



941 Abbott Rd. Suite 4
East Lansing, MI 48823

April 9, 2020

East Lansing City Council
City of East Lansing
410 Abbot Road, Room 100
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Council Members:

In September of 2019, restaurants in East Lansing had just started to recover from the negative effects of two years of major construction in the central business district. Those years' impact on businesses was not just a substantial loss of revenues, but business closures as well.

Now, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the Governor to close all restaurants for the safety and welfare of everyone. We agree with that action. As a result, restaurants now face a threat to their very existence. According to the JPMorgan Chase Institute, 47% of small businesses have less than two weeks of cash liquidity on hand, with restaurants and retail operating at the slimmest margins. Supporting that information, the Michigan Restaurant Lodging Association has stated that up to one third of restaurants in Michigan will close permanently as a result of this crisis, with the loss of over 200,000 jobs. Business closures would have a profound impact on East Lansing: loss of income tax paying jobs, loss of income tax paying businesses and destroying the very idea of a vibrant downtown business district.

Therefore, we would like the East Lansing City Council to consider taking the following action:

- Abate all business, restaurant and entertainment license fees for the remainder of 2020.

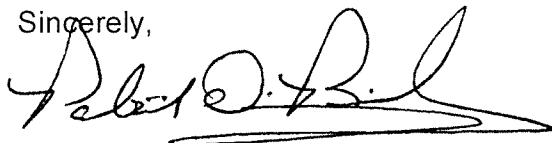
Since funds available from the SBA's Payroll Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans cannot be used to pay these fees, this single action would provide some financial relief to the over 100 restaurants in East Lansing.

Other actions you may consider later for the East Lansing business community at large are:

- Offer free parking in all City lots and ramps for the first 30 days after the business shutdown order is lifted,
- Waive all late payment penalties and interest for all city payments due in 2020 – property taxes, utility payments, etc.,
- Establish a temporary moratorium on landlords evicting commercial tenants unable to pay rent due to a loss of income caused by COVID-19,
- Create a city purchasing policy establishing preferences for businesses located in the City of East Lansing.

We hope that you seriously consider our request and take action on this financial relief for East Lansing restaurants, as we are all in this together.

Sincerely,



Patrick O. Riley
President
Responsible Hospitality Council

Council Members

Beggar's Banquet
Bistro 43 (Marriott)
Black Cat Bistro
Buffalo Wild Wings
Crunchy's
Fieldhouse
Harper's Restaurant & Brewpub
Harrison Roadhouse & Pub

Hopcat
Lou & Harry's
Peanut Barrel
P,T, O'Malley's
Rick's American Café
Riviera Café
Tin Can