

January 31, 2023



Items 46, 47, and 48

# Small Business Recovery + Growth

Partnerships between the City and LiftFund, the Better Business Bureau, and Project Vida for the provision of small business services

Goal 1. Create an environment conducive to strong, sustainable economic development



# Council Requested Action:

## Continue + Grow Small Business Assistance

Authorize the City Manager to execute Subrecipient Agreements between the City and:



- **LiftFund** providing **\$2,500,000** to administer American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to institute the City of El Paso **Small Business Grant & Interest Buy-Down Program** to entities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.



- **Project Vida** providing **\$200,000** to hire staff to conduct outreach and technical assistance, including assisting underrepresented businesses in the submission of applications for grant opportunities through the **Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program**.



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# Economic Recovery:

## A Focus on El Paso's Small Businesses



**Improve  
Liquidity +  
Cash Flow**



**Stimulate  
Demand**



**(Re)Start +  
Grow  
Operations**

**3 Goals to Support Small Businesses**

**83%**

of El Paso County  
businesses have fewer  
than **20 employees**

**\$24M+**

Funding deployed to  
small business recovery  
efforts since March  
2020

# Economic Recovery:

## City-Sponsored Small Business Programs

| Goal                          | Program  | Funding      |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Improve Liquidity + Cash Flow | Small Business Financial Assistance (5 Partners)       | \$17,334,000 |
|                               | Small Business Recovery Program*                       | \$3,000,000  |
|                               | Small Business Financial, Legal + Technical Assistance | \$400,000    |
|                               | Childcare Assistance                                   | \$156,000    |
| Restart + Grow Operations     | EPBusinessStrong.org                                   | \$1,990,000  |
|                               | Business Safety Alteration Financial Assistance        | \$400,000    |
|                               | Safety Product Access + Supply Chain Assistance        | \$100,000    |
|                               | Contract Training + Work Safe Assistance               | \$113,000    |
|                               | Downtown Sanitation Program                            | \$80,000     |
|                               | Downtown Outdoor Dining Program                        | \$450,000    |
| Stimulate Demand              | E-Commerce Platform Development                        | \$100,000    |
|                               | E-Commerce + Digital Platform Training                 | \$577,000    |
|                               | "Buy El Paso" Marketing Initiative                     | \$50,000     |
| Total                         |  | \$24,750,000 |

# 11

Community Partners Engaged in Rolling Out **15+ Programs** to Assist Small Businesses

# 1,566

Small Businesses Assisted with Grants



**Play Video Here**

# Economic Recovery:

## City-Sponsored Small Business Programs



### Technical Assistance

- E-commerce platforms developed for **130** businesses
- **1,040** businesses trained through one-on-one counseling or webinars
- Jobs Retained **1,379**



### Health

- **1,276** business visits by Task Force distributing PPE
- **155** businesses aided with "work safer" protocols
- **17** businesses engaged to support PPE supply chain
- **500** COVID-19 Business safety kits distributed



### Safety

- **80** businesses received installation of temperature kiosks and/or barriers
- Disinfected **61,000** public assets within downtown
- **19** handwashing stations installed and maintained, and
- **4,700** patrons utilized downtown Outdoor Dining Area maintained by DMD



### Marketing

- Established EPBusinessStrong resource clearinghouse & Buy El Paso Program
- Buy El Paso Program: Generated **93,600** page views from **58,600** users

