

PRESS RELEASE

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FINAL ROUND OF GRANTS OPEN FOR BENICIA BUSINESSES Applications Accepted for Utility Grant Through September 11, 2020

Benicia, CA (September 3, 2020) – The City of Benicia Economic Development Division announces the third and final round of BOOST (Business·Open·Opportunity·Support·Thrive) grants for Benicia businesses. Previous rounds of BOOST grants provided up to \$10,000 in funding to be used for business expenses. In this round, grants of up to \$2,500 will be awarded and may only be used to reimburse businesses for City of Benicia Water and Wastewater Utility Fees assessed from March through September 2020.

More than 50 applications were received in the first round of BOOST grants. After review, 28 grants of up to \$10,000 were awarded from a pool of \$200,000 approved by the Benicia City Council.

The application period for second round of BOOST grants recently closed. Grant awards are expected to be announced on September 14, 2020. More than 60 applications were received for Round 2, which offered grants of up to \$10,000 from a pool of \$100,000.

The application period for BOOST 3 grants ends on Friday, September 11, 2020. The grants are funded by a pool of \$100,000 approved by the Benicia City Council on July 21, 2020 to provide businesses with some financial relief during the COVID-19 pandemic. Small commercial and industrial businesses in Benicia with 1-50 employees are eligible to apply.

Businesses that were awarded a previous BOOST grant are not eligible to receive BOOST 3 grant funding. Business owners who applied for Round 2 are encouraged to apply for the Round 3 grant in case they are not awarded funds from Round 2.

The objective of the BOOST Grants is to assist those businesses most vulnerable with some relief from expenses or to bridge a financial gap caused by the COVID-19 crisis, helping the business to continue operations and local employment in Benicia.

Additional eligibility requirements include:

- Business that has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 closures (25% decline in revenue).
- Business that has already pursued other Federal or State assistance.
- Business that has been in operation in Benicia for over 1 year as of April 1, 2019.

- Business that is in good standing with the City of Benicia and has a valid Benicia business license.

“While this is the final round of BOOST grants, City staff will continue to work with our regional, state and federal partners to secure additional financial resources that can aid our businesses,” said the City’s Economic Development Manager, Mario Giuliani.

BOOST grant applications are reviewed by a six-member selection committee comprised of City staff and economic development and business professionals. They make recommendations to the City Manager for award of the grants. Selection priority is given based upon:

- Description of impact on business due to COVID-19 and explanation of use of funds in sustaining business.
- Businesses that generate local sales tax revenue.
- Businesses that maintain local jobs.
- Tenure of local business.
- Businesses that contribute to the City’s tourism effort.

The BOOST 3 utility grant application form, guidelines and scoring criteria are available online at www.BeniciaBusiness.com. Applications will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Friday, September 11, 2020. To apply, the application and supporting documentation should be submitted in one file and emailed to Economic Development Manager Mario Giuliani at mgiuliani@ci.benicia.ca.us. After Selection Committee review, grant award recipients will be notified on Thursday, September 17, 2020. Grant funds will be available on or after Thursday, October 1, 2020.

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Attachments:

- BOOST Grant Round 3 Application Package