



The Black Rock Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (BR NRZ) encourages development that promotes economic vitality, while preserving and enhancing the commercial and residential character of Black Rock.

This month's newsletter report:

- 1.) Black Rock's businesses were well represented in Bridgeport's distribution of grant funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP)
- 2.) A quick update on the apartment development project at 3115 Fairfield Avenue.

American Rescue Plan Funding

The numbers are in!

A total of forty-three (43) businesses in the Fairfield Avenue corridor of Black Rock were awarded a grand total of \$814,328 in grant money to be used for storefront improvements and/or business expansion. This funding was provided by the Federal government through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to provide an economic boost to cities for losses suffered during the Covid shutdowns.

How Did This Come About?

Last summer, acting on public feedback and the support of the City Council, the City of Bridgeport was tasked with distributing ARP funds, designating \$25 million to be distributed to non-profit organizations and small businesses throughout the city. Small businesses (those with less than \$2 million in annual revenue) could apply to one or both of two types of funding opportunities:

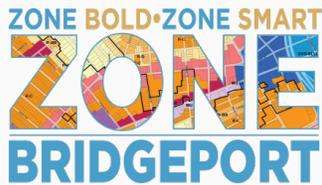
1. **Small Business Expansion up to \$10,000** Funding for additional personnel, capital improvements, consultants, equipment, supplies, accounting services, or other items that would help expand, improve, and/or grow the capacity of the business.
2. **Storefront Improvements up to \$25,000** Funding for any material storefront improvement projects including, but not limited to, window replacements or repairs, decals, signage improvements, sidewalk improvements, decals, or any other reasonable exterior improvements.

The Black Rock NRZ helped get the word out about this funding opportunity **with a door-**

to-door campaign, visiting businesses along Fairfield Ave and Brewster from the Ash Creek bridge to the entrance of I-95. Most businesses visited were not aware of the grants program and the approaching application deadline. It was most gratifying that 43 Black Rock businesses were able to complete the arduous application process in time and with successful results.

We want to give a special acknowledgment to **Laura Mendes of Isla's Business Services on Fairfield Ave**. Laura and her staff assisted with translating the grant information into print form and reaching out to the Spanish-speaking businesses in the area.

Look out for some changes on the Avenue!



3115 Fairfield Ave Apartment Development Update

SCOPE

Proposed mixed use apartment complex.

STATUS

The Planning & Zoning proposal hearing for the development of an apartment building at 3115 Fairfield Avenue has been postponed again to a date in the future. The hearing date for this project could be as soon as April 25th but will more likely be postponed

The developers, having heard the community's concerns, have been receptive to input from the BRNRZ Design and Land Use committee. The developers have signaled that they will be proposing a new design with significant changes in scale, density, and appearance that is more compatible with the character of Black Rock.

Get Involved

NRZ welcomes all who want to be involved supporting or leading our committees. If you would like more information, contact blackrock.nrz.bpt@gmail.com.

Share Your Updates With the NRZ Community

If you have updates you would like incorporated into future newsletters please send them

to valrossi@msn.com and greg@simonpartnerships.com
