



Economic Vitality

March 12, 2026
Packet Addendum #1

In order to have better engagement and decision making on Thursday, these are my advance notes that I wanted to share with EVC Council Members.

Headlines:

- Chamber funding in 2025 was \$42,000. We are requesting \$60,000 to support the expansion of events and programming and new communication tools we offer. The \$42,000 paid in 2025 is outlined in the 2025 agreement. Therefore the increased request is \$18,000 for expansion of services.
 - I have suggested some amendments to 2026 agreement presented by City staff at the end of these notes as an example of potential outcome.
 - The parade fence has historically been paid for by the City at City's request but the city no longer wants to pay for the fence. We understand why as it's now \$8K due to city request to expand fencing on the parade to Parkview.
 - Chamber putting on these civic events saves the city significant funds as a cost effective event partner.
 - In kind is key to acknowledge, please note that the Chamber also provides in kind or value in return for the partnership as well so this is truly a partnership.
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Louisville Chamber Partnership - Background and Key Questions for Council

Ahead of the upcoming discussion regarding the City–Chamber partnership, I wanted to share a short overview and answer a few questions that may help frame the conversation.

The Louisville Chamber and the City have partnered for more than 20 years to support community events, economic vitality, and business engagement.

Over the past two years the Chamber has undergone a significant revitalization. Membership has grown by more than 50 percent, programming has expanded to more than 50 programs and events annually, and the Chamber now delivers a broader mix of civic events, business engagement, communication, and advocacy support than when the current funding structure was originally established.

The Chamber submitted a proposal requesting an adjustment to the partnership funding to better align with the expanded scope of services now being delivered.

Below are several key points that may help clarify the request.

What does the City currently fund?

The City currently provides:

- \$30,000 annual Chamber grant
- \$2,000 Parade of Lights support
- \$1,500 City Fellowship membership

Total operational partnership as per the 2025 Agreement is **\$33,500**

Plus as per the 2023 to 2025 Agreements the Parade fence is paid for by the city. (\$8,500)

The staff memo references **\$42,000 in 2025 funding**, and that number includes the **parade fencing reimbursement**.

The staff packet also references in kind support of around \$20,000

What is the Chamber requesting?

The Chamber requested **\$60,000 annually** to reflect the expanded scope of civic events, economic vitality programs, and community engagement work now being delivered.

Review pages 5-9 of the Grant Proposal for detail of what the chamber will deliver. **This is based on actual deliverables from last year and fully planned programming that is live for 2026.**

- **The Chamber Increase for 2026 is \$18,000 (Based on comparison to 2025)**
- **If the fence is included to be paid by the city the request would rise to \$68,500**

Included in Agreement	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Chamber Proposed 2026 Funding / No Fence	Chamber Proposed 2026/ Plus Fence
Grant	20000	25000	30000	30,000	30,000	30000	60,000	60,000
Parade					2,000	2000	0	0
Fence				5150	5150	8500	0	8500
Membership						1500	0	<i>Comp/ \$3,000</i>
Other								
Total	20000	25000	30000	35,150	37,150	42,000	60,000	68,500

- *The funds from 2020 - 2024 were appropriate for the level of engagement.*
 - *In 2024 the new program and infrastructure was developed.*
 - *In 2025 there was proof of concept with no additional funds requested for all the additional programming.*
-

FENCE: How will the parade fencing be handled?

The parade fencing was added several years ago at the request of the city after safety incidents at another parade. The City requested the fencing as a safety measure for the Parade of Lights.

The Parade fence reimbursement has been in the Chamber/ City agreement annually to be recharged. The cost of the fence has increased due to the increase in the size of the parade. The city requested in 2025 that the fence go all the way past the Elks Club to Parkview hence the increase in price.

In the 2026 proposal the city is proposing that the Chamber now pay for the fence.

If EVC/ City Council decide the Chamber should pay for the fence in 2026 then that does reduce the operational funds available to the chamber for our programming.

That said, recognizing that budgets are tight across departments, the Chamber is open to discussing contracting the fencing directly going forward if that helps simplify the partnership discussion.