# Economic Recovery: Small Business Grant Recipient Feedback

**1,500+**

Small Businesses  
assisted with grants

**53%**

Non-employer or  
one employee

**65%**

In business less  
than 10 years

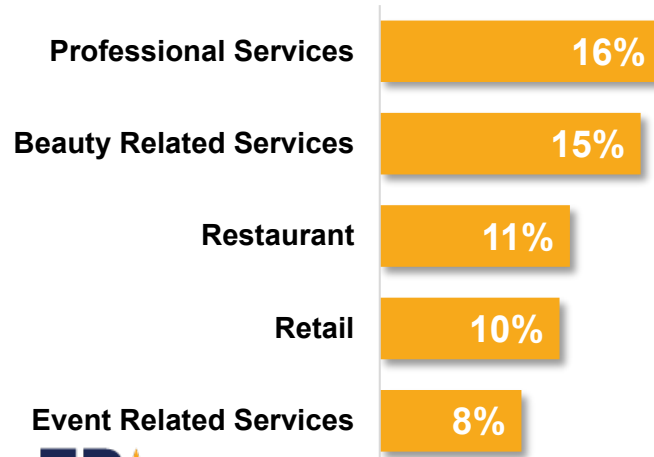
**23%**

Do not have a relationship  
with a bank or credit union

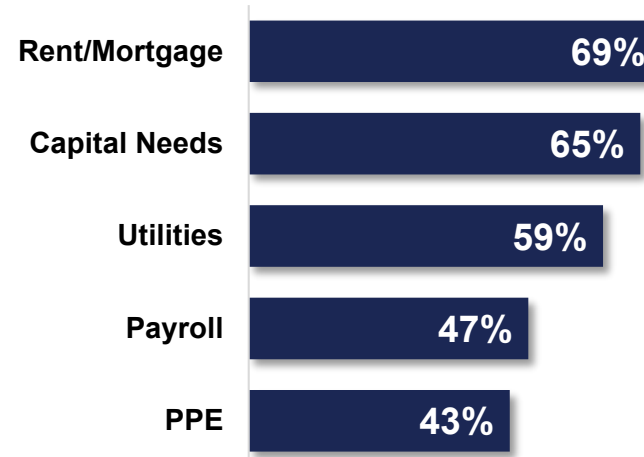
**11%**

Attempted to access capital  
through traditional bank loans

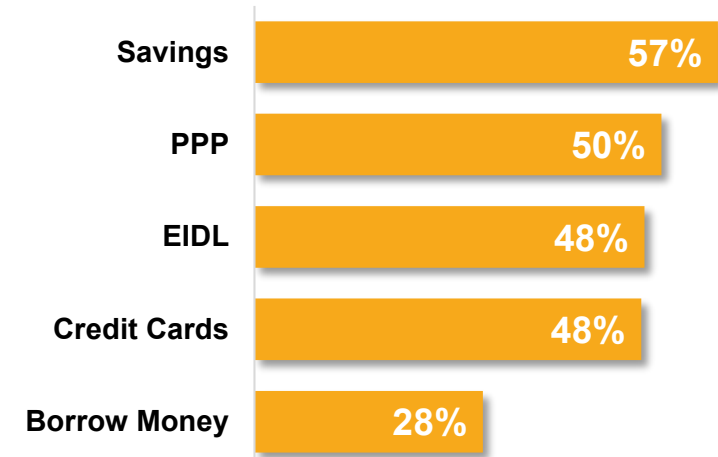
**Business Respondent  
Profile by Sector, Top 5**



