

For Immediate Release: Friday, April 8, 2022

Press Contact: Gloria Chan, (415) 554-6926, gloria.chan@sfgov.org

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

CITY ANNOUNCES FINANCIAL RECOVERY GRANTS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Funding will allow small businesses to make storefront and accessibility improvements

San Francisco, CA— The San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD), through its Office of Small Business and Invest in Neighborhoods division, announced a series of financial recovery grants for businesses to design storefront improvements and to assess their space for accessibility upgrades. The investments support small businesses with professional design services such as architects, engineers, and also provide reimbursements for Certified Access Specialists to assess the physical space of the storefront and help guide improvements.

With the City now fully reopened and recovering, San Francisco is offering grant funding to businesses wanting to ensure their storefronts are safe, accessible and visually appealing. In addition to these grants, San Francisco recognizes that many businesses are still struggling and need to apply for further capital to maintain their operations and accelerate their recovery.

“As San Francisco re-energizes, we recognize that small businesses are critical to our economy and the San Francisco civic fabric. After two years, we see how hard our small businesses fought to stay alive during the pandemic, and we hope these grants will help them turn the corner and recover,” said Kate Sofis, Executive Director of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development.

The series of financial relief will be rolled out in two phases. This first phase will provide grants to storefronts for technical design services. The second phase will provide grants to those that have a plan in place to implement the improvements. Applications are available, and OEWD anticipates distribution of funds in Summer.

“Prior to the pandemic, most small businesses did not have the financial flexibility to make improvements and upgrades to their storefront spaces. These grant programs are designed to give small businesses the boost they need so they can better adapt to changing operational needs and be better suited to welcome all types of customers in this new era,” said Katy Tang, Executive Director of the Office of Small Business.

To date, San Francisco has allocated over than \$63 million in grants and loans to support over 3,300 small businesses. The grants and loans were designed to serve minority owned small businesses and complement state and federal financial relief.

The grants that are currently available include:

CONTACT

 gloria.chan@sfgov.org

 (415) 554-6926 direct

 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102

 (415) 554-6969 main

SF Shines Design Services Grant: OEWD will be providing access to professional design services to storefront businesses to help them with design, permits, and other technical services make improvements to their space. The goal is to ensure our small businesses continue to thrive and create vibrant and safe neighborhood commercial corridors.

Accessible Business Entrance Grant: The Office of Small Business will be providing grants to small businesses required by landlords to comply with accessibility regulations. Small businesses that are approved for a grant under this program will receive a reimbursement of up to \$1,000 for an accessibility inspection of their front entrance or up to \$3,000 for an accessibility inspection of the entire storefront. This grant program is designed to assist small businesses required by their landlords to comply with the [City's Accessible Business Entrance \(ABE\) program](#), a local requirement to ensure San Francisco businesses welcome everybody. Under the ABE, commercial property owners of public-serving businesses must submit an accessibility checklist to the Department of Building Inspection by June 30, 2022 if they have not yet done so.

Shares Spaces Equity Grant: The Planning Department is offering reimbursements for up to \$2,500 for businesses that need to comply with requirements for a permanent shared space. The funds can be used toward services or materials.

Storefront Vandalism Relief Grant: OEWD provides financial relief to restore small businesses impacted by deliberate actions that result in the destruction or damages of storefronts. This program offers either \$1,000 or \$2,000, depending on the total cost incurred to repair physical damages.

Revolving Loan Fund: Through community partner, Main Street Launch, up to \$50,000 in zero to low-interest loans is available for eligible new and existing small businesses. Funds can be used toward business acquisition, debt refinance, furniture, fixtures and equipment, inventory and supplies, tenant improvements, working capital, and for start-up expenses.

Emerging Business Loan Fund: Through community partner, Main Street Launch, up to \$250,000 in zero to low-interest loans are available for eligible new and existing small businesses. Funds can be used toward business acquisition, debt refinance, furniture, fixtures and equipment, inventory and supplies, tenant improvements, working capital, and for start-up expenses.

CA Rebuilding Loan Fund: Through community partner, Main Street Launch, up to \$100,000 in COVID-19 recovery loans are available for eligible businesses in operation prior to June 2019.

In addition to these recovery funds, the City continues to provide one-on-one counseling and technical assistance and services to small businesses looking to open, operate, and expand in San Francisco. Information and services are also available for businesses who can't pay back rent and looking for assistance to prevent a commercial eviction. For information on recovery funds for storefront small businesses, visit sf.gov/storefronts

Small businesses can also connect with the Office of Small Businesses and schedule an appointment to meet and speak with a case manager to learn more about available resource and services. For more information, call (415) 554-6134, or email sfosb@sfgov.org

###

CONTACT

 gloria.chan@sfgov.org

 (415) 554-6926 direct

 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102

 (415) 554-6969 main