

Box Bazaar Tenant Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Where is it?

A: The Box Bazaar: Manor Road project will be located at 3511 Manor Road, just off the intersection of Manor Road and Berkman Drive/E M Franklin. The project site is located within Council District 1, the MLK Combined Neighborhood Planning Area, and the JJ Seabrook Neighborhood. Learn more here: austintexas.gov/page/box-bazaar#location

Q: Will there be Wi-Fi or internet?

A: Yes there will be publicly available Wi-Fi on site.

Q: What are the hours of operation?

A: The hours of operation have not yet been determined. They will be set based on the needs of the tenants selected as finalists.

Q: Does the space have lights?

A: Yes, each container will be outfitted with two LED lights as well as two windows to maximize natural lighting.

Q: How many outlets per shipping container?

A: Each container will be outfitted with two electrical outlets.

Q: Are there bathrooms?

A: Yes there will be public restroom facilities including a hand washing station available on site in an air-conditioned restroom trailer.

Q: Can a single container be shared between two businesses?

A: Interested businesses can apply jointly for a single container space, but otherwise each container will not be leased to more than one tenant.

Q: Is Box Bazaar strictly for retail? What kinds of businesses can apply?

A: Retail is not the only possible use of the containers. The goals of this project are to provide low-barrier business incubator space and support small businesses, but also to activate city-owned land for community benefit and create a neighborhood center. Possible businesses could include food sales, retail of craft or handmade goods, personal services, educational services, or artist workspace or exhibition space. The project will prioritize businesses that have a connection to the local community and that are at a place in their lifespan where this temporary location makes financial sense and where the need for support is still high.

Q: What uses are wanted by the community?

A: The East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan specifically calls to “allow the ‘neighborhood urban center’ special use at the intersection of Manor and Pershing,” is envisioned as a mixed-use, pedestrian and transit oriented development. The neighborhood Future Land Use Map calls for mixed uses on the project site.

Q: What uses are allowed?

A: The property is zoned GR, or community commercial, will allows office or other commercial uses that serve neighborhood and community needs. For the full list of uses allow in this zone, see page 46 and 47 of the [City of Austin Guide to Zoning](#).

Q: Can I prepare food inside a container?

A: Food preparation within the containers will not be possible; however cottage food production operations can prepare approved foods at home and sell from the containers so long as employees are food handler certified and the prepared foods are not considered “potentially hazardous” meaning the final product does not require refrigeration.

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Q: Can I sell food at the Box Bazaar?

A: Cottage food production operations can prepare approved foods at home and sell from the containers so long as they are food handler certified and the prepared foods are not considered “potentially hazardous” meaning the final product does not require refrigeration.

Q: Are there fixtures or furniture available to lease from the City of Austin for the shipping containers?

A: No, at this time there are no fixtures or furniture available for lease. Interior furniture will not be provided. Permanent modifications to the containers by the tenants will not be allowed.

Q: What are the demographics of the area?

A: Area demographics are available on the project website [or here](#).

Q: Could you post the neighborhood plan?

A: The East MLK Combined Neighborhood Plan is available on the project website [and here](#).

Q: If and when the project moves to a different location will it target the needs of that local community?

A: Yes, the project is supposed to be responsive to the community in which it is located. The uses for the shipping containers could vary depending on the next project site and needs.

Q: What are the utility costs?

A: Utilities include electricity, water, trash and recycling, and internet. These costs will be split among all tenants. We do not have utility cost estimates at this time.

Q: Is there a plan for signage? Will people be able to find it from the street?

A: There will be signage on the Manor Road frontage of the property visible to people on the street, in cars, or on transit. One possible option is having an empty shipping container with the Box Bazaar logo on it placed in the front of the property to draw attention to the site.

Q: Why only six containers and not more? There is a big need for this.

A: Box Bazaar: Manor Road is a one-of-a-kind project that has never been done before by the City of Austin. For this pilot project, there was enough funding to make six containers available. Feedback received throughout this project will allow us to determine if scaling up with more containers is viable and warranted for future iterations.

Q: How will tenants be selected?

A: All interested businesses are required to apply through the online application (available at surveymonkey.com/r/BoxBazaar). All applications will be reviewed by a City staff as well as a Community Selection Committee based on the applicants' connection to the local community, strength of business idea, viability of business model, availability, and experience and ability to operate a business. Finalists will be asked to pitch their business idea through a brief presentation and participate in an in-person interview.

Q: What is the city's promotion responsibility?

A: The City will make efforts to promote the Box Bazaar: Manor Road including an opening day event and a closing event. Ongoing promotions will be a joint responsibility between the City, the tenants, and other community partners who host events at the project site.

Q: What is the security like at the Box Bazaar?

A: Each shipping container will be able to be locked and secured independently. There are also gated entries to the project site that will only be open during public hours of operation.

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Q: What are the resources for the tenants after six months? Other city space available, connections, etc?

A: The City of Austin Economic Development Department's Small Business Program is a partner on the Box Bazaar project and will offer orientation courses as well as one-on-one business mentoring opportunities for tenants in which business owners are encouraged to explore and develop next steps for their business after the Box Bazaar has closed its doors. Small business coaches will be available to help tenants look for available commercial space and connect them with other opportunities when available.

Q: Could you make this a permanent program?

A: The next steps for the Box Bazaar project will be greatly influenced by the success and community reception and feedback of the Manor Road pilot. Following the closing of the Box Bazaar: Manor Road, the project will be evaluated based on tenant feedback and community input. The City of Austin will evaluate the possibility of replicating the project at another location at that time.

Q: Will the rest of the site outside of the containers be available for workshops or community events?

A: Yes, there will be flexible event and programming space available on site. The application to host a community event at the Box Bazaar will open soon and be posted on the Box Bazaar website. Check back regularly or sign up to the mailing list to know when that application is available.