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City of Northampton Releases \$125,000 in Emergency Business Grants

NORTHAMPTON - Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced today that the city is providing \$125,000 in emergency business grants to 23 Northampton businesses that are pivoting to address the economic challenges of COVID-19. All of the funding comes from the city's federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation.

"Even as we work to keep our community safe from COVID-19, we need to support our small businesses during this incredibly challenging time," said Mayor Narkewicz. "I'm proud of our collaboration with Valley CDC to issue these emergency grants. It is only a first step, however, as the need is far greater than our limited CDBG funds could address. We are working to secure additional state and federal resources to hopefully expand the program."

Mayor Narkewicz announced the grant program April 6, 2020, as part of the budget for \$1.2 million in CDBG funds. These grants fulfil that promise. Grants are being made to local businesses as diverse as Dobra Tea, Strada shoes, Mill River Music, Coop Power, Jake's Restaurant, and 18 other Northampton businesses.

Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability added, "I wish we could do so much more, but I am in awe of and inspired by the dedication of our local businesses. I will pay them back by shopping in our community whenever I can."

"While listening to you... and my fellow business owners discuss a pivot, I stopped mourning what was gone. I started turning my energy towards what lay ahead," said Anna Bowen, owner of Strada. "Since receiving the good news last week... [we] launched an ecommerce site and we have already made a few sales. Virtual shopping can't recreate the feeling of personal connection we strive towards, but it is a big beautiful step towards making sure we're still relevant when we reopen to the public."

Allissa Jukiro, co-owner of Dobrá Tea, said simply, "When I got the email yesterday I literally burst into tears. Thank you. Thank you so much."

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.