

Your Business is Our Business

Talking UP

Economic Development UPdates

University Place
WASHINGTON

August 2020

City Businesses Receive CARES Act Grants

As of Aug. 20, a total of 67 grants representing \$351,000 have been distributed to city businesses and nonprofits that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and related shutdown. The funds came from the \$992,700 the City received from the State of Washington as part of the federal CARES Act.

Eligible businesses that applied for a grant by the deadline of July 22 received support. The majority of the funds were distributed by July 31. For Becky Metcalf, project assistant in the Economic Development Department who handled the distribution of the grants, the effort was extremely rewarding.

“It was so satisfying to give out those checks. We know it was not enough to totally alleviate all the financial concerns of our local businesses, but we hope that what we were able to provide was helpful,” she says.

Metcalf reports that 21 grants were awarded to home-based businesses and another six were given to businesses that have been in operation for more than 20 years. “That was one of our primary goals, to make sure that all of our businesses, small or large, new or established, could have equal access to these grants,” Metcalf says.

In addition to the business grants, the City Council also allotted \$100,000 of the federal CARES funds to assist qualified residents of U.P. who can demonstrate a substantial loss of income due to COVID-19. The balance of the CARES money will be used to reimburse City taxpayers for expenses



incurred by the City related to COVID-19 response, including personal protective equipment, remote work technology, and a portion of salaries for those with COVID-19 response efforts, including public safety personnel.

Commercial Mortgage and Rental Assistance Available from Pierce County



The Pierce County Council and County Executive Bruce Dammeier passed an ordinance that provides up to three months of commercial rent or mortgage assistance to businesses struggling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funds will be delivered in the form of grants not to exceed \$5,000 per month or the monthly rent or mortgage obligation for the business, whichever is lesser, up to a maximum of \$15,000 total payment assistance. Rent, lease or mortgage payments will be made directly to the landlord or lender identified in the application.

Business owners are responsible for any commercial rent or mortgage balance above \$5,000 a month and/or over the \$15,000 grant maximum.

Businesses currently operating under [recent rollbacks of Phase 2 reopening](#) or that are prohibited from opening until Phase 3 or 4 of [Washington's Safe Start reopening plan](#) may qualify for these grants. Commercial mortgage or rental assistance will be applicable from Sept. 1 to Dec. 1, 2020.

To determine if your business is eligible for these grants, visit the [Pierce County Economic Development website](#) for complete details and program requirements.

Chambers Bay Distillery Wants to Help You Keep Your Customers Safe

Chambers Bay Distillery is selling high quality, no-touch liquid sanitizer dispensers with adjustable height stands and drip trays to local businesses. The dispensers use the distillery's own World Health Organization (WHO)-approved formula that consists of 80 percent ethanol, glycerin, aloe and hydrogen peroxide.

Chambers Bay Distillery Managing Partner Jeff Robinette says the company's unscented sanitizer has no offensive odor, unlike sanitizers made from smelly ethanol. They can even add a few drops of essential oils such as lemon or grapefruit for customers who would prefer scented sanitizer.

If your business is having difficulty finding sanitizing equipment and supplies, this an opportunity to be safe while also supporting another local business. For details on pricing and how to order, call Chambers Bay Distillery at 253.292.5962 or visit chambersbaydistillery.com.



Get Your Free Sign of the Times



Don't forget that free "We're UP & Open" window cling signs are available to City businesses to display in their windows to remind the public that they have reopened safely.

The 18" x 24" window clings signs are available in four unique designs and can be picked up at the following locations:

- First Financial Northwest Bank (3555 Market Place W.), Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Fatz Detail (7915 27th St. W.), Monday-Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- University Place Refuse & Recycling (2815 Rochester St. W.), Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Don't miss this chance to let the public know that you are UP and Open and are anxious for their business!

Don't Wait for Crisis to Have a Communications Plan

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded all of us that crises can affect businesses large and small. Whether due to an accident, a natural disaster or a health crisis, businesses should be prepared to communicate essential information to the public, their employees and any other key stakeholders when a crisis occurs.



There are several good templates available to help businesses develop their Crisis Communications strategies. These templates outline key elements of any successful plan, including:

- Key stakeholders
- Designated spokespeople
- Potential crisis scenarios
- Communications methods and monitoring

Although it might seem just another thing on the “to-do” list, taking the time to prepare a plan in advance makes smart business sense, both with regard to any potential liabilities as well as from a public relations perspective.

Check out the [Federal Emergency Management Agency’s \(FEMA\) webpage on crisis communications](#). Or check out this [sample Crisis Communications plan template](#).

Economic Development Commission Vacancy



Just a reminder that the City of University Place Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC) has a vacant position and a volunteer is needed

to fill the spot.

The Economic Development Advisory Commission is comprised of seven citizens that advocate for the implementation of the Economic Development Strategic Action Plan as adopted by the City Council. It serves as a sounding board for various business community interests, and as the "eyes and ears" for the City in the business community.

The Commission also occasionally participates in community outreach efforts to share information on economic development initiatives that impact the University Place community.

Visit the [EDAC webpage](#) for more information and to apply or email cityclerk@cityofup.com. The vacancy will remain open until filled.



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