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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR MORE THAN \$15 MILLION 'TOGETHER NOW' GRANT FUND

City-backed fund provides grants to Chicago's small businesses as they work to recover from continued COVID-19 impacts and damage sustained during nationwide protests and unrest

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced that the City is now taking applications for the Together Now fund grant allocations which will help small businesses and not-for-profits in Chicago that have experienced economic distress and significant operational losses due to COVID-19, or have experienced damage from events of the weekend of May 29 and beyond. The online application will be open to any eligible establishment throughout the City, and it will stay open until Monday, June 29, with grants distributed after the application deadline through a lottery system. The fund is primarily comprised of multiple city-backed funding sources including money from the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF), Adopt-a-Landmark and CARES Act funding, as well as corporate and individual donations.

"I am very proud to open applications for the Together Now fund which will allocate money to many of Chicago's small and locally-owned businesses that need additional assistance to recover from COVID-19 and damage to their storefronts," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Our small businesses play a critical role in contributing to the vibrancy of our city which is why it is essential that we offer them assistance during what may be the most difficult time that many of them face."

The fund directly targets small businesses that otherwise may not be able to reopen quickly or at all without additional funding, given the loss of revenue due to COVID-19. Businesses that have experienced damage from the events related to the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd will be eligible for infrastructure grants of up to \$10,000 to repair physical infrastructure damage. Businesses that have experienced at least a 25% revenue loss due to COVID-19 will be eligible for grants of up to \$4,000 to cover operating costs that arose as a result of economic losses experienced due to the pandemic.

To be eligible for either grant, businesses may not have more than 100 employees at any one specific location. Businesses applying for an infrastructure grant will need to provide proof of damage, including photos of damage, repair quotes or any other available materials. Each business owner is eligible to apply for up to one infrastructure grant and one operational grant. Certain institutions, such as regional or national chain businesses,



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including franchises, branch banks and payday loan stores are not eligible. More information is available on the application.

The opening of the application comes after Mayor Lightfoot's announcement of the fund at the beginning of June, which was established to channel money raised by Chicago's philanthropies, corporations, and individuals to assist businesses that have faced mounting financial pressure due to months of revenue losses from the COVID-19 pandemic. The fund started out with an initial City commitment of more than \$10 million to address immediate needs of small businesses, and also received an additional \$1 million contribution from Jewel-Osco to assist small businesses. It has since grown to over \$15 million dollars in total. The initial round of grants are expected to help over 2500 small businesses.

Applicants for the Together Now fund grants will be notified of their status via email within three weeks after the application deadline. This program is being administered through the support of multiple City Departments, including the Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, as well as administered with the support and partnership of various neighborhood organizations.

The City of Chicago is working closely with The Chicago Community Trust and One Chicago Fund to develop a longer-term component of the Together Now fund to focus on economic growth and equitable recovery in chronically disinvested neighborhoods most hard hit by COVID-19. More information is forthcoming.

For more information about the eligibility requirements and to start the application process for the immediate Together Now fund grants, please visit www.chicago.gov/togethernow or cct.org/togethernow.