



City of Auburn, Maine

Business & Community Development

Glen Holmes, Director

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The Third Space Incentive Program

Empowering Community Gathering

Join the movement and be a catalyst for vibrant community engagement! The Third Space Incentive Program (TSIP) is designed to incentivize the creation of privately owned locations or regularly organized events in public spaces, fostering a sense of belonging and connection among residents. TSIP supports the development of unique spaces that go beyond work and home, providing open areas that promote community gathering and facilitate the formation of genuine relationships. These spaces, driven by various forms and business models, serve as inclusive hubs for hosting community-building activities and programs.

By participating in TSIP, you contribute to the goals outlined in our city's Comprehensive Plan. We aim to attract and retain a diverse range of small and medium-sized businesses in Auburn and New Auburn Downtowns, fostering a vibrant urban atmosphere (Objective I.1). Additionally, we strive to maintain Auburn's role as a regional economic center with diverse opportunities for appropriate business growth (Goal I.2).

Maximize your impact with up to \$50,000 in financial assistance per operation for approved expenses. Our funds are specifically allocated to enhance social interaction and community building. Submit a detailed budget outlining how this support will help create a net increase in community engagement. We offer a deferred-payment, 12-month loan structure, enabling you to kickstart your project without immediate financial burden. If all conditions are met, the loan will be converted into a grant, providing you with even greater resources to make a lasting impact.

Eligibility for TSIP extends to new Auburn-based non-profit organizations and businesses, operating within the Downtown, New Auburn, or Union St census tracts. Whether you're a qualified for-profit or non-profit entity, such as C-corps, S-corps, partnerships, or sole proprietors, this program welcomes your innovative ideas. Utilize the funds to acquire or upgrade facilities, purchase equipment and supplies, or expand your workforce to establish publicly accessible congregate spaces. These spaces can encompass restaurants, cafes, activity centers, recreation areas, and more, catering to the diverse interests of the general public.

We value ongoing operation and sustainability. Post-closing conditions will be reviewed 12 months after closing. If all requirements are met, including the submission of 2023 tax returns and evidence of continued operation, your loan will be seamlessly converted into a grant, securing your long-term success.

Embrace the power of community gathering. Apply today and let's create a thriving Auburn where relationships flourish, and connections endure.

In order to be eligible to receive funds, all property taxes, real and personal, owed on the property that is the subject of the application must be current at the time the application is made. Any property on which there is past due balance for such taxes will be removed from consideration.

Application

Applicants will apply through the city Community Development Application portal and will provide all necessary documentation. <https://portal.neighborlysoftware.com/auburnme/participant> Select “Community Development Grant”. Select “Service Provider Grant” under section A4 and Name the Project “Third Space Incentive Program” under section B1. Applications will be collected until August 1st, at which time only completed application packages will be reviewed. Failure to provide all needed information will result in applications being denied. The city of Auburn reserves the right to reject any application. The top scoring applications will be funded until all funds are completed, or there are no more qualified applicants.

The City of Auburn is committed to accessibility for all applicants. For questions or accommodations completing applications contact the Community Development Office at (207) 333-6601 ex.1332 or emailing CDBG@auburnmaine.gov. Arrangements will be made for non-English-speaking persons and persons with special needs for mobility, hearing and visual impairments, homebound or those needing assistance with technology and/or access.

Applications must include the following:

- Detailed description of the market population and current mix of offerings
- Detailed plan to expand or create new space or offerings
- Approach to improve quality of service & education/marketing of new offerings
- Detailed traffic or sales projections
- Job descriptions of any new staff to be hired with grant funds
- Existing infrastructure and matching funds leveraged to meet stated goals
- Summary of data tracking and financial systems used to manage funds
- A budget including all requested and matching funds with supporting documentation
- Narrative describing how the expansion meets the program objectives

Management and Oversight

- Written Agreement: The city will enter into a written agreement with the selected businesses describing the amounts and uses of funds.
- A commitment letter and promissory Note will be executed in the amount awarded. In the event the business does not meet the conditions detailed within the agreement the funds will be repaid to the city.