

COLUMBIA COUNTY BUSINESS CONTINUITY FUND

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF) and Columbia Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), in partnership with Berkshire Taconic's Fund for Columbia County and the Columbia Chamber of Commerce, are creating the **Columbia County Business Continuity Fund** to provide cash grants to local small businesses in our city and town centers that need assistance during this severe economic downturn.

Columbia County is fortunate to have many restaurants, coffee shops, retailers, and other independently-owned small businesses. These small shops and their passionate owners and employees contribute to our quality of life and the economic vibrancy that makes our county such a wonderful place to live, work, and visit. They are also our friends and neighbors, and we believe it is critical to try to help them address the economic challenges the pandemic has caused on their small businesses.

The aim of **Columbia County Business Continuity Fund** is to support small businesses operating in our distressed communities that are impacted by the economic consequences of the coronavirus. Specifically, the Fund is intended for small businesses in our city and town centers with 1) fewer than 10 employees and 2) less than \$1 million in annual revenue that are open to the public and are reliant on foot traffic for customers.

This Fund will award grants from \$1,000 to \$5,000 on a competitive basis to small businesses that meet these core criteria. Small businesses can apply for grant funds to cover costs related to retaining employees, rent, and other fixed costs related to their operations.

BTCF will host the fund and administer fundraising and fund accounting. CEDC will implement the grantmaking process with the help of volunteers and BTCF. The applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. One hundred percent of all contributions will go toward supporting small businesses in Columbia County.

For those small businesses qualifying for a grant, funds will be disbursed as quickly as possible, dependent on receipt of donations from businesses, individuals, area foundations, and other generous contributors.

This is a difficult time in our county, state, and country. We will continue to work together as we navigate these uncharted waters until this health crisis abates and we are on the road to financial and economic recovery.

Learn more and donate at www.BerkshireTaconic.org/BusinessContinuity.