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## Lafayette resumes its Business Assistance Program

By Pippa Fisher

The City of Lafayette is once again offering one-on-one help to its local businesses and nonprofits in navigating through the maze of loans and funds to help them identify which assistance programs might be available to them.

With recent approval by Congress of a second stimulus package, the city announced the restarting of its Business Assistance Program effective Jan. 4.

Townsend Public Affairs, the city's consultants, helped more than 100 local businesses and nonprofits in the first phase of this program, offering guidance for both federal and state programs.

"Restarting the BAP for our businesses and nonprofits is a great way to start off 2021," says Mayor Susan Candell, who hopes the partnerships formed between the city and these groups will be as successful as the previous cycles when stimulus money was available. "Helping businesses and nonprofits navigate the process with excellent guidance from Townsend and Associates is a win-win for Lafayette, and we as a city are glad to help," says Candell.

Participants need to register with the city and will be expected to verify that they are a Lafayette business or nonprofit. Once qualified, LBA will connect with business owners to evaluate their goals and desired outcomes in order to identify which programs they might be eligible for. Further details can be found on the city website.

The mayor and Townsend Public Affairs will be hosting a webinar at 10 a.m. Jan. 6 to provide more information about the new funding and to highlight the services offered by the BAP.

Registration for this webinar through the city website is required.

[www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/lafayette-strong/lafayette-business-assistance](http://www.lovelafayette.org/city-hall/lafayette-strong/lafayette-business-assistance)

Local businesses seek financial support from the community

Local business owners are turning to the community for help as they struggle financially during the coronavirus pandemic, utilizing crowdfunding platforms like GoFundMe as a way to stay afloat. Karen Gaskins, owner of the small Lafayette business, Ms. Karen's Place, where she specializes in children's haircuts, has had her business shuttered for months, but according to the GoFundMe account created by organizer Lindsay Klein, Gaskins has had to pay rent this entire time. Although she was briefly able to reopen, taking careful precautions to protect her clients and herself, she will now be shut again due to the county's new rules for at least the next month.

"I have served the community with love for all my children in the Lamorinda area for 18 years," Gaskins said. "It's been a honor to watch your children grow and be a part of their lives and I'd love to continue to do so in the future!"

Klein is urging the community to "help this wonderful woman during this difficult time."

For information on how to help, visit:

[www.gofundme.com/f/help-ms-karen-stay-afloat?](http://www.gofundme.com/f/help-ms-karen-stay-afloat?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cp_guide_do&memberId=7218096)

[utm\\_source=customer&utm\\_medium=copy\\_link&utm\\_campaign=p\\_cp\\_guide\\_do&memberId=7218096](http://www.gofundme.com/f/help-ms-karen-stay-afloat?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cp_guide_do&memberId=7218096)

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[back](#)

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