We request EVC direction on where they think this cost should sit.

IN KIND - How is that attributed?

The City provides 'In Kind' services to the Chamber which has been a long standing relationship and very much appreciated.

To note

The city has provided in kind services for farmers market, chamber and DBA / Streetfaire and it's important to note that the Chamber is aware of that support and to recognize the value of these services.

The Chamber also provides in kind services to the City. **This is a partnership**

With partnership in mind, I would request that in kind costs do not impact the grant funds available.

IN KIND CITY		
<i>Public Works</i>	11,592	Used for Taste and Parade
<i>Fees</i>	2,172	Used for Taste, Parade & Pints
Police	7,007	Used for Taste, Parade and Pints
Total	20,771	

Chamber In Kind Services

The Chamber provides approximately **\$10,750 annually in sponsorship and participation value to the City**. If these items were purchased individually, that would be their approximate market value.

This reflects a mutual partnership where both the City and the Chamber contribute meaningful value to the community.

IN KIND CHAMBER		
Annual Awards Hosted Table	\$360	
Pints in the Park Tickets	\$200	
Taste of Louisville Tickets	\$240	
Taste of Louisville Booth (5)	\$750	
Taste Gold Sponsor	\$2,500	
Pints Gold Sponsor	\$1,500	
Parade Sponsor	\$0	Paid in the Grant at \$2000
Feel Good Festival Gold Sponsor	\$750	New - Added in Good Faith
Feel Good Festival Booth (2)	\$300	New - Added in Good Faith
Annual Awards Sponsor	\$0	Included in Fellowship
Education Summit Gold Sponsor	\$500	
Leaders Lunch Gold Sponsor	\$500	
Gold Scramble Gold Sponsor	\$1,000	
State of the City Sponsor	\$0	Included in Fellowship
T Shirt & Tote Sponsor	\$1,000	New - TBD
Community Guide Page	\$1,150	
	\$10,750	
Plus logo added to twice monthly networking events		
Plus Communication Section on Louisville Loop		

How has the Chamber's role expanded?

Today the Chamber delivers two major categories of work.

Civic Event Delivery

The Chamber produces several of Louisville's largest community events all of which have expanded in particular the Taste of Louisville.

- Taste of Louisville - Expanded
- Pints in the Park - Expanded
- Parade of Lights - Expanded
- Feel Good Festival - New / Not included in Grant

These civic community events bring thousands of residents and visitors together, support local businesses, and contribute to Louisville's civic identity.

Important Note: In many communities, events of this scale are managed directly by municipalities.

Producing these events through the Chamber allows the City to deliver these programs without needing to add staff or contract outside event producers.

Economic Vitality Programs

The Chamber also delivers programs that support Louisville's local business environment and economic vitality.

Examples include:

- Annual Education Summit (marketing, AI, bilingual programming)
- Leaders Lunch civic policy discussions
- Industry focus groups
- Leads Group and Home Pros referral networks
- Cross-chamber regional partnerships
- Advocacy communication and business updates
- Louisville Directory and Community Guide
- Support Local campaigns across commercial districts
- Visitor information and relocation resources
- Community communication platforms connecting residents and businesses

These programs help businesses grow and remain competitive while strengthening Louisville's local economy and tax base.

These programs are not included in the current agreement

Is this a permanent funding commitment?

No.

The Chamber agreement operates as an **annual contract reviewed each year by the Economic Vitality Committee.**

Historically the partnership has been renewed annually. If the Chamber were not delivering the programs and services, the City could adjust or amend the partnership in a future year.

The Chamber is already delivering a significantly expanded scope of civic events, economic vitality programs, and community engagement services.

The funding request simply seeks to **align the City partnership with the work currently being delivered to support Louisville's businesses and community.**

Proposed Amendments to 2026 Agreement presented in the packet.

Best Case Scenario - \$60,000 plus fence covered by the City therefore \$68,500 in total funding. This is what we truly need to operate successfully in 2026.

Compromise Scenario - If EVC would like the Chamber to cover the fence going forward we can compromise and cover the fence directly or split the costs. This does reduce the required funding to successfully run our operations and request that our minimum request of \$60,000 be met.

Edit / Additional Item & Expansion

- Plan & manage 5 signature events throughout the year. (Taste 2 Day), Pints, Parade, Feel Good Festival and Annual Awards Ceremony)
 - *This change reflects the **expanded scale of current events and the addition of the Feel Good Festival**, which has become a significant Chamber-led community event.*

Additions to Agreement

- The Chamber will work with the **City of Louisville and the Northwest Chamber Alliance (NWCA)** to support Sundance-related programming and business engagement opportunities.
 - *Sundance presents a regional opportunity for business engagement and collaboration between chambers and municipalities.*
- The Chamber will **explore development of the Discover Louisville concept.**
 - *This would initially focus on expanding the Chamber's existing Info Hub promotional platform and related webpages to highlight local businesses, events, and visitor information. Please note that any expansion beyond this digital promotional framework would require additional budget and resources.*

- The Chamber will continue engaging with local businesses through its mission to **Connect, Advocate, and Promote**.
 - **Connect**
Unlock meaningful networking, exclusive events, and communication tools that help businesses build relationships, participate in community events, and expand their reach through partnerships across Louisville and neighboring communities.
 - **Advocate**
Provide access to information, educational resources, and a unified voice advocating on issues that impact the local business community at both local and state levels.
 - **Promote**
Create opportunities to showcase local businesses within the Louisville community and across Boulder County, reaching new audiences and generating referrals that support business growth.
 - *By adding this section it provides the overall chamber programming without a specific list but is a reference to the work the chamber does to support economic vitality and will be reflected in the year end reports.*

Minor Adjustments

- Request Public Works scope of services be clarified especially in relation to snow removal so we ensure a safe Parade of Lights.(Offline review to make sure we are aligned)
- Edit - Police services should read Taste of Louisville 2 events not Dinner on Main.
- Removal of Vanessa to attend Board and Advocacy Meetings as part of the agreement. While we are happy for Vanessa to attend these meetings this should not be in the agreement and hasn't been historically and doesn't align with Chamber Board
- City offered to pay for Fellowship Membership on Top of the Grant.
 - Chamber believes that the City Membership should be at the highest Enterprise Level and would like to include that complimentary (Value \$3,000) Enterprise level is designed for multiple department listing like Avista Hospital or a City that wants different memberships for each department.

REFERENCE DOC/ Proposed 2026 Grant and Current Deliverables

		<i>Everything in YELLOW is either expanded or new or not included in agreement. For details review P5-9 Grant Request.</i>
2026 Proposed Service Agreement		2026 Chamber Current Deliverables
Membership - Fellowship Level \$1,500 Paid on top of Grant		Membership - Enterprise Level (\$3,000 Included in grant)
		Membership for 5 dept. Plus council / City should be at highest level on branding and coms.
Taste of Louisville		Taste has expanded month long campaign and 2 day event (5 events in one program)
Pints in the Park		Pints has expanded
Annual Awards Dinner		Same but improved!
Parade of Lights		Parade has expanded
State of the City		Same but improved!
		Feel Good Festival (NEW)
		Golf Scramble
		Annual Education Summit
		Directory & Community Guide
		Annual Membership Drive
		First Friday
		Third Thursday Networking
		Focus Groups
		Home Pro Group
		Leads Group
		Expanded Communications - Loop / What Not to Miss
		Expanded Community Coms - Discover Louisville
		Leaders Lunch
		Arts Hub Membership
		Sundance Planning
		Advocacy Committee & Engagement
		County & Regional Advocacy

