



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Jeff Robinson, Director, Community and Economic Development  
Carol Wolfe, Division Manager, Community and Economic Development  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk's Office  
Tadd Wille, Deputy City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution to accept \$400,000 EDA Technical Assistance Grant Project # 07-79-07752  
**DATE:** August 17, 2021

---

**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this memo is to seek Council resolution to accept a \$400,000 U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) competitive grant to address one of the City's economic development priorities of enabling the business community to recover and rebuild from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Technical assistance will be provided focused on financial and digital literacy as well as credit repair, and the feasibility of creating a BIPOC business organization to complement existing business development networks will be explored. The grant funds must be expended by September 30, 2023.

In May 2021, Community and Economic Development (CED) received confirmation of the \$400,000 award in response to a competitive application to the regional EDA office to provide technical assistance to businesses as they rebuild after the negative impacts of COVID-19. The proposal was approved, fully funded and awarded to the City. The administration of the grant will be performed by the Business Services Division within CED.

**COUNCIL SPONSORS:** NA

**BACKGROUND:**

On March 27, 2020, the United States Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in response to the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) and its resulting impact on the economy and public health across the nation. Staff were contacted in late spring 2020 regarding the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration Competitive Grant opportunity that would be made available to assist jurisdictions addressing COVID-19 impacts to the business community. The funds must be expended within a 24-month period and includes a \$100,000 match from CED which will be met through its existing approved budget.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

CED staff surveyed applicants from business awarded EDA RLF funds in 2020 and 2021 as well as outreach to community navigators, technical assistance partners and stakeholders with the Neighborhood Business District Program to identify gaps and priorities for technical assistance. CED's survey and outreach was considered along with a review of a survey conducted by the Pierce County Economic Development Department, input from the MBDA Office, and regular participation on the Pierce County/EDB weekly online discussions around the impacts of COVID-19 on the local business community. This information assisted CED staff in the preparation of the technical assistance grant proposal.

**PROJECT DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:**

CED staff will procure technical assistance from existing culturally competent providers with a demonstrated record in the areas of: Financial Literacy; Digital Literacy; Credit Repair and Integrated Networks. Staff will utilize



the Request for Proposals (RFP) and Request for Information (RFI) process to solicit and select technical assistance providers.

**Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)**

Initial outreach for response to RFPs and RFIs to deliver the technical assistance will be made through community-based organizations and/or other individuals with cultural competency in working with minority owned businesses and/or small businesses located in areas of low economic opportunity as identified in the Equity Index.

Following this, promotion of the program will be conducted through standard methods of Social Media, Press Release, MakeItTacoma.com, and City of Tacoma web page banners with marketing materials that clearly emphasize underrepresented businesses from the first round of EDA -RLF COVID-19 Stabilization Loan funding.

CED staff will also work closely to market the program through the MBDA Office as they have identified a diverse roster of strategic partners to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Tacoma 2025 strategic goals:**

- Economic Vibrancy and Employment
- Education and Learning
- Government Performance

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Council could decide to not accept the funding allocation of staff and technical assistance activities projected to occur via this Competitive Grant Program derived from the Federal Economic Development Administration.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

CED staff will adhere to the EDA Grant Administrative Plan approved in 2021 as part of the award acceptance. Staff will evaluate and report on our performance in accordance with the approved Administrative Plan through the lifecycle of the grant.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the adoption of the Resolution and the acceptance of the EDA Competitive Technical Assistance Grant.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

By adopting the motion to formally accept the grant, the Council will be committing to the implementation of the EDA Competitive Grant and approved Administration Plan. Funds used to support Program activities will be paid directly from the Federal grant. This amounts to \$400,000 grant funds over 24 months. Staff will request mid-year budget adjustments for 2021 if needed.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1195 - Special Revenue Fund EDA	852400	Various	\$400,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$400,000</b>



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

Federal funding from U.S Economic Development Administration

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?**

**NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW**

This is a recent EDA Competitive Grant and was not planned in the 2021-2022 biennial budgeting processes. Staff will request mid-year budget adjustments for 2021-2022, if needed.

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

No

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

No

**Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?**

No

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None