



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor
210 Main Street Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275D
mayor@northamptonma.gov

For Immediate Release - April 6, 2020

**City of Northampton Announces Plans for \$1.2M in
COVID-19 CDBG Emergency Funding**

NORTHAMPTON - Today, Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced plans to use \$1.2 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to help the City of Northampton adapt to the COVID-19 crisis and to serve low- and moderate-income Northampton residents.

“We are working to address the COVID-19 crisis and the eventual recovery, with the goal of serving the neediest among us and our long standing housing, accessibility and public service needs,” said Mayor David J. Narkewicz. “The economic impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic poses a threat to our businesses and our residents, especially our low- and moderate-income residents.”

Mayor Narkewicz shared a budget for roughly \$1.2 million in CDBG funds. This budget is for roughly \$120,000 in reallocation of existing funds, \$682,340 for the CDBG funds that arrive in July, and \$401,400 in our CDBG-CARES.

“I am committing \$150,000 to help our small businesses survive,” said Mayor David J. Narkewicz. “I am aware how daunting the economic crisis is and how much these funds can only supplement the larger funding commitments from the federal and state governments, banks, and on-going community support of our businesses.”

In addition, the program will provide \$125,000 in direct grants to small businesses (those with 10 or fewer employees) with direct benefit to low- and moderate-income employees or owners. These grants will average \$5,000 each with a cap of \$10,000.

The revised CDBG budget also dedicates \$120,000 for the emergency shelter for the houseless at Northampton High School or for any other emergency sheltering needs that arise. Mayor

Narkewicz noted that state and federal contributions to sheltering needs and emergency city operations remain uncertain.

The city also increased CDBG social service funding by over \$100,000, starting with a \$25,000 grant to the Northampton Survival Center and Grow Food Northampton, to support their innovative approach to address the sudden food insecurity resulting from the economic devastation caused by the pandemic.

Northampton's Planning and Sustainability Director, Wayne Feiden noted, "While we address the short-term emergency, we need to start planning for recovery. COVID-19 has highlighted how much more expensive it is to address a broken system than to fix the system in the first place. To that end, Mayor Narkewicz has asked us to put \$200,000 towards the creation of a resiliency hub, to provide services to our most chronically stressed population including the homeless and other community programs, and to be available during times of emergency."

The fund will focus on maintaining Northampton's commitment to other social service programs, affordable housing, economic development, and accessibility, underscoring the value that each dwelling unit reduces the need for emergency sheltering, emergency services, and the risk of future contagion.

The emergency small business grant program will be administered by Valley Community Development Corporation (Valley CDC), which will provide \$25,000 in small business counseling and service delivery.

"Valley Community Development Corporation is proud to work with the city to help our local businesses and our low- and moderate-income workers," said Joanne Campbell, Executive Director of Valley CDC.

The details of the program will be available at www.valleyCDC.com starting Tuesday, April 7, 2020, with grant applications opening at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

The Northampton Office of Planning and Sustainability coordinates the CDBG program under the Mayor's direction and is convening the planning for a resiliency hub. The Office of Planning and Sustainability will hold a public hearing on the city's proposed CDBG Action Plan on Friday, April 10, 2020 at 9:00 AM via teleconference. Details for attending the virtual hearing are on the agenda posting on the city's online calendar.

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.