



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Spokane County Provides Update on Results of CARES Funding Allocated to Small Business and Nonprofit Grants

SPOKANE COUNTY, March 30, 2021 – During the Fall of 2020, the Spokane County Board of County Commissioners allocated a total of \$23,075,000 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to go towards grants for small businesses and nonprofit organizations in Spokane County.

Spokane County contracted with Greater Spokane, Inc (GSI) to administer and distribute the funds. Up to \$10,000 in grants, through the OPENTogether program, were distributed in September and October of 2020 to 1154 small businesses and 191 nonprofits.

In addition, grants of up to \$20,000 were distributed through the Hospitality Relief Grant Program in December of 2020. These funds specifically targeted the restaurant, hotel, and tourism industry, all of which were impacted particularly hard by government mandates forcing business closures during the global pandemic. These funds were distributed to a total of 665 small businesses and nonprofit organizations.

After reviewing application data, both programs were provided additional funding by the BOCC so that every eligible application would receive a grant.

Multiple community partners were engaged from the beginning to intentionally include experience in grant funding, application review, software support, and community outreach. Over 35 individuals and community outreach organizations were included in the grant development process to ensure wide and inclusive communication, recognition and reduction of barriers, and to provide a lens of equity to the grant distribution process.

An overview of the results of these programs, including details about sector engagement, geographic data, demographic info and additional program highlights, was provided to the Board of Commissioners on the afternoon of March 30, 2021. A recording of that presentation will be available on the official Spokane County You Tube Channel.

Chair of the Spokane County Board of Commissioners, Josh Kerns stated, “We owe a debt of gratitude to all the volunteers and organizations who dedicated their time to make this a positive regional impact for our small businesses and nonprofits. Early in the pandemic, the Board recognized there was a tremendous need to support our small businesses and nonprofit organizations through this difficult time, which is why funding this program was one of our highest priorities. While these funds will never make up for the losses experienced in 2020, we are proud that they played a small part in protecting jobs and keeping many people in our County employed.” **(Continued)**

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“We are extremely grateful to the County and our other incredible partners to administer millions in needed relief grants to support our small businesses and non-profits this past year,” said GSI CEO Alisha Benson. “To assist in providing a lifeline and a sense of hope during an incredibly challenging time is what GSI and its partners in business development are called to do.”

About Spokane County

Spokane County government serves over half a million citizens and 13 municipal jurisdictions, making it the fourth-largest county in the State of Washington. For more information, visit www.spokanecounty.org, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).