**Planned Uses for Grant,  
Top 5 (%)**



**Business Capital Access,  
Top 5 (%)**



# Council Approved **Local American Rescue Plan Allocation for Small Business Support**

## **4 Strategies to Support Existing + New Small Businesses**



**\$4.8M**

**Strengthen the Entrepreneurial Support Ecosystem**

**\$3.0M**

**Support Strong Partnerships to Optimize Growth (Manufacturing Focus)**

**\$14M**  
**Total Investment**

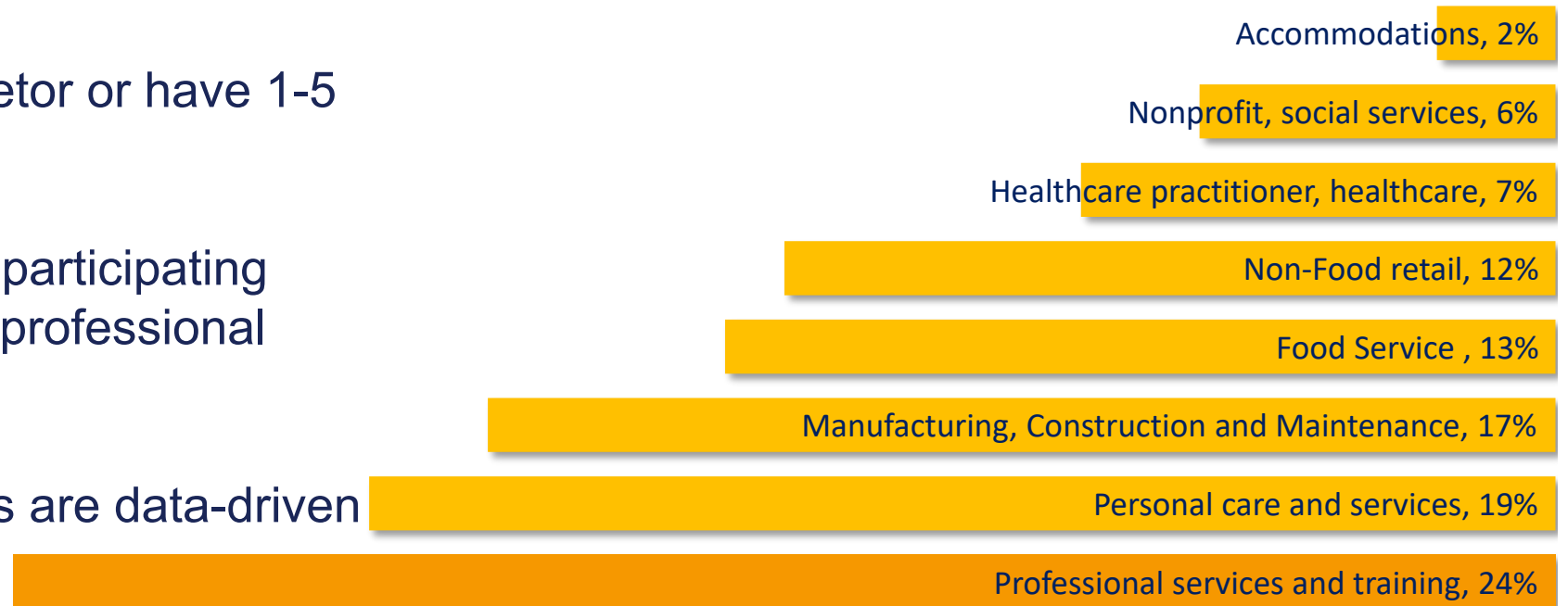


# Recent Survey:

## Small Business Respondent Profile

- **121 Responses** from 13 roundtables/townhall meetings and online outreach from March to July 2022.
- **65%** are either sole-proprietor or have 1-5 employees
- Nearly a **quarter (24%)** of participating small businesses, provide professional services and training
- Program recommendations are data-driven

### Type of Business

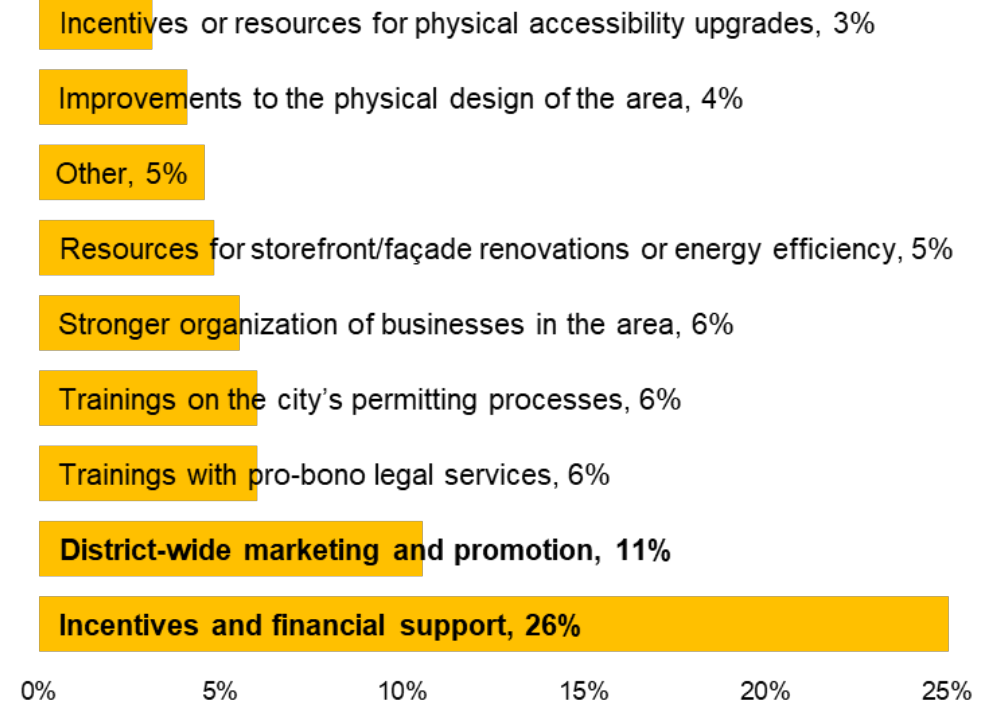


# Recent Survey: Small Business Feedback

Which topics or tools are you most interested in developing or strengthening for your business?



