

CDBG Webinar Series

CDBG-CV Best Practices, ED and Assistance to Business

Carrie Kronberg: Thank you, Paul. First, to kick us off today, we're honored to be joined by Duncan Yetman, who's the deputy director of the Entitlement Communities Division of the Office of Block Grant Assistance. Duncan has a few open opening remarks. So Duncan?

Duncan Yetman: Great. Thank you, Carrie. Good afternoon, grantees on the East Coast. Those on the West Coast, good morning. Thank you for joining us for the first session of our second CDBG webinar series on CDBG-CV best practices. This year's series has a focus on impactful CDBG-CV funded projects in response to the coronavirus.

I want to take this opportunity to thank today's panelists who have agreed to share their unique strategies of how to best assist businesses during the pandemic.

The goal of this series is to focus not only on activities that have successfully demonstrated tieback, in other words, that have shown to have tie back to preventing, preparing for, and responding to coronavirus, but also that have targeted that assistance to address potential gaps in the overall economic, public service, infrastructure, and housing safety nets that serve low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and communities and that also address future risks and vulnerabilities to coronavirus.

The ultimate objective of this series is to provide a platform for you, our grantees, to learn from each other and to share useful strategies in response to the coronavirus that can be adapted to fit your different needs. We hope that this series and the accompanying report will assist CDBG-CV grantees in identifying and replicating successful CDBG practices.

The Office of Block Grant Assistance at HUD headquarters has put this together with a focus on four specific areas, today's webinar on economic development and assistance to businesses, public services, which will be coming forth tomorrow, public facilities and building improvements, and interim and affordable housing.

In an effort to encourage peer-to-peer learning among CDBG-CV grantees, HUD will have these webinars posted onto the HUD Exchange so they can be viewed and shared widely. In addition, the report HUD is preparing for Congress will also be posted so that it can be shared with grantees and their staff.

Again, welcome and I look forward to hearing more about these projects and I will hand it over back to Carrie.

Carrie Kronberg: Thank you, Duncan, and thank you to HUD for hosting this webinar series.

So as Duncan said, good afternoon, everyone, or good morning to those of you further out west like me. I'm Carrie Kronberg. I'm a housing and community development technical assistance consultant with ICF, and I'll be your moderator for the session today.

Before I turn things over to our panelists, I'll quickly review the learning objectives and our agenda.

So our learning objectives are what we hope that you all will get out of this is participants should gain knowledge of unique approaches to identify and solve challenges in the implementation of CDBG-CV economic development programs, support economic recovery, and to develop strategies to prevent job losses during a global pandemic. Additionally, participants will be exposed to effective, replicable best practice models to implement in their local CDBG-CV programs.

Now for the agenda. So on the next slide, I'll introduce our wonderful panelists and tell you a little bit about each of them. Then they will each provide a 10- to 15-minute presentation on their CDBG economic development programs and strategies. And then at the end, we'll have time for the panelists to take some live questions from all of you. So please be thinking of questions, and type them into the Q&A box. This is your chance to pick the brains of some of the most successful CDBG-CV implementers in the country.

Okay. So let's meet our panelists. First, we have Steve Posey and Natasha Main from the city of Colorado Springs in Colorado. Steve Posey is the Community Development Division Manager for the city of Colorado Springs. He joined the city in 2012 after working as a HUD program consultant for multiple jurisdictions in Arizona. His specialty is the financing and development of public facilities and affordable housing using Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Program funds, low-income housing tax credits, and private activity bonds.

Natasha Main is the executive director of Exponential Impact, where she works with high-growth technology startups in growing their companies and supporting their founders as they grow their leadership capacity.

Next, we'll hear from Sabina Craig at the city of Aiken, South Carolina. Sabina Craig is a development project manager in the Economic Development Department with the city of Aiken. She was hired in December 2003 as a planner, and she administers and manages the CDBG program. And she'll have been with Aiken for 18 years on her upcoming anniversary.

Then from Vermont, we have Kevin Geiger. He's joined by Ann Kroll. Kevin is from the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission and works on brownfields, water quality, climate change, emergency management, and housing policy areas. He's also the senior land use staff person and widely regarded as an expert on land use regulations.

And Ann Kroll is the director of Grants Management for the State of Vermont. Kevin will lead the presentation, and Ann is also here to answer questions from the state grantee perspective.

Finally, we have Sarah Kerner from the city of Springfield, Missouri. Sarah has served as economic development director for the city since October of 2015, and her duties include center city redevelopment, economic development incentives, and coordinating review of significant development proposals.

So we'll get started in just a moment, but one last thing before we turn it over to our first panelists. There are a few points throughout the presentation where we want to hear from you all and get a sense of who's in the room and where you are in your CDBG-CV program implementation. So you'll see poll questions pop up prompting you to respond, and there's our first poll question now.

So we'd like to know, what is the size of your combined CDBG-CV allocation across all three rounds? So it gives us a sense of who's in the room and the size of the communities and your grants. So take a moment and select the answer. Thank you.

And now, we see the results. Okay. So I think the biggest representation we have is in the \$1 million to \$3 million category. So right down the middle. Great.

Okay. So with the next slide, I will turn it over to Steve and Natasha.

Steve Posey: Let's see. Yes. Thank you, Carrie. Good afternoon, everybody. As Carrie mentioned, by name is Steve Posey, and I am the Community Development Division Manager in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Colorado Springs is a community of 490,000 people located along the front range of the Rocky Mountains approximately 70 miles south of Denver. And Colorado Springs received two allocations of CARES Act funding, totaling a little less than \$4 million. And then, in addition to the CARES Act CV funds, the city received \$3.2 million as part of our annual entitlement for program year 2021.

Even before the pandemic -- whoops. We seem to have gotten out of order here. Let's see. We should have gone to the next slide. Sorry. I think that we're missing a couple of slides here.

Even before the pandemic, Colorado Springs, like many communities, had a large share of cost-burdened renters, and many of those renters were employed in service industry jobs that were particularly hard hit by COVID-19. Shortly after the pandemic started, our regional leadership asked the local Pikes Peak United Way to ramp up its 211 line and expand its ability to take calls from residents that were needing assistance. And the top 211 requests for assistance were focused on housing, utilities, and, of course, lost wages.

And from that 211 dashboard, we knew that lower income renter households in particular were struggling due to COVID-19. We deployed a considerable amount of our CDBG-CV funds to supplement the kinds of programs that we knew would help them, rental assistance, childcare, case management, and eviction prevention, for instance.

What was less obvious to us when we first started trying to assess the impacts of COVID-19 was the number of small businesses that were unable to access business assistance through the Paycheck Protection Program or other economic development sources, and in particular, those small businesses that were embedded in the city's lower income neighborhoods.

