



Rahway Special Improvement District Report

Monday, March 11, 2024

I. SID Business Improvement Program –

- Forgivable loans for new and existing Rahway businesses for Interior Improvements, Signage and Brand Marketing/Design Services up to \$2,000 in each category.
- MBE Certified Businesses (Minority, Women, Veteran, LGBTQ) that has or gets the certification are eligible for additional \$1,000.

Update

- There was a total of 130 applicants for the BIP. 109 businesses met the established criteria for eligibility.
- 62 businesses have submitted their funding requests.
- At present, 38 of 62 businesses have completed all the steps and have received funding.

II. Facade Improvement Program

- \$250,000 has been allocated for property owners to improve their exterior facades and storefronts as \$10,000 forgivable loans.

Update

- There was a total of 32 applicants for the FIP. 24 applicants met the established criteria for eligibility.
- 10 property owners are ready to receive funding and are working with SID and UCEDC to finalize paperwork.
- 2 property owners have completed the necessary steps and have received funding.

III. Restaurant Meetings

- Two meetings were held to bring our restaurant owners together to discuss new initiatives, upcoming events and to network with other owners.
- Meetings were held on February 12th in the UCPAC Lounge and on February 15th at Hamilton Stage.
- The meeting also gave restaurant owners an opportunity to meet with City officials and to have the opportunity to ask questions.
 - Police Director Nicholas Breiner spoke about safety and community engagement.
 - Department of Health Director, Andrea Alvare spoke about upcoming food safety classes and training that will be available.
 - Administrator of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Rachael Faillace spoke about public art that has been completed and how Rahway is seeking to build on the arts scene.

IV. Website Revamp

- www.Rahwayishappening.com website will undergo an overhaul to help make it a more user-friendly experience for visitors to the site.
- The site was first created in 2016 and has undergone updates, but this will be the first large scale update to the site in eight years.
- Some of the improvements will include a newly designed Events Calendar and Business Directory. Behind the scenes improvements will also be made to allow for a better user experience.

V. Women in Business Networking Event – Wednesday, March 27 from 6-8pm at Nancy’s Townhouse (1453 Main Street)

- WOMEN TALKING BUSINESS OVER PIZZA - A Casual Gathering About Serious Business
- The event will be led and moderated by Jacqueline Lombardo and Sheryl Rosenstock from Wizdom Media
- This 2-hour meet-up/workshop is dedicated to local Rahway women entrepreneurs, with an introduction to tools which will potentially help them thrive in both their professional and personal lives.
- This gathering will focus on marketing with a focus on practical approaches like time blocking, task prioritization, automation tools, outsourcing non-core activities, and integrating marketing into daily routines.
- There will also be time for networking and opportunities to meet other women business owners.

VI. Rahway Taste of Spring - April 5, 2024, from 5:30-9pm at the Rahway Rec Center

- Tickets went on sale on Friday, March 1st. As of 3/6/24, 400 tickets were sold through Eventbrite.
- Currently, there are 20 eating and drinking establishments that are registered for the event with more to come.
- There are 9 judges ready to taste and select winners in 8 different categories. Our judges range from social media influencers, local journalists, Rahway business owners, and former Rahway’s Own honoree Gary Gonzalez.
- We have been working with Recreation, Police, Fire, Health, and Department of Public Works to coordinate the day of logistics.

VII. Upcoming Events

- Women in Business Networking Event – Wednesday, March 27 at 6pm at Nancy’s Towne House
- Rahway Taste of Spring – April 5th from 5:30-9pm at the Rec Center