

City of Battle Creek  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
Zoom Virtual Meeting  
Wednesday, April 29, 2020  
3:00 pm

**AGENDA**

Call to Order

Public Comment

Approval of Minutes from December 6, 2019 Meeting

Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program

Board Discussion

- Economic development update

Adjournment

**Economic Development Corporation Meeting  
December 6, 2019  
City Hall  
10 N. Division, Room 302A  
Battle Creek, MI  
8:00 A.M.**

**Present:** Rebecca Fleury, Ted Dearing, Brenda Whited, Tom Beuchler, Anmar Atchu, Lynn Ward Gray and John Gallagher

**Absent:** Joe Sobieralski and Stacy Flathau

**Staff Present:** Alicia Greene, Deputy City Clerk

**Call to Order:** Mr. Beuchler called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M.

**Public Comment:** There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Mr. Gallagher, supported by Ms. Whited, to approve the December 7, 2018 Economic Development Corporation meeting minutes with a correction to Mr. Atchu's name spelling. All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

**Appointment of Officers**

A motion was made by Ms. Gray, supported by Mr. Beuchler, to reappoint Rebecca Fleury to the Economic Development Corporation. All yes, none opposed. Motion approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Dearing, supported by Mr. Beuchler, to reappoint Tom Beuchler as President, Ted Dearing as Secretary, Lynn Ward Gray as Treasurer and Anmar Atchu as Vice President to the Economic Development Corporation. All in favor, none opposed. Motion approved.

**Economic Development**

**a. Project Updates**

Mr. Dearing provided an update on downtown projects including; The Milton, HandMap Brewery, Battle Rock, McCamly Plaza Hotel and the Record Box.

Mr. Dearing noted the possible reopening of Michigan Ave. in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Beuchler provided an update on the New Holland project.

**Board Member Comments:** There were none.

**Next Meeting:** Friday, December 6, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. in Room 302A.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Beuchler asked if there were any further comments. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 A.M.



# Small Business Development Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program

## Overview

The Economic Development Corporation of the City of Battle Creek has created the Small Business Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program (RMAP) as a 0% interest loan for small businesses located within target commercial districts. RMAP is administered by the City's Small Business Development Office and is used for commercial rent or mortgage payments during May through July, 2020. The program helps stabilize small businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. RMAP provides short-term relief for small business owners in conjunction with other local, state and federal programs. For a list of other resources available to small businesses please review the following webpage: [Battle Creek Unlimited COVID-19 Resource Center](#).

## Eligibility

- Priority will be given to a small business within a target commercial district. Home-based businesses are not eligible. Click here to see if your property is eligible to apply: [RMAP Qualifying Zones](#)
- Special circumstances may allow for businesses outside of a district to qualify. Please contact [smallbusinessinfo@battlecreekmi.gov](mailto:smallbusinessinfo@battlecreekmi.gov) to inquire.
- Have commercial rent or mortgage payment to a second-party landlord or mortgage holder.
- Priority will be given to business with 10 or fewer employees.
- Must be a for-profit business.

## Requirements

- Maximum amount of \$2,000 per month during May, June and July 2020. Payment may not exceed rent obligation.
- Must show proof of lease or mortgage amount, proof of last 2 payments, and lease or mortgage holder contact information.
- Investment real estate and home-based businesses are not eligible.
- Must demonstrate economic impacts of COVID-19 on business operations.

## Terms

- Loans will be issued with 0%. No collateral required.
- Loan disbursement will be made directly to landlord or mortgage holder.
- Loan repayment begins six months after issuance to be repaid over twelve months.
- Loan forgiveness may be granted. For each month of loan disbursement an additional month of business operation in the same location is required for loan forgiveness. (i.e. payments received during May, June and July require continued business operations during August, September and October for full loan forgiveness.)
- Every effort will be made to maximize available funds to serve the greatest number of applicants.

## Application

Please complete the application online at [RMAP Application](#). If you have problems submitting the online form or need an electronic copy emailed to you, please contact Small Business Development staff noted on this document.



City of Battle Creek



John Hart  
Development Director  
269.924.9681



Valerie Byrnes  
Retention & Development Mgr.  
616.638.5521



[smallbusinessinfo@battlecreekmi.gov](mailto:smallbusinessinfo@battlecreekmi.gov)



# Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program (RMAP) COVID-19 Emergency Response Initiative Internal Policy and Procedures Manual

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## I. PURPOSE

This document is the internal policy and procedures for the administration and implementation of the Small Business Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program – COVID-19 (RMAP), which creates emergency relief incentives for Battle Creek small businesses to pay rent or a mortgage on a commercial space in which the business is located within targeted districts. RMAP is funded by the the Economic Development Corporation of the City of Battle Creek. The program administrator, its subcontractors, and participating small business owners must adhere to these policies and procedures.

Updates to the policy and procedures are discussed periodically during team meetings and meetings with external partners such as other Entrepreneur Support Organizations (ESO). In addition, program staff participate in internal meetings to discuss progress, deliverables and obstacles. As procedures are updated and additional policies are executed by The program administrator with input from stakeholders, updated versions of this document will be issued to all interested parties via electronic mail.

