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Gilbert Announces the #GilbertTogether Business Recovery Program

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The Gilbert Town Council AZCares Subcommittee has recommended that \$18 million be allocated to support Gilbert businesses as part of the [#GilbertTogether Business Recovery Program](#). This three-phase program focuses on supporting the relief, recovery, and resiliency of Gilbert businesses.

On September 29, the Gilbert Town Council approved phase one of the program, the #GilbertTogether Business Relief Grant, and authorized a contract with the Arizona Community Foundation to manage the grant process. The Business Relief Grant is an \$11 million allocation supporting Gilbert businesses experiencing financial hardship due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Qualifying businesses experiencing revenue declines of at least 15% because of COVID-19 will be eligible to receive a grant of up to \$35,000 based on their demonstrated positive financial impact to the Town of Gilbert.

"Gilbert is pleased to offer this grant program to our business community," said Mayor Scott Anderson. "Through the efforts of elected officials, Town staff, and the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce, this program will prioritize getting the necessary funding to the businesses who need it most and begin the process of helping our local economy."

At the same meeting, the Gilbert Town Council also authorized a contract as part of phase three, Business Resiliency Assistance, focused on providing technical assistance resources for the business community and Gilbert residents. Career and technical training opportunities provided by several Maricopa Community Colleges: Chandler-Gilbert Community College (CGCC), Mesa Community College (MCC), and the Maricopa Corporate College (MCOR). The colleges will provide entry-level career and technical programs to assist Gilbert residents who have been impacted by COVID-19. Courses offered support growth in high demand professions with average wages at or above the median Maricopa County wage. Under this contract, the colleges will also provide up to 200 hours of technical assistance to interested businesses. Gilbert has allocated \$150,000 for this contract and the Council AZCares Subcommittee has recommended that \$2 million be allocated for business resiliency assistance. Staff will be bringing additional assistance opportunities forward for consideration.

"CGCC, MCC and MCOR are excited to work collaboratively to provide eligible individuals access to 19 short-term Certificates of Completion (CCL) training programs which lead to careers with competitive wages that are in-demand in the East Valley. We also look forward to utilizing the expertise of the Maricopa IT Institute (MITI)-East Valley to provide technical assistance to interested Gilbert businesses," said Michael Voss, MCC Dean of Career and Technical Education.

Gilbert was allocated \$29.2 million out of the \$441 million in CARES act funds given to the State of Arizona by the federal government. The \$29.2 million was restricted to covering public health and safety expenses, effectively freeing up money within Gilbert's general fund that was previously allocated to these expenses. After the Gilbert Town Council approved the reallocation of general fund money on August 11, 2020, the #GilbertTogether Business Recovery Program was created through the Council AZCares Subcommittee convened to explore the use of these funds.

"In partnership with the Gilbert Chamber of Commerce, Gilbert surveyed local businesses to create a program that focuses on their recovery concerns and needs," said Gilbert Economic Development Director, Dan Henderson.

"The #GilbertTogether Business Recovery Program was designed to provide immediate relief, sustainable recovery, and long-term resiliency for Gilbert businesses. Our business community provides necessary jobs and positively impacts the quality of life that Gilbert is known for, and we intend for this program to help our businesses in their time of need."

Staff anticipates bringing phase two, a business recovery loan program, to Council for consideration in the near future. The business recovery loan program aims to enhance business recovery by "bridging the gap" between other loan programs and the revenue losses local businesses have faced due to COVID-19 and related business shutdowns. The Gilbert Town Council AZCares Subcommittee has recommended that \$5 million be allocated for a business recovery loan program.

Additional information about the #GilbertTogether Business Recovery Programs will be rolled out soon. Find more information about these programs at glbrt.is/BizPrograms.

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