



COVID-19 – Local Funding for Small Businesses

March 31, 2020

In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, St. Louis economic development organizations are offering financial assistance in the form of loans and grants to small businesses and their owners and employees throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area.

The St. Louis Economic Development Partnership and the St. Louis Development Corporation are offering a zero-interest loan program for small businesses that have sustained economic damage due to the COVID-19 crisis, located in the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County. For-profit businesses in the City of St. Louis or St. Louis County that have sustained economic damage due to the COVID-19 crisis are eligible to apply for loans of up to \$5,000 for working capital. To obtain a zero-interest loan, businesses must be current on all taxes through 2018, be in good standing with state and local governments, and have been in business for at least one year. Applicants must demonstrate that their company's jobs are threatened by the health crisis, and they must explain how the loan would retain those jobs. Financial institutions and lenders are not eligible. Businesses can apply online at: stlpartnership.com.

The Gateway Resilience Fund was created through the St. Louis Community Foundation to provide short term monetary relief to employees, essential local contractors, and owners of independent bars, restaurants, entertainment venues, retail establishments, and other small locally owned business in the St. Louis region affected by closures and other circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak. The fund will consider covering personal, family, living, or funeral expenses incurred as a result of the outbreak. The Gateway Resilience Fund will make direct grants of up to \$500 to eligible applicants or directly pay the bills of eligible applicants up to \$1,000. In addition, a gift from the St. Louis Downtown Community Improvement District allows the Gateway Resilience Fund to make \$5,000 grants to affected small, locally owned businesses in its 180-block area (roughly north of I-64, south of Convention, west of I-55 and east of 18th Street). Small businesses in the 180-block area with at least 5 employees and 2 years in business are eligible to apply. Applications can be found at: stlgives.org.

Further, through the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the "**CARES Act**"), economic relief will be provided to individuals and small businesses in St. Louis County. See Lathrop GPM Legal Alert at: COVID - 19 Federal Loan Assistance Programs. Final figures are not yet available, but rough estimates based on population now suggest that St. Louis County could receive over \$100 million. The City



of St. Louis has a smaller population and will receive money from state funds.

For more information regarding local stimulus options for small business, please contact Colleen Ruiz or your regular Lathrop GPM contact.