

Virtual Meeting Access

Greetings!

For the safety and wellbeing of our members and employees, we would like to continue to hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976, as amended.

We have decided to use Microsoft Teams for video/phone conferencing for all upcoming board and alliance meetings. Teams has many exciting features including screen sharing, recording, live captions, file sharing, and more. Below are instructions on how to access the upcoming virtual meeting.



MICROSOFT TEAMS

1. It is recommended to download the App -
 - a. [Apple Devices](#)
 - b. [Android Devices](#)
2. Once you have downloaded the app, [click here](#) to access the Teams meeting.

** Note: If you do not have a Microsoft account, you can join as a [guest](#).*

Please note that you may provide comments during the meeting using the “chat” feature of Microsoft Teams; however, comments posted in that fashion may not be read or addressed until after the meeting. You may also provide input or ask questions of the Board relating to any items of business that will come before them at the meeting by emailing Tim Kelly at tkelly@downtowngr.org who will forward them to the Board, or by mailing them via regular U.S. Postal service to c/o Tim Kelly, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., 29 Pearl NW, Suite 1, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, or by calling (616) 719-4610.

Persons with disabilities may attend and participate using any of the above described methods. If you require special accommodations, please email asloan@downtowngr.org and we will be happy to accommodate you. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please email asloan@downtowngr.org.

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AGENDA

MONROE
NORTH
TIFA



Board Members:

Jim Baldwin • Shaun Biel • Mayor Rosalynn Bliss • Elianna Bootzin • Diedre Deering • Kayem Dunn • Jane Gietzen • Carl Kelly • Mark Roys • Jim Talen • Rick Winn

Wednesday, March 10, 2021
9:45 a.m. Meeting
Microsoft Teams [Virtual](#) Meeting

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| 1. Call to order | | |
| 2. Approve Meeting Minutes from February 10, 2021 (9:46)
(enclosure) | Motion | Biel |
| 3. River Governance Recommendations (9:50)
(enclosure) | Motion | Guy |
| 4. DGRI President & CEO Report (10:00) | Info Item | Kelly |
| 5. Public Comment (10:10) | | |
| 6. Board Member Discussion (10:15) | | |
| 7. Adjournment | | |





**Meeting of the City of Grand Rapids Tax Increment Financing Authority
February 10, 2021**

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Chair Shaun Biel.

Attendance

Present: Jim Baldwin, Shaun Biel, Mayor Rosalynn Bliss, Elianna Bootzin, Diedre Deering, Kayem Dunn, Jane Gietzen, Jim Talen, and Rick Winn

Absent: Carl Kelly and Mark Roys

Others Present: Tim Kelly (Executive Director), Amanda Sloan (MNTIFA Recording Secretary), Tricia Chapman (MNTIFA Treasurer), Jessica Wood (Legal Counsel), Melvin Eledge, Marion Bonneaux, Mark Miller, Annamarie Buller, and Samantha Suarez (DGRI).

2. Approve Meeting Minutes from June 10, 2020
Motion: Ms. Dunn, supported by Ms. Deering, moved approval of the minutes from the June 10, 2020 board meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve January 31, 2021 Financials
Ms. Chapman introduced herself as the new Treasurer for MNTIFA, having taken over Jana Wallace's role at the City. She presented interim financial statements noting we made the final payment to Kent County for the 2008 Floodwall Debt and stated the authority is in a strong financial position.

Ms. Bootzin inquired on the negative investment earnings. Ms. Chapman explained at the end of each year we make an adjustment on investment values and June 30th investments are entered at market value (which are currently negative earnings being mostly long-term investments). The City Treasurer is confident that these investments will be marked up and we will see a positive investment earning by the end of the year.

Motion: Ms. Dunn, supported by Ms. Deering, moved to accept Statement C: Schedule of July 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021 Expenditures as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. FY2020 Audit

Ms. Chapman presented the FY2020 Audit and noted we received a clean unmodified opinion. The audit report does highlight a prior period adjustment that was done a number of years ago (a piece of Canal St park was removed as a fixed asset and accumulated appreciation and is now appropriately on the City's books).

Motion: Mr. Winn, supported by Ms. Gietzen, moved to accept the FY2020 Audit. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Monroe Avenue Crosswalk

Mr. Miller stated a proposed project to improve pedestrian safety in Monroe North was brought to our attention recently. The Monroe Community Church (MCC) is moving into a space at 1021 Ottawa Ave NW and a crosswalk to connect the building and Canal Street Park will be required in order for MCC to provide childcare within the building. MCC has already begun work with Progressive AE and the City of Grand Rapids to design a new crosswalk, making use of the existing median. Mr. Miller stated this general area lacks official crosswalks, the closest one to the north at Ottawa, Coldbrook, and Monroe and the closest to the south ¼ mile away at Mason Street. This improvement will not only benefit the church but park-goers from the residences and businesses in the area as well. The project is expected to cost \$21,000 so the recommendation with a contingency is to authorize funding of \$23,000 with flexibility in who that is paid to. (MCC will likely pay the construction costs directly and seek reimbursement from MNTIFA.) Site work is anticipated to begin in April.

Mr. Deering asked if there will be tree plantings in the extended medians. Mr. Miller stated there is not an immediate plan for this but typically it is determined after the construction if a tree can fit. Mr. Biel asked if this could include irrigation in the median as the MNBA regularly plants in this space and will likely continue to do so. Mr. Winn suggested authorizing funding for irrigation as well.

Motion: Mr. Winn, supported by Mayor Bliss, moved to authorize funding in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for pedestrian safety improvements and irrigation within a median in North Monroe. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Winter Ready Grant

Mr. Miller presented a Winter Ready Grant recommendation noting there has been quite a bit of activity in the DDA for this program. On October 14, 2020, the DDA authorized \$200,000 for this COVID-19 recovery program, providing outdoor seating and amenities that will allow business operations to continue despite state restrictions. On December 9, 2020, an additional \$175,000 was authorized and earlier today a further \$250,000 was approved for a total of \$650,000 in grant funding. Dozens of businesses already have installations with more in production and looking for funding once permits are approved. In Monroe North area, Linear, City Built, and Field & Fire have already been funded for a total of \$46,062. Mr. Miller recommended reimbursing the DDA this \$46,062 and authorizing \$40,000 (\$20,000 each to Sandy Point Beach House and Garage Bar) for Winter Ready installations. He further recommended direct payment to Prestige Products of \$20,000 on behalf of Sandy Point Beach House.

Mr. Biel thanked the DDA for stepping in and quickly acting for these businesses and stated he believes it to be perfectly acceptable to support these businesses in these amounts. Mayor Bliss agreed

and is hopeful to see these outdoor installments being utilized year-round. When asked by a board member, Mr. Miller stated Eastern Kiln is likely the only other business that might still apply for this Winter Ready Grant program. Mr. Winn suggested approving an additional \$20,000 in funding to allow for this and potentially other applicants in the area. He also suggested publishing the support data on businesses within the DDA and MNTIFA. Mr. Kelly agreed now is a good time to do so.

Motion: Mr. Winn, supported by Mayor Bliss, moved to authorize funding in an amount not to exceed \$106,062 (\$46,062 being reimbursed to the DDA, \$20,000 paid to Prestige Products, and the remaining to reimburse business applicants including \$20,000 to Garage Bar) for the Winter Ready Grant in Monroe North. None opposed. Motion carried.

7. President & CEO Report

Mr. Kelly stated DGRI is organizing spring social zone deployments by holding a series of meetings including one for Monroe North businesses on February 17, 2021 at 2pm. He stated we expect to hold MNTIFA board meetings in March and April as we review River Governance recommendations and start the budgeting process for FY22. Development projects continue to happen throughout the TIFA and Mr. Kelly noted the Integrated Architecture Office is slated to open this spring on Ottawa. Hannah Berry will attend the MNBA meeting this Friday to share an update on the 975 Ottawa project. World of Winter will be extended into March with new art installations being added weekly including the Lamplighter at 555 Monroe and Valent-Ice installations throughout Downtown this weekend. Mr. Kelly stated we have seen increased pedestrian traffic during this festival which anecdotally is contributing to business support.

Ms. Bootzin asked if the DASH has begun late night service and if the board could be provided an update on bicycle friendly infrastructure improvements. Mr. Kelly stated the DASH is back to running its regular schedule and will follow up with an update on bicycle friendly infrastructure.

8. Public Comment

None

9. Board Member Discussion

Ms. Bootzin welcomed board members to take the neighborhood leadership survey [Stakeholder Survey | Neighbors of Belknap Lookout](#).

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

COVID-19 Impact Report
March 3, 2021

Business Openings

2020

- ① Morning Belle (June 8)
- ② Ding Tea (June 28)
- ③ Downtown Nutrition (June 29)
- ④ Art Caribbean Fusion Cuisine (July 10)*
- ⑤ The Color Forest (July 16)*
- ⑥ Insomnia Cookies (July 21)
- ⑦ Pump House (July 23, 2020)
- ⑧ Balke P&D Gallery (August 7)
- ⑨ Alt City Beverage Downtown Market (August 20)
- ⑩ Portico & Knoop Canopy Hilton (September 8)
- ⑪ Mel Styles (September 19)*
- ⑫ Tupelo Honey (September 19)
- ⑬ Basic Bee Boutique (November 14)*
- ⑭ Purpose Training Studio (November 16)
- ⑮ GRNoir (December 4)*
- ⑯ Aggregate 136 (December 4)
- ⑰ House Rules Board Game Lounge (December 4)
- ⑱ Pack Elephant (December 10)*
- ⑲ Arktos Meadery (December 11)

2021

- ⑳ Marissa's Jewels (January)
- ㉑ Poké Poké & Boba (January 19)
- ㉒ MDRD (February 2)
- ㉓ Condado Tacos (February 4)

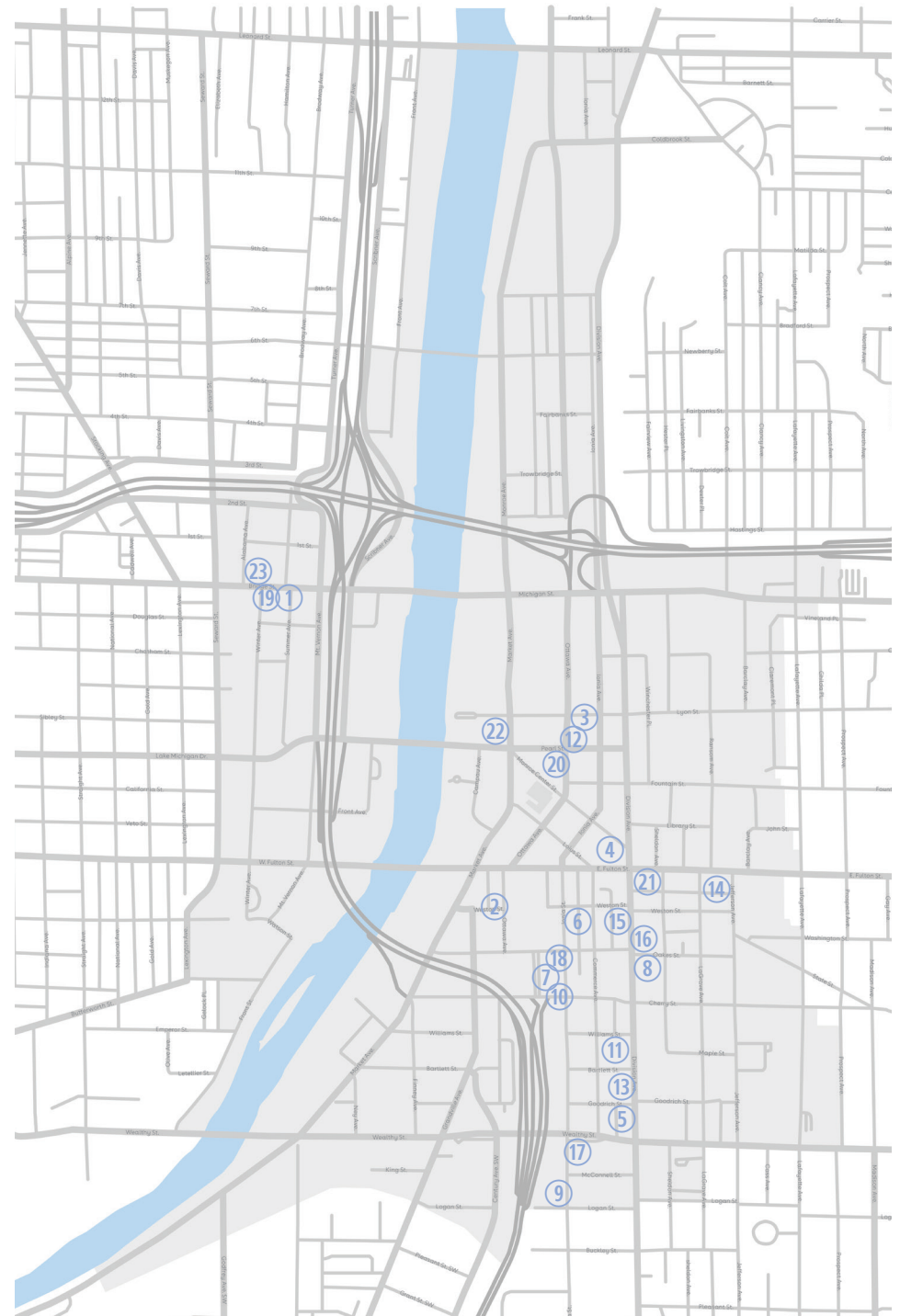
26%
BIPOC-Owned

39%
Women-Owned

28
businesses opened
in the same time
frame pre-COVID

*received DDA Retail Incubation Grant

Source: Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.



Business Closings

2020

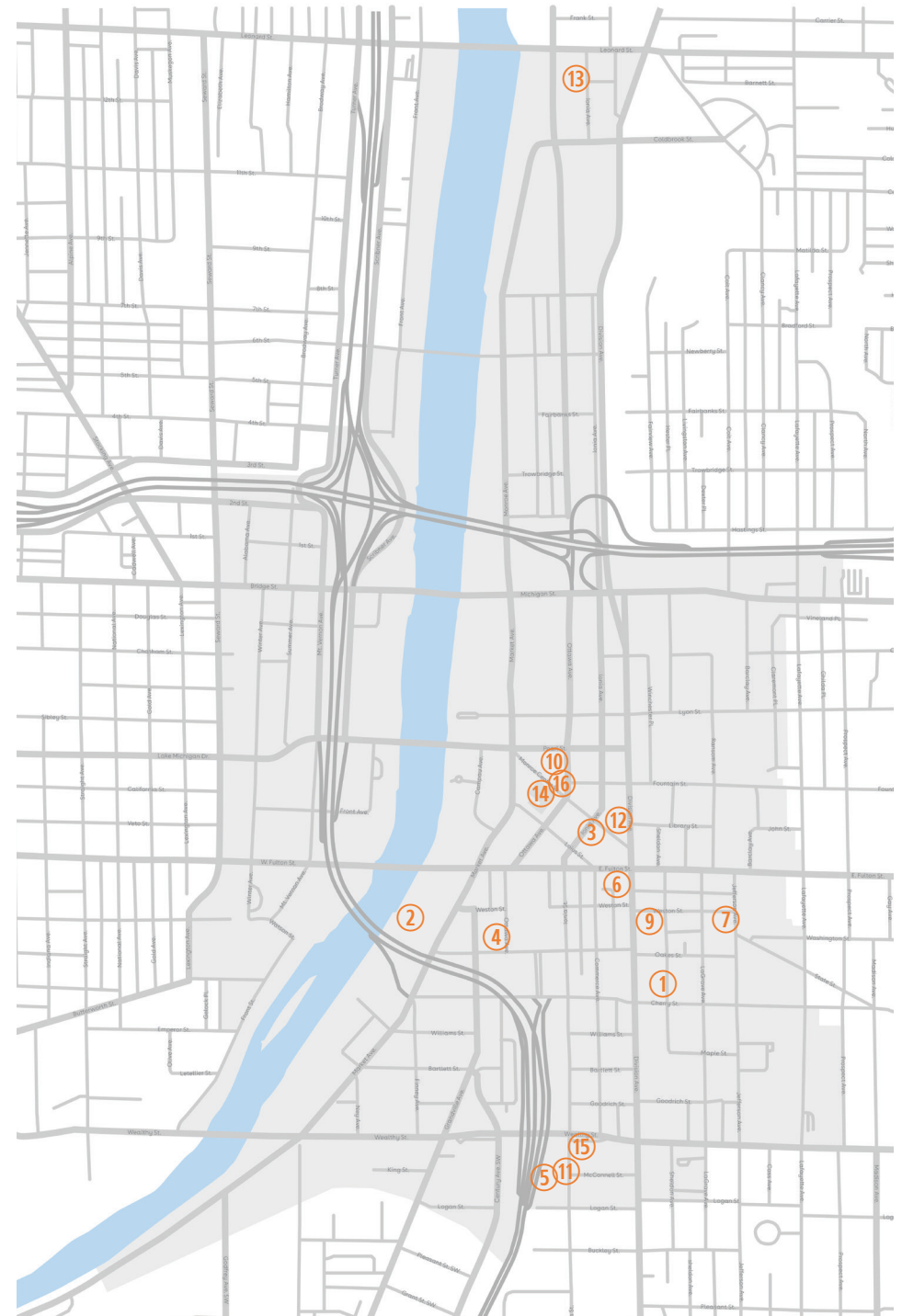
- ① Zoey Ashwood Fine Art (May)
- ② Charley's Crab (May 15)
- ③ Grand Central Market (June 1)
- ④ The Wheelhouse (June 4)
- ⑤ Madcap Downtown Market (June 8)
- ⑥ UICA (June 17)
- ⑦ Dog Story Theatre (June 27)
- ⑧ Sloppy Joe's Snack Shack (July)
- ⑨ Bend Gallery (July)
- ⑩ Perrigo Printing (July 1)
- ⑪ Social Kitchen (July 7)
- ⑫ Gina's Boutique (August 8)
- ⑬ Sin Republic Salon (August 28)
- ⑭ GRAM Store (August 30)
- ⑮ GP Sports (Summer)
- ⑯ Craft Beer Cellar (September 26)
- ⑰ The Dog Pit (December 19)

2021

- ⑱ Big E's Sports Grill (February 18)
- ⑲ Sweetie-Licious Downtown Market (February 25)
- ⑳ Apothecary Off Main (February 28)

14
businesses closed
in the same time
frame pre-COVID

businesses are opening
1.15x
faster than they are closing



Downtown Ground-Floor Storefront Vacancies

336

ground-floor
businesses in DT

21%

current
vacancy rate

2.3 yr

average vacancy
duration

This equates to
400k
square feet of
available space

4 new storefronts have been added in the last 12 months:

449 Bridge St NW #1 (Condado Tacos @ Bridge St Lofts)

449 Bridge St NW #2 (Vacant @ Bridge St Lofts)

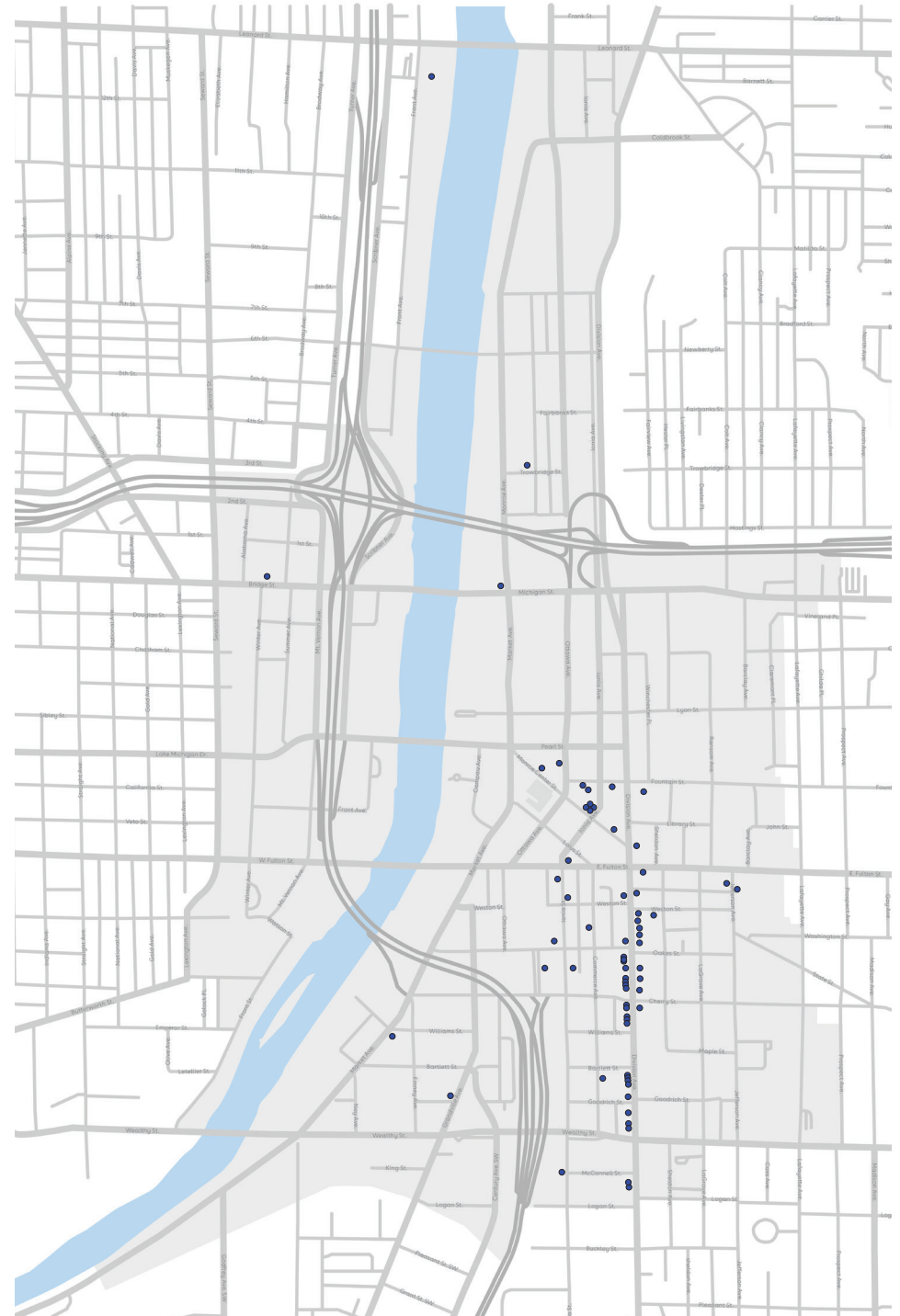
10 Ionia Ave NW #1 (TBA @ Residence Inn)

10 Ionia Ave NW #2 (TBA @ Residence Inn)

Anticipated new storefronts:

111 Lyon St NW development - May 2021

430 Monroe Ave NW development - 2022



Downtown Office Space Vacancy

3.4%

overall **increase** in
vacancy rates in 2020

This equates to

6,405

square feet of
office space

Colliers estimates

5.7M

square feet of occupied
space in Q3 2020, a

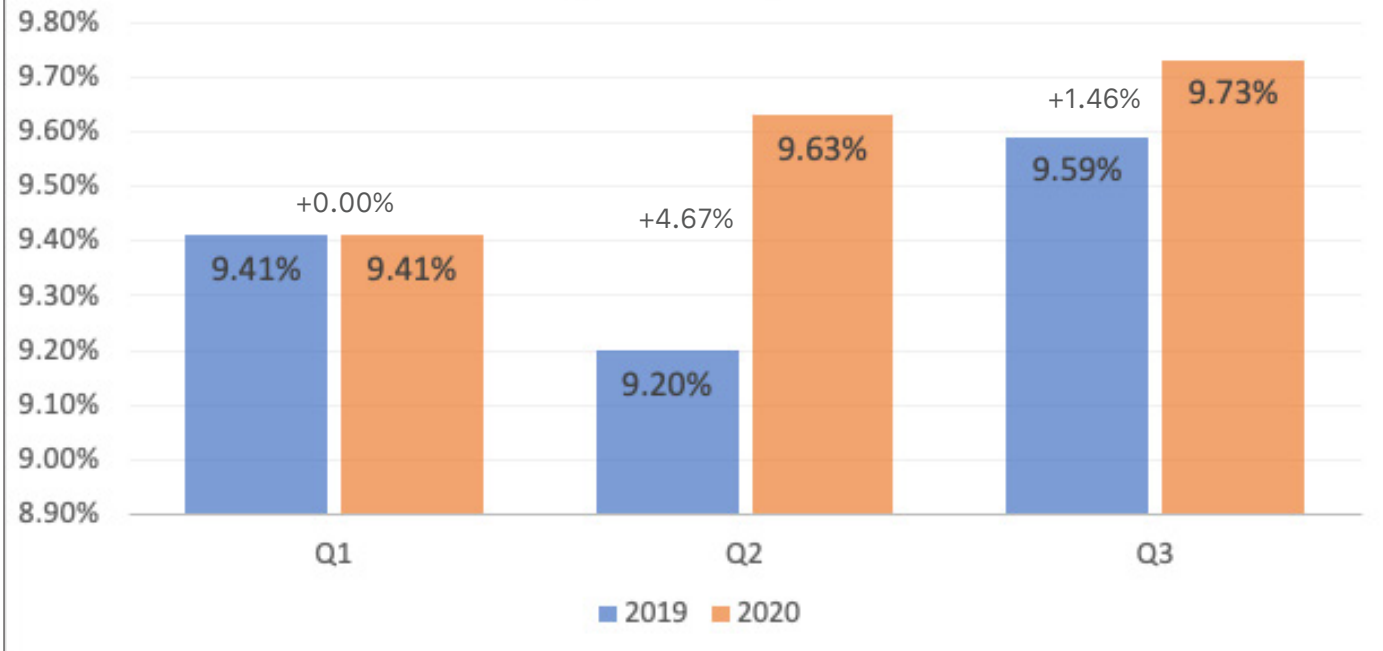
2.6%

decrease since
Q1 2020

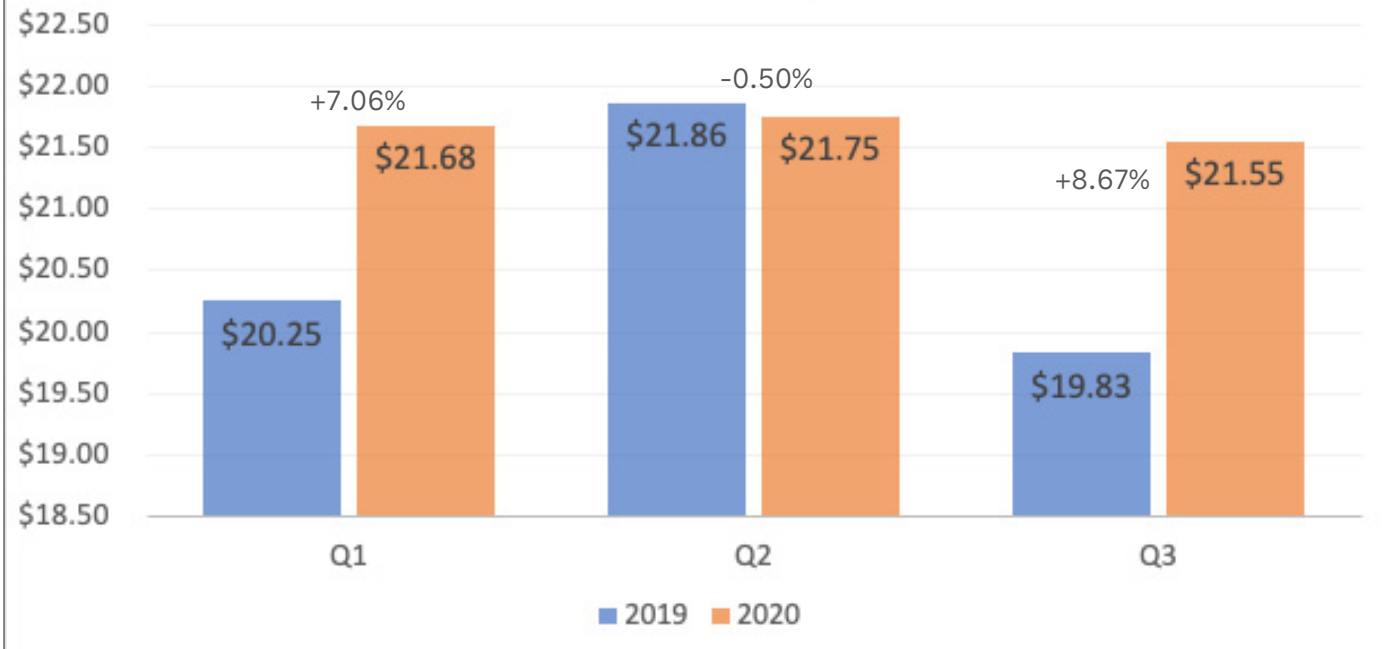
0.6%

overall **decrease** in
rental rates (\$0.13)

Downtown Office Space Vacancy Rates 2019 vs. 2020



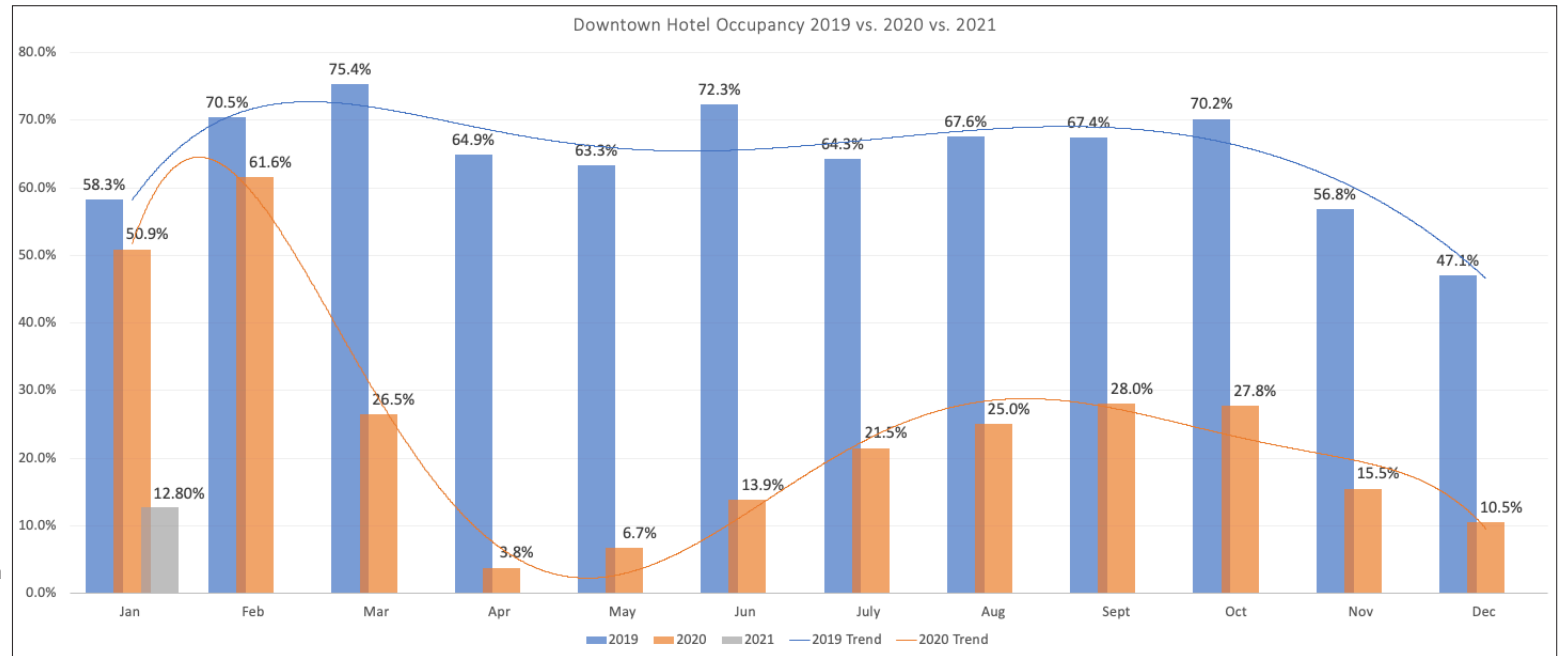
Downtown Office Space Rental Rates (per sq ft) 2019 vs. 2020



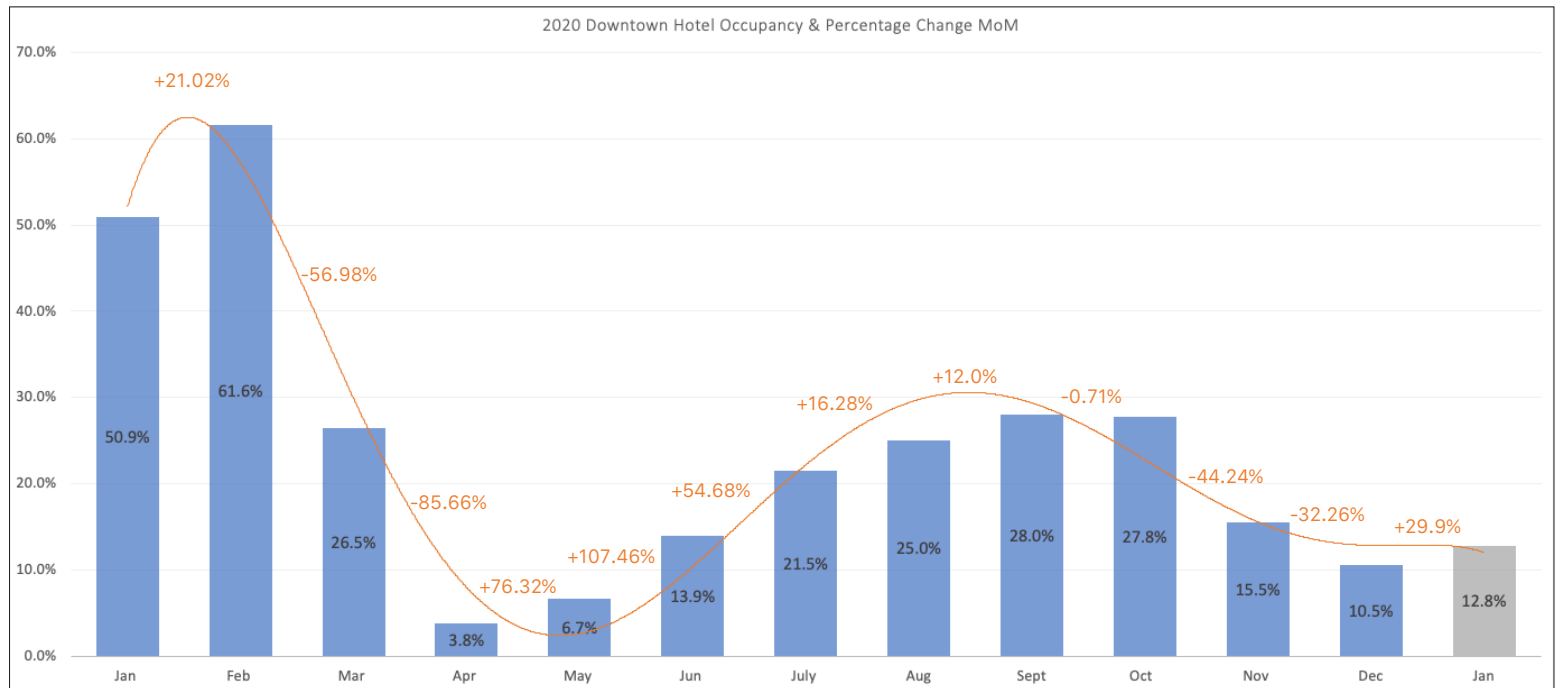
Downtown Hotel Occupancy

74%
average decrease
in hotel occupancy
during COVID

The point change between October and November in 2019 and 2020 is comparable (12.3% and 13.4% respectively), indicating that although occupancy did decrease it decreased at the same rate in 2020 as it does in non-COVID years.