Monthly coordination with Economic Vitality		Same
Promotion of City programs through Chamber communications		Same
Beer garden service for two City events		Same
Police/ Fire/ City / Public Works		Same
Fees waived for liquor and event permits		Same
Public Works (Review)		Note: Vanessa and Gillian to confirm with Public works the inclusions and snow plan/ Not required to update the agreement but just a note.
In Kind Service Note from City/ value add		In Kind Services Chamber/ value add
Table Awards		Same - In Kind from Chamber
Dinner on Main tickets		Same - In Kind from Chamber
Pints in the Park Tickets		Same - In Kind from Chamber
Promote workshops and business info from EVC partners		Same but expanded in 2026
		Expanded partnerships beyond city groups (Latino Chamber/ Mental health partners / Biz West Board /Commuting Solutions/ World Trade/ NWCA etc)
City logo on print and digital for events, programs and marketing.		Expanded number of events / in kind from Chamber
Monthly meeting with Vanessa		Same - often connect more than monthly
		Plus multiple other city meetings/ not asking for a grant to attend these but it's important to reference and note that this engagement has a labor cost to the chamber and a benefit to the city and our business community. We are attending on behalf of hundreds of businesses and the information and work post meeting to keep people informed.
Back Cover Louisville Lantern x 4		Same
Signature events shared through city marketing channels		Note: Vanessa and Gillian to confirm billing insert and community cal inclusion.
Poles		Same
Prior Years - Grant agreements noted that City would pay for parade fencing.		City require Chamber to pay for the fence in 2026.

From: [Diana Langley](#)
To: [Samma Fox](#); [Genny Kline](#)
Subject: FW: EVC Meeting for Chamber of Commerce Grant Proposal, Meeting March 12, 2026
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2026 9:07:20 AM

Here's a message sent related to the EVC agenda. This did not go to Council, but it can be included in the packet addendum. Thank you.

From: Eric Reed <info@acmefinegoods.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 4:36 PM
To: Vanessa Zarate <vzarate@louisvilleco.gov>
Cc: Diana Langley <dlangley@louisvilleco.gov>
Subject: EVC Meeting for Chamber of Commerce Grant Proposal, Meeting March 12, 2026

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Members of the Economic Vitality Commission,

My name is, Eric Reed I am the President of the Board of Directors of the Louisville Chamber of Commerce, the Owner of Acme Fine Goods located here in Old Town Louisville for almost 7 years, a member of the Downtown Business Association Board of Directors, and an involved Old Town Louisville resident since 2015. I am writing to encourage the Commission to support the Louisville Chamber of Commerce's request to update the City's grant support for 2026.

Running a small retail business is rewarding, but it's also challenging. Independent businesses operate on tight margins, and our success depends on visibility, foot traffic, and strong community engagement. The Chamber plays an essential role in creating all three.

Over the past year and a half, I have been part of a real shift in the energy around Louisville's business community. Our events have grown, programs have expanded, and the Chamber has become a much stronger connector between businesses, residents, and the City and its Staff. Signature events like "Taste of Louisville", "Pints in the Park", and the "Parade of Lights" bring thousands of people into town. Those events don't just create a fun atmosphere—they bring people through our doors, introduce visitors to local shops and restaurants, and help keep spending local.

The Chamber also provides something that small businesses often struggle to create on our own: consistent visibility. Through newsletters, local promotions, networking events, and marketing campaigns, the Chamber helps remind residents that Louisville businesses are here and worth supporting. For a small retailer without a large marketing budget, that visibility is

incredibly valuable.

What many people may not realize is that the Chamber accomplishes all of this with very limited resources. A small team is coordinating more than 50 programs and events a year, supporting local businesses, promoting the city, and helping connect the business community with City initiatives.

The City's current funding level was set when the Chamber's work was much smaller in scale. Since the Chamber's revitalization in 2025, expectations and impact have grown significantly. From the perspective of someone running a small business day to day, the work being done now clearly goes beyond what that original funding level was designed to support.

Increasing the City's partnership to \$60,000 would help ensure that this momentum continues. It would allow the Chamber to sustain the programs, events, and communication efforts that help businesses like mine stay visible, connected, and competitive.

Just as importantly, it allows the City to support economic vitality in a very cost-effective way. The Chamber has been able to leverage volunteers, sponsorships, and business participation to deliver programs and events that would otherwise cost far more for the City to produce on its own.