So we found by cross-referencing unemployment numbers with what we were calling CV hotspots -- and those were zip codes here in our city that had particularly high case numbers -- along with high numbers of self-reported mom-and-pop business closures, we started to

understand that in the southeast part of Colorado Springs, COVID-19 was having a compound impact both on very small business owners and on their employees.

And the challenge at that point was to launch and design -- or design and launch a program that the city had never implemented before, specifically targeted to our very small businesses or micro-enterprises that would effectively provide assistance to those business owners and to the employees at the same time. Next slide.

And our economic development team had been working with a local business incubator called Exponential Impact on a program called Survive and Thrive. And Survive and Thrive had been set up in response to the pandemic, and quickly it became evident to us that Survive and Thrive was a model that could be modified to meet the needs of micro-enterprises affected by COVID-19.

And in order to modify that program quickly, Community Development, my division, engaged a consulting firm to provide technical assistance and put together program guidelines, application materials, and reporting templates. And as a result, the program was ready to launch within a matter of weeks. And if we could go on to the next slide. Next slide.

And I'm going to turn it over to Natasha Main at this point. She is the executive director of Exponential Impact, and she's going to give you some more specific information about the Survive and Thrive program itself.

Natasha Main: Thank you, Steve. Before I go into the adaptation of the Survive and Thrive program to suit HUD funding and the CDBG dollars, I want to take a moment to share about the launch of the initial program for context.

XI, which is what we shorten Exponential Impact to, is primarily a technology startup incubator and accelerator with a nonprofit charter to drive economic development by supporting high-growth entrepreneurs. When the pandemic hit in March of 2020, we took our core competency as an organization in developing programs for business owners that pair access to financial resources with capacity building programming.

Thanks to the network of partners, including the city of Colorado Springs, we were able to provide the first financial relief to small businesses in our community. We raised a \$2.3 million fund locally, provided 132 businesses with low-interest loans, and developed a holistic program that included pairing each recipient with a community mentor.

We had over 100 applications within the first hour of announcing the program and over 800 by the end of the application period. In selecting the companies, we were most interested in supporting jobs. So we prioritized businesses with 5 to 25 full-time employees and distributed the loans across geographic regions in the city. The result of this initial program was an ROI of \$156 million to the community and over 1,000 jobs supported. These numbers are internal metrics and applicant data.

The strong community engagement and support, the testimonials from the recipients of the programing, and the mentorship made Survive and Thrive a program that was the perfect vehicle for the needs of the city's and Steve's initiative. So that's where Survive and Thrive 2.0 came into play.

We focused on micro-enterprises in this iteration because those were the businesses that had fallen through the cracks, to Steve's earlier points. We adapted the program knowing that these micro-enterprises, specifically those in low- to middle-income communities, can be hard to reach. So reducing the barriers to access and a strong outreach effort where required.

We worked with community gatekeepers and organizations to develop and execute an engagement strategy to ensure we were co-developing the program with the community. We also worked with Civitas to ensure that we were checking all the requirements of the CDBG program along the way.

So moving into this marketing and the community outreach, to build trust and reduce ineligible applications, the requirements were laid out clearly and often. In addition to the traditional channels, we directly contacted businesses by sending over 1,000 mailers and calling over 30 businesses directly to talk them through the application process and this opportunity.

We made sure that the application and this opportunity was in both Spanish and English as well. And after the two-week application window, we used the established Survive and Thrive review process, which ensures each application is read by at least three individuals over a two-wave process.

The first wave checked for application completion, HUD requirements, and scored them with a rubric. Finalists were then moved to the executive committee, made up of community and business leaders, to make final recommendations for funding to Steve's office.

Once the business was selected, we worked with the owner to correct and improve their financials to ensure they were eligible to receive the funding. I really cannot stress enough how important this process of support and building personal relationships with individual business owners is to the success of this process. So if we want to go to the next slide, please.

Great. In addition to the funding, recipients were required to go through programing and participate in mentorship to strategize how best to use the funds, develop tools and financial acumen to apply for a future funding opportunities, and raise their visibility to increase customers. To offset restrictive underwriting requirements, we distributed the funding half at the beginning of the program and half at the end of the program, which was a -- which allowed businesses to prove their ability to stay open and remain viable.

The programing was there to prevent business closure during the pandemic, but importantly, it was also there to build resilience for future growth for these businesses and their communities.

Our goals of the program were to create or retain a low- to middle-income job and the continuation of micro-enterprises. The program was virtual and required no more than two to

three hours a week from business owners. The subjects were based on stated needs for the support in the application that we received from the applicants in the program, as well as the initial Survive and Thrive program. We looked at the most common reasons for why businesses were denied funding, and that's how we really looked at building out the programing. So if you want to go to the next slide, great.

So these are the different topics that we covered over the eight-week program. The mentoring, so, again, each of these businesses were paired with a business leader in the community or community member to be able to walk through how best to use the funding, as well as to kind of strengthen the community connections across the city.

It really strengthened the social fabric of our community, and regardless of the fund size, whether it was this program or our first one, the fact that our local community showed up to solve a problem that was really hurting our local businesses had a real impact. If we can go to the next slide, please.

So highlighting the demographic data at the end of this program, these numbers were only possible because of the high level of intentionality in our marketing and outreach efforts, as well as the significant technical support and mentorship throughout the program to keep the businesses engaged.

I'll also highlight how many of these businesses weren't on this -- on stable ground prior to the pandemic because they were so young. So when the pandemic hit, they did not have the reserves already built up. So this program really supported that continuation of these micro-enterprises. We can move on to the next slide, please.

So looking at these lessons learned from the Exponential Impact side of things, incorporating lessons learned that we saw throughout local and federal funding opportunities over the course of 2020 to implement this Survive and Thrive 2.0 program were really important. That includes the need to collaborate across entities and across the city and how important relationship building is both within that collaboration but then especially with the people that we're working with and serving. So with that, I'll turn it back over to Steve for some closing thoughts.

Steve Posey: Yes. Thank you, Natasha. And I just wanted to add one more thing to that lessons learned category, and that's the last bullet there, go small. And what I meant by that was that, at the time that these programs were being rolled out, we were hearing a whole lot of talk around \$10 million, \$100 million, \$200 million that was being pushed into or made available to businesses in communities throughout the country.

Absolutely necessary, but what we learned out of this process was that there were businesses that simply could not access that assistance. And the CDBG-CV funds turned out to be a really effective tool in helping both stabilize and then put about two dozen businesses on a path toward really being sustainable and being able to thrive going in the years to come. So thanks, everybody, for your participation this afternoon.

Carrie Kronberg: Thank you so much, Natasha and Steve.

