-term

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant support to administer survey of applications and recipients from first phase of loan program: \$3,000. 		
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RECOMMENDATION #5: *Provide information about available public-sector and private-sector grants to assist small businesses.* Use the City’s economic development web page and proposed monthly electronic newsletter to provide information about available public-sector and private sector grants to assist small businesses.

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need short-term funding assistance.*
- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*

Use the City’s economic development web page and proposed monthly electronic newsletter to provide information about available public-sector and private-sector grants to assist small businesses. Many businesses do not have the financial capital to sustain their operations until the end of the year. The cost of doing business is also increasing—labor, supplies, utilities, etc. Grants are preferred option for funding assistance because many businesses do not want to incur more debt. Loan programs, such as those offered by SBA, require paperwork and the process is often unclear and time-consuming.

NOTE: Because the application process for new grant programs typically have short deadlines and have limited resources, information about these programs needs to be communicated quickly.

Examples: The following is a partial list of grants and loans available to small businesses:

- State Fund Insurance Grant to help businesses purchase Personal Protection Equipment and Supplies https://www.statefundca.com/Home/StaticIndex?id=https://content.statefundca.com//news/covid19supportfunds.asp&mc_cid=12cbde9f94&mc_eid=e2846f8254
- Ten (10) grants for minority-owned businesses: <https://www.business.com/articles/small-business-grants-for-minorities/>
- California’s largest nonprofit microlender, the Opportunity Fund, is offering microloans to small businesses. See: <https://www.opportunityfund.org/get-a-loan/>

Other resources:

When the pandemic ends, the focus shifts to grants and loan programs that focus on building long term resilience and sustainability for small businesses such as the Opportunity Fund. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) currently offers CARES funding for revolving loan programs which is a longer-term option that prefers a regional, leveraged approach. Main Street Launch has expressed interest in pursuing EDA funding.

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated cost)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. • Information should be an e-mail blast or via small business newsletter and shared with the Chamber and Downtown Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee • Local banks and financial institutions • SBA • Corporate grant programs 	<p>Implementation: One month to develop and integrate into small business electronic newsletter.</p> <p>Resiliency: Long-term</p>

RECOMMENDATION #6: *Provide businesses support and assistance when using social media for advertising and promotion. Promote digital tools that can expand and improve electronic commerce for small businesses.*

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*

Using social media and the City’s electronic newsletter, Chamber and Downtown Committee communications, promote digital tools that can expand and improve electronic commerce for small businesses. During duration of pandemic, newsletter should be e-mailed monthly to local businesses. After pandemic, newsletter can be sent every quarter.

Examples:

- Google has created a business [resource page](#) with tips, recommendations and tools such as web-based workshops to help businesses communicate with [customers](#), [employees](#), and [remote work](#). Google is offering \$340 million in [advertising grants](#) for small- and medium-size businesses, a credit that will be added automatically to Google Ads accounts. The City and the Chamber of Commerce are Google partners, which allows businesses access to digital coaches and workshops. (The Chamber recently offered a Google workshop for businesses.)
- Facebook has developed online tools and resources for small business and their customers to facilitate and expand electronic commerce. See: <https://about.fb.com/supportsmallbusiness/#actionsfacebookistaking>

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee 	<p>Implementation: One month to develop and launch.</p> <p>Resiliency: Long-term</p>

RECOMMENDATION #7: *Businesses need current information and assistance maintaining and promoting a safe environment for customers and employees. Provide clear, consistent updated information about County and State health orders regarding business operations including County and State approved checklist templates and other signage.*

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*
- *Businesses need clear, consistent information about health orders that affect operations.*
- *Businesses need assistance finding and retaining employees.*

Use the City’s Economic Development web page and proposed monthly electronic newsletter to provide clear, consistent updated information about County and State health orders regarding business operations, including County- and State-approved checklist templates and other signage.

Example:

- City of Oakland: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/coronavirus-2019-covid-19-business-and-worker-resources>

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee 	<p>Implementation: <i>Ongoing</i></p> <p>Resiliency: During Pandemic</p>

RECOMMENDATION #8: *Promote Mountain View as a “safe city” for businesses and customers. Expand the “Shop Local” campaign to “Shop Local, Shop Safe.”*

SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*
- *Businesses need clear, consistent information about health orders that affect operations.*
- *Businesses need assistance finding and retaining employees.*

As part of the “Shop Local, Shop Safe” campaign, promote Mountain View as a “safe city” for businesses and their customers using social media, City, Chamber, and Downtown Committee websites.

