

OUTDOOR AREA EXPANSION & BEAUTIFICATION GRANT PROGRAM

The 2021 Outdoor Area Expansion and Beautification Grant Program was created by the East Lansing Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to provide financial assistance to eligible businesses interested in expanding and/or beautifying their outdoor private and adjacent public spaces. This Program is intended to help offset costs associated with outdoor area expansion and beautification projects.

Purpose: Provide financial assistance to support eligible businesses with infrastructure purchases and/or site design services to expand or beautify their outdoor dining, seating, shopping and/or service area.

Maximum Grant Amount: A dollar for dollar match of up to \$2,500 per business location on a first come, first served basis.

Total Grant Program Funds Available: \$43,000

Eligible Applicants: Downtown East Lansing businesses that meet the following criteria:

1. Is located within the [boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority](#); and,
2. Has a prior approved [2020 or 2021 Temporary Outdoor Seating Application](#) or an approved [2021 Outdoor Area Expansion and Beautification Application \(PDF\)](#); and,

(Note: The applications above require submission and approval of a site plan. Several items requested for reimbursement under this Program may require the site plan approved for the temporary expansion specifically identify those items.)

3. Is current on all City taxes.

Eligible Expenditures: Eligible expenditures must be directly associated with expenditures made to expand or beautify outdoor dining, seating, shopping and/or service areas defined in an applicants approved 2020 or 2021 Temporary Outdoor Seating Area Expansion Application or 2021 Temporary Outdoor Area Expansion Application.

Invoices and/or cost estimates must be attached to the application. Reimbursements may be requested for any eligible expenditure made from January 1, 2021, to present. Any application submitted without invoices and/or cost estimates will **not** be considered.

Award Process: If selected for a grant award, applicants must enter into an agreement with the City of East Lansing and indicate that the infrastructure purchased and reimbursed under this Program will be used to expand or beautify their outdoor dining, seating, shopping and/or service area. Further, the applicant must agree to comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations. Upon submission of receipts and proof of payment for approved purchases, applicants may be reimbursed for approved expenditures per their approved application

Applicants may request reimbursement for the following expenditures related to outdoor expansions and beautification efforts:

List of Eligible Expenditures	
Stanchions or similar items required to define seating or dining areas and/or pedestrian traffic	
Tables	
Seating/chairs/stools/benches	
Lighting (must enhance aesthetics of project area)	
Umbrellas/shade structures	
Planters/planter boxes	
Plants	
Signage/a-frames/sidewalk chalk boards	
Design services	A maximum of \$500 may be requested for reimbursement and/or used as match dollars and must be design services specific to an approved temporary outdoor area expansion application.
¹ Other	The Other category is provided for items that may align with the objectives of this grant program and further outdoor area expansion and beautification goals but are not specifically identified in the table above. Each Other item proposed in this application will be considered on a case-by-case basis and there are no guarantees that the proposed Other item will be considered an eligible expenditure under this grant program.

Questions? Email business.support@cityofeastlansing.com

APPLICATION PROCESS

Below are general steps involved in the application process. The submission of the grant application should generally occur at Step 4.

Step 1. Complete and submit a [2021 Outdoor Area Expansion and Beautification Application \(PDF\)](#).

Note: Applicants with an approved 2020 or 2021 Temporary Outdoor Seating Area Expansion Application do not need to complete Step 1 unless further outdoor area expansions are being considered.

Step 2. Obtain an approval letter from the Planning and Zoning Administrator indicating the 2021 Outdoor Area Expansion and Beautification Application has been approved.

Note: Applicants with a prior approved 2020 or 2021 Temporary Outdoor Seating Area Expansion Application do not need to complete Step 2 unless further outdoor area expansions are being considered. They do, however, need to attach the approval letter that they previously received when applying for their temporary outdoor seating area along with their grant application.

Step 3. Obtain cost estimates for eligible expenditures being requested under this Program.

Note: Applicants that made purchases for eligible expenditures under this Program on or after January 1, 2021 may supplement cost estimates for invoices and submit proof of payment with this application.

Step 4. Complete and submit a [2021 Outdoor Area Expansion & Beautification Grant Application](#).

Include all required attachments.

Attachments: The following attachments are required:

1. Cost estimates and/or invoices
2. Approval letter as outlined in Step 2.

Step 5. Applicants will receive an award notice via email within seven business days from the date of the application submission. If selected for an award, the email will include a grant agreement that each grant awardee must enter stating that the infrastructure purchased and reimbursed under this Program will be used to expand or beautify their outdoor dining, seating, shopping and/or service area within the DDA district. Further, the applicant must agree to comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

Step 6. Review, sign, and submit the agreement within seven business days. If invoices (or receipts) and proof of payment were not submitted with the 2021 Outdoor Area Expansion Application, they must be submitted with the signed agreement.

Step 7. Upon approval of the invoices (or receipts) and proof of payment documentation, the applicant will be reimbursed within 10 business days from the execution date of the grant agreement. The grant agreement execution date is the date all required signatures are obtained.

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