So next, we are going to have a much smaller community, the city of Aiken, South Carolina, and we have a Sabina Craig here to tell us about their economic development program.

Sabina Craig: Hi. Good afternoon. It is indeed a pleasure to be with you today to talk about successful programs the city of Aiken implemented to assist small businesses that were affected by the impacts of COVID-19.

The city of Aiken is located in Aiken County, South Carolina, with a population of approximately 31,401 citizens. We are known for its horse community and golf, and Aiken has a lot to offer, including shopping and fine dining. The city branches out in four quadrants, which is south, east, north, and west, and each area has many small businesses that include restaurants, retail, hospitality, medical, equine, construction, legal, and other services.

We received two rounds of funds from the CARES Act and that first one being \$117,639, which we started using right away to assist small businesses, which were restaurants. And then in the third round, we received \$201,483, which we used to assist small businesses through a loan program. And is not in this PowerPoint, but we also assisted a medical facility to help with COVID testing. We have used 100 percent of our CDBG-CV allocations at this time. We'll go to the next slide.

Some of the challenges faced, during the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020, many of our small businesses suffered greatly, especially our local restaurants. Many small business owners expressed their concerns and hardships to our city council members, to our mayor, and our city manager, and we knew we had to do something to put something in place immediately.

And like many HUD funded cities, Aiken received CARES Act funds to assist those impacted by COVID-19. And although our funding opportunities were being made available, other opportunities were being made available, such as the PPP and disaster loan funds. Small business owners had lots of questions and concerns.

So we wanted to be able to get some information out to them, be able to talk to them, let them know what was available, and help them better understand to get their businesses back up and running.

So one of the ways we assisted small food and beverage businesses to keep them open was to provide them with the means for outdoor dining. This included tables, chairs, tents, screens, and hand sanitizer stations. Utilizing a local rental company, restaurants that wanted the assistance were delivered the supplies for outdoor dining. These businesses were able to serve, have patrons purchased food and beverages, be socially distanced while they dined, and jobs were retained and restaurants were able to stay open.

And to inform the public, the city used our social media to get the word out. Once everything was delivered, our mayor, our city manager, and economic development director, they went out to various restaurants with the local news media to talk to the business owners to see how things

were going, and this was a way to let other small businesses, restaurants, food and beverages see what we were doing and so that they can also receive assistance if they needed it.

We used a first round of COVID funds to assist 14 restaurants by renting equipment for outdoor dining, and we also created and purchased 1,000 #BeSafeAiken stickers that were handed out door to door and placed on every small business in the city limits of Aiken. And a total of \$17,639 were expended on the rentals and the stickers.

Then next, while we were -- with our remaining funds, our second round of COVID -- and our second round of COVID funds and general funds from the city of Aiken, with a partnership, we -- from the Chamber of Commerce, Security Federal Bank, and Aiken Corporation, which is a nonprofit, we all came together to provide \$1-million-dollar small business revolving loan fund.

The fund allows small businesses to borrow up to \$5,000 or less or \$5,001, up to \$10,000 with a 2 percent interest rate. The \$5,000 loan was amortized over a 12-month period after a six-month deferment, and any amount above the \$5,000 up to the \$10,000 was amortized over a 24-month period, also with the six-month deferment.

The city of Aiken advertised this program through its website and social media, on the Chamber's website, and also through the Aiken Downtown Development Association. A call line and a website was set up for small businesses to schedule individual appointments to meet with us face to face, which was held in a large room with plenty of social distancing, and the loan application process was explained to each business representative.

They needed to provide copies of documentation to include current and past year's income taxes, financial statements such as nonprofit and loss sheets, and balance sheets. Once the application was returned to us with all required documents, they were logged and then hand-delivered to the Security Federal Bank for approval. And this program was a great success, with 47 businesses being assisted and 179 jobs retained, which included 145 low-income positions and 32 moderate-income positions. So we helped a lot of people keep their jobs through this program.

Some impacts. It is always great to hear from testimonials and the success stories from those we do assist. We make follow-up calls to all the restaurants and small businesses that we assisted with these programs, and everyone that we talked to were very grateful and gave really good feedback.

As you can see here, What's Cookin' is a restaurant that is a popular restaurant that's downtown that cuts through the main -- one of the main streets of our city downtown that was affected by the pandemic. And as you could see, they offered -- before COVID-19, they offered breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They had to adjust to serving pre-cooked meals to help increase with the options. And this family-owned business, the husband, the wife, and the son, they all worked without pay so that no one would be left without a job or had to be laid off.

So once -- when they had the shutdown, it resulted into a 60 percent decrease in sales. And then with the COVID CV funds, with the loan that they applied for, they were able to retain 15 full-

time positions and two part-time positions. So they increased operations by 80 percent of normal back to business once they received the loan.

And some of the lessons learned here is, if there were -- was any other pandemic that affected other small businesses in Aiken, we would like to get the word out quickly and as soon as possible that there are resources -- to let them know that there are resources and other things available for assistance. And we want to make sure businesses are aware, educated, and feel comfortable about the various resources and how they can apply for the assistance.

And we realize there are some small businesses that need a little extra help, especially those just starting out or haven't been in business for very long to make any type of financial impact on their business. So providing a forgivable loan or small grant to those small businesses who aren't creditworthy enough to qualify for the loan could be a way to assist those that do not qualify for a small business loan program such as what we had. But we would want to be able to provide some type of assistance to help them stay open as well. Thank you.

Carrie Kronberg: Okay. Great. Thank you so much, Sabina.

Before we move to our next panelist, we have our next poll question. So at what stage is your agency with CDBG-CV funded economic development? Are you a program design, program launch, implementation, close out, or is this not applicable because you're not undertaking an ED activity, you're just here to to learn?

Okay. Great. It looks like once again, we're in the middle. Answer is C. So most of you here are in the implementation phase. Thank you.

Okay. Now, next, we have Kevin Geiger with the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Commission, and he is going to talk about the state of Vermont's program.

Kevin Geiger: Thanks, Carrie. So as Carrie said, I'm Kevin Geiger. I work for the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Commission, which is a regional planning commission, one of 11 in the state. And we were one of two organizational partners that I'm going to talk about that the state of Vermont used in our program, which was aimed at assisting sole-proprietor businesses. And with me online is Ann Kroll from the state as well.

And as you can see here from this slide, Vermont is a small rural state. We have no functional counties. So work is pretty much done at the state and local level, and there's essentially no staff at the local level to help coordinate business assistance. So agencies such as ours, regional planning commissions, and regional development corporations fill in many of the gaps in the state.

You can see on the map where Vermont lies between New Hampshire and New York, and for those hikers out there, that red squiggly line is actually the Appalachian Trail running through there. And where I am, it's just a few miles, literally, north of where I am.

