



CITY OF BERKELEY ANNOUNCES \$25,000 COVID-19 BUSINESS DAMAGE MITIGATION FUND

Downtown Berkeley Association to administer grants up to \$2,500 for all Berkeley businesses that have sustained property damage since March 16, 2020.

(Berkeley, CA) — The City of Berkeley in conjunction with the Downtown Berkeley Association announced the commencement of the Business Damage Mitigation Fund to reimburse Berkeley businesses for physical damage repairs and cleanup costs sustained since the COVID-19 Shelter in Place Order was established on March 16, 2020. The Berkeley City Council approved and dedicated \$25,000 to a “Business Damage Mitigation Fund” on June 2, 2020 to respond the needs and hardships faced by many of Berkeley’s small businesses.

As the Mayor’s item to Council stated:

“During this COVID-19 emergency, City staff have received numerous complaints from local businesses regarding problematic and violent behavior, including assault of employees and property damage. As a result of increased criminal activity, the Berkeley Police Department have deployed overtime shifts in Telegraph and the Downtown to increase police patrols to respond more quickly to calls for service and to increase police presence to deter crime. While the deployment of the BPD Downtown Task Force has provided additional presence and support for businesses, crime is still occurring. Businesses have specifically requested that the City establish a Damage Mitigation Fund to provide one-time funding for repairs to local businesses occurring as a result of vandalism and other problematic behavior during this COVID-19 State of Emergency.”

To implement the direct reimbursement of Business Damage Mitigation funds to Berkeley’s impacted businesses as swiftly as possible, the City is asking that all Berkeley business that have experienced property damage since March 16, 2020 due to criminal activity complete a simple application for reimbursable expenses by 5pm on November 25, 2020. The Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) is

administering the program on behalf of the City gratis. An independent non-profit, the DBA intends to mail out reimbursement checks directly to qualifying businesses by December 16, 2020.

According to Downtown Berkeley Association CEO John Caner, "We want to thank the Mayor and Council for their support of small businesses that have sustained damage during these trying times of COVID. We agreed to step forward to administer this fund at no charge to get funds out as soon as possible to small businesses that sustained damage."

According to Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguín, "During these challenging times when businesses are seeing a significant loss in revenues, some have sustained damage which requires in some cases that they pay out of pocket to keep their businesses open. This Damage Mitigation Fund is a small way for the City to support our local businesses and keep them going during this pandemic."

Berkeley businesses can apply for a grant of up to \$2,500 to cover cost of repairs and/or cleaning due to vandalism or other property damage sustained since the Shelter in Place Order was established on March 16, 2020. Grant applications must be submitted **by 5pm Wednesday, November 25** via email to **damage@downtownberkeley.com** with the following information included:

- a. Business name and address of property sustaining damage;
- b. Description and photos (if available) of damage sustained;
- c. Description and photos (if available) of repairs or cleaning made;
- d. Clear tabulation of all eligible documented expenses (i.e. spreadsheet or list with total dollar amounts spent)
- e. Copy of receipts (or other proof of payment) of eligible reimbursable expenses documenting the repair of property damage;
- f. Statement that the business has not already been otherwise reimbursed for these expenses (i.e. by an insurance company or other third party).

Berkeley Damage Mitigation Fund Details

On June 2, 2020 the Berkeley City Council approved \$25,000 in funding to establish the **COVID-19 Business Damage Mitigation Fund** to help small business in the City of Berkeley that have since sustained damaged after Shelter-in-Place order was established on March 16, 2020. The Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA) has agreed to administer the program gratis on behalf of the City according to the following terms established by the City of Berkeley:

1. **COVID-19 Business Damage Mitigation Fund** Program is available for any small business in the city that has experienced documented vandalism and/ or property damage from the

date that the initial local Shelter-In-Place order went into effect (March 16, 2020) until the local declaration of emergency is rescinded by the City Council of the City of Berkeley.

2. Maximum grant amount available to any small business located in Berkeley: \$2,500
3. List of items that qualify for a grant under the COVID-19 Business Damage Mitigation includes, but is not limited to:
 - Removing graffiti
 - Repairing and/or replacing broken windows, doors, and furniture
 - Cleaning and/or Sanitization of business site or property
4. Applicants of grant funds shall submit description and photos and documenting vandalism / property damage; receipts, invoices or other proof of payment for fixing said damage; and spreadsheet or other tabulation itemizing individual and total eligible documented expenses.
5. Recipients of any amount of COVID-19 Business Damage Mitigation Funds shall attest that third-party funds (i.e. insurance reimbursement or any other grant) have not been used to repair the vandalism and/or property damage subject to reimbursement.
6. Grant applications are to be submitted via email to: damage@downtownberkeley.com by 5pm Wednesday, November 25 to be eligible for first round of Business Damage Mitigation grants.
7. In the event the fund is oversubscribed by all valid claims submitted by the November 25 deadline, payments will be proportionally reduced to all eligible complete applications by amount over subscribed. Conversely, if the fund is not oversubscribed by the November 25 deadline then payments will be continue to be made to eligible applicants after November 25, 2020 on a 'first come first serve' or "rolling" basis until the full fund (\$25,000) is exhausted.
8. Any Recipient of a grant from the COVID-19 Business Damage Mitigation Fund shall retain records for 5 years.

It is the goal of the DBA that first round reimbursable grant checks awarded would be mailed to successful Berkeley Businesses Damage Mitigation Fund applicants no later than Wednesday, December 16. For questions on active grant applications please email damage@downtownberkeley.com; for program questions or concerns please contact: oedmailbox@cityofberkeley.info.