



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **City and Private Partners Launch Shreve.biz in Support of Struggling Local Businesses**

A partnership including the City of Shreveport, SUSLA, Cohab, The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, and the Shreveport-Bossier African American Chamber announced today the launch of **Shreve.biz**, a helpdesk for Shreveport and Caddo area businesses navigating the economic strains imposed by the COVID-19 crisis.

The Shreve.biz website, which is now live, contains useful information about the various forms of financial assistance available to businesses, and in-depth support for small businesses is available via phone and video. A volunteer team consisting of local professionals with banking, accounting, legal, and business backgrounds will offer free, private, one-on-one counseling for local business owners and managers. These volunteers will be equipped to answer common questions and help business owners understand and access SBA Disaster Loans, federal stimulus dollars, and private credit options.

The announcement comes after Governor John Bel Edwards issued a statewide Stay at Home order in response to the threat posed by COVID-19. This order, while essential for public health, has negatively impacted virtually every sector of the local economy. Shreve.biz is intended to mitigate the impact for local businesses and assist them through this difficult period.

“This effort reflects the very best of Shreveport and it comes at a critical time,” said Shreveport Mayor Adrian Perkins. “The public and private sectors are working together, and individuals with expertise are donating their time to advise and assist other businesses in need. We are all in this together, and we have to work together to flatten the curve and lift up small businesses.”

“Local businesses are suffering, and the smallest businesses have been hit the hardest” said Brandon Fail, Economic Development Director for the City of Shreveport. “We want to do everything we can to help small businesses make it through this crisis so they can thrive again.”

“This is a difficult moment, but there is hope,” said Tim Magner, President of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce. “As the details of the federal stimulus become clear, our staff and volunteers can help businesses access the latest information, apply for aid, and plan for the future.”

“Southern University and CoHab had already built a great relationship around entrepreneurship,” said Amanda Flynn, a business advisor with Southern University’s Small and Emerging Business Development Program, who will be fielding calls as a part of the new service. “It was natural to pivot and serve the community in response to what we see as an overwhelming new need.”

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