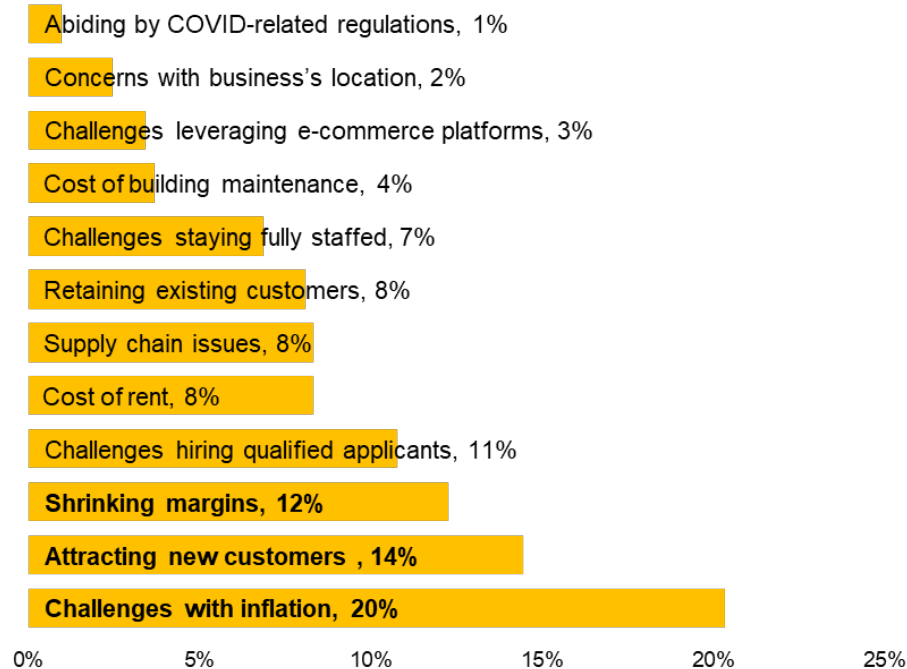
What types of support would you like to see offered that would help your business thrive?



# Recent Survey:

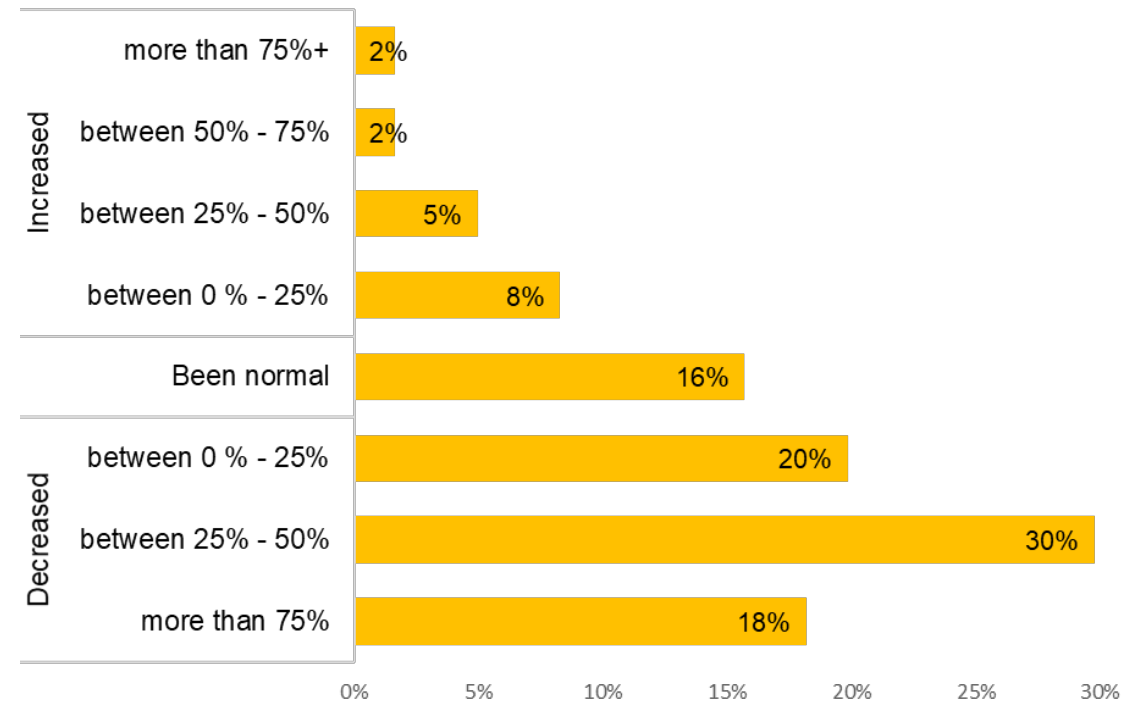
## Small Business Feedback

Thinking of the next six months, how serious are the following concerns for your business?\*



\*Respondents selected the top three

How has your business revenue changed since COVID-19 became a widespread concern in early March 2020?



