

PROPOSED PROJECT

With this grant award, staff intend to build off existing mechanisms to support the local business community, including the interim development regulations that enable outdoor dining expansion and marketing efforts to connect residents with their local businesses. The primary project goals are to:

- Partner with local businesses to design attractive outdoor seating areas to expand dining capacity and create “destinations” in the Island’s central business districts to encourage residents to stay local for food & drink; and
- Design and implement a summer “buy local” marketing campaign to promote outdoor experiences, such as outdoor dining, visiting the Farmers Market, attending socially distanced community events, etc., happening in and around Mercer Island’s central business districts.

(See Exhibit 2 for the full project proposal that was awarded funding.)

Grant funds will be redirected to support the local Mercer Island economy as much as possible using local contractors and services to complete project needs. Staff anticipate the grant and matching funds will be used for the following types of expenses:

- Contracting services (Mercer Island consultants in branding / marketing; public space design; and other local professional service providers as identified and/or needed)
- Technical assistance and outreach to local businesses (Connecting businesses with resources and with each other to encourage collaboration; redistributing outdoor furniture for local business use; surveying businesses and customers to track usage)
- Outreach and marketing collateral (Print and digital advertising; environmental elements such as signage, banners, etc.; social media content; and other pieces as identified to promote the local business community)

The \$37,035 appropriation request is for the 2021 budget, and the grant project scope is expected to be executed June–October 2021. Final grant reporting and evaluation will be delivered to the Port no later than November 2, 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the City Manager to accept the 2021 Port of Seattle Economic Development Partnership Program grant and:

1. Appropriate \$24,690 in program expenditures using grant funds for 2021;
2. Appropriate \$6,345 in program expenditures using General Fund available fund balance (2020 prior-year surplus) as cash match; and,
3. Support the in-kind staff match, which is to be provided by the Economic Development Coordinator.