We used a portion of our total allocation, about \$3.6 million of it we carved out for the sole proprietor program, and that's what I'm going to talk about. And so, next slide.

I think one of the things -- oh, we kept these -- so, actually, if we can jump ahead one slide, and then I'll jump back. Can we jump -- yeah. There you go. And then we'll jump backwards one.

So I think one of the things that helped our state move along was the use of trusted partners, which we kind of had pre-positioned. The state divided itself into half and contracted with the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and us, Two Rivers, to help manage the grant. And together, our two entities and the state developed the program, the website for the program, the software application that people were going to use, the guidelines around it, everything, and Ann is great to work with on that. So it's not just us. We need a state person too.

And one of the reasons they picked us to do that is both of us have successfully managed HUD funds before for the state. Two Rivers, we did \$7 million worth of buyout programs for the entire state, and the BDCC also did business recovery and disaster funding from the state as well.

So that trust and good working relationship enabled us to ramp up our program early. We started developing things in April of 2020, and by August of 2020 we were operational and giving awards to folks. So now, if we can go back one slide to the challenges.

Great. For those of you who have done this type of program already -- and I'm hearing similar things from some of my compatriots out there -- this may be a time of commiseration. For those of you who are about to do anything like this, hopefully, we're giving you some words of wisdom and caution.

The intent of the program is noble. We are trying to help the really small folks, sole proprietors in our case. The hard part is that you're helping really small folks, really small businesses. They mostly don't have accountants. They have no bookkeepers or no bookkeeping. They have done their taxes wrong. So you're trying to fix their taxes while you're in there too to do things.

And, for example, you're trying to reimburse somebody for their office costs, and their offices is in their house. And so, you're trying to figure out how much of their house is there, but they didn't write that down on their taxes. So you need to have them fix their taxes or get an accountant statement or something so you can prorate their house.

Sometimes you get lucky and a business has a large cost, the full amount of the grant, which is nice, and other times they have receipts from Wal-Mart for \$17. And I think the record that we have is 300 individual receipts for one particular business. We've literally gotten a box of receipts, paper dropped off on the doorstep out front here.

They also don't have resources. Some lack access to a computer, but you're trying to be equitable and cover everybody out there. So you're going to help them along the way.

And some were so impacted by the pandemic on all parts of their lives that they just couldn't focus on the grant for a while. And many just seemed like they needed someone to talk to. I think

Natasha said about building personal relationships, that therapy is part of the work, but you kind of got to get the other parts done within your budget.

So now, we're going to jump up two slides. There we go. This is kind of how -- once again, I think -- well, I'll talk about this, and we'll keep going.

So this is how we got the word out. There we used our newspaper ads. We used traditional economic development folks like reasonable development corporations and chambers of commerce. We used trade organizations. From our initial applications, we could see certain groups. So we used, for example, the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Forest Products Association. We were trying to target loggers and farmers and artists and that type of stuff. And in particular, in Burlington, we have immigrant communities. So we used immigrant community support groups that were out there.

And we did two rounds, which was good. We expected everybody would use the total money we had in the first round. That didn't happen. So we were able to modify our program and get two rounds out there.

And so, then let's see. Maybe the next -- oh, well, so, let's see. I'm going to just going to try to adjust here a bit. Oh, and just to notice, when we did our applications, we had a whole bunch of applicants, and then by the time that actually figured off into the folks that were truly applying, we'd lost about half of those. So you may end up with a big initial pool and a smaller actual pool in the end. And then about 10 of those -- 10 percent of those also were ineligible as we moved them forward.

So here are our results. We're now down to the last set of our applicants. We've moved through 90 percent of the folks. We hope to finish in the last few months. We used a \$10,000 grant limit to try to spread the money around. And obviously, that's a pretty good chunk of money to a small business.

And more importantly to us, there are side effects of that. They're able to pay the feed store. They're able to pay their bookkeeper. They're able to pay their power bill, whatever they're doing, and they don't close their storefront. Some of these folks are on Main Street. They -- we have very small towns in lots of places. So having one or two businesses not go under in a town can be a very big thing. Next slide.

Great. This is just to give you a taste of all the different types of business we funded. It was actually fascinating on our end because you get to see the guts of the business, everybody from a piano tuner to a horse trainer.

And between all our grantees now, I am sure I can arrange the parts of the wedding, including the limo, the tent, the caterer, the flowers, the photographer, the musicians, and the cleaners. So all of those parts. If you're ever going to do a wedding in Vermont, let me know. And Beli was the owner of this -- of Preya up in Burlington. So she was one of our applicants, successful applicants.

Lesson learned. Having two rounds was useful. It wasn't planned, but it was a blessing because then we could adjust, and we were doing it fast enough that we could make mistakes and then correct them and get things better for the second time.

We provided some short videos on a bunch of the process tasks so people could watch the video and watch the video over again. We had a Zoom call. Once we had all the applicant pool solidified, we had a Zoom call with all of them so that they could get through the process easier.

We hired translation help for when we needed it. We had a big frequently asked questions thing built on the website, but find -- found that's really not that useful for folks. What was really useful is that one-on-one phone calls or emails or sometimes actually even in-person help with getting the exact document out. And through experience, you get pretty good at looking at the particular types of costs that we were going to be reimbursing so you could ask them questions and kind of pull information from them.

And that's about it for me. I'm glad we're going to have a bunch of questions later, and thank you for your interest in our program.

Carrie Kronberg: Okay. Thank you so much, Kevin.

Now, we have our third pull question. So let's hear about challenges. So what -- at what stage have you experienced the most challenges in your CDBG-CV implementation? Is it at citizen participation and consultation, marketing and outreach, underwriting, eligibility, or accomplishment data collection, or maybe you haven't had any challenges at all? Paul, can you bring up the poll?

All right. Great. Wow. I'm impressed that 47 of you have not had challenges. So looks like most people are struggling the most with eligibility determination. Okay. Thank you.

So now, we have our final panelist, Sarah Kerner from the city of Springfield, Missouri.

Sara Kerner: Hi there. All right. Well, hello from Springfield. We are kind of in the middle of some of these other communities as far as size of population. We've got about 170,000. We're located in the Missouri Ozarks, third largest city in Missouri. And our focus for a portion of our CDBG-CV funds was providing small assistance -- or financial assistance to small businesses that were impacted by the pandemic.

So as you can see, we've got our annual allocation there and our two rounds of CV funding, and we did allocation -- allocate a portion of that, not all of it, to business assistance. So we've spent 82 percent overall but 99 percent on our business assistance program. Okay. So we can move on to the next slide.

