

Message from Mayor Bud Starker

During this challenging time, I have been talking to neighbors, friends and family about what makes Wheat Ridge so special. There are a number of elements that contribute to our great city, and one we all agree on is our special community of local businesses. This health emergency is challenging our local business community in the most profound way, and I am proud to say the City is responding to provide some assistance.

In collaboration with our business community and City staff, City Council and I have created some ways to help local businesses. Last week we announced a [new grant program for small businesses](#). The city has allocated \$250,000 to provide grants of up to \$5,000 in grants to qualified small businesses to assist with stabilization efforts during this health emergency. Applications are available on the city website and a Task Force will review and determine awardees. Businesses must be in good standing with the City of Wheat Ridge as of Feb. 1, 2020, and with current licenses effective Jan. 1, 2020. Additional criteria are listed on the application. The deadline for application is this Friday, April 17 by noon.

To further assist small businesses, the City has established a Sales Tax Deferment program for businesses who are struggling with cash flow issues. This application is also available on the [City website](#). Staff also created special [COVID-19](#) and [Business Continuity and Support](#) pages on the City website where businesses can more easily find resources like the Paycheck Protection Program and Small Business Loans from the Small Business Association (SBA).

In addition, two new websites have been created: [Eat-Ridge.com](#) and [Biz-Ridge.com](#). Businesses can add their information so community members can easily find updates on products and services being made available and ways we can support our local businesses and their employees.

The outbreak of this deadly disease has been a lot to deal with and we're not done yet. While there is still a great deal that is unknown, including when this will be over and when we can return to a sense of normalcy, what we CAN rely on is the strength of our community. We are all in this together, and together we can do our part to contain the spread of the virus. Let's help each other stay positive and focus on the hope and renewal of spring. #WRInThisTogether #DoOurPart #MakeWheatRidgeCount.

Be well my friends
Mayor Starker