

TO: US Senators and Representatives for Rochester Minnesota
SUBJECT: Appealing for PPP for 501c6 Downtown Management Organizations

Hello,

I am writing to appeal for consideration for forgivable PPP loans for 501c6 organizations like ours.

The Rochester Downtown Alliance (RDA) is a special service district which offers enhanced management services to downtown Rochester, including cleaning and safety, public space enhancements, marketing, and events. We are one of many such districts in Minnesota and across the United States. We are all offering valuable direct services to main street America in response to COVID-19.

Some of RDA's accomplishments since March of 2020 include:

- Creating and administering the [Keep It Local Grant](#), which distributed \$100,000 in City/EDA funds to small businesses who hired a local service-provider to help them pivot their business during COVID-19.
- Spearheading the City's [outdoor dining patio extension guidelines](#) to allow restaurants to maximize outdoor dining options in response to the Governor's executive orders. We also created an accompanying grant program and partnerships with local design firms to assist restaurants in optimizing their patios.
- Launching a [Clean & Safe Ambassador](#) program to offer enhanced cleaning and public space management services and improve consumer confidence downtown.
- Serving as a voice for our downtown business community as City and County weigh emergency economic response and CARES funding allocation, and serving as a distributor of information from City to downtown stakeholders.

During normal years, we operate community events which bring over 280,000 people downtown annually and generate an estimated \$10m in community economic impact. Our 2019 annual report can be found [here](#).

We have been significantly impacted by COVID-19. We have cancelled all major in-person events and lost accompanying sponsorships. Some of our most reliable sources of non-event funding will be delayed by 6 – 9 months or may not come through at all. We are utilizing furloughs and budget cuts to minimize expenses during this period of uncertainty. Access to PPP will allow us to grow programs to support our downtown businesses as well as support our staff.

We are neither a 501c3 nor a business, and therefore do not qualify for any emergency forgivable loans or grants other than the EIDL advance. I understand that there is still PPP funding available. **We wish to appeal to Congress and the SBA to consider 501c6 downtown management associations for forgivable PPP loans.**

Thank you for your time. We know this is a challenging period for everyone and that there are many demands on resources. We truly appreciate anything you can do to help advance this issue.

Sincerely,

Holly Masek



HOLLY MASEK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ROCHESTER DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE