Application Guide
2021

Program Description

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation, in conjunction with Detroit-based crowdfunding platform Patronicity and in partnership with the Michigan Municipal League, has developed "Public Spaces Community Places", a creative placemaking and funding mechanism.

Public Spaces Community Places program is a grant match program that utilizes donation-based crowdfunding to generate public interest and funding to revitalize or create public spaces. By utilizing web-based donations, projects are accessible to anyone willing to donate in real-time. This model we call Crowdgranting engages the public as each person plays a part in achieving place-based improvements and instills community pride as residents become invested in their surroundings.

Placemaking projects in municipalities with traditional downtowns and/or Redevelopment Ready Communities are aided by Public Spaces Community Places, which assists the fundraising efforts of patrons through a crowdfunding campaign on Patronicity. With the MEDC providing a granted match if the financial goal is reached, the creative funding mechanism mobilizes community members to make individual contributions. Potential projects must focus on the "activation of public spaces creating community places." Michigan's ability to attract and retain young knowledge-based talent is greatly increased by taking advantage of unique, downtown placemaking assets in each of our communities; making this funding mechanism even more valuable.

As these projects affect the lives and well-being of entire communities it is important that they establish public awareness, gain local momentum, and earn the support of their "crowd" to hit their goal and maintain a local landmark.

Eligible Applicants

This creative funding mechanism is available to projects located in Michigan communities that contain a traditional downtown or are certified in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program. Municipalities, L3C's, and 501(c)(3)non-profit entities are eligible to apply. Non-profit entities must have 501c3 status and a State Solicitation License in place before project launch. Applicant communities must also be at least engaged in the Redevelopment Ready Communities program to be eligible for funding.

A traditional downtown is defined as follows:
1) A grouping of 20 or more contiguous commercial parcels containing buildings of historical or architectural significance.
2) The area must have been zoned, planned, or used for commercial development for more than 50 years.
3) The area consists of primarily zero-lot-line development.
4) The area has a pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

Types of Activities Allowed

Applications may be submitted for projects that activate public placemaking, or places where people gather and spend time. Before applying for the Public Spaces Community Places program, applicants are encouraged to have established public awareness and local momentum for their project.

Projects that fit this description would include but are not limited to:
- Streetscape Beautification & Walkability
- Public Plaza Development
- Access to Public Amenities (Riverwalks, Canoe Livery, Pier Enhancements)
- Farmer's Markets, Community Kitchens, Pop-Up Retail/Incubator Space (community or non-profit)
- Alley Rehabilitation
- Park Enhancements
- Bike Paths & Non-Motorized Infrastructure
- Bandshells & Amphitheaters
- Community Theater Rehabilitation (community or non-profit)
- Public Wi-Fi
- Place Branding & Event Implementation
- Any other project that activates public space or a community place

**Any event-based activation of public space will be limited to a $7500 grant amount. Event-based projects must be taking place over at least 3 months and at least 4 events must occur. Established festivals and entertainment series are not eligible.

***For any indoor spaces, regular public programming must be included in the plans and a portion of the total PSCP funding may be used to provide such programming.**

Grant Dollars

Eligible projects must have a minimum total development cost of $10,000, where the recipient will crowdfund $5,000 to receive $5,000 in MEDC matching funds if the fundraising goal is met. MEDC matching grant funds will be available up to $50,000 per project, or a total funding goal of $100,000 needed to complete the space.

"Prior committed funding" constitutes funds provided by a project stakeholder: the local unit of government, a non-profit entity, private source, or other state or federal agencies, which are committed to the project scope of work before and at the time of application. All projects are encouraged to have prior committed funding before participating in the PSCP program, however, this is not a requirement for projects under $100,000 in total development cost. Projects must be able to complete development from previously committed funding and crowdfunded dollars along with PSCP match. **Projects over $100,000 in total development costs must have all other prior committed funding sources in place and will use the PSCP program to fill the remaining gap in development costs needed, up to $100,000. The funding secured through this program must be the FINAL portion of funds needed to complete and activate the space. See funding scenarios below.**

> ### *Scenario 1:*
> Total project development cost: $120,000
> Prior Committed Funding: $70,000
> Financial Gap: $50,000
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> - Patronicity Campaign Goal: $25,000
> - MEDC Match, if Patronicity Campaign Goal is achieved: $25,000
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> ### *Scenario 2:*
> Total project development cost: $30,000
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> - Patronicity Campaign Goal: $15,000
> - MEDC Match, if Patronicity Campaign Goal is achieved: $15,000

Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be evaluated on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to:
- a defined and focused project
- the overall impact of the project on the community and placemaking efforts
- local financial commitment and documented plan of how to attain the necessary match needed
- project location (preference is given to projects connecting to or located in a traditional downtown)
- project start and completion date

Other Criteria

- Projects must demonstrate the activation of a new or distressed public space or community place.
- This program is to be used for investments in permanent improvements unless event-based as previously described.
- Projects must hit the crowdfunding target by the 60-day deadline or else they will not receive the grant money.
- ***Project Videos:*** Project creators are responsible for producing their pitch video for their project page. **MEDC Videography staff has produced a helpful 'How To' video to assist those making a video for their PSCP campaign. The 'How To' video can be found here: https://youtu.be/fXxO7XbDTmM**
- Patronicity will provide crowdfunding support to those awarded through technical and strategic assistance.
- Any individual donor/entity can donate a maximum of $10,000 or 35% of the goal to the raise *(whichever is lesser)*.
- Grant disbursements will be negotiated on an individual basis depending on the needs of the project and community.

- It is not required that the projects are competitively bid, but it is highly recommended.
- Grants will only be made to an applicant deemed eligible by the MEDC
- **Projects must complete project construction within one (1) year of *receiving* MEDC match funds**

Project Process Flow

- **STEP 1- Tell Us About Your Project**
  Applicants will utilize the [Patronicity website](#) to build out a basic profile for their project. This profile acts as the initial application. Once a project page is started, Patronicity will make contact with the applicant. Applicants may be required to acquire a solicitation license.

- **STEP 2- Patronicity Review**
  Patronicity will perform an initial screening of the project and profile. Patronicity staff may request additional information to determine the project's appropriateness for crowdfunding.

- **STEP 3- MEDC/MML Review**
  If the project passes the initial Patronicity review, projects will be forwarded to the review team and evaluated on the criteria noted in this document. MEDC/MML staff may contact the applicant for more information.

- **STEP 4- Patronicity Polish & Video Production**
  If approved by the review team, Patronicity will then engage fully with the applicant to polish off the project page and prepare the campaign to launch. Project creators can produce their own pitch video for their campaign (optional). MEDC Videography staff has produced a helpful "How To" video to assist those making a video for their PSCP campaign. The video can be found at the link here: https://youtu.be/fXxO7XbDTmM.

- **STEP 5- Project Goes Live!**
  Start crowdfunding! Patronicity will provide technical assistance as needed throughout the raise period.

- **STEP 6- Implementation**
  If the crowdfunding campaign is successful, MEDC will match the funds raised and implementation can soon follow.