



Governor

# Gretchen Whitmer



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2024

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## Gov. Whitmer Announces Grants for 31 Small Businesses Across Michigan, Creating 76 New Jobs

**LANSING, Mich.** – Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF) support for 31 small businesses across Michigan through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s (MEDC) [Match on Main program](#). The \$748,018.82 in grants awarded to small local businesses will create resiliency and strengthen downtowns in communities throughout the state.

“Michigan’s small businesses are the beating hearts of our main streets and downtowns,” said Governor Whitmer. “Today’s Match on Main grants will create 76 good-paying jobs and provide 31 small businesses across Michigan with the support they need to grow and thrive. Together, we are growing our economy and making communities across Michigan more attractive to live, work, and invest. Let’s keep working together to ensure anyone can ‘make it in Michigan.’”

The grants are expected to create 76 full-time jobs and activate 8,835 square feet of vacant and underutilized space, with the projects expected to generate a total private investment of more than \$2.7 million. Of the 31 awardees, 22 businesses are located within Geographically Disadvantaged Areas.

The Match on Main program serves as a tool to support new or expanding place-based businesses as they seek to launch and grow in core downtown areas and commercial districts by providing up to \$25,000 in funding to support an eligible small business through a competitive application process. The FY24 Match on Main application window yielded a total of 113 applicants from 80 communities – the highest participation to date.

In February 2024, [the MSF board approved \\$750,000 in funding](#) to further strengthen Match on Main’s role as a foundational MEDC program, ensuring that Michigan’s small businesses will continue to succeed in the state.

“Match on Main is an important tool for place-based small businesses and communities across Michigan and serves as a catalyst in driving small business investment and growth opportunities,” said **Amy Rencher, Senior Vice President of Small Business Services at MEDC**. “Through the Match on Main Program, we’re not just investing in small businesses; we’re revitalizing communities and fostering economic growth one entrepreneur at a time.”

### FY24 Match on Main Recipients

Of the FY24 Match on Main grantees awarded, eight are new businesses and 23 are existing businesses, including 15 restaurants, nine retail establishments, five service businesses and two other businesses that demonstrate a commitment to revitalizing community infrastructure and boosting local employment.

In Alpena, the city awarded a \$25,000 grant to Mangos Express for the creation of a walk-up counter and bar off the back of the building that faces an alleyway. The alleyway is being transformed into a pedestrian-only public gathering space in collaboration with the DDA, City of Alpena, and surrounding businesses.

“Our business will forever be positively impacted by being selected for this grant,” said **Hugo Mendez, owner of Mangos Express**. “We will be using this award to continue with the re-opening of Mangos Express, which will also provide our community with more job opportunities. Our number one goal is to always give back to our amazing community that has given so much to us.”

In the village of Stevensville, a \$22,157.36 grant was awarded to Watermark Brewing Company to support the expansion of its beer garden. The development will transform a pre-existing blight property, enhancing the local downtown corridor and boosting the area’s appeal for residents and visitors alike.

“We are incredibly grateful for the support provided by the Match on Main grant,” said **Chris Mason, co-founder of Watermark Brewing Company**. “This expansion allows us to retain and potentially increase our workforce, ensuring that we continue to play a vital role in Stevensville’s thriving business community. Moreover, it positions Stevensville as a key destination for beer enthusiasts and tourists, further boosting the local economy.”

## July 2024 Match on Main grantees

Region 5			
Middle Michigan Development Corporation (on behalf of the City of Clare)	Northern Michigan Land and Cattle	Market on McEwan	\$25,000.00
Middle Michigan Development Corporation (on behalf of the City of Harrison)	The Lynx Enterprise		\$25,000.00
Buena Vista Charter Township	Redd Unlimited LLC	Baldwin's Smokehouse BBQ	\$25,000.00
City of Bay City	Wanigans, Inc.	Wanigan Eatery	\$25,000.00
Region 6			
Laingsburg Downtown Development Authority	Reform Wellness, LLC		\$22,204.63
City of Owosso Downtown Development Authority	Oak + Ivory LLC	Oak & Ivory Clothing Co.	\$24,830.71
Region 7			
Old Town Commercial Association (Old Town, Lansing)	Sweet Custom Jewelry LLC	Sweet Custom Jewelry	\$25,000.00
City of Lansing	Veg Head LLC		\$15,000.00
Region 8			
Coldwater Downtown Development Authority	Branch County Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Hope Cafe	\$20,278.00
City of Kalamazoo	Layla's Cool Pops, Inc		\$25,000.00
City of Sturgis Downtown Development Authority	Freakin Sweets LLC	My Freakin' Pizza	\$25,000.00
Village of Stevensville	Watermark Brewing Company, LLC		\$22,157.36
Village of Cassopolis	The Be Hyve Collective		\$25,000.00
Downtown Development Authority of the City of South Haven	Beachtown	Coastal Blue	\$25,000.00
Region 9			
Jackson Downtown Development Authority	Voyager Film Company, ILC	Uncharted Film Company	\$22,877.98
City of Adrian Downtown Development Authority	101 East Maumee, LLC	Maumee Street: taproom + kitchen	\$25,000.00
Saline Historic Downtown Alliance dba "Saline Main Street	Updough Enterprises, LLC	DropTop Pizza	\$25,000.00
Region 10			
Farmington Downtown Development Authority	Lone Light Spirits	Lone Light Spirits	\$25,000.00
Oak Park Corridor Improvement Authority	Best Friends Child-Care, LLC	Best Friends Early Childhood Education Center	\$25,000.00

Michigan's small businesses are a vital part of the state's economy, employing more than 1.8 million people. Helping businesses to open and grow is a key focus of MEDC, and the Match on Main Street program provides opportunities for new and expanding businesses located in Main Street districts to grow and succeed. [Get more information on the Match on Main program.](#)