## II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### A. Overview

RMAP is intended to stabilize small businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic located within targeted commercial districts in the City of Battle Creek. Relief incentives are limited to rent or mortgage assistance for a small business with leased or owner-occupied commercial space. The business must be located within a targeted district unless otherwise determined by The program administrator. The program is intended to help retain and stabilize “main street” small businesses by providing financial resources in the form of a no-interest loan to those already owning and operating a business in a target district.

The Program is intended to help small business remain operational beyond COVID-19. The outcome is to retain small business in commercial districts, avoid vacant commercial space, and stabilize commercial districts. The target districts provide centralized shopping, essential services and are considered primary commercial corridors within Battle Creek. The program has been designed as a supplemental program to other local, regional and statewide resources being made available to small business owners during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The target commercial districts are detailed below in section III.B “Target Area”.

### B. Benefits

1. Small Business Rent or Mortgage Loan
  - a. Available to business owners with a business located within the program target area.
  - b. Provides a loan for rent or mortgage up to \$2,000 per month for up to 3 months during May, June and July, 2020, not to exceed the monthly rent or mortgage obligation. The maximum amount of the loan is not to exceed \$6,000.
  - c. Assistance is secured by a no payment, no interest loan forgivable after six months, contingent on continued business operations and use of property as a small business by the applicant for three months following the period of loan distribution.

For each month of loan disbursement an additional month of business operation in the same location is required for loan forgiveness. (i.e. payments received

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during May, June and July require continued business operations during August, September and October for full loan forgiveness.)

- d. This benefit also serves as an introduction to working with the Small Business Development Team of the City of Battle Creek (the program administrator) on future business stabilization, development and growth strategies.

### **III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. Eligibility**

1. Small Business eligibility criteria include:
  - a. Applicant is small business owner currently operating a for-profit business within a target commercial district. (as described in section III.B of this document). Investment real estate and home-based businesses are not eligible.
  - b. Preference will be given to small businesses with 10 or fewer employees.
  - c. Applicants must intend to reopen or remain in operation beyond COVID-19 shelter-in-place orders.
  - d. Applicants are required to meet virtually or by telephone with the program administrator for the purpose of conducting an interview prior to loan approval.
  - e. Applicants for the rent assistance loan must provide a copy of their lease and complete a Landlord Participation Agreement which stipulates how payments are to be applied. Payments will be made directly to the landlord.
  - f. Applicants for the mortgage assistance loan must provide proof of mortgage payment amount and mortgage holder information for City to issue payment. The mortgage holder must acknowledge applicants participation in the RMAP. Payment will be made directly to mortgage holder.
  - g. The City of Battle Creek and its contractors will not discriminate against any individual or group because of his or her actual or perceived race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, height, weight, physical or mental disability, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or political belief.

#### **B. Target Area**

1. The program target commercial districts are identified as:
  - a. Urbandale
  - b. Beckley Road
  - c. Old Lakeview
  - d. Columbia Avenue Business Improvement District
2. Reference Appendix A: Map of Small Business Rent and Mortgage Assistance Program – Target Commercial Districts

#### **C. Retention Period**

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1. The benefits of this program are contingent on the applicant maintaining small business ownership within the current business location and qualified district following COVID-19 shelter-in-place order. Should a business permanently cease operation, no additional loan or mortgage payments will be made following the date of closure.
2. Rent or mortgage assistance is provided in the form of a loan, secured by a no interest/no payment loan agreement, which shall be forgiven after three months of business operation consecutive to the loan period.
3. In addition to the loan note, small business owners must sign a Retention Agreement to certify their understanding and acceptance of the following conditions until the end of the retention period:
  - a. The Loan bears no interest.
  - b. The Loan does not convert to a grant unless the specific requirements are met.
  - c. The property may not be used for any illegal activity.
  - d. The owner must remain prepared to do business once the COVID-19 Order is lifted.
  - e. The business owner must keep the program administrator (10 N. Division St., Battle Creek, MI 49014, 269-966-3355, x. 1191) informed as to any changes in the above.
4. If an applicant defaults on a lease or mortgage condition before the retention period ends, the following procedures and responsibilities will apply:
  - a. When the program administrator becomes aware that a business owner may fall out of compliance with the requirements of the retention agreement, they will contact the business owner to assess the situation and attempt to work out resolution.
  - b. The EDC of the City of Battle Creek and its program administrator may attempt to collect all or partial payment of the loan balance.
  - c. The EDC of the City of Battle Creek may forgive in whole or a portion of the loan balance.
5. The program administrator will connect with applicant business owners monthly to verify the status of operations and to discuss other business needs.

**D. Recapture**

1. If a determination of non-compliance is made the EDC of the City of Battle Creek and its program administrator will endeavor to recapture the full amount of the loan .
    - a. The EDC of the City of Battle Creek will allow a defaulted business owner to make payments on amount subject to recapture.
    - b. Payments shall be amortized over a period of 12 months.
    - c. There will be no interest added to the repayment.
  2. The program administrator will document all good faith efforts to recapture funds.
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3. The EDC of the City of Battle Creek reserves the right to decline to pursue recapture in the event that it determines recapture activities are unlikely to result in enough funds to cover its expenses. If such determination is made, a written justification will be included in the project file.

