



# Renaissance Downtown Challenge

## RENAISSANCE DOWNTOWN CHALLENGE GRANT

The Oswego Renaissance Association offers Matching Funds (up to \$2,000) to owner of eligible businesses, in Oswego's Traditional Downtown area, to create attractive and vibrant outdoor seating environments (OaSEs) for customers. The COVID-19 pandemic has created a challenging environment for restaurants and other human service retail in Oswego, NY. OaSEs are needed to keep customers safe and for businesses to remain healthy. While human service retail in Oswego has created some outdoor seating on sidewalks, it has not realized its full potential. Various type of OaSEs, such as sidewalk cafes and Parklets, are more than tables and chairs on the sidewalk. OaSEs buffer customers from the sight and sounds of traffic, protect them from sun, and are attractive environments that people want to be in. The goal of the Renaissance Downtown Challenge is to incentivize eligible downtown businesses to significantly expand and/or improve their outdoor seating through the creation of OaSEs in front of / alongside their businesses. Projects must be completed in 2021.

### What is meant by Matching Funds?

Matching funds means that the ORA will match 1 dollar to every 1 dollar the owner spends on outdoor seating area, (before tax) up to a maximum of \$2000 from the ORA. Thus, if a business owner provides at least \$4000 in receipts for work, the ORA reimbursement grant is \$2000. **This match is scalable**, a business owner could spend less for a smaller project. For example, if \$500 in expense receipts are presented, the ORA reimbursement grant is \$250. The ORA cannot reimburse sales or service tax of any kind. Thus, any sales tax on receipts cannot be counted towards the match.

### What types of businesses are eligible?

To be eligible, a business must meet two criteria:

#### I. Business Types

Eligibility is Limited to locally owned:

*Restaurants*  
*Sub/Sandwich or Pizza Shops*  
*Coffee Houses*  
*Ice Cream Parlors*  
*Barbershops and/or Hair Salons*

Any other businesses, such as convenience stores, bars, etc are not eligible in this 2021 pilot program. A business identified as a bar, but which provides *a menu with a wide range of cooked food options and sit down eating* may be classified as a Restaurant for our purposes and may be eligible. Depending on the program's success, future years may expand business eligibility.



## **Guidelines & Requirements**

Priority will be given to applications which propose outdoor seating that score highly on each of the criteria below. The outdoor seating should:

- 1. Help shield customers from the sights and sounds of vehicle traffic and parked cars**  
*Physical barriers such as decorative kneewalls, fencing, plants etc between the seating and moving traffic and parked cars is strongly encouraged*
- 2. Provide shade from the sun.**  
*Umbrellas would be a minimum, but stronger applications could include potted trees, newly planted trees, trellises/arbors, or overhead canvas*
- 3. Make use of green buffers such as live plants and/or potted trees**  
*Flowers, potted trees, large plants or other features are encouraged to humanize the space.*
- 4. Be attractive & beautiful, and expresses the business' aesthetic.**  
*Applicants are encouraged to look at decorating their outdoor spaces with at least as much attention as indoors. Bringing the indoors to outdoors is encouraged.*
- 5. Be a transformative improvement over the current outdoor seating.**  
*Strong applications will include a robust improvement over existing spaces, rather than simply requesting support for the status quo.*



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## Applicant Information

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from business address): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost of Project (including grant funds): \_\_\_\_\_

Amount requested (Max \$2000 from ORA): \_\_\_\_\_

If awarded a Downtown Challenge Grant, applicant agrees to:

- Enter into a grant agreement with the Oswego Renaissance Association, detailing the maximum commitment of the ORA, expenses to be covered by the grant, a timeline for the project or activity, and the method(s) of payment. **Matching funds are reimbursed through submitted receipts (excluding sales tax).**
- Allow the ORA to publicize the grant to local media in order to raise the profile of the grant program and educate the public about the types of projects can undertake to spur business engagement and revitalization.
- Submit a one page performance review within 12 months of signing the grant agreement that explains the results of the project and its impact on the business

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Project Proposal

DUE APRIL 1ST

2021

Please submit a short written (typed) summary of your proposed project. Address each of the six topics listed below, in order. Please number each section (1 through 9).

1. **Project Description & Overhead Sketch:** (200 words or less). Please provide a general overview of your project and why you believe it will be a great space. Attach a simple overhead sketch/drawing of the space. A good drawing will provide the rough scale & dimensions of the seating area, and include lines showing where the sidewalk, building and streets are, and include the locations of the seating, tables, buffers, features etc.
2. **Buffering:** (100 words or less). Please indicate how you will help insulate customers from the sight and sounds of vehicular traffic and parked cars.
3. **Shade:** (100 words or less). How will the proposed seating areas create shade on hot days?
4. **Green:** (100 words or less). Will the seating area make use of green elements such as potted trees, large plants, flowers or other features? If so, what and how?
5. **Aesthetics:** (100 words or less). How will the seating area be made attractive, and express your business' own aesthetic?
6. **Expanded Seating:** (100 words or less). Does the project include *expanding* seating into previously unused areas, such as into parking spaces? If so, please describe. If city owned property, approval from the City of Oswego will be required before an awarded project is executed.
7. **Reversibility & Maintenance:** (100 words or less). How/where will you store seating when not in use? Will some pieces remain outdoors all season? If so, how will they be removed and stored away in winter? Who will be responsible for the storage?
8. **Transformation:** (100 words or less). How will the proposed project be a truly transformative improvement over any current outdoor seating you have?
9. **Budget:** Please provide a detailed budget for the project. The budget should include the specific materials to be purchased, the count (how many/how much) and their costs. Labor costs can be included but must include a professional estimate from a qualified contractor. We cannot reimburse business owners for their own labor.

## \*\* Supplemental Materials

You may choose to attach any materials (up to eight pages) that may assist you in explaining your project and its implementation—such as site photos or diagrams, letters of support, additional sketches, or other materials.

SEND DIGITALLY SCANNED APPLICATIONS IN PDF FORMAT TO:

[OSWEGORENAISSANCE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:OSWEGORENAISSANCE@GMAIL.COM) BY APRIL 1ST 2021

IF YOU CANNOT DO THIS PLEASE CONTACT THE ORA AT THE ABOVE EMAIL.