

# Activating Places through Enhanced Community Spaces

## Commonwealth Places Program

June 23, 2016

*Way to grow.*



# Commonwealth Places

## What is “Placemaking”?

- Placemaking aims to improve the quality of public places and the lives of communities through a participatory process. While urban design and economic development is central to placemaking, the most significant component is the community process and programming that can facilitate social interaction, spark public discourse and increase local capacity and engagement. Increasingly, placemaking has been used to revitalize commercial districts using these small, community-driven investments that leverage economic growth and development.
- **Examples include:** public plazas, pocket parks, alley rehabilitation, farmers’ markets, community kitchens, rail trails, amphitheaters, streetscape beautification, youth recreation center, public Wi-Fi

# Commonwealth Places

## What is “Crowdfunding”?

- Crowdfunding is an increasingly-used tool by which private organizations and public entities are able to fund projects ranging from consumer products to public space improvements. This, in effect, has democratized the raising of capital by allowing the public to monetarily support initiatives. Simply, it allows the public to vote with their wallets. By tapping a large donor pool for small donations, organizations are able to better leverage funds. Further, crowdfunding engages the public to play a part in achieving community improvements and instills community pride as residents become invested in their surroundings.

# Commonwealth Places

## Statewide Placemaking Program

- Placemaking aims to improve the quality of a public place and the lives of its community through a participatory process
- Place-based, community-driven investments
- Enhances economic growth/development
- Supports areas we are engaged; identifies areas we should be engaged
- Builds off success of TDI Places (2015-2016) on a statewide level

# Commonwealth Places

## TDI Places (2015-2016)

- *19 Gateway Cities applied*
- *All received grants or TA*
- *Grants ranged from \$1,000 to \$7,500*
- *Total amount awarded: \$92,500*
- *Total amount leveraged: \$44,900*
- *Stakeholders engaged to date: 30+ (11 cities)*



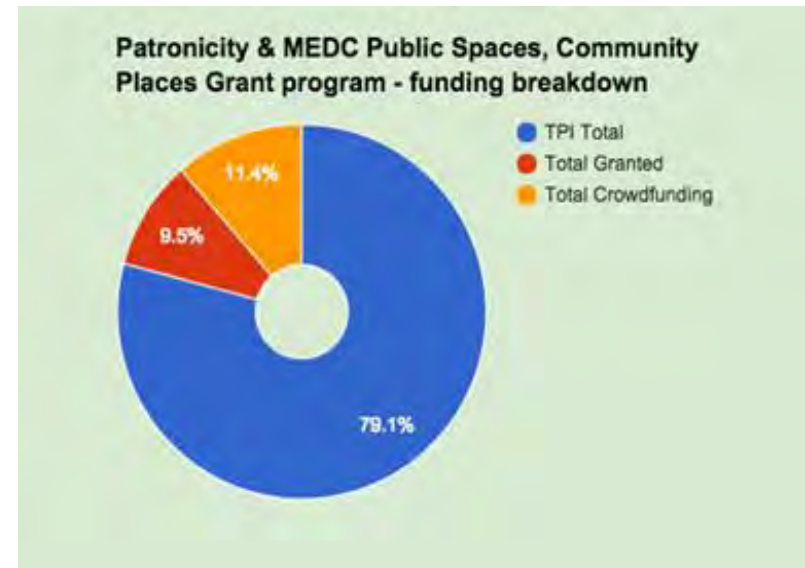
# Michigan Economic Development Council:

## Public Spaces and Community Places

- Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) launched the “Public Spaces, Community Places” grant program in 2014
  - Program success required additional funding within 9 months
  - Pilot year yielded 42 projects statewide
- MEDC partnered with Patronicity a civic crowdfunding platform that has pioneered the concept of crowdgranting
- Patronicity **evaluates and vets** proposed projects, **coaches and supports** project proponents through the fundraising process, and after successfully raising their required funds, **certifies the project, issues the matching grant, and monitors the impact**

# Michigan Economic Development Council: Public Spaces and Community Places

- MEDC launched program with Patronicity in 2014
- 2014-2015 Results
  - 97% success rate
  - 42 completed projects
  - \$1.52 million crowdfunded
  - \$1.26 million granted
  - \$10.7 million total project investment
  - 4,100+ citizen donors
  - 820,000+ people reached
- 2015-2016 Program renewed; expanded to include MI State Housing Authority



# Commonwealth Places

## Key program components/evaluation criteria

- Projects must have a **minimum total cost of \$5,000** and MassDevelopment matching grant funds will be available for not more than 50% of the project costs, **up to \$50,000 per project**;
- Projects must demonstrate the **activation of a new or distressed public space** or community place;
- Preference will be given for **permanent physical projects**, as opposed to events or temporary projects; however the program will consider these types of projects if they will activate an area over at least three-months. **The matching grant funds for temporary projects will be capped at \$7,500 per project**;
- Eligible applicants limited to **municipalities or 501(c)(3) nonprofits**, with documented city municipal support;
- Available **statewide** for **projects that serve low-to moderate-income populations** and act as **revitalization projects** that activate traditional downtowns or neighborhood commercial districts;
- **No single donor may account for more than \$10,000 or 35%**, whichever is less, of the crowdfunded match;
- Projects **must hit crowdfunding target within 60-days** of crowdfunding launch or else they will not receive the grant funds; and
- Projects should be **ready to proceed within 6 months** of reaching crowdfunding match and be **complete within 18 months**.



# Commonwealth Places

## Project review/approval process

- Patronicity will work with applicants to vet the proposal and help prepare it for consideration for a crowdfunding campaign in accordance with the outlined criteria;
- Once finalized, Patronicity will send an applicant's proposal to MassDevelopment for approval;
- MassDevelopment staff will review and approve the proposal and send it to the CEO for final authorization for grants up to \$50,000;
- Upon approval, Patronicity will work with the applicant to move ahead with the crowdfunding campaigns.

# Commonwealth Places

## Patronicity's Role

- **Project Vetting:** Complete vetting of submitted projects and recommendations to MassDevelopment.
- **Successful Management:** Complete project management of local crowdfunding campaigns to ensure high success rates.
- **Crowdfunding Webpage:** Sponsor page and MDFA program information on [www.patronicity.com/commonwealthplaces](http://www.patronicity.com/commonwealthplaces)
- **Local Representative:** Staffing in Massachusetts to run outreach & administration of the program.
- **New Media Marketing:** Marketing program and individual projects through traditional & new media channels.
- **Measure Success:** Maintain, collect, and measure metrics for projects & the program.
- **Progress Reports:** Regular updates of projects and program to MassDevelopment.
- **Start-to-finish Support:** Easy to use admin panel for up-to-date information on projects and completion of disbursement forms for projects.

# Commonwealth Places

## Patronicity - Website Overview

<https://patronicity.com>



# Commonwealth Places

## REACH Community Arts Center

<https://vimeo.com/105657054>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaEroNYvz4U&feature=youtu.be>



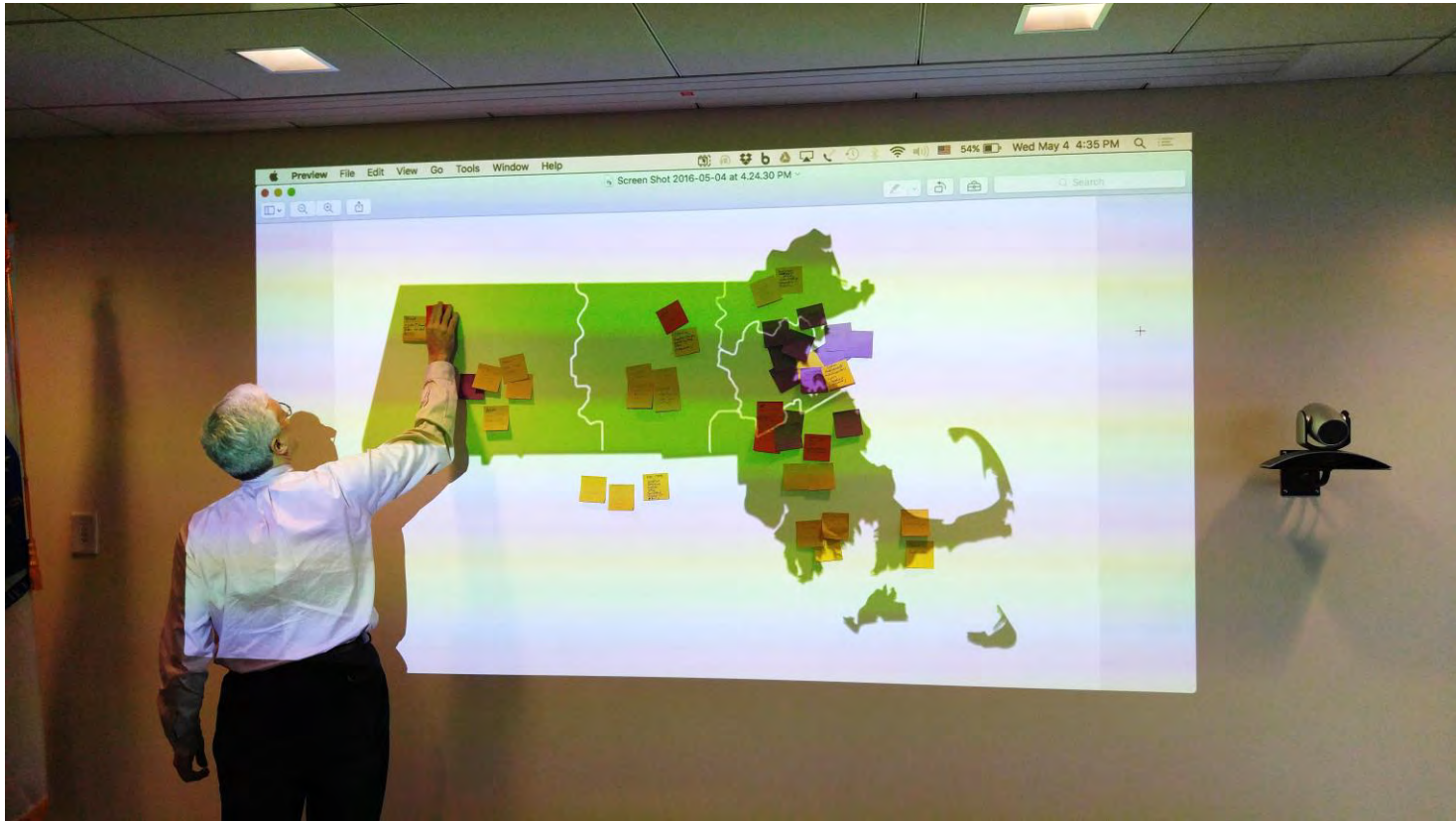
# Commonwealth Places

## What Makes a Project Successful?

- Simmering Project
- Driven Leader & Team
- Willingness to Run a “Marathon”
- Solid Connections
- Creativity
- Working the Training
- Work Hard & Have Fun

# Commonwealth Places

## Massachusetts... projects are out there!



# Commonwealth Places

## Orange, MA

<https://patronicity.com/orangepark>

