



**Bristol County Economic Development Consultants Vice President Ken Fiola, seen in this Herald News file photo, said Fall River small businesses impacted by the COVID pandemic may be eligible for grants.** COLIN FURZE

# ARPA grants available for Fall River small businesses

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FALL RIVER — More than \$3.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act grant money will soon be available to local small businesses impacted financially by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The money for the Small Business Recovery Grant program is part of a \$68 million ARPA allotment awarded to the

city. The program is being managed by the Bristol County Economic Development Consultants.

BCEDC Vice President Ken Fiola said an application is available on the agency's website now. Applications will be accepted on Feb. 1.

"Businesses will be required to submit their taxes, telling us how they are impacted by COVID," said Fiola. "All the businesses to qualify will have to show that they made more money in 2019

than they did in 2020, and the reason they didn't make the same amount of money was because of the pandemic."

Fiola said a \$2,500 grant is available for small businesses with five or less employees and for establishments with a minimum of six employees but no more than 10, grants of \$5,000 are available.

The ARPA grant funds can be used for

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# ARPA

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rent, paying fixed debts, accounts payable as well as used towards working capital, machinery and equipment.

"Businesses are still struggling," said

Fiola. "I think the overwhelmingness of the COVID situation is one that continues to create uncertainty for a lot of these businesses. They don't know if they are going to be further impacted by any type of closures or new orders that limit the amount of people allowed in their businesses."

The other thing pressing small busi-

nesses is the employment issue, said Fiola.

"I think the combination of these factors is creating uneasiness for businesses," said Fiola.

Mayor Paul Coogan announced the creation of the Small Business Recovery Grant program recently as part of the ongoing ARPA spending plan.

Among the projects included in the \$20 million plan, \$4 million to complete phase 4 of the Quequechan Rail Trail and \$8.35 million to replace aging water pipes in the city.

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