

# Dane County Exec. Parisi: “Dane Buy Local” team again to fast track small business pandemic recovery

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Dane County will infuse another \$15 million into small business pandemic recovery efforts, County Executive Joe Parisi announced today. The funds will support the county’s Small Business Pandemic Support Grant Program, a partnership launched nearly one year ago with the organization “Dane Buy Local.”

“Plugging dollars directly into our small businesses and jumpstarting the local economy are incredibly important as we look to recover from the challenges of the past year,” Parisi said. “Grants from the innovative partnership we created with Dane Buy Local have helped keep businesses open and people’s dreams alive. As this pandemic evolves, we feel these funds, put directly into the pockets of small business owners in our community, offer a real opportunity for a fresh start.”

Funds for the new grants will come from the county’s allocation from the recently adopted federal stimulus legislation. To date, the local partnership has received more than \$14 million in funds to help sustain Dane County small businesses throughout the pandemic. The county’s program was first launched last April with an initial \$800,000 in county dollars, prior to passage of the first federal government Covid-19 rescue plan known as the “CARES Act.” At the time of its creation, it was one of the very first local government run, small business grant rescue programs in the entire country.

“While the pandemic continues to weigh heavy on us all, we feel fortunate to be able to assist the efforts of Joe Parisi and Dane County in providing local businesses

the support they need,” said Dane Buy Local Executive Director Colin Murray. “The significance of the latest round of grants cannot be overstated; they not only help businesses survive but will potentially be key to the businesses being able to thrive once again. Joe and his staff are inspirational, and provide an exemplary example to other municipalities around the county on how to support local businesses and communities during a time of crisis.”

Dane Buy Local is in the process of awarding \$4 million in funds from the last county allocation to this grant program, announced back in January. There were over 2,800 applications for that funding with an average grant request approaching \$18,000.

A resolution approving the expanded Dane County Small Business Pandemic Support Grant Program will be introduced to the County Board this week with approval expected in April.