



NEWS RELEASE

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MEDC Expands Two Community Development Programs, Launches New Website to Support Small Business and Downtown COVID-19 Recovery Efforts

LANSING, MICH. As efforts begin to re-engage Michigan’s economy under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s MI Safe Start Plan, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) announced several new initiatives today designed to help support the COVID-19 economic recovery efforts of small businesses and traditional downtowns throughout the state.

These initiatives include the MI Local Biz Community Crowdfunding Program, which pairs successful crowdfunding efforts with a financial match from the MEDC; an expansion of the Match on Main program to support recovery efforts of small businesses through grants to local units of government, downtown development authorities, or other downtown management organizations; and a new website offering resources, strategies and assets for downtowns and communities as they plan for their re-openings following the COVID-19 crisis.

“Michigan’s small businesses and traditional downtowns are a vital part of the state’s economy, and we are deploying every resource possible to support the recovery efforts of these businesses, while providing communities with resources to engage in economic recovery efforts,” said MEDC CEO Mark A. Burton. “The expansion of these programs will help Michigan’s small businesses, especially retail stores and those that provide in-person services to our residents, as they work to recover from the loss of revenue as a result of the COVID-19 virus.”

The new [MI Local Biz program](#) builds on the MEDC’s successful Public Spaces Community Places (PSCP) program, in which residents can use crowdfunding to be part of the development of strategic projects in their communities and be backed with a matching grant from MEDC. MI Local Biz will allow for a small business to utilize donation-based crowdfunding through Michigan-based Patronicity’s existing platform and to receive a 1:1 matching grant from MEDC of up to \$5,000. Funds must be used by the businesses for working capital needs in order to maintain ongoing operations during and through the COVID-19 crisis.

Examples of the types of businesses that these grants are intended for include restaurants/bars/coffee shops, cafes, salons/day spas, bakeries, retail shops, hardware stores, and other small businesses retailing products or providing services in a face-to-face physical location within the state of Michigan.

The program offers quick access to capital for those businesses currently experiencing a loss in revenue directly related to the COVID-19 crisis and help position them to re-open as the crisis eases. Businesses can rally their customers, supporters, family, and friends in real time to donate in order to leverage the matching MEDC funds. Applications will be accepted through the Patronicity platform starting May 18, 2020 at 8 a.m. Business applications will be evaluated on a first come, first served basis, with \$500,000 in matching funds through the MEDC available.

MEDC's existing Match on Main program, which provides grants to Select or Master level Michigan Main Street communities in conjunction with eligible businesses seeking support, is being expanded to provide access to more communities and refocusing resources on recovery efforts of existing businesses, rather than helping open new businesses. Community-based organizations such as downtown development authorities can apply for grant funding through Match on Main to then make local grants to small businesses located within their districts that have realized a significant financial hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The [Match on Main–COVID-19 Response program](#) will be opened up to all 286 engaged and certified [Redevelopment Ready Communities](#) across the state of Michigan, in addition to the [Michigan Main Street communities](#) that traditionally participate in the program. The expanded program also waives the matching requirement for the small business applicant which is required to receive funding under the traditional Match on Main program.

The local unit of government, downtown development authority, Main Street organization or other economic development organization that represents a traditional commercial district including a downtown, neighborhood commercial district, or an area planned and zoned for concentrated commercial development is eligible to apply for up to \$50,000. The minimum contribution that is able to be administered to any one business must be at least \$2,000, with a maximum of \$10,000. The applicant will determine which businesses are selected for inclusion in the application for support and at what desired grant amounts. The application window is May 13, 2020 through May 29, 2020. All applications will be due by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29. Applications and more information can be found here: <https://www.miplace.org/match-on-main/>.

Finally, in partnership with Main Street America, Michigan Main Street and the MEDC have launched a new Reopen Main Street website offering resources, strategies and assets for downtowns and communities as they plan for their re-openings following the COVID-19 crisis. The site, <https://michigan.reopenmainstreet.com/>, will assist Main Street directors, downtown development authority managers, small business owners and local stakeholders in navigating the complexities of re-opening their local business districts by providing a variety of recovery resources compiled into one, easy-to-use website.

Other resources for businesses across Michigan struggling with economic losses as a result of the COVID-19 virus can be found online at michiganbusiness.org/covid19. The MEDC has also developed a FAQ for Michigan businesses and communities at michiganbusiness.org/covid19-faq.

Today's announcement builds on a number of COVID-19 support efforts offered or supported by the MEDC. On May 6, it was announced that more than 2,700 small businesses around Michigan were awarded a total of \$10 million in grants by local economic development organizations through the [Michigan Small Business Relief Program](#). The \$10 million in grant funds leveraged an additional \$3.185 million in matching dollars around the state through local economic development and foundation partners.

To see the full list of businesses that received MSBRP grants, visit <https://www.michiganbusiness.org/about-medc/covid19/small-business-relief-program/>.

Other COVID-19 support announced through the MEDC include:

- The [PMBC COVID-19 Emergency Access and Retooling Grants](#) program, which awarded \$1 million to 12 small manufacturers and non-profits in the state looking to retool and produce critical health and human service supplies in response to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Collateral support through the Capital Access program that allowed [National Filters](#) to purchase equipment necessary to vastly increase surgical mask production begin producing N95 respirators as well as rehire 16 employees who had been previously laid off due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The launch of [Mlpaycheckprotection.com](#) in collaboration with the Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) and the Michigan Association of Certified Public Accountants to help 103,811 small businesses in Michigan receive more than \$15.9 billion in forgivable loans during two rounds of Paycheck Protection Program funding.
- Working with the Michigan Small Business Development Center to support Governor Whitmer's successful request to the U.S. Small Business Administration for a statewide Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) declaration, opening the opportunity to small businesses to access low-interest loans from the SBA.
- The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA) launched a new program providing a total of \$502,400 in federal grants to Michigan's eligible nonprofit arts and culture organizations that have been negatively impacted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

For those who have questions about the state's actions to mitigate the spread of coronavirus, please call the COVID-19 Hotline at 1-888-535-6136 between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

About Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is the state's marketing arm and lead advocate for business development, job awareness and community development with the focus on growing Michigan's economy. For more information on the MEDC and our initiatives, visit www.MichiganBusiness.org. For Pure Michigan® tourism information, your trip begins at www.michigan.org. Join the conversation on: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#).

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