**From:** esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com
**To:** Brownie W. Newman; Kit Cramer
**Cc:** Sybil Tate; Avril Pinder; "Debra Campbell"
**Subject:** RE: Input on timing on reopening businesses
**Date:** Monday, April 20, 2020 9:03:56 AM

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Let me know if this call or Zoom comes together, I am glad to participate. The mayors have a call with Mandy Cohen tomorrow so I may know more after that but glad to talk whenever.

**Esther Manheimer**
**Mayor, City of Asheville**
**P.O. Box 7148**
**Asheville, NC 28802**
**Cell 828.231.8016**
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**From:** Brownie W. Newman <Brownie.Newman@buncombecounty.org>
**Sent:** Sunday, April 19, 2020 1:11 PM
**To:** Kit Cramer <kcramer@ashevillechamber.org>
**Cc:** Sybil Tate <Sybil.Tate@buncombecounty.org>; Avril Pinder <Avril.Pinder@buncombecounty.org>; Debra Campbell <dcampbell@ashevillenc.gov>; esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com
**Subject:** Re: Input on timing on reopening businesses

Kit,

Thanks for reaching out. Would you have time for a call or meeting on Monday? Naturally, we are looking to our health officials for recommendations on how to safely reopen various business sectors and community activities. I think it could be helpful if businesses can help bring forward ideas and protocols that could enable them to operate more safely based on what we know about how COVID-19 is transmitted. There are likely certain protocols that make sense across all sectors but there could also be some specific, creative approaches that could be unique to different industries. We would welcome input from businesses on what some of those protocols could be.

Brownie Newman
828-243-0107

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 16, 2020, at 3:59 PM, Kit Cramer <kcramer@ashevillechamber.org> wrote:

Sybil, I wanted to share with you the results of a study that was conducted by the Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago. I think it's pertinent because of the sheer number of small businesses in our community. And it also has bearing on the decisions we make about how long we keep businesses closed.

First, here's a link to the working paper, "How are Small Businesses Responding to COVID-19?", https://bfi.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/BFI_WP_202042.pdf.

The things that struck me are things that we basically knew already, but this research provides additional weight:
"…our results suggest that many businesses are financially fragile. The median firm with expenses over $10,000 per month has only enough cash on hand to last for two weeks. Three-quarters of respondents state that they only have enough cash on hand to cover two months of expenses or less. Parsa et al. (2005) also note the fragility of small restaurants."

"Section 6 considers survival rate differences across industries, and how this depends on the duration of the crisis. In-person industries like personal services or retail report much lower prospects for riding out the pandemic than professional services or other sectors with minimal need for face-to-face contact. Unsurprisingly, the longer the crisis last, the lower the probability that firms ascribe to their reopening after the crisis. If the crisis lasts 4 months instead of 1 month, only 47% of businesses expect to be open in December compared to 72% under the shorter duration."

"Section 7 concludes. The COVID-19 crisis represents a once-in-a-generation crisis for America's small businesses, especially those that specialize in face-to-face service. One fifth of America's workers labor in retail trade, leisure and hospitality and these sectors are particularly vulnerable to the current pandemic."

"These results suggest that the damage to our economy and its network of small businesses will be far larger if the crisis lasts for many months. This suggests large economic benefits for policies that can safely lead to reopening the economy quickly."

This survey suggests that we focus in on how to safely reopen the economy.

We would be happy to put together business leaders from a variety of industries to discuss how we can safely do that, perhaps with a focus on those that are in the greatest peril of closing, as well as those that employ the most of our citizens.

**Kit Cramer, CCE, IOM**
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@kitcramer

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For updates and business resources on Covid-19, visit: www.ashevillechamber.org/coronavirus
Join us for Virtual Business Workshops Tuesdays at 10 a.m. and Thursdays at 3 p.m. Details will be posted on the site.

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