For small businesses, the Chamber is more than an organization—it is a connector, a promoter, and a partner that helps make sure Louisville remains a place where local businesses can survive and grow.

When local businesses succeed, the entire community benefits. Our shops and restaurants create jobs, contribute to the City's tax base, support local nonprofits, and help maintain the character that makes Louisville such a great place to live.

Without this increase, just like in my business, hard choices must be made. Programs will be cut, events abandoned, and the coordination between businesses and the City will diminish. It's my hope that this won't be necessary. I believe that the increase will allow the City and the Chamber to be the strong Partners needed for the Future of our successful City.

Thank you for the work you do to support Louisville's economic vitality, and for considering this request. I hope you will support updating the City's investment in the Chamber so it can continue the work that keeps our business community strong.

Sincerely,

Eric Reed

Acme Fine Goods
915 Walnut St.
Louisville, CO 80027

From: [Vanessa Zarate](#)
To: [Genny Kline](#); [Christina Fernandez](#)
Subject: FW: Louisville Chamber of Commerce EVC
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2026 1:48:34 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

And this

Thank you!

V

Vanessa Zarate, CEcD
Economic Vitality Manager
303-335-4531



LouisvilleCO.gov

I have responded to this email at a time that was convenient for me. Please respond when convenient for you

From: Vanessa Zarate
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 8:37 AM
To: Christopher Leh <leh@louisvilleco.gov>; Deb Fahey <dfahey@louisvilleco.gov>; Judi Kern <jkern@louisvilleco.gov>
Subject: FW: Louisville Chamber of Commerce EVC

Vanessa Zarate, CEcD
Economic Vitality Manager
303-335-4531



LouisvilleCO.gov

I have responded to this email at a time that was convenient for me. Please respond when convenient for you

From: Mike Deborski <MikeD@oldstylesausage.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 10:58 AM

To: Vanessa Zarate <vzarate@louisvilleco.gov>

Cc: Gillian Millar <director@louisvillechamber.com>

Subject: Louisville Chamber of Commerce EVC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Vanessa,

Can you please present this e-mail to the EVC and enter it into the EVC meeting record. Thank you!

Mike

To: Louisville Economic Vitality Commission,

Respected Members of the EVC,

My family business has been a charter member of the Louisville Chamber of Commerce. I do not know the exact year but we measure it in decades. Back then, Chooch, Lani and Lawrence shared a common vision of Louisville becoming a community with a strong business base that would support the small business amenities that our residents desired. Today, I'd say they succeeded. This was accomplished by working closely with city hall to create business support and civic functions that brought our residents together to gain an awareness to our businesses.

When Chooch retired, Shelly took the reins as executive director. She and Lani did a great Job of moving it forward. For decades our chamber of commerce was the conduit between our small business communities' needs and city Hall. In recent years that was somewhat lost and this vital function became detached. I'm very pleased to say that under the leadership of our Board of Directors, Gillian and support of Vanessa, the relationship, communication and cooperation between City Hall and our Chamber is as strong as ever.

Much of this is now accomplished through our Chamber of Commerce advocacy committee.

Our Chamber also serves as a filter to insure we as a city capitalize on our assets while not compromising the heritage, culture and core of what makes Louisville a great place to live. We need to retain and protect our unique character and identity that brings value to our community.

These are hard times for our brick and mortar retailers, restaurants and manufacturing based businesses. Louisville's high cost of real estate, taxes, insurance, labor combined with the increased cost food and raw materials has eroded margins that threaten their existence. City Hall's understanding and support of their needs is more critical now than ever.

I've seen enough business models over the years to know our Chamber is operating at high efficiencies and needs additional funding to fulfill our members and communities needs. This in turn drives the tax revenues that fund our city's ability to provide the high level of services our community enjoys. Please support an increase level of funding of this mutual symbiotic relationship.

Respectfully,

Mike Deborski

Office # 303-666-8240

Cell # 720-312-5285

miked@oldstylesausage.com