



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 5821
March 16, 2021
Regular Business

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5821: 2021 Chamber of Commerce Partnership Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Approve the scope of work for the Partnership Agreement.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

DEPARTMENT:	Community Planning and Development
STAFF:	Jeff Thomas, Community Planning & Development Interim Director Sarah Bluvias, Economic Development Coordinator
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Jake Jacobson Craig Reynolds
EXHIBITS:	1. City Council and Community Planning & Development Work Plans Regarding Economic Development 2. Overview of the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce Activities and Accomplishments 3. 2021 Partnership Agreement Scope Draft
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	3. Implement an economic development program.

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ 14,400
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ 14,400
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ 0

SUMMARY

On December 1, 2020, the City Council approved a budget allocation of \$14,400 for the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce ("the Chamber") to support of the City's 2021 small business COVID-19 relief and long-range economic development planning efforts. City staff, the Chamber Executive Director and board, and City Council liaisons collaborated to develop a scope of work that aligns with Goal 3 of the City Council's work plan and Goal 4 of the Community Planning & Development department work plan to "establish a citywide economic development program" (see Exhibit 1).

BACKGROUND

The Chamber assists the City in promoting the economic vitality of the Island through advocacy, community-building events, referral and networking opportunities, and strategic partnerships for businesses. As a long-time community partner of the City, the Chamber has provided a range of services, including:

- Serving as a communication channel for the City to Chamber members (totaling 167 members in 2021);

- Providing opportunities for City staff to connect with local businesses and residents at monthly Chamber luncheons and other events;
- Hosting annual community events that activate Mercer Island Town Center, including Art UnCorked, Town Center Trick-or-Treat event, and the Fitness Crawl;
- Launching the “Shop. Eat. Enjoy. Local” marketing campaign to drive community awareness of local businesses; and,
- Operating a Town Center office and maintaining a part-time Executive Director position to provide on-the-ground support for Chamber members, Island visitors, and the general business community.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber has been a key collaborator in supporting the Island business community. Highlights of this work during the emergency include:

- Accessing free PPE supplies through the Chamber’s membership with the Eastside Chambers Coalition and distributing those supplies to more than 100 Island businesses;
- Creating “MInext,” a buy local campaign designed to reconnect residents with local businesses that redirected more than \$20,000 in advertising dollars, in-kind support, and direct support through contracted services back into the Island business community; and,
- Weekly meetings between City staff and Chamber leadership to share resources, identify needs, and quickly implement actions to support local businesses.

See Exhibit 2 for a complete overview of the Chamber’s activities and accomplishments to-date.

2021 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In its 2021-2022 budget, the City included a goal to “establish a citywide economic development program,” (see Exhibit 1.) To align with the Community Planning & Development work plan (see Exhibit 1), City staff identified three key areas where the Chamber will provide assistance in support of this goal in 2021:

- Continue COVID-19 Pandemic Support
- Contribute to Long-Range Economic Development Planning Efforts
- Strengthen Relationships Between the City and Local Business Community

See Exhibit 3 for the proposed program scope to be included in the 2021 partnership agreement with the Chamber of Commerce.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the 2021 Chamber of Commerce Partnership Agreement scope of work as presented.