# Small Business Assistance: Programs For Consideration

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## Goal: Increase Access to Capital

1

### Small Business Financial Assistance:

LiftFund: \$2,500,000

2

### Financial Literacy + Technical Assistance + Community Outreach:

Project Vida: \$200,000

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## Goal: Strengthen Entrepreneurial Support Ecosystem

3

### Marketing Campaign Partnerships:

Better Business Bureau: \$1,435,522



# What's in a Name?



The word LIFT has an inspirational meaning which is why it is often used, services are different.



It means to raise, rise, elevate, pick up, boost, and uplift.

# LiftFund: Small Business Grant + Interest Buy-Down Program

## Cash grants

- Up to **\$10,000** to eligible small businesses for working capital
- Businesses making \$1M or less in annual gross revenue
- Eligible businesses that did not receive CARES Act funding will be prioritized for grant funding under this program

## Buy-down interest rate

- Interest buy-down to **2%**
- Available for loans up to \$100,000

Approximately **215** businesses will receive funds



| Budget                 |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Grants                 | \$2,150,000        |
| Interest Buy-down      | \$100,000          |
| Administration Fee 10% | \$250,000          |
|                        | <b>\$2,500,000</b> |

# Project Vida: Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program (MTAP)

Addresses outreach and technical assistance encouraging stabilization and growth of microenterprise businesses:

- Project Vida will utilize a “**promotora**” (community health worker) model to conduct outreach and build relationships with microentrepreneurs in El Paso.
- Prioritizing outreach to businesses that did not receive CARES Act funding to assist with grant applications in all City Council Districts
- Primary focus of recruitment for the program: self-employed and business owners with less than four employees
- Program will serve over **260 microentrepreneurs**



| Budget                 |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Program Cost           | \$180,000 |
| Administration Fee 10% | \$20,000  |
|                        | \$200,000 |

# Better Business Bureau: Continue Existing, Successful Programs

- **EPBusinessStrong** designed, created and launched during August 2020, a digital, centralized source of information to help connect small business owners with credible financial resource opportunities.
- **Buy El Paso Program** began in August 2020 as a pandemic response campaign to help local businesses. Program is focused on increasing support for local small businesses by encouraging the community to shop locally.
- **SizeUp El Paso** business intelligence tool, provides market research data for small businesses.



| Budget                  |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Program Cost            | \$1,299,122 |
| Administration Fee 9.5% | \$136,400   |
|                         | \$1,435,522 |



# Better Business Bureau: **El Paso Business Strong**

**[epbusinessstrong.org](http://epbusinessstrong.org)**

## Made in El Paso

- Video and blog series supporting local small businesses that create unique items
- **24 business** received marketing and publicity free of charge, through this initiative

## Success Stories

- Highlighted local businesses through video
- Captured how businesses navigated the pandemic using resources shared on the website
- Website pivoted from pandemic response tool to premier business resource digital center

## BBB Tips

- Video series to answer common questions business owners may have.
- Topics: Why have a business website?, What is a Community Development Financial Institution?

# Better Business Bureau: Buy El Paso



## Buy El Paso Day

- All-day event, first Saturday of December.

## Buy El Paso Shirt Campaign

- Local artists were recruited to design t-shirts depicting what they perceived the "Buy El Paso" initiative means. Each month featured a unique design by a different artist.
- Over **500 t-shirts** were designed by **15 local artists**, distributed to **33 local businesses**

## Buy El Paso Adventures

- Monthly video & written blog, explores local businesses & highlights products.
- **67 businesses** have been featured in the program.

## Holiday Gift Guide

- Businesses were encouraged to submit a product they wanted featured.
- Gift guide included: business' information, picture & product description.
- **17,000 gift guides** distributed through El Paso Inc & El Paso Times
- **Over 500 businesses** were listed or featured.

**When you Buy El Paso  
...You ♥ El Paso**

# Better Business Bureau: **Create New Programs**

## El Paso Small Business Rewards Program

- Program will serve as a catalyst to help revitalize local businesses by offering a marketing incentive tool to drive customer behavior.
- Technology Driven solution rewards incentive / Movement tracking technology (QR Code)
- Providing business owners behavioral and predictive analytics to support operational decisions.
- Provide real-time economic and consumer movement data, including consumer habits.
- Program will serve a minimum of **500 small businesses**.



### Customer QR Code rewards program process



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## Mission

Deliver exceptional services to support a high quality of life and place for our community



## Vision

Develop a vibrant regional economy, safe and beautiful neighborhoods and exceptional recreational, cultural and educational opportunities powered by a high performing government



## Values

Integrity, Respect, Excellence, Accountability, People