

New Business Rental Incentive Program

Part A- Business Owner Application

Financial Need Demonstration:

Subject: Murchison Spice Company Rental Incentive Program Application

Dear Tomball Economic Development Corporation Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to review and consider Murchison Spice Company's application for the Rental Incentive Program. We are deeply grateful for the opportunity and would like to share how this support would significantly impact our small business and its future in the Tomball community.

I founded Murchison Spice Company in July 2024 and opened our doors in a beautiful storefront at 210 W. Main Street in Old Town Tomball. My husband and I fully self-funded our start-up, investing our personal savings and retirement funds, including over \$70,000 in spice inventory alone. From our opening through May 2025, we built a loyal customer base and became a part of the Tomball community, expanding our product offerings based on local feedback and hosting a variety of events, from cooking classes and art workshops to Girl Scout tea parties and private celebrations.

Unfortunately, our initial location faced ongoing maintenance issues. Persistent roof leaks led to repeated water damage, and despite the landlord's patch-work to the roof, a major storm in late May caused significant flooding inside the store. While we were fortunate not to lose inventory, we sustained over \$3,000 in damages to materials and supplies, and the property's condition, including warping and a worsening mildew problem, made it untenable to remain. We made the difficult decision to vacate in early June 2025.

Since then, we have continued limited operations online and at local events while searching for a permanent new location. Ultimately, we decided to invest in purchasing a 1,400-square-foot property at 1710 S. Cherry Street, just a short distance from our original storefront. However, because the property was zoned residential, the rezoning process, which will be finalized on October 20, 2025, has caused significant delays and additional expenses.

To continue moving forward, we secured a \$100,000 loan in September 2025 to cover renovation costs, ADA compliance, city permitting, materials, labor, and other required upgrades. We also engaged ZM Development Group to assist with city approvals, engineering, surveying, and permitting; expenses that, while necessary, have placed an even greater financial strain on our young business.

Despite these challenges, we remain fully committed to Tomball and deeply believe that Murchison Spice Company adds unique value to the community. Our mission goes far beyond selling spices; we aim to foster connection, learning, and cultural engagement through our classes, events, and locally inspired products.

Any financial support provided through the Rental Incentive Program would have a transformative impact on our ability to reopen and sustain operations in our new location. It would allow us to focus on growing the business, serving the community, and continuing to contribute to Tomball's vibrant local economy.

Thank you again for your time, consideration, and support of small businesses like ours. We are proud to be part of the Tomball community and look forward to many more years of growth and engagement here.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Murchison

Owner, Murchison Spice Company

How Murchison Spice Company Will Enhance and Complement the Surrounding Area:

Murchison Spice Company is uniquely positioned to enrich the Tomball community and complement neighboring businesses in meaningful ways. As a 14-year resident of Tomball, I've long wished for a specialty spice store in our area. Until now, the closest high-quality spice shops have been located in Houston Heights or Galveston. Our business fills that gap, as we are the only specialty spice store of our kind serving Tomball, Cypress, Magnolia, Spring, Klein, The Woodlands, and Conroe, and we've consistently drawn customers from each of these communities. Some have even traveled from as far as College Station to visit our shop.

Our focus on organic, premium-quality spices without fillers or additives sets us apart from conventional grocery store options. In addition to spices, we serve as a curated hub for locally milled infused olive oils, Texas-sourced balsamic vinegars, botanical wellness products, Mediterranean olive wood kitchenware, and artisanal culinary accessories.

Our new location offers expanded space and exciting opportunities to deepen community engagement. With a larger footprint, we plan to grow our popular cooking, art, and educational classes, and to transform our garage-converted classroom into a versatile event space. This space will be available for bridal and baby showers, small celebrations, community meetings, book clubs, and Bible studies, creating a welcoming environment for connection and collaboration.

We also envision adding a covered patio area alongside the event space, providing a relaxed setting where guests can gather, sip tea, and enjoy outdoor activities. This area will be ideal for small community events, artisan markets, craft fairs, young entrepreneur pop-ups, cottage baker showcases, live music, and more. Additionally, our parking area could host one or two food trucks, which would further enhance the visitor experience and support other local small businesses.

The property has already attracted interest from local creatives, including a photographer eager to use the space for photo sessions and styled shoots. Looking ahead, our long-term goal is to convert the kitchen into a commercial facility, enabling us to offer more advanced culinary classes and provide rentable kitchen space for cottage bakers and small food businesses.

We currently have just one neighbor, Real Life Ministries, a church that is adjacent to the property. After meeting with one of the pastors, we expressed our desire to serve as an extension of their space by offering a welcoming environment for small groups, Bible studies, and fellowship gatherings, as well as a convenient stop for members seeking cooking ingredients, botanical wellness products, or specialty teas. Otherwise, we are surrounded by wooded areas (home to a future business park), a home across the street on several acres of farmland, and some warehouses.

In short, our new location will not only strengthen Tomball's retail landscape but also serve as a multipurpose community hub; a place where people can shop, learn, gather, celebrate, and connect. Murchison Spice Company is more than

a retail business; it's a destination designed to bring people together and enrich the cultural, culinary, and community fabric of Tomball.