Yeah. Our slides are all out of order, too. So -- or maybe they've just been retitled. All right. So yes. We determined fairly quickly that, as we were figuring out how we wanted to spend these CV funds, that we wanted to provide business assistance. And the reason that became apparent

very quickly is that, since 1984, the city of Springfield has operated a small business loan program with CDBG funding.

So we have a number of borrowers that we are in constant communication with, and so, we have a -- kind of an ear to the ground as far as what the small business community was dealing with as the pandemic came forward. So I think I'll kind of address these items on the slide out of order.

So our stay-at-home order was in place from March 26 to May 3rd, and during that time, we were trying to figure out what were the needs. We actually paused payments on our existing borrowers, which is a great thing we were able to do, and put our program together as far as taking it through our city council and getting approval for the structure. And we were really able to model it very closely on the program that we already have.

And so, we already have a standing loan committee. We have underwriting procedures. We have application forms. So a lot of that we were able to take and repurpose, and we did change it because we set this up as a business grant program. And, of course, our other program is a loan. But overall, it made us very nimble and able to address the problems that the small business owners were experiencing as quickly as we could.

So we approved our first loan last June. So the awards that we were giving were capped at \$10,000 and we were requiring receipts to verify, a lot like what Kevin was describing, verification of all those expenditures. And some of our business owners were able to access PPP and other programs, and so, we also did a lot of checking as far as making sure there was no duplication of benefits.

But mostly, what we were seeing was the PPP money often came in first. That got spent fairly quickly, and then there was still a gap because there was still just a lot of challenges for small businesses to overcome. Okay. So next.

Yes. So our program partners, like I said, we began working on this very quickly of how we could put something together. And so, we did it -- we worked from our state level at the Department of Economic Development. We have -- we're kind of unique that we have two downtowns in Springfield because we had two cities that merged. So you've got pictures of our two historic downtown areas there, and they have community groups that we were able to work with since a lot of our small business owners are located in those areas.

Springfield Finance Development Corporation is like a private loan pool that some banks have put together to support those downtown areas. Of course, our Chamber of Commerce was working very closely with businesses as well to try to really communicate with them and find out what they needed.

We worked with our Minorities in Business organization just to make sure -- we wanted to make sure all this assistance got out to everyone who needed it, because I think we all heard those stories about the PPP loans tending to be approved to businesses that had already well-established relationships with banks. So we wanted to make sure that was not how our program was going to operate and our county as well, since our -- the way it worked, at least in Missouri,

is the county was getting CARES Act money around the same time that we were getting the CDBG-CV money. And so, we were really trying to coordinate and make sure that we weren't causing duplication issues and we were making our programs complement each other. Okay. Next.

So obviously, being the fourth speaker, we all lived through this too. We know what the challenges were, but something that was kind of interesting -- and I suspect this was the case in many communities, but being a larger city in a largely rural area, we had stricter limitations.

So we had stricter occupancy limits, and we required masking where many of the surrounding areas did not. And so that put an additional burden on the businesses inside of our city limits, where, essentially, customers who didn't mind going out in the early days of the pandemic and eating in a restaurant or going to an event, they would just go out outside the city limits and find those services or goods that they were wanting to buy. Of course, also all of the additional costs associated with takeout and other things.

Let's see. I think also the consumer hesitancy issue cannot be overstated. One of the businesses that we assisted, which is listed here, is this Jungle Gym indoor playground. And I think even now, the target market for that business is not even able to be vaccinated yet. So they're still likely experiencing reduced demand and also feeling like they need to assure parents and do lots of extra sanitation and all of that.

So moving on to a success story, this is kind of a fun one. The Savoy Ballroom Event Center Dance Studio is located in Historic Commercial Street, and this is a national register historic district in northern -- the northern part of Springfield. So it is a really neat downtown area, but then it's surrounded by older, lower-income neighborhoods. And this is an event center.

They host weddings and proms and receptions, and they also during the week clear out all those tables and chairs that you see and teach adult ballroom dance lessons. So as you can imagine, none of those things were happening for several months during the beginning of the pandemic. This is owned by a husband and wife. They are low- to moderate-income business owners, and this is their sole source of income.

So like I mentioned earlier, being an event venue inside the city of Springfield was an additional challenge for them because, of course, we all know all the weddings and proms and everything in spring 2020 got canceled. But then, slowly but surely, things kind of started coming back on the calendar, and, of course, some of them got canceled again. But a lot of things, at least in our area, just moved outside the city limits because the city was still imposing restrictions but the county was not.

So this business, being inside the city limits and following all the rules, we felt particularly important that we as the city administering this program, this is the type of business we should be helping.

Also, challenges of a business like this, they only have two employees. So their PPP grant -- I mean, themselves, the owners -- their PPP grant was really small, and they didn't qualify for

shuttered venue grant, which -- like concert halls and that kind of thing would have gotten money to cover the fact that they weren't able to hold performances.

But a place like this, they just kind of fell in a donut hole. And so, this was actually one of the few businesses that we actually gave a second round of that \$10,000 grant. So again, this was something Kevin mentioned, I think, but do keep it open of the possibility of having a second round because we thought surely all the money is going to be spent. But we did have a few businesses that came back for a second round, and as long as they document their expenses, we were okay with that.

We did put a date for the second round. So we're going to keep it open for first round applicants first and not let people take two bites of the apple early on, but then once a certain amount of time has passed, we did go ahead and open it up.

And just for fun, I thought I'd drop in, since they weren't able to do it last year, this group produces a thriller experience for Halloween, and since we're so close to Halloween, I thought I'd drop in the YouTube link in case anybody wants to watch it. Just a little flavor of Springfield for you there.

And moving on, we've got some nice results from our program. So out of the approximately \$808,000 that we allocated for the Business Assistance Program, we were able to help 82 businesses. Really good statistics on women-owned, minority-owned, a large number in the historic business districts, and quite a large number that had been in business for a long time.

So those are the kind of businesses that you would hate to see lost over the pandemic when they had obviously been doing so well for so long. We retained 376 low-mod jobs, and we assisted 27 low-mod business owners.

Okay. So our lessons learned on this, I mean, our existing working relationships were invaluable. We were able to reach out to our borrowers and say, if there is anything we could do, what would it be? And seeing the creativity and resilience of those business owners was really inspiring during such a crazy time and trying to work from home and take these approvals through council and get it so we could get this money out on the street as fast as we could.

I mean, truly, that was our goal is, how do we help these businesses as quickly as we can? And we wanted to streamline the paperwork, make it simple as possible, and adapt as needed. So I think those are our lessons learned from Springfield.

Carrie Kronberg: Great. Thank you so much. So now, before we open up the Q&A, just go to the next slide.

We have a few resources here. We always like to point you towards additional assistance and support. So there are lots of technical assistance products and guidance on the HUD Exchange, as well as hud.gov.

A couple of resources specific to this topic. So there is an economic development quick guide that is available on the HUD Exchange. And then also a financial management quick guide is helpful for lots of implementation but several of the programs we had today, that's something they had -- they would need to keep good track of.

So also, we have just general overview. Can you go back? Sorry. Just some general guidance, the general COVID-19 guidance, and there's also the address there for the main CDBG-CV HUD Exchange page. The Federal Register Notice is something you always want to refer to.

And then the CDBG-CV toolkit organizes and categorizes all of the available resources so it's easier to find things based on the topic that you're looking for. And then, of course, this is part of the CDBG-CV webinar series, and there are a number of trainings as well available on the HUD Exchange.

Okay. So we have contact information here for our panelists, and we'll bring this up again at the end. But for now, let's dive into questions and answers.

We got a number of questions. Some were more general, and some were for the whole group. So if our panelists can turn their cameras back on, that would be fantastic.

Okay. So the first question I want to ask -- I have a couple that are, I think, apply to the whole group that came in. And one good one that I think would be helpful to hear more about from all of you is about your screening process and how you selected businesses to receive grants and loans.

So what were your requirements that you used, or what was your process that you used to make those awards? And I guess a related question, though, I'll ask it as well, is if any of your programs excluded certain businesses, so home occupations, adult oriented businesses, businesses over a certain size. So I guess we can go in order of our panelists, if Colorado Springs wants to take that first.

Steve Posey: Sure. I'll jump into that one. Yes. We excluded all of what you would typically think of as the sin businesses, novelty book shops, things of that nature. And then what I think was really fascinating in listening to everybody's presentation today was how all of us recognized that there were businesses that were not able to access help from any other means.

And I think we got that information -- I know the city of Colorado Springs anyway, got that information through our partnership and network with Exponential Impact. And that's how that came to us. We were made aware that, hey, there are a lot of businesses out here, particularly really small businesses in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods, who simply weren't able to access that help. And that's how we became aware of it, and that's how we started to work with Exponential Impact to get that program dialed in the way so that we could target those businesses specifically. And I think I'm going to let Natasha speak to the screening aspect of it.

Natasha Main: Sorry. Yes. Agreed on all fronts with Steve there. Because the first fund too that we started with loans was a lot broader in scope, we looked at data that was shared, and this is

great kind of speaking to the collaboration across the city of different local funding programs. So the county did one. Our downtown partnership did one. Several other organizations were engaged in this.

So we all kind of looked at who had fallen through the cracks, and consistently, really small businesses were the ones that kind of fell through the cracks there. So we did cap it at about five employees. There may have been one or two small exceptions there, but that's where we kept it for this iteration.

And then I'll also share in our marketing and what we were targeting, we looked at those zip codes that were hardest hit when least served, and we targeted them first. So when I was talking about that direct outreach in terms of the phone calls and the mailers, those were to those kind of target zip codes, and then we broadened it out from there once the need was met.

Carrie Kronberg: Great. Thank you. Sabina, do you have anything to -- can you talk about your screening process?

Sabina Craig: Yes. Since we're -- Aiken is not quite as large as the other cities, we were able to assist or screen those that were -- had employees of 50 or less. So that was our criteria. So we were -- helped salons, consultants, realtors, anyone who had a legitimate business that had a business license within city limits of Aiken, we were able to sit down and talk with them to see if they will qualify based on the information that they -- that were -- they were required to provide us. So we were able to help a good many folks. Thank you.

Carrie Kronberg: Thank you. Kevin and Ann?

Kevin Geiger: So we went even smaller and with sole proprietors, you could not have any W-2 employees. So we typically had one or two people was the business. But we also just didn't want somebody who made one birdhouse a year. So we had an income -- a lower income threshold of \$24,450. So you had to meet that threshold. The only hard part was if your business started the year before the pandemic. And so, every now and then, for those people on the cusp, we had to do some extrapolation. Some people started the day of the pandemic. That was the worst.

Ann Kroll: I would just quickly add the decision making was made at our agency level due to all the additional CARES Act money coming from the Treasury that we were targeted to use our HUD funds specifically for the sole proprietors because there was a grant program that was running through our agency that was specifically for businesses larger than the sole proprietors and the sole proprietors were being left out. So that's why that decision was made for that. Thanks.

Sarah Kerner: Okay. For Springfield's program, we had fairly minimal requirements as well. We didn't cap number of employees. We did require, of course, a physical location inside city limits. They had to be in operation for at least one year before their application. We -- of course, they had to show a hardship caused by the pandemic and then just some basic things like they couldn't be in bankruptcy. They had to be -- their city business license had to be current. They couldn't be behind on a city loan, and they couldn't have a conflict of interest with the City Council member.

So those are kind of basic things, but always good to remember. And then we also did have a few ineligible types of businesses, like Steve mentioned, payday loans, liquor in tobacco stores, pawnshops, firearms, that kind of thing.

Carrie Kronberg: Okay. Great. Thank you. And now -- so, we've gotten a number of questions on the -- kind of the two things that are special about CDBG-CV, and that is the PPR tieback and duplication of benefits.

So can you all talk about your processes to ensure that there wasn't duplication of benefits for small businesses when there was so much money out there and you had to make sure you were -- they weren't double dipping? We'll do same order. Steve.

Steve Posey: There we go. So with regards to the tieback to COVID, we did kind of harvest a couple of different data sources, one of them being -- well, actually a lot of it came from American Community Survey and that household pulse survey that was up and running and has been up and running over the last, I think, 18 months to two years even related to household income and types of jobs.

And then we were able to cross-reference that to parts of the city where we were seeing very high case rates. And that data about COVID infections was coming to us from our Public Health Department. They were doing a terrific job of kind of tracking the pandemic across the city. So it wasn't very difficult for us to connect the dots, if you will, between households and individuals who were suffering and laid off and had loss of income.

And then the other piece of it, when Exponential Impact came into the conversation, this light bulb went off that, oh, wait. This is not just individuals who have been laid off. There are also business owners. And as it turned out, some of those business owners were also their own principal employees.

So it became obvious after a couple of months that we really needed to figure out a way to help both businesses and their employees through that process. And that's -- that was really the tieback to COVID, and we even made it look pretty with a lot of graphs and things like that.

So that part of it -- the duplication of benefits part that was built into the application process, they did have to do some certification that they were not receiving benefits from other sources and that they -- this was a type of funding that, if not for this funding, they were really going to be on very shaky ground in terms of being able to move forward and keep their businesses going.

Natasha Main: And I can just kind of add too kind of on the individual front in terms of working directly with the businesses. We made sure that they submitted receipts and were really aware if they had taken a loan elsewhere or a different grant and making sure that their -- we knew what was the money and the funds were going to. So kind of from the individual standpoint and then I think Steve was able to cover everything else on that question too.

Sabina Craig: And when we sat down with the individual businesses that came to us through appointments, we gave them a couple of different options besides our loan program so that they knew what was out there and knowing that they -- what they could apply for and what they could not apply for. And then with the local bank that we worked with was also doing various background checks and things like that so no one would be able to easily duplicate federal funds.

So it all worked out for them in the long run to be a helpful resource. So we didn't have any issues. And through our screening process, that was a part of the one-on-one meetings that we had with the small businesses. So we were able to tell those that we could not assist and why and be able to proceed with those that we could help. Thanks.

Carrie Kronberg: Great.

Kevin Geiger: So our turn.

Carrie Kronberg: Go for it. Yeah.

Kevin Geiger: Okay. So we had a couple things. The biggest part I would say is we had an affidavit that they would sign that would list all their federal benefits and state benefits and even a local. Like if a town gave them a loan, we wanted to know that. For the federal benefits, we required the proof. So we got the PPP document or the SBA loan or anything like that. And we basically had them show the expenses that those things covered and then expenses that we were going to cover out there. And then they wrote a little narrative statement about why things were not good.

It was also relatively easy because we had a statewide shutdown. So if you' were a non-essential business, you were closed for a long time. Our offices were remote by governor's order for a year. So we weren't traveling. We had a statewide travel ban. If you had to come in the state, there were signs everywhere that you'd go direct to quarantine for two weeks. So any kind of hands-on tourism related business just went through the floor.

Sarah Kerner: All right. Springfield's tieback related to the decreased revenue related to the pandemic and the shutdown and then also the increased costs related to sanitation, the plexiglass barriers, all the additional hand sanitizer, and everything all the businesses had to buy.

And so, we required profit and loss statements from the previous year, so '19 -- 2019 and 2020, to show the decreased revenue piece and then just receipts and things for -- to document their expenses. And then, like basically everyone else has already said, we were very --- we worked really closely with each of the applicants as far as what other assistance had they received and making sure we had clear documentation of everything and what exactly that money was going to. So we made sure ours was going to other things.

We also -- I don't know that I specifically mentioned this, but, I mean, we did also kind of do the job retention thing that is not that different than the way our normal HUD loan program works with job creation for low- to moderate-income people. So we did it as job retention in this case,

and we got payroll records and made sure that the number of employees that was being retained was met. So anyway, that's it.

Carrie Kronberg: Great. We had a question about that, too. So -- about how to document jobs retained. So that's great.

Let's see. So another question is just about evolving your programs and responding to information as you learn it; right? So when you launch a program, you make your best effort and best guesses at what's going to happen, and there's always new information coming and challenges that you're facing and you make adjustments.

So can you each talk about how -- what you learned along the way and how you adjusted because I think that's really critical to all of your success? So go ahead, Steve.

Steve Posey: Yeah. I think that is really an important aspect of this, being nimble. And I think -- I want to echo something that I heard from all of the other panelists as well about that direct engagement with the business owners that you are trying to help out.

I heard somebody, I think it was Kevin, say that, suddenly he understood that therapy was part of the job. And I think that that was the experience for all of us in terms of designing and then implementing these programs because we were hearing directly from -- and I -- I should qualify this. Natasha was hearing directly from a lot of small business owners who were in really dire straits and needed to have some pretty consistent and available help about not just how do you get through the application process but why do you need things like a bank statement or a profit and loss statement or a balance sheet?

What is it about that information that demonstrates the viability of your business, and why is it so important to people who are funding or providing help in times of these really -- in these really difficult circumstances? And just staying there and walking along with those business owners I think became the key to understanding really what their needs were.

And that -- I know in terms of the Survive and Thrive program that Colorado Springs had going, that really lent itself to this sort of two-tranche approach to here's some of the money initially, you're going to go through some of this training, you're going to demonstrate that you -- you're going to be up and running and you can make it for a while, and then we're going to deliver the back half of that program assistance. And that is, I think -- Natasha, please expand on that, but I think that was part of the key for us.

Natasha Main: Oh, absolutely, Steve. I agree with all of those points as well, and I think when kind of taking the whole framework of Survive and Thrive and how that was changed was really one responding. I had a mother of a small business owner find my number and call me crying because her daughter couldn't receive any support because she was owner, really just on her own; right, and was falling through the cracks.

I compared that to what I was hearing and the other organizations leading these kind of initiatives as well, and that was consistent. So really understanding, okay. This is the kind of

target. These are the people who are falling through the cracks but then also really recognizing a level of trust was not yet built up all the way for us to be able to fully develop and kind of execute on these programs.

So looking at how do we build that quickly, one that's working collaboratively across a bunch of different organizations? But then it was really for us trying to demonstrate to these individual businesses that we're here alongside with you. We know that these requirements can be overwhelming. How to use these funds and how to make sure you're doing it correctly can be terrifying; right?

And so, I think we got to a point as well that, if this program was going to work, it required our team to hand build back some of these financials and to really go deep. I think Kevin was kind of talking about this as well in terms of not underestimating the amount of work it requires to support people, but then also the kind of greatness that gets built through that in terms of the community and the connections and the trust that's built to continue that momentum.

So agree in terms of what Steve was saying as being able to anticipate, and it's also based on those individual relationships and leaning in when things got difficult and really taking the time to do that with people.

Sabina Craig: Well, luckily, some years ago, we had a small business loan program that loaned up to \$5,000 for businesses starting out. So we had a little advantage of what or how we wanted to see the program set up still working with so many different businesses, all different types, different kinds, some that have been in the game for years, and some just starting out.

But sitting down with each individual business owner, talking with them, seeing what their needs were. Some needed the \$10,000. Some did not. So making sure that they had all their paperwork. And again, like Natasha said, the trustworthy -- trusting us that, if they don't pay the money back, are we going to take their business? Or what happens with all of that?

So kind of working with them, guiding with them, getting them with the bank, getting them with the right underwriter, making sure that this is something that they can do, that it's going to be beneficial to them, and then when loans are paid back, how we can turn it around and help someone else. So just mainly that communication with the homeowner -- I mean, with the business owner and with the bank that they will be working with. So that's it.

Kevin Geiger: For us, I think we started off trying to be more remote, because I said we can't answer 300 phone calls a day on this stuff, and -- but we got sucked into it. And so, eventually we're like, okay. You're going to have to call on the phone and walk through this thing, sometimes because the person had no computer and just couldn't deal with our computer centric thing or they didn't do email or you're just -- it takes too long to describe what an invoice is because we're like, send me the invoice, and they're like, send you something that's not invoice. You're like, no.

So literally, sometimes you just Zoom and you'd have them hold up the thing and you're like, no. Not that thing. And then they'd hold up a different thing. You're like, that thing. That was much easier.

We did initially have a floor of \$5,000 and weren't going to go below that. In our second round, we went down to \$1500, which I think was useful because we had to reject some from first application because they didn't have enough costs, specifically home occupations, which are allowed for us, but they don't have -- they're not spending a lot on a commercial rent and stuff. And so, if they weren't -- if their business was down, they didn't have all these costs going out the door for supplies. And so, they were a little tougher to fund.

We also did fund pivot -- what we call pivot projects. And so, we weren't just looking at things that they are incurred, but if they were like, well, we've got to build an airlock on our child care center or whatever type thing to deal with COVID, we could do some of those type of stuff and some costs going forward. Of course, we had to do environmental review on that, but Ann's shop lovely did that for us.

Ann Kroll: Well, and I would just add some real pivot projects where people that found that they -- somebody went back to school to go to be from a massage therapist to be a medical transcriptionist to get away from having somebody that's in a hands-on really COVID contact situation to support that.

But that therapist aspect, I'm going to say, in Kevin's Shop, he has a young woman that is the queen of therapy, and she has really guided a lot of businesses through a lot of that. And it really does take that with -- especially sole proprietors that we have been dealing with. And it's key. It really is key for that.

And I just think -- but other thing that I think early on we were -- they were in touch with me constantly with, oh, these issues have come up, and we talk through that. And then when we decided it was something that we wanted to do, it was instantly got posted to the website on our frequently asked questions. So we would make sure that the information was available and put out to people instantly too. So we made use of our frequently asked questions a lot.

Kevin Geiger: And it was a way for us to remember, what did we tell everybody? Try to keep things even Steven.

Steve Posey: I think I would actually just add one other thing to that. We found having a consultant on board -- we used Civitas, LLC. Other grantees may be familiar with them, but having that consultant available to help us vet questions and program requirements and guidelines and application materials and so forth as they came up, really, I think, allowed us to resolve some of those issues quickly, change -- pivot the program when we needed to, and have some confidence that we were doing that in a way that was still going to be compliant and consistent with all of the program guidelines for the use of those funds.

Sarah Kerner: Yes. In Springfield, I'd say our first real moment where we had to be flexible and kind of determine which way we were going to go was just with our experience doing loans. We

thought originally we would do a business assistance loan program and just have it be 0 percent interest or something, but for a number of factors, but one of them being just the time to underwrite it, making sure somebody can pay something back is like a whole other level of things you got to check on versus just, did you spend the money on the right stuff?

So with our -- one of our primary goals being get the money out the door as quickly as possible, we ended up going with a grant program. Then we're starting to get these receipts in, and we were getting people saying, well, I spent this much on gloves and different things for a restaurant that were three times as much as they would have paid before the pandemic. And that's what they cost at that time. And so, we had to -- obviously, we made sure that they were legitimate, but that was something that was a little bit unexpected for us.

And I think it's really -- the point has been made well already, but that hands-on support for the small business owners at a time when they were just being inundated with information about, oh, PPP and EIDL loans and all these things, but no one from the U.S. federal government was picking up the phone and saying, can I help you fill out that form or we need this one extra receipt. And I think that's the thing at the local level that we were able to do that made such a big difference.

Carrie Kronberg: Great. Thank you. I think we probably have time for one more question, but before I do that, we've had a number of requests for application forms, policies, guidelines. Are you all okay? We're going to put your contact information back up, but I want to give you the chance to say no. Okay. So folks that have been asking for those things can reach out to people, and we'll put that up in just a minute.

But just wanted -- one more question that we've gotten a number of times is folks really want to hear lists or just details on what were the eligible expenses for your programs.

Steve Posey: I'm going to let Natasha answer that one because I know she's memorized it.

Natasha Main: Absolutely. So for this, we tried to keep -- we knew that the tracking the expenses were going to be tedious, to say the least. And so, we kept it to rent, payroll, utilities. Those were also what we were seeing across the board in terms of the biggest expenses that people needed help with.

And then for a few organizations that were so small, they had such small expenses on those pieces or weren't using an office space anymore because of the pandemic or things like that, we did make some exceptions for working capital that did require an additional survey for us to really make sure that this was necessary for them to be able to continue their business, to continue to pay people, if they had people on staff. So we did make some exceptions there.

Sabina Craig: Well, ours was pretty similar. Simple. Pretty much on rent, utilities, payroll, any supplies that would keep their business running on a normal basis that required them to have. But other than that, that was pretty much about it. Most everybody wanted to use it for either payroll, rent, or utilities and supplies. Nothing out of the normal.

Sarah Kerner: Yeah. Springfield was the same largely as just what Sabina listed, and then we had a few items specifically listed as non-eligible costs. So they couldn't do payment of non-business debt, no personal expenses, political activities. They couldn't pay their taxes. Obviously, we made sure there was no double dipping with other programs and no construction or expansion. We're just trying to keep you open right now.

Kevin Geiger: Yeah. We did rent, a lot of insurance, business insurance out there, supplies, and stuff. We also did business vehicles. So if you were a logger or something and you're paying the log truck and you had that monthly payment of \$500 going out, you had to keep doing that. And so, that was a big coverage.

Natasha Main: I'll add one more thing that we definitely ran into requests around maintenance or construction as well, to Sarah's point, and we knew and Civitas was great in helping us anticipate those, that it triggers additional regulations and requirements and all of those things. So being able to be firm in terms of that's not the working capital.

And then the other thing that we did at the beginning, because we realized it would be a lot easier for us if we could do reimbursements, but recognizing a lot of these businesses did not have the cash flow to do that. So being able to have both an advance and reimbursement kind of availability was something that we had to kind of adapt as well.

Carrie Kronberg: Thank you very much. Okay. So I think we'll end the Q&A there, and I'll wrap up. So Olivia, if you can put the -- thank you.

So the contact information up here again so folks can write down the names of folks that they want to reach out to.

And then I'll say that we had a ton of questions, and there were a lot that we couldn't get to. If you have specifically program eligibility, compliance related questions -- we saw a lot of those -- please reach out to your HUD field rep, and they can help you make those determinations.

Okay. So now, we'll quickly go back to the resources one more time. Thank you. So just again, these are the resources out there available to you to help you with your CDBG-CV economic development and other programs. So just wanted you to have the chance to make a note of these as well.

And just a reminder, the slides and the recording will be available on the HUD Exchange in a couple of weeks. So you can revisit this training a little bit later down the road.

So I think with that, we will say thank you, everyone. Thank you so much to all of our panelists. It was wonderful to hear from you and learn from you. I learned a ton. And thank you to all of you for joining us. Have a great afternoon.

(END)