



May 19, 2020

Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency
C/O Leon County and City of Tallahassee Commissions
315 S. Calhoun Street, Suite 450
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Leon County and City of Tallahassee Commissions,

As we align our work during this pandemic, we are grateful for your thoughtful and proactive response to the threat of COVID-19 for our local nonprofits. Your support was and is essential in providing crucial services and meeting increased demands from our community, while navigating revenue losses and budget cuts. The LEAN program (Local Emergency Assistance for Non-Profits), launched on April 24th by the Office of Economic Vitality (OEV), has provided much-needed stimulus to these organizations. We have appreciated the partnership between OEV, UPHS, INIE and COCA to assist nonprofits in applying.

The sign of true partnership is listening and adjusting to meet the needs of the greater goal. While thousands of notifications, hundreds of emails, dozens of phone calls and targeted webinars were producing steady but slow results, the nonprofit sector worked with applicants and our service organization partners to problem solve. LEAN provided some challenges for nonprofits to meet, including confusion around the utility bill requirement for programs without permanent spaces, and revenue losses for upcoming cancelled programs and events. We are grateful OEV responded and re-worked select parts of the original guidelines and criterion on May 5th before the May 15th deadline.

With the remaining LEAN funding, we respectfully request it stay allotted within the nonprofit sector, as well as, your consideration for using it in the following ways:

- Increase grant awards to nonprofits with larger staffs and budgets (up to \$5,000) to reflect the access/guidelines created within the CEDR grant program for small businesses.
- Expand access and eligibility to other nonprofit sub-sectors to apply (i.e. Environmental, Animal Services, etc.).
 - o Tallahassee-Leon County has over 2,000 registered nonprofit entities.
 - o 14% of Tallahassee-Leon County workers are employed by the nonprofit sector, contributing over \$1B in wages annually.

Our three organizations represent the entirety of the nonprofit sector, and we see how our area nonprofits continue touch the lives of every Tallahassee-Leon County resident each day. They play a pivotal role in our local economy, as well as delivery of services; and in response to this pandemic, our area nonprofits are stepping up without hesitation to serve our community, to protect public health and to support their own employees.

This elected body has a strong history of listening and responding, and we thank you. As always, you can count on the nonprofit community to be a partner in your work, and you can count on our organizations to be a resource and communications conduit. Thank you for your consideration and your continued leadership in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Spehar
Executive Director, COCA

Felina Martin
Executive Director, INIE

Amber R. Tynan
Executive Director, UPHS