

## Legislation Text

File #: 15-20229, Version: 1

### **Recommended Uses for American Rescue Plan Act Funds - Additional Small Business Ecosystem Partner Support**

#### **Action:**

- A. Approve funding in the amount of \$630,000 from American Rescue Plan Act Funds to support three additional organizations that previously applied for the 2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program:**
- Carolinas Asian-American Chamber of Commerce: \$250,000,
  - Carolinas Chinese Chamber of Commerce: \$130,000,
  - Latin American Chamber of Commerce: \$250,000, and
- B. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute any necessary contracts and agreements related to these recommendations.**

#### **Staff Resource(s):**

Tracy Dodson, City Manager's Office  
Holly Eskridge, Economic Development  
Christi Floyd, Economic Development

#### **Background**

- In 2022, City Council awarded \$2.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for the Small Business Ecosystem Partner program that provided up to \$250,000 in grants to eligible partners supporting local small businesses. Applicants had to be nonprofit, chambers of commerce, government, or academic organizations.
- The 2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program was a competitive grant process. A six-person team of city staff from various departments (excluding Economic Development) reviewed and scored the eligible applications.
- Twenty-one organizations submitted applications and 11 received funding.
- Funding was distributed based on the review process. Applicants were ranked in order and provided with funding until the full \$2.5 million was distributed.

#### **Explanation**

- During the February 6, 2023 City Council Committee Discussions Meeting, Council's discussions included consideration of adding support for local ethnic minority chambers within funding for the Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program. At the meeting City Council gave consensus for the additional use of ARPA funds for additional chambers to be added for consideration at a future City Council Business Meeting agenda.
- The three ethnic minority chambers that applied to the 2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program and did not receive full funding include:
  - Carolinas Asian-American Chamber of Commerce: Applied for \$250,000 and received no funding
  - Carolinas Chinese Chamber of Commerce: Applied for \$250,000 and received \$120,000
  - Latin American Chamber of Commerce: Applied for \$250,000 and received no funding
- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Black Chamber of Commerce did not apply for the 2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program.

- Funding for the additional \$630,000 would be allocated from unprogrammed ARPA funding.

**Fiscal Note**

Funding: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds

**Attachment(s)**

2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Program Overview

2022 Small Business Ecosystem Partner Applicant and Awardee List