For Immediate Release – March 19, 2020

Contact: *Information located at bottom of release*

Regional COVID-19 Business Support Taskforce Formed

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Regional agencies and organizations have teamed up to coordinate support and resources for businesses in the Harrisonburg and Rockingham area that have been impacted by COVID-19.

The Regional COVID-19 Business Support Taskforce started meeting weekly to brainstorm ideas, curate resources, share information and unify their efforts as they address business and employer concerns.

Taskforce members include representatives from the City of Harrisonburg Economic Development; Rockingham Department of Economic Development and Tourism; the Shenandoah Valley Partnership; the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center (SVSBDC); Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance; and the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce.

This week, the Taskforce undertook the following steps:

• Coordinated numerous state and federal alerts and proposed programs for business support and funding.
• Distilled information on the first emergency small business loan program, through the Small Business Administration with local support through the SVSBDC.
• Collected data from area employers and the local economy to share with state agencies and federal departments and authorities to assess impacts and support economic relief efforts.
• Developing a video that educates the public on how and why they should support local businesses during this unprecedented time.
• Launching a continually updated, one-stop shop Google Docs that consolidates COVID-19 business assistance programs and toolkits.

The SBA's Disaster Loan program is designed to help small businesses and nonprofits meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot otherwise be met as a direct result of COVID-19. The SVSBDC provides information and assistance in the loan preparation documents.

To learn more, visit:

https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Information/Index
https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Information/EIDLLoans
https://www.valleysbdc.org/covid-19/

The Task Force members are all working tirelessly on keeping up with fast developing and changing developments, particularly at the federal and state level. Elected officials are keenly aware of the economic impacts of COVID-19 and the measures implemented to stop its spread. The hope is that the actions taken at the federal, state and local levels will result in a faster end to the virus' impact and a return to a normal business climate.

Remember to support your local economy when many small businesses are looking at options to weather the economic storm. Buy gift cards now. This helps businesses with cash flow today, so their doors are open tomorrow. Shop online. Many local businesses have online stores or will take orders over the phone for shipping or curbside pick-up. Also, you can order delivery from local restaurants as well as retailers who deliver.

Task Force members and their contact information are:

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The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.

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