



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Action Item for the City Council Meeting of September 23, 2025

DATE: September 23, 2025

TO: Peter Zaroni, City Manager

FROM: Randy Almaguer, Compliance Officer, CCREDC
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Type B – 8 Small Business Assistance Programs

CAPTION:

Resolution approving eight Corpus Christi B Corporation (Type B Corporation) Economic Development Small Business Agreement Projects with the following entities for one year: LiftFund, Inc., Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, and five projects with Del Mar College for a total amount not to exceed \$1,174,725.00, to assist small businesses within the City of Corpus Christi to create/retain jobs to promote and develop business enterprises and to be paid out of the FY 2026 Type B: Economic Development Fund.

SUMMARY:

This resolution seeks approval for eight Small Business Assistance Program contracts, totaling an amount not to exceed \$1,174,725. These agreements are designed to provide targeted support for small business development efforts in Corpus Christi, including access to training, technical assistance, and entrepreneurial support services. Funding for these contracts would be provided by the Corpus Christi B Corporation as part of the FY 2026 budget. Approval of this motion would enable continued collaboration with key community partners to strengthen the local small business ecosystem.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

On June 16, 2025, the Type B Corporation approved the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget for 8 small business projects and appropriating \$1,174,725 for the eight Small Business Assistance Programs. On August 25, 2025, the Type B Corporation approved eight small business agreements for a total amount not to exceed of \$1,174,725.

LiftFund Interest Buy-Down Program – \$75k

LiftFund is a mission-driven nonprofit organization dedicated to leveling the financial playing field in entrepreneurship. The core goal of its programs is to ensure that every aspiring and existing business owner—regardless of their background, income level, or credit history—has equitable access to the financial tools and resources necessary to succeed.

By offering responsible, affordable small business loans and financial education, LiftFund empowers entrepreneurs who may face barriers to traditional funding. This includes women, minorities, veterans, and individuals in underserved communities who often lack access to conventional banking services. In addition to capital, LiftFund provides one-on-one business support, credit-building opportunities, and strategic guidance to help entrepreneurs not just launch businesses but grow them into sustainable and thriving enterprises.

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) - \$95,225

SCORE is a nonprofit organization committed to empowering entrepreneurs and supporting the success of small businesses across the nation. Through personalized mentoring and comprehensive training, SCORE helps business owners start, grow, and thrive. The organization boasts a team of 13 certified mentors, each bringing specialized skills and diverse expertise in areas such as business planning, accounting, operations, and strategic development to name a few.

Texas A&M – Corpus Christi Internship Program - \$199,500

Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi continues to enhance its internship program to better serve both students and local businesses. A recent improvement now allows interns to work during semester breaks; a change designed to promote business continuity and improve intern retention. The impact of this effort in 2024 has been significant—nine interns were hired full-time by participating employers, and 62 businesses hosted interns, demonstrating strong regional demand. The overarching goal of the program is to strengthen the local workforce, expand small business capacity, and address the evolving needs of employers in the community. Over the last two years, the program has received and fully expended its grant funding: \$125,000 in fiscal year 2023 and \$150,000 in fiscal year 2024.

Del Mar College Small Business Internship Program (SBIP) – \$150k

Del Mar College's internship program continues to experience strong and sustained demand, receiving weekly inquiries from both students seeking career experience and small businesses in need of staffing support. To address this high level of interest, additional funding is being requested to reduce the current waitlist and expand placement opportunities. The proposed 7.14% funding increase is justified by performance-based metrics and a clear, demonstrated need. Notably, 100% of the requested funds are allocated directly to intern wages, ensuring full support for students placed at local small businesses. The program offers dual value: students benefit from paid, real-world experience that aligns with their career goals, while small businesses receive affordable staffing that contributes to their growth and the creation of new jobs in the community.

