



For Immediate Release

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Federal Grant of \$500,000 Creates a Positive Spark for Eastside Businesses

Small businesses invited to tap into a new center with free resources and support.

Redmond, Wash. – [OneRedmond](#) announced today the creation of [OneEastside SPARK: Center for Business Resilience and Innovation](#) to support small businesses and non-profits throughout East King County's 23 cities and towns. Funded through a \$500,000 grant awarded to OneRedmond by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration, OneEastside SPARK provides tailored assistance to small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. OneEastside SPARK is a partnership of eastside chambers of commerce, higher education institutions, non-profits and city, county, and state government entities.

"While there are many development resources available in Seattle, the Eastside lacks the same opportunities despite significant growth in recent years," said Congresswoman Suzan DelBene. "Community partners like OneRedmond and OneEastside are stepping up to help struggling small businesses. I am pleased that SPARK was awarded federal CARES Act funding, with my support, and will soon be able to offer its services to Eastside businesses as our local economy recovers from the damage of this public health crisis."

"Navigating the resources that are available from multiple sources is a time-consuming, complex and often overwhelming task for the busy small business owner trying to rebound from the devastating effects of COVID," said Kristina Hudson, CEO, OneRedmond. "This grant and the creation of OneEastside SPARK allow us to combine resources across the Eastside to more effectively help small businesses."

OneEastside SPARK builds on the work started last year by OneRedmond's Eastside Recovery Hub, which guided 3,700 companies through applications for financial grants and loans. OneEastside SPARK expands the reach beyond Redmond to businesses across East King County.

Resources available to small businesses at OneEastside SPARK will include:

- Free, tailored one-on-one advising services with experts in finance, accounting, legal, and marketing, including advising on COVID-related accounting and tax issues (employee retention tax credit, PPP loans, EIDL and more).
- Quarterly business roundtables providing sector-specific guidance to help businesses re-open and stay open safely.
- Boost Your Business Virtual event series in partnership with Startup425 and Bellevue College to help small businesses get online and/or boost their digital presence.
- The latest updates on local, state and federal COVID-19 related guidelines, and tools for strengthening their businesses.
- Supporting language and interpretation needs.
- A searchable knowledge base of FAQs.
- Facebook group for Eastside businesses to interact with their peers.

“During the first part of the pandemic last year, we lost 97% of our retail income and laid off all but nine of our 150 employees,” said Denise Brown, director of finance and HR at Molly Moon’s Homemade Ice Cream. “In the midst of this crisis, OneEastside’s webinars and educational outreach were an invaluable resource as we navigated the complex programs available to aid small businesses. Their guidance was instrumental in securing the PPP funding and ERC credits that allowed our business to weather the impact of the pandemic. We are forever grateful to OneEastside for the help they provided the eastside business community in the most difficult times any of us have ever faced and are thrilled to learn that help and resources will continue to be available thanks to this grant.”

About OneRedmond/OneEastside

OneRedmond is a public-private economic development partnership that supports and advocates for local businesses, non-profits, and community enrichment. OneRedmond is an alliance of business, government, and community entities to promote economic vitality in the city of Redmond. OneEastside was formed in 2020 as a result of COVID-19, OneEastside provides small businesses and non-profits with tools, resources and direct assistance to help them pivot, recover and build resiliency.

For more information visit www.OneRedmond.org.

For more information about OneEastside Foundation visit www.OneEastside.org.

For more information about OneEastside SPARK visit: www.OneEastside.org/SPARK

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Addendum: partner quotes

“I was proud to support the OneRedmond Foundation in their grant application last year to the Economic Development Administration, and I am pleased that they have been awarded a \$500,000 grant to support the creation of the OneEastside SPARK. This important project will help create and retain jobs in King County when we need it most. Helping secure federal dollars for critical efforts like this to support Washington state jobs will always be a priority for me.”

Senator Patty Murray

“OneEastside SPARK is an additional tool our local businesses will now have to withstand the current economic challenges and equip them to effectively maneuver unforeseen economic difficulties ahead. The success of our local businesses is foundational to a healthy and thriving community. I’m appreciative of OneRedmond to offer these vital and comprehensive resources to our valued business community.”

Mayor Angela Birney, City of Redmond

“This investment will bolster and expand the recovery support our collective Eastside has been providing small businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic. Our small businesses are the lifeblood of our community and this additional resource will help our businesses remain resilient and recover stronger.”

Mayor Lynne Robinson, City of Bellevue

“We are thrilled to see OneEastside SPARK moving forward to support small businesses recovery and resiliency. Working together as a region makes all of our communities stronger.”

Mayor Penny Sweet, City of Kirkland

“We are pleased to join the new OneEastside Spark as a member of its Guidance Council. To nurture this dynamic superstar region that drives global innovation and continues to be a place where top talent wants to work and live, we must work closely together with our public and private partners to tackle complex issues that impact smart, sustainable growth. Through a culture of collaboration, we are not only better prepared to address the inequities exasperated by the pandemic, but we have the opportunity to build our regional economy back stronger than before.”

Brian P. McGowan, CEO, Greater Seattle Partners

“I have been a board member of OneRedmond for eight years, and I’m really proud of the economic development work they have done, specifically the eastside collaborations around the OneEastside, which led to the success for the Economic Development Administration grant. I’m very confident, as a partner organization, that this will create a number of opportunities for the eastside.”

Dr. Amy Morrison, president, Lake Washington Institute of Technology

“Through networking and information partnerships with OneRedmond, we think we will be able to continue our important work in the Seattle and Eastside communities. We endorse OneRedmond’s proposal to bring as many resources and tools to the region as possible that can be leveraged not only for small businesses but for organizations like ours.”

Beto Yarce, executive director, Ventures