Example:

- Downtown Livermore: <https://www.livermoredowntown.com/corona-businesses>

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. • Consultant support to develop and launch campaign: \$10,000. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee • Shopping center owners/property managers 	<p>Implementation: One month to develop and launch after “Shop Local” campaign is completed.</p> <p>Resiliency: During Pandemic</p>

RECOMMENDATION #9: *Businesses need access to PPE and supplies.* Explore options with private-sector businesses for bulk purchasing and other supplies needed by small businesses.

SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*
- *Businesses need clear, consistent information about health orders that affect operations.*
- *Businesses need assistance finding and retaining employees.*

Explore options with private-sector businesses, the County, and other cities for bulk purchasing of PPE and other supplies need by businesses. Hospitals, medical centers, and large businesses often create purchasing entities to centralize purchase of supplies, equipment, and material. They may be willing to participate in a program to help local businesses reduce the cost and increase the availability of PPE and supplies.

Example:

- County of Merced: Once had a program for purchasing equipment and supplies on behalf of smaller cities which enabled them to benefit from lower prices.

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify City staff responsible for procurement to explore potential partnerships for purchasing of bulk PPE and supplies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Clara County • Other cities in the County • Chamber of Commerce • Hospitals and medical centers • Wholesalers of cleaning supplies and products 	<p>Implementation: Three months to launch and develop.</p> <p>Resiliency: During Pandemic</p>

RECOMMENDATION #10: Support employees with assurances of a safe work environment and resources for finding employment opportunities. Employers have difficulty hiring because workers want assurances of a safe work environment.

SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need assistance reducing business costs.*
- *Businesses need clear, consistent information about health orders that affect operations.*
- *Businesses need assistance finding and retaining employees.*

Based on feedback from NOVA Works, a Federally funded employment assistance program that serves northern Santa Clara County, employers have difficulty hiring because workers want assurances of a safe work environment. As part of the “Shop Local, Shop Safe” campaign outreach to businesses, provide information about NOVA’s business assistance services for hiring workers. Include NOVA as a business resource on the Economic Development web page and business newsletter for hiring workers and finding employment opportunities. See <https://jobboard.novaworks.org/>.

Example:

- This flyer which emphasizes COVID protocols can be adapted for use by businesses to recruit workers.

Learn how you can be a part of the Brisbane Warehouse Team at Williams-Sonoma, Inc. as a sample coordinator, responsible for products used for photoshoots, supporting the design and photo teams.

Pay: \$18-20 / hour (dependent on experience)

- Benefits:**
- Health, dental & vision insurance
 - 40% discount on **all** Williams Sonoma brands
 - Paid vacation, sick time, holidays & time off to volunteer
 - Tax-free commuter benefits

The Brisbane warehouse is operating on-site with COVID protocols for employee safety.



RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in duties of Economic Development Division staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber of Commerce • Downtown Committee • NOVA Workforce Development 	<p>Implementation: Three months to develop and launch.</p> <p>Resiliency: During Pandemic</p>

POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS (Need additional review):

With continued restrictions on indoor and outdoor dining, take-out and delivery of food have become the mainstay of restaurant businesses. Several cities have enacted emergency orders to reduce commissions charged by third-party delivery businesses from 30 percent to 15 percent of a food order.

SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING KEY FINDINGS:

- *Businesses need to expand customer base.*
- *Businesses need assistance with promotions and advertising.*

The City could consider limits on food delivery commissions to 15 percent of each order’s total before taxes or gratuities.

Examples:

- City of Fremont: <http://fremont.gov/ExecutiveOrder2020-07>
- City of Santa Clara: <https://santaclara.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8753362&GUID=1B238A1F-5676-40D5-94CE-15E82992D39A>

RESOURCES (including staffing and estimated costs)	PARTNERS	IMPLEMENTATION and RESILIENCY
City Attorney’s Office and Economic Development staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Committee • Chamber of Commerce 	Implementation: Immediate

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