4.47%
average increment
of recovery between
May and Sept 2020



City Employment Rates

Key Dates

March 15, 2020

MI closes bars/restaurants for dine-in, gyms, theaters and other public places.

June 8, 2020

MI restaurants and bars can reopen at limited capacity.

September 9, 2020

MI gyms, pools and organized sports are allowed to reopen/resume.

July 1, 2020

MI recloses indoor service at bars.

November 18, 2020

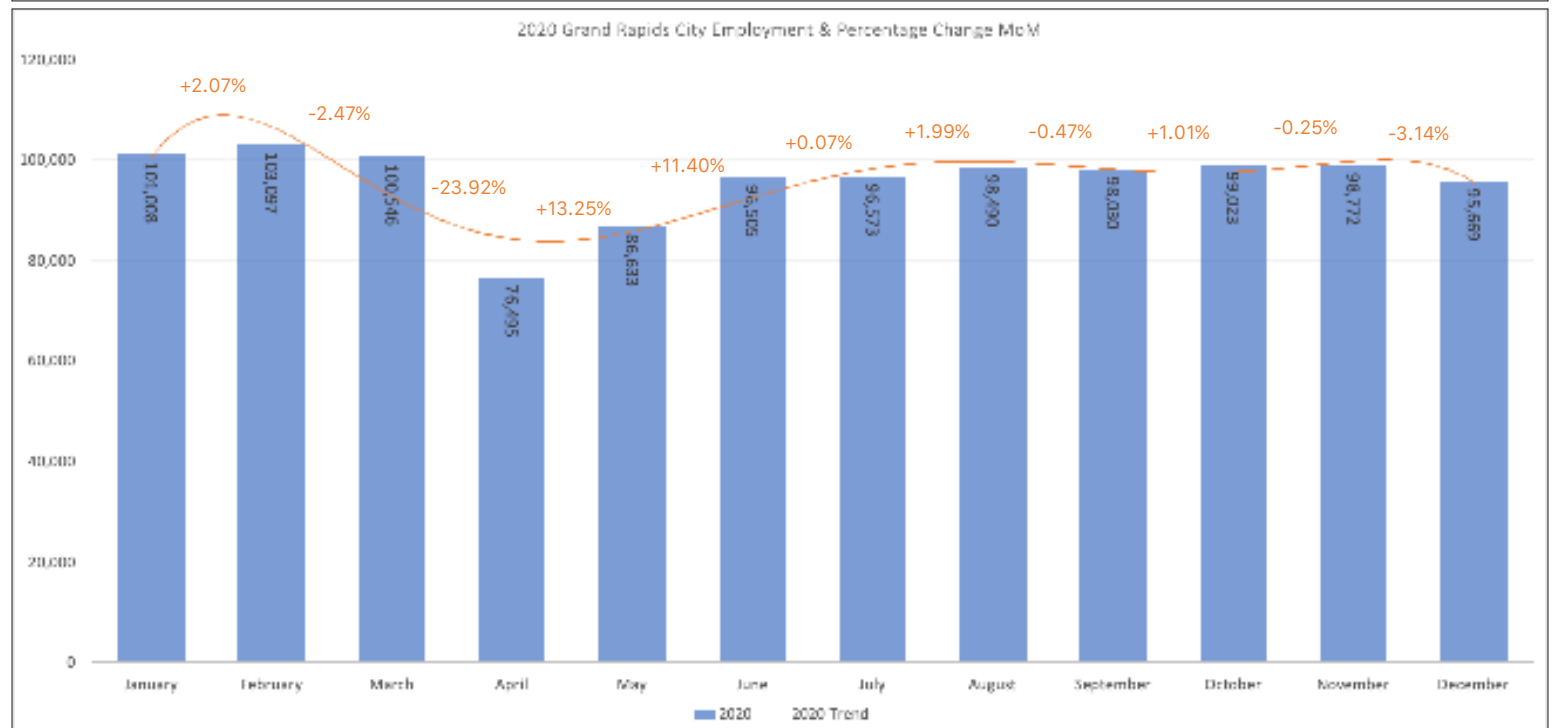
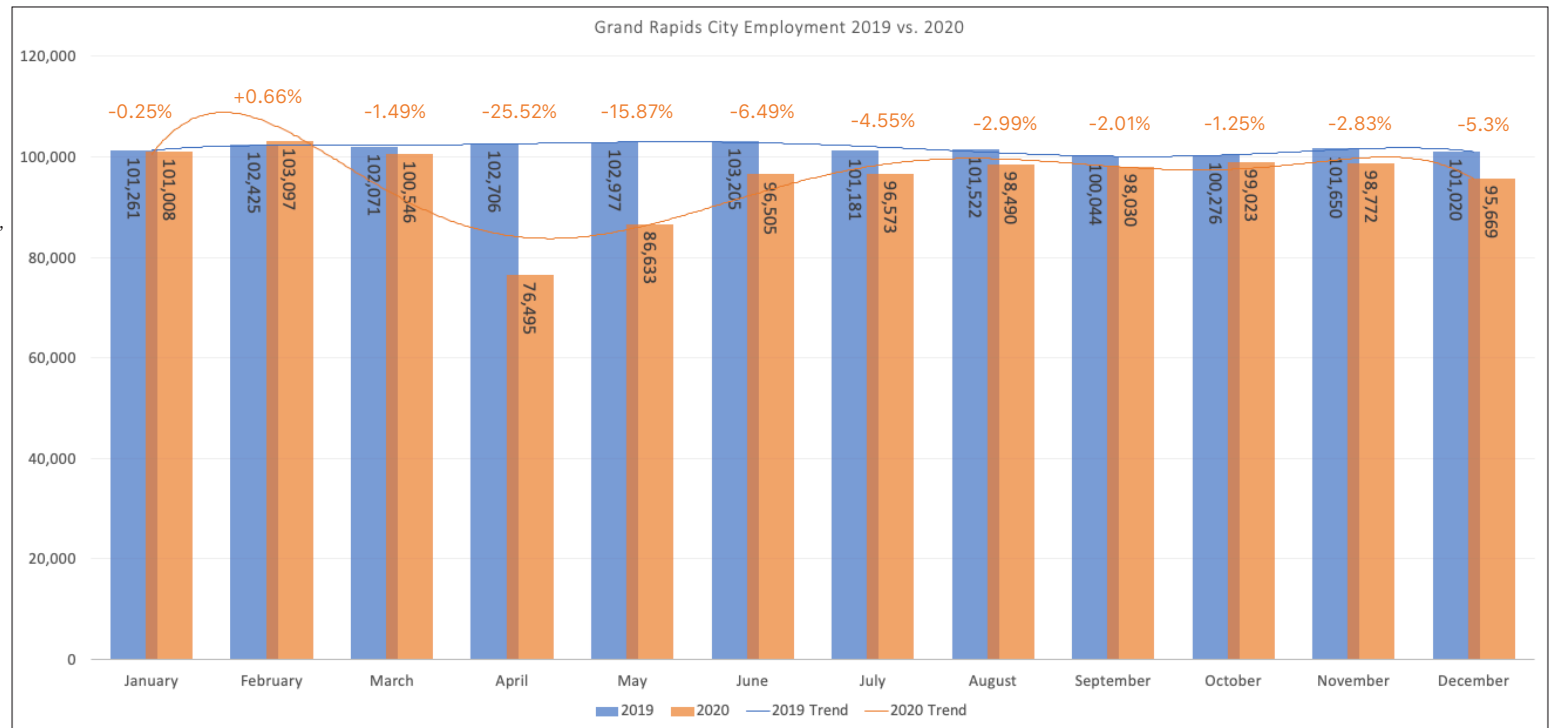
MI closes indoor dining, theaters, bowling alleys, casinos, group fitness classes, organized sports (other than professional sports).

December 18, 2020

MI reopens some businesses such as casinos, cinemas, bowling alleys. Indoor dining remains closed.

February 1, 2021

MI indoor dining reopens with capacity restrictions, 10 p.m. curfew, previously established restrictions.



Downtown Pedestrian Activity

61%

overall **decrease** in pedestrian activity, ranging from **-70%** in April 2020 to **-28%** in August 2020

- ① **Bridge St & Summer Ave** has one of the historically largest volume of pedestrian activity in the district. It experienced a **79% decrease** in activity in March-May 2020 when compared to previous years. Social Zone deployment in June assisted activity with an **84% average increase** in the months the zones were active.

Pedestrian traffic **more than doubled** in February 2021 when compared to the two preceding winter months, due in part to World of Winter activity.

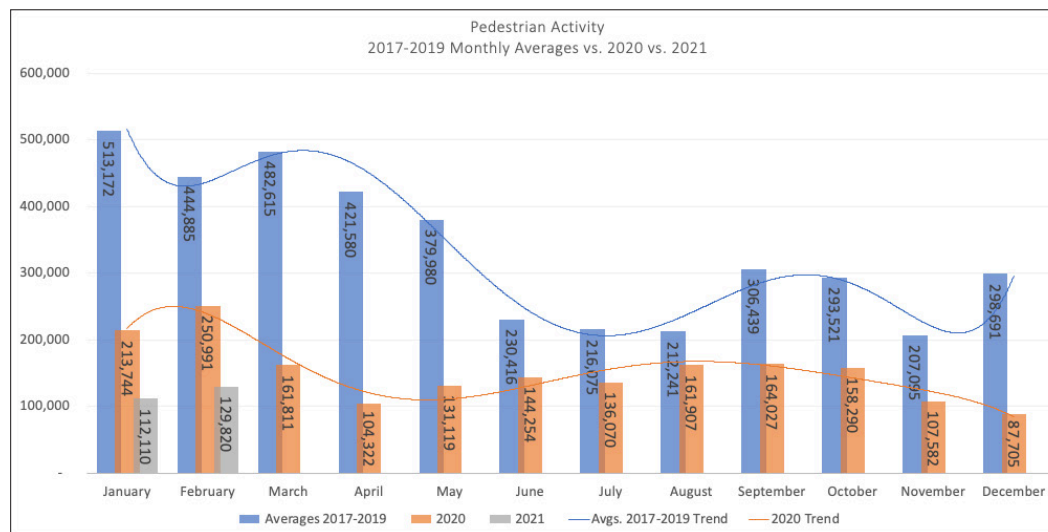
- ③ **Ah-Nab-Awen Park** had an overall **36% decrease** in pedestrian activity during the pandemic, though it did not see the same dramatic decrease in March and April as most street locations did, and maintained steady traffic throughout May to October.



- ② **Monroe Ave & Trowbridge St** experienced one of the smallest impacts during the pandemic, with only a **20% decrease** in pedestrian activity, even when considering the high numbers produced during World of Winter 2020 (pre-pandemic). It saw its highest traffic in October and November 2020 - **more than double** the traffic in April and May 2020.

- ④ **Rosa Parks Circle** saw the largest decrease in total pedestrian activity during the pandemic. Specifically, this location saw a **90% decrease** in activity in March when compared to previous years. Social Zone deployment in June 2020 **tripled** that activity and has remained steady ever since.

RPC was **twice** as busy as it has been on average since January 2020 during February 2021, in large part due to World of Winter traffic.



WOW 2021 weekends have been on average

84%

busier than the winter weekends preceding it

Current Downtown Construction and Development

- ① GVSU - anticipated May 2021
+160,000 square feet of office space
+66 parking spaces
- ② GVSU/Spectrum Parking - anticipated May 2021
+1,220 parking spaces
- ③ The Finnley Hotel - anticipated June 2021
+5 hotel units
- ④ Amway Grand Plaza Renovation - anticipated June 2021
- ⑤ Acrisure Headquarters- anticipated Spring 2021
+105,000 square feet of office space
+150 market condos
+400 jobs
- ⑥ RDV Corp. Headquarters - anticipated Spring 2021
+100,000 square feet of office space
+9,700 square feet of commercial retail space
- ⑦ Fifth Third Redevelopment - anticipated Summer 2021
+100,000 square feet of office space
+44,000 square feet of commercial space
- ⑧ Integrated Architecture - anticipated Fall 2021
+13,600 square feet of office space
+20 parking spaces
+52 jobs
- ⑨ The Morton Hotel - anticipated 2021
+32 hotel units
- ⑩ MSU Innovation Park - anticipated late 2021
+200,000 square feet of office space
+600 parking spaces
+250 jobs

679k
square feet of
office space

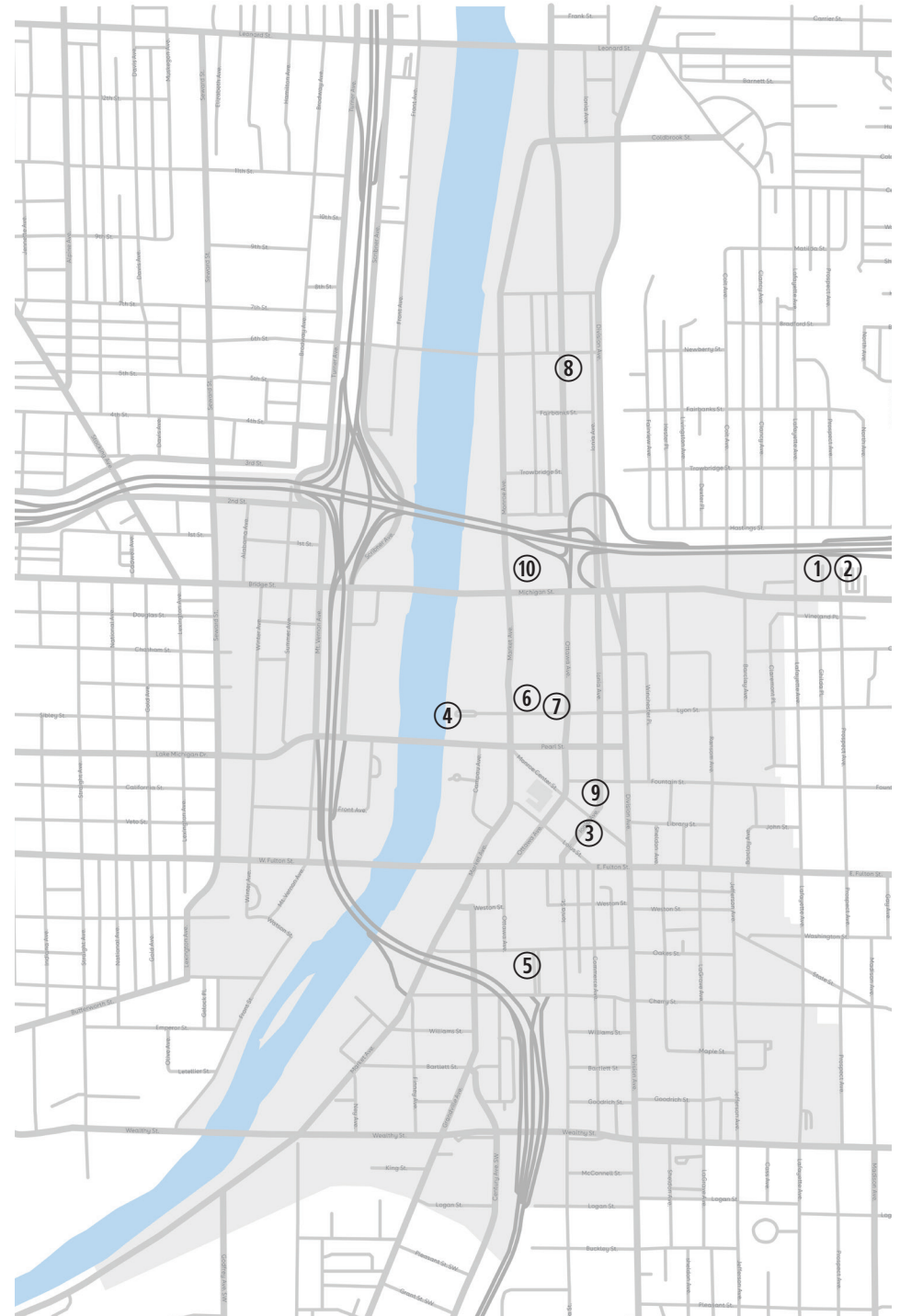
54k
square feet of
commercial space

150
residential units

37
hotel rooms

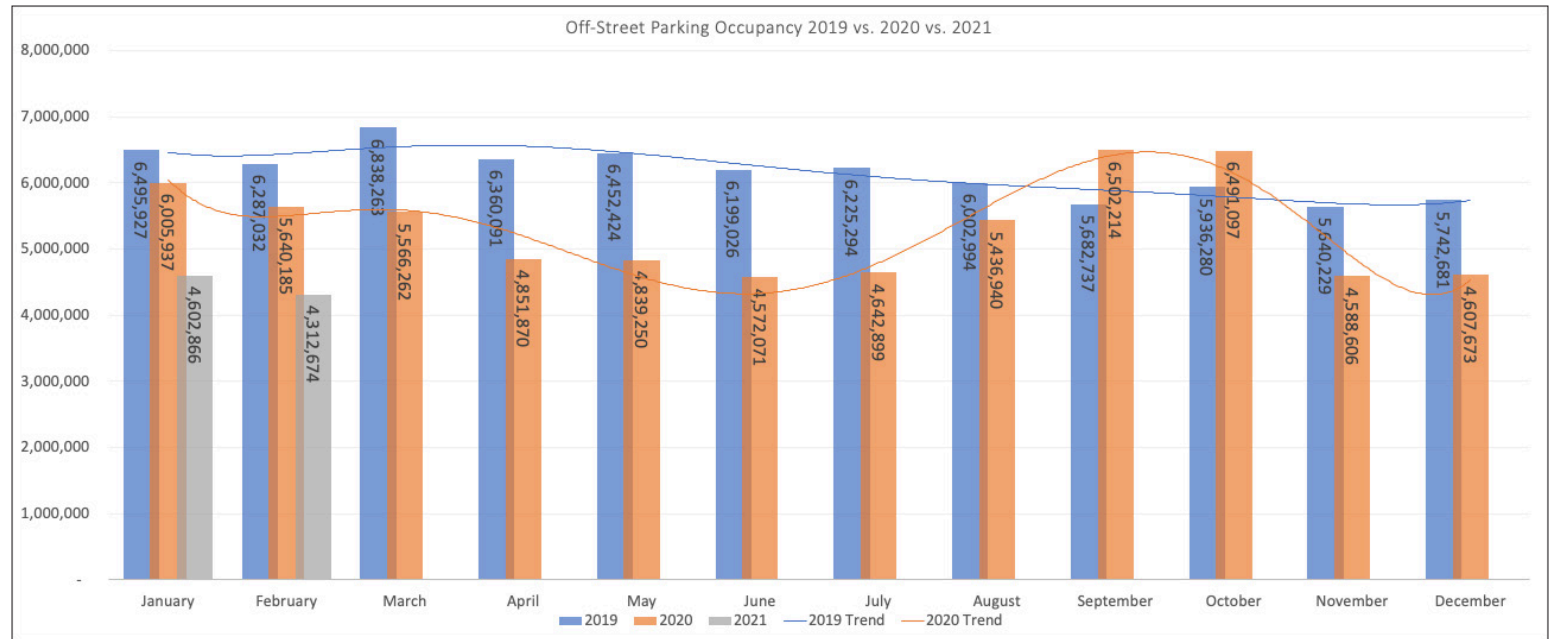
1,906
parking spaces

702
new jobs



Downtown On- and Off-Street Parking

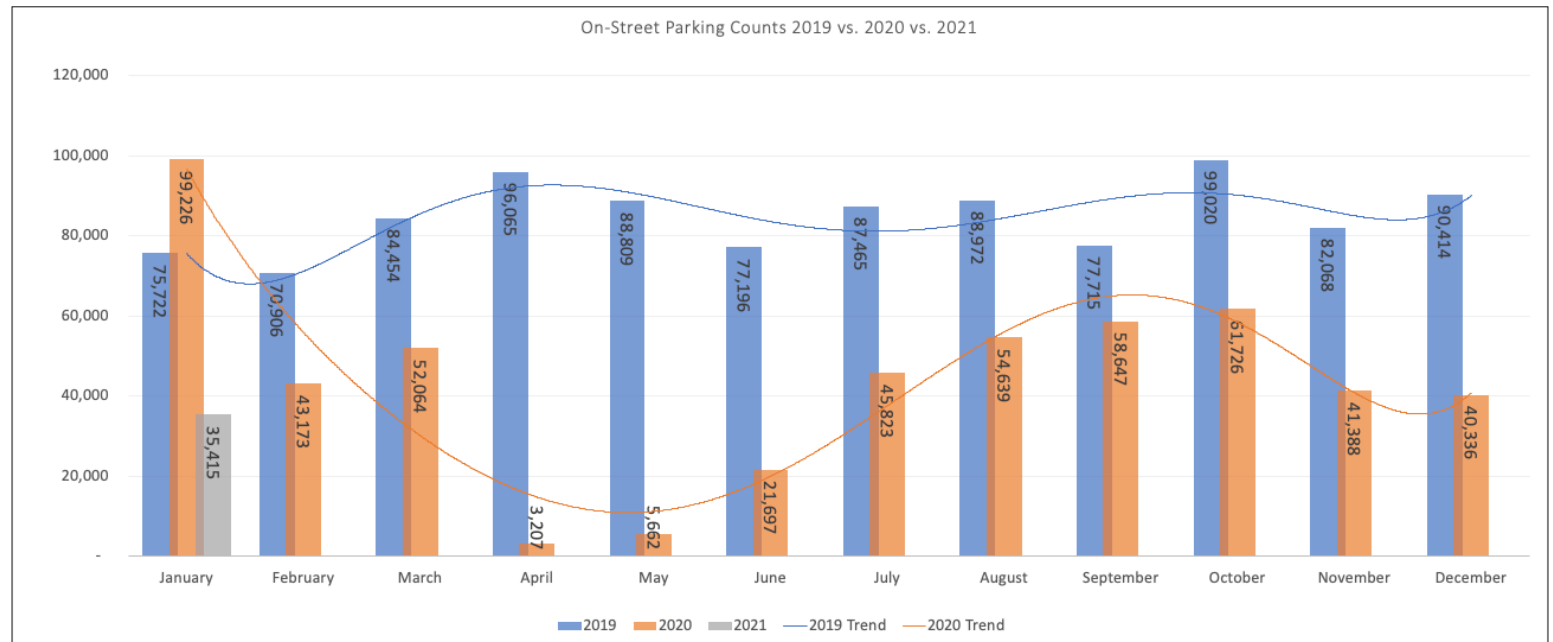
18%
average decrease in
off-street occupancy
during COVID



	Jan Δ	Feb Δ	March Δ	April Δ	May Δ	June Δ	July Δ	Aug Δ	Sept Δ	Oct Δ	Nov Δ	Dec Δ
2019 vs. 2020	-7.54%	-10.29%	-18.60%	-23.71%	-25.00%	-26.25%	-25.42%	-9.43%	14.42%	9.35%	-18.65%	-19.76%
2020 vs. 2021	-23.36%	-23.54%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

56%
average decrease in
on-street occupancy
during COVID

March 24th, 2020 - July 6th 2020:
meter enforcement was suspended.



	Jan Δ	Feb Δ	March Δ	April Δ	May Δ	June Δ	July Δ	Aug Δ	Sept Δ	Oct Δ	Nov Δ	Dec Δ
2019 vs. 2020	31.04%	-39.11%	-38.35%	-96.66%	-93.62%	-71.89%	-47.61%	-38.59%	-24.54%	-37.66%	-49.57%	-55.52%
2020 vs. 2021	-64.31%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

DASH Ridership

70%
average **decrease**
in ridership
during COVID

Timeline of Interrupted Schedule:

On **March 26th**, DASH services changed to:

DASH West 15-minute frequency

DASH North 20-minute frequency

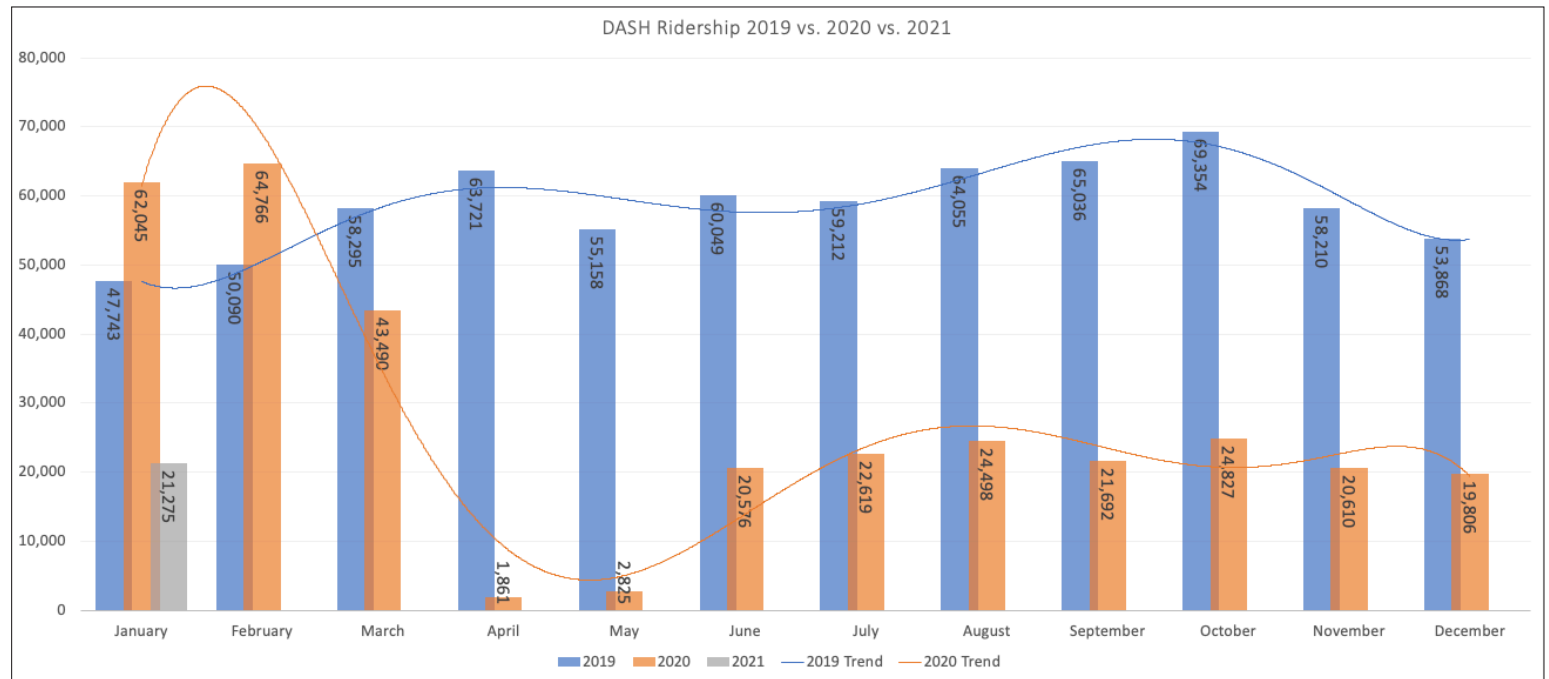
Operating 7am - 7pm, Mon - Fri

On **April 10th**, DASH services were temporarily suspended

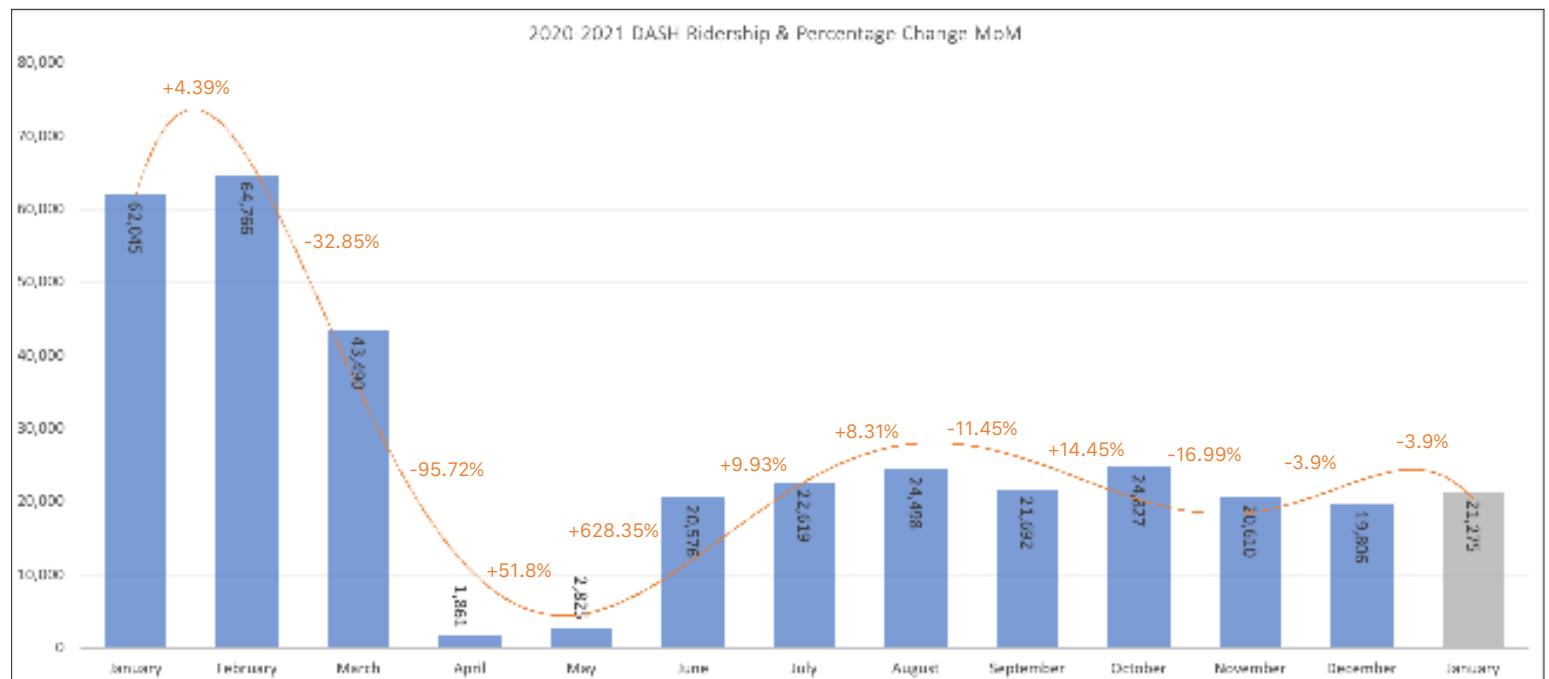
On **May 26th**, DASH services changed to:

Reduced number of vehicles

Operating 6am - 10 pm, Mon - Sat



	Jan Δ	Feb Δ	March Δ	April Δ	May Δ	June Δ	July Δ	Aug Δ	Sept Δ	Oct Δ	Nov Δ	Dec Δ
2019 vs. 2020	29.96%	29.30%	-25.40%	-97.08%	-94.88%	-65.73%	-61.80%	-61.75%	-66.65%	-64.20%	-64.59%	-63.23%
2020 vs. 2021	-65.71%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



Source: The Rapid

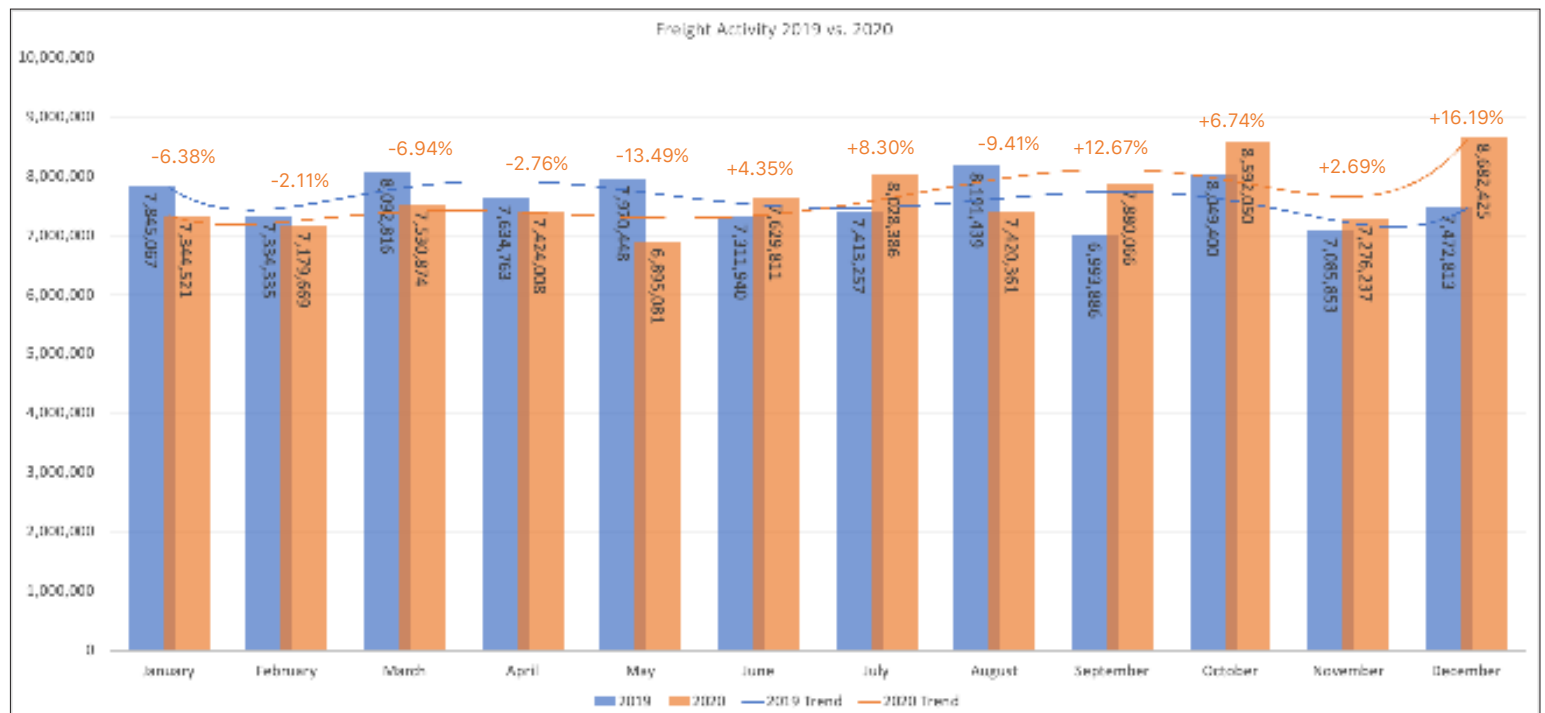
