



Delaware County Commissioners

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Gary Merrell

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Delaware County Announces Plans for Additional COVID-19 Relief

DELAWARE, Ohio — The Delaware County Commissioners today directed their staff to move ahead with programming that will distribute \$3.5 million to local businesses, service organizations and residents who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Up to \$2 million for grants to small businesses will be set aside. Another \$1 million will be used to expand an existing Community Enhancement Grant program, while \$250,000 has been earmarked to fund marketing programs run by business-advocacy groups. An additional contribution of \$250,000 will be sent to the United Way of Delaware County.

The County's Economic Development department will administer a grant program for businesses with 25 or fewer employees. Up to \$15,000 will be made available to those who can document operating losses because of the pandemic. The grant program will complement the County's existing Revolving Loan Fund to which the County previously committed \$2.5 million. To be added to an email-notification list for grant applications, please complete the information form at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DCbizprotect>.

An existing Community Enhancement Grant program normally has distributed about \$160,000 each year to local nonprofit organizations since 2014, but previously has limited this funding to specific capital projects. For 2020, the program will instead provide reimbursements for operating losses due to the pandemic. To be notified when application instructions are available, please complete the information form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DCcommunityenhance>.

County Administrator Mike Frommer pointed out that business-advocacy groups like Destination Delaware County Ohio, Main Street Delaware and local Chambers of Commerce already have developed marketing programs to help local businesses, so, Frommer said, "we felt it more expedient to funnel this infusion of \$250,000 to them so they can continue this valuable work."

Similarly, the County will provide a grant of \$250,000 to the United Way of Delaware County, which follows a previous grant of \$89,000. The new grant will be directed to the United Way's Pathways for Hope program, which addresses housing, utility and food insecurities among Delaware County residents.

Application packages are being prepared now and will be available soon. Those interested in applying must do so within the designated timeframe because the funds are limited.

Said Commissioner Jeff Benton: "We are very pleased to be able to direct these funds to exactly where they're needed – to the businesses, organizations and residents who have been hit hard by the pandemic. A great program like this will help us preserve what makes Delaware County such a special community."

Commissioner Gary Merrell said, "It is my hope that these funds will help those in need — individuals, nonprofits and small businesses — get through this difficult time."

Commissioner Barb Lewis added: "Too many are still hurting and need a helping hand, whether they are a small business trying to survive or a family struggling to pay rent. May these monies make life a little better for those in need."

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