APEX Accelerator- \$160k

The proposed funding increase supports the transition of a part-time Procurement Specialist to a full-time role, enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of business support services. Currently budgeted at \$21,000 per year, the position would be upgraded to a full-time salary of \$53,000 plus fringe benefits. This staffing enhancement would significantly expand the program's advising capabilities and improve support for clients seeking procurement opportunities. Type B funding specifically sustains the "Plan Room," a valuable resource that offers access to local construction bid packages, affordable printing, and increased visibility for project opportunities. By equipping small and local firms with the tools and knowledge to navigate the procurement landscape, this initiative strengthens the competitiveness of area contractors and promotes greater participation in public-sector contracting at the local, state, and federal levels.

Contract Resource Center (CRC) - \$150k

The CRC Program is designed to prepare and connect small businesses with multi-year construction projects, helping them build the capacity and readiness needed to compete effectively in the commercial sector. Serving over 2,200 local firms across key industries such as construction, manufacturing, oilfield services, and transportation, the program delivers a suite

of strategic support services. These include business readiness assistance—helping companies organize, present, and market their services—and access to ConstructConnect, a leading bid-tracking tool for identifying local commercial project opportunities. Clients also benefit from the Plan Room, which offers up to 50 free printed pages per month to support their proposal and bidding needs.

The program is aligned with regional industry needs through an ongoing partnership with Gulf Coast Growth Ventures (GCGV), providing guidance on navigating the Contractor Qualification Process and gaining entry into the industrial procurement pipeline. In addition, the CRC Program emphasizes training and capacity building, offering certifications and workshops in critical areas such as OSHA 30 safety standards, cost estimating, contract negotiation, and health and safety protocols—equipping small firms with the tools to succeed in a competitive construction environment.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – 150k

The SBDC has been a vital part of the Corpus Christi entrepreneurial landscape since its establishment in 1989, originally operating under the Chamber of Commerce before transitioning to Del Mar College in the 1990s. Today, the SBDC offers no-cost, high-quality business support services to startups and established businesses throughout the Coastal Bend region. Its core offerings include confidential, one-on-one advising delivered by certified professionals, along with over 150 training events annually. The center assists clients with business plans, financial projections, permitting and licensing, regulatory compliance, market research, and funding strategies.

The SBDC serves a broad range of clients—from microenterprises to companies with up to 499 employees—reflecting the fact that 97% of Corpus Christi businesses fall under the SBA's definition of a small business. Its impact spans from helping entrepreneurs launch \$3,000 startups to guiding multi-million-dollar expansions worth up to \$40 million. Clients include retail shops, service providers, technical firms, specialty medical practices, construction companies, and major primary employers, showcasing the center's wide-reaching economic and community influence.

Cyber Center – 195k

The proposed transition of a full-time Administrative Assistant I position from the expiring NIST RAMPS grant to Type B funding is vital to maintaining the operational capacity of the Cyber Center. This role is essential for supporting marketing, outreach, and client engagement efforts that drive program impact. The Cyber Center provides critical services tailored to small and mid-sized businesses, including cybersecurity awareness and training, one-on-one confidential advising, and compliance support for federal cybersecurity standards. Strategically, this work helps local businesses mitigate cyber threats and strengthens their ability to compete for government and industry contracts. Moreover, the center plays a pivotal role in regional workforce development through collaborations with industry partners, academic institutions, and government agencies. Sustaining this position ensures the continued delivery of these high value services and supports the growth of a resilient, cyber-ready business community in the Coastal Bend.

ALTERNATIVES:

The council could choose to not fund these agreements or could choose to fund them at a lesser amount.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The financial impact is an amount not to exceed \$1,174,725 to be funded with the Type B Economic Development Fund in FY 2026. There is no fiscal impact to FY 2025.

Funding Detail:

Fund:	1146	Type B: Economic Development Fund
Organization/Activity:	15020	Small Business Projects
Department:	57	Economic Development
Project # (CIP Only):		
Account:	530000	Professional Services
Amount:	\$1,174,725	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of these eight agreements in an amount not to exceed \$1,174,725 to be funded by the Corpus Christi B Corporation in FY 2026.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Resolution
Agreement - LiftFund
Agreement - SCORE
Agreement - Texas A&M Internship
Agreement - Del Mar College Internship
Agreement - Del Mar College – Apex Accelerator
Agreement - Del Mar College – CRC
Agreement - Del Mar College – SBDC
Agreement - Del Mar College – Cyber Center