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MEMORANDUM

TO: Ann Wall, City Manager

FROM: Christian Lockamy, Acting Economic Development Manager 

DATE: May 16, 2018

SUBJECT: Small Business Plan Competition (SBPC)

At the January 2018 City Council Planning Retreat, the Mayor and City Council made “developing programs to support small businesses” one of the 7 action steps to accomplish the priority of “developing a proactive economic development program”. As part of this initiative, City staff will work on revisions to the Small Business Plan Competition (SBPC) that will provide more robust options for entrepreneurs in our community.

Managed by the City’s Redevelopment Commission (RDC), the SBPC has provided grants to 38 recipients since 2008 who have located or expanded within the Center City Redevelopment Area and West Greenville Revitalization Areas. While the program has seen its fair share of community interest within the last decade, it’s time to explore some additional options as it relates to supporting small business growth.

Most recently, at the City Council Economic Development Committee (CCED) meeting on May 9, 2018, City staff discussed delaying the summer round of the Small Business Plan Competition (SBPC), while proactively working on revisions. While the summer round of the SBPC typically starts around July 1st every year, the intention is to take the following action steps to put a new plan in place, while also giving proper notice to the community:

- Late May 2018 - Advertise on social media, community centers, minority publications, and other outlets that the July 1st round of the SBPC will be delayed for several months while we craft revisions.
- Late May 2018 - Advise our partners at the Small Business Technology and Development Center (SBTDC) and the Small Business Center (SBC) our intention to delay the SBPC, while working on revisions.
- June/July 2018 – City staff to benchmark other communities and small business offerings, and develop a program(s) to assist with our growing community’s small business needs.
- August 2018 – City staff to present recommended changes at the CCED meeting and work with committee members to craft the new small business offering(s).
- September 2018 – Present CCED recommended revisions to the City Council for adoption.
- September/October 2018 – After adoption of the revised small business program, public outreach will take place to notify area partners and citizens about the new program, application process, timeline, grant awards, etc. with the intention of executing the first round of the newly revised program shortly thereafter.

Additional communication will be provided to City Council as we navigate this process. In addition, we have created a list of interested parties who have contacted our office regarding the SBPC. We will ensure that communication will take place with those citizens that have already expressed a desire in applying, so they are fully informed. We are excited to work on additional small business grant opportunities and hope that these efforts will create a more robust offering that will show our citizens that “Greenville Means Business”.