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## **Downtown Dearborn Awarded State of Michigan RAP Grant**

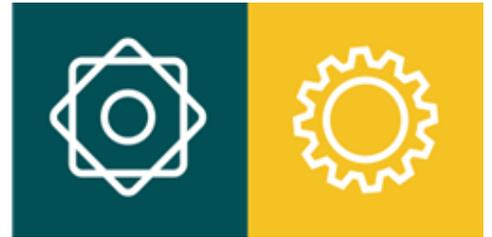
*Funding will be used for “CulturAlley” - An Innovative Public Space*

**September 9, 2022** - Governor Whitmer and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) announced on Wednesday, September 7, 2022, the recipient list for the State of Michigan’s [Revitalization and Placemaking \(RAP\) Grant program, funded by the Michigan Strategic Fund](#). The East Dearborn Downtown Development Authority (EDDDA) is pleased to be one of 22 awardees of the RAP Grant as a Public Space Place-Based awardee, in the amount of \$787,718.

Over 185 communities throughout Michigan submitted proposals for the specified purpose of developing innovative placemaking projects that harbor vibrant community activation. These investments and initiatives are meant to spur economic development by attracting new talent, housing options, and business creation.

The grant was submitted to revitalize and reimagine the pedestrian alley just north of Schaefer Road and Michigan Avenue, on the east and west sides of Schaefer Road, behind the Arab American National Museum and the Masri Clinic Medical Office building.

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“The EDDDA Board of Directors has long recognized the importance of revitalizing the pedestrian alley as a vital area for the community to gather,” says Cristina Sheppard-Decius, Executive Manager of the East and West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities. “Conversations with surrounding businesses and stakeholders have been very positive that this project will be transformational to the area, and create a vibrant, walkable and accessible community space.”

Dubbed “CulturAlley,” the project vision is to create a dynamic space for business and community use, and establish a grand, welcoming gateway that reflects the Arab American culture and artistic community that surrounds it. It will draw visitors through the alley to explore businesses, culture and art, and offer local entrepreneurs a space to work remotely while providing opportunities for businesses to utilize the space for expanded programming and services such as outdoor dining, art and culture programs and exhibits, and an outdoor living room space for the residents in the area.

The project will include pedestrian circulation and safety improvements, as well as hard and softscape surface improvements. In particular it will provide for enhanced lighting, green stormwater, art, a mobility hub for micro transit options such as scooters and bikes, outdoor seating, and a small outdoor gathering and performance space.

The initiative is projected to cost approximately \$2.3 million, with the remaining dollars to be raised via corporate donations, other grant funding, and available financial resources. The project is in the first stages of development, with the expectation of breaking ground in the Spring of 2024.

The East and West Dearborn Downtown Development Authorities’ mission is to create a vibrant Downtown Dearborn experience for all. Learn more about these events and other programs happening in Downtown Dearborn by visiting [downtowndearborn.org](http://downtowndearborn.org) or via social media at [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).