**E. Roles and Responsibilities**

1. The program administrator as designated by the EDC will administer the program, including:
  - a. Distribute benefits;
  - b. Provide support to program participants during the duration of the assistance period;
  - c. Coordinate interactions with business owners, property owners and other stakeholders as necessary through the duration of the assistance period;
  - d. Develop follow-on small business support tools and resources in partnership with partner Entrepreneur Support Organizations; and
  - e. Provide business mentorship through the assistance period into full business operation and as needed thereafter.
2. Key administrative staff include:
  - a. The City of Battle Creek's Small Business Development Team (SBD) Development Director—provides program administration, prepares draws, manages internal and contracted staff, creates and maintains written policies and procedures, compiles reports, convenes team meetings, and reviews and approves applications.
  - b. The SBD Retention and Development Manager—does initial application intake, serves as point of contact for business owners, conducts site visits if applicable, prepares application package for review, manages disbursements, provides mentorship, and completes final project closeout.
3. Program Stakeholders include:
  - a. Entrepreneur Support Organizations—promote the program to qualified small business owners; provide collaborative oversight; provide additional small business resources according to the organization's objectives including but not limited to business training, mentorship, workshops, financing and other services as available.

**F. Program Outreach**

1. The SBD shall be responsible for the creation of promotional materials and activities.
2. The SBD shall coordinate direct marketing activities to small business owners with the commercial districts.

**G. Data Collection and Reporting Responsibilities**

1. SBD shall prepare a report that will contain the following:
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- a. A narrative report of what was accomplished by expenditure of the assistance funds;
  - b. An evaluation report;
  - c. A financial statement reporting expenditures according to the approved budget.
2. The SBD will maintain a monthly benchmark report of assistance activities that includes applications received, applicant business status, applicants participating in follow on services, and total funds disbursed by program.
  3. The SBD will confer monthly to exchange information and review monthly progress towards goals.
  4. The SBD will confer with stakeholders quarterly.

#### **IV. APPLICATION ACTIVITIES**

##### **A. Application Process**

1. Application Distribution
    - a. The primary method of application distribution will be through the City of Battle Creek Small Business Development team (the program administrator). Targeted dissemination of the program overview will be limited to businesses located within the target districts.
    - b. The Development Director and Business Retention and Development Manager will be listed on all promotional materials as the point of contact for questions, connecting with resources, and submitting applications.
  2. Application Received
    - a. All applications shall be submitted to the City of Battle Creek Small Business Development via email or an online application.
    - b. Applications received are reviewed by SBD staff within twelve (12) hours.
    - c. The Retention and Development Manager confirms that the application is complete. If any part of the application is incomplete or if additional information is needed, the Retention and Development Manager will attempt to contact the applicant no fewer than three times to request the information. If the applicant does not respond, the application is closed out two weeks after the last attempt at contact. The applicant will be notified by phone, email and/or U.S. mail delivery service.
  3. Application Approved
    - a. The Development Director shall confirm that the applicant meets the program eligibility criteria.
    - b. Once an applicant is deemed eligible, the Business Retention and Development Manager will enter applicant information into Applicant Tracking Sheet and Salesforce customer
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management database.

Applicant tracking sheets shall be forwarded to the Assistant City Manager monthly.

- c. The Business Retention and Development Manager then contacts the applicant to schedule an intake conversation and establish next steps.

#### 4. Application Denied

- a. Applications may be denied for the following reasons:
  - An applicant refuses to respond to reasonable requests for additional documentation requested by the Business Retention and Development Manager.
  - An applicant is not located within the program target area.
  - An applicant is not a current business owner.
  - An applicant is unable to meet any other eligibility criteria.
- b. An applicant has sent an incomplete application and has failed to respond to at least three contacts by intake staff. Funds are committed to projects on a first applied, first served basis for as long as funding is available. Applications may be denied due to lack of funding.

#### 5. Intake

- a. The purpose of an intake is to provide an orientation and overview of the process, collect any required additional documentation (i.e. loan pre-approval), develop a plan to address any barriers to business operation, and complete a business assessment.
  - b. Intakes may occur virtually or over the phone.
  - c. Small Business Development staff shall provide assistance as needed to applicants including but not limited to:
    - Making referrals to partner Entrepreneur Support Organizations; and
    - Providing basic applicant information to partner Entrepreneur Support Organizations for the purpose of providing relevant services.
  - d. The RMAP is intended to alleviate financial burdens during the COVID-19 crisis and time is of the essence. Applicants shall be given adequate information to make an informed decision whether or not to apply for assistance, however, funding is limited and awarded on a first come, first served basis.
    - Program funds will not be reserved or committed for applicants that have not completed an application.
  - e. Once all documentation is received by the City, a completed application will be forwarded to the Development Director for approval.
  - f. Approvals will be determined on a first come, first served basis and will be contingent on the availability of program funds. Every consideration will be given to serving the greatest
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