



For Immediate Release

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Atascadero, CA

Getting Stimulus Funds to your Small Business

It has been almost three months since the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was approved and small businesses have been waiting to see some benefits from it. Most government agencies have received their funds and are being prodded by the Obama administration to spend the dollars quickly.

The City of Atascadero's Office of Economic Development website at <http://atascadero.toolsforbusiness.info> has information and resources to help businesses gain the most from the Recovery Act (ARRA). Here are some highlights:

Where to find approved infrastructure projects. ARRA projects are being approved over the next several years, so how do you know what to bid on today? Go to <http://www.recovery.com> and find approved projects in our area that are ready for bid. Once you find a project, contact the agency for bid information. This website has ARRA projects only – don't forget that stimulus funds are in addition to regular government spending. You can learn how to find those bid opportunities and how to do business with the government on Atascadero's website at <http://atascadero.toolsforbusiness.info> or regarding the City's local stimulus projects at http://www.atascadero.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=193&Itemid=378.

Training your employees and yourself for the future. Your local Workforce Investment Board's One-Stop Career Center is receiving stimulus dollars to train workers for jobs of the future. If you need workers with specialized skills or want to avoid layoffs by training your unskilled workers in more advanced skills, contact Creekside Career Center Business Services at (805) 788-2631. If your business has failed, there are training funds and assistance for you and your employees through the One-Stop Career Center's Displaced Workers program.

The California Employment Training Panel (ETP) also has funds to train existing employees and business owners. For information, visit <http://www.etp.ca.gov> or call (916) 327-5640.

If you are reducing employee hours, your employees can receive partial unemployment insurance through the Employment Development Department's Work Sharing program. For information, see Employer Assistance at <http://atascadero.toolsforbusiness.info>.

SBA's American Recovery Capital (ARC) Loans. Many businesses are waiting for the \$35,000 SBA-guaranteed loans to cover business loan payments during this economic crisis. These are 5-year loans to viable businesses with no payment due for the first year. The loans are for existing businesses and funds cannot be used to pay SBA loan payments. This is one of the few new programs authorized by the ARRA, so it has taken longer to set up than other stimulus programs. It will probably be late May before the program is available.

Businesses can take a few steps to be prepared: The funds are for "viable" businesses only – so you will probably need your income tax statements plus a budget for the next two years demonstrating that you can make a profit once the economy begins to turn around. The loans will be made by banks – probably the banks that currently do SBA lending – although each bank may choose whether to participate in this program.

Had a business loss? Get a refund of past taxes. ARRA allows a 5-year operating loss carryback, which means if you had a 2008 business loss that exceeded your other income (so your personal taxable income was negative), you can deduct that loss from prior years' taxable income and re-calculate your prior years' taxes to get a refund. To do this, use IRS form 1045 for each year that you request a refund.

The City of Atascadero Office of Economic Development recognizes the importance of supporting its business community. It hosts Tools for Business Success on its website, with extensive local, state, federal and web resources to help businesses start and grow. Visit <http://atascadero.toolsforbusiness.info>.