



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Offers Grant Funding to Help Outdoor Businesses Comply with New Regulations

QUALIFIED BUSINESSES CAN RECEIVE UP TO \$20,000 FOR PERMITTING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS UNDER 'SPACES AS PLACES' PROGRAM

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego is offering grants of up to \$20,000 to eligible businesses that have applied for a new [Spaces as Places](#) permit, allowing them to continue outdoor operations within the public right of way. Businesses that had a valid Temporary Outdoor Business Operations permit and are in the process of obtaining a Spaces as Places permit may apply for the funds.

Launched in January 2022, Spaces as Places allows local eating and drinking establishments to exclusively use outdoor spaces in the public right of way, including sidewalks and parking spaces, with a two-year permit. It follows the Temporary Outdoor Business Operations (TOBO) program that aimed at supporting businesses with limited space to safely implement COVID-19 restrictions. The TOBO program expired on July 13, 2022. However, compliant eating and drinking establishments are allowed to continue TOBO operations pending approval of the Spaces as Places permit.

"We know that San Diegans enjoy the outdoor experience that many local businesses have to offer, and we want to assist dining and drinking establishments who made these changes during the COVID-19 pandemic to continue operating outdoors," said Christina Bibler, Director of the City's Economic Development Department. "It's our hope that people will cooperate with the new Spaces as Places requirements and use this program to their benefit."

Approximately \$300,000 in Outdoor Business Grant funding will be available through the current fiscal year, until June 30, 2023. Funding comes from [Senate Bill \(SB\) 1186 fees](#), collected through the sale of business licenses and renewals and the Small Business Enhancement Program.

Awarded in phases, the Outdoor Business Grant aims to help cover permitting, design and construction expenses for a Spaces as Places Sidewalk Cafe, Streetary or Active Sidewalk. Businesses located within the [San Diego Promise Zone](#) boundaries, along with those in low- and moderate-income areas or owned

by low- and moderate-income individuals, are eligible for up to \$20,000 in reimbursement. Alternatively, businesses outside these locations may apply for up to a \$15,000 grant.

In addition, after covering program implementation costs, at least 50% of the funding collected through Spaces as Places fees will be dedicated to public right-of-way, bicycle and pedestrian improvements in traditionally underserved communities.

The City's Development Services Department [Small Business and Restaurant Assistance Program](#) can help with permitting and planning needs. For more information about the grant, the award process and requirements, visit sandiego.gov/economic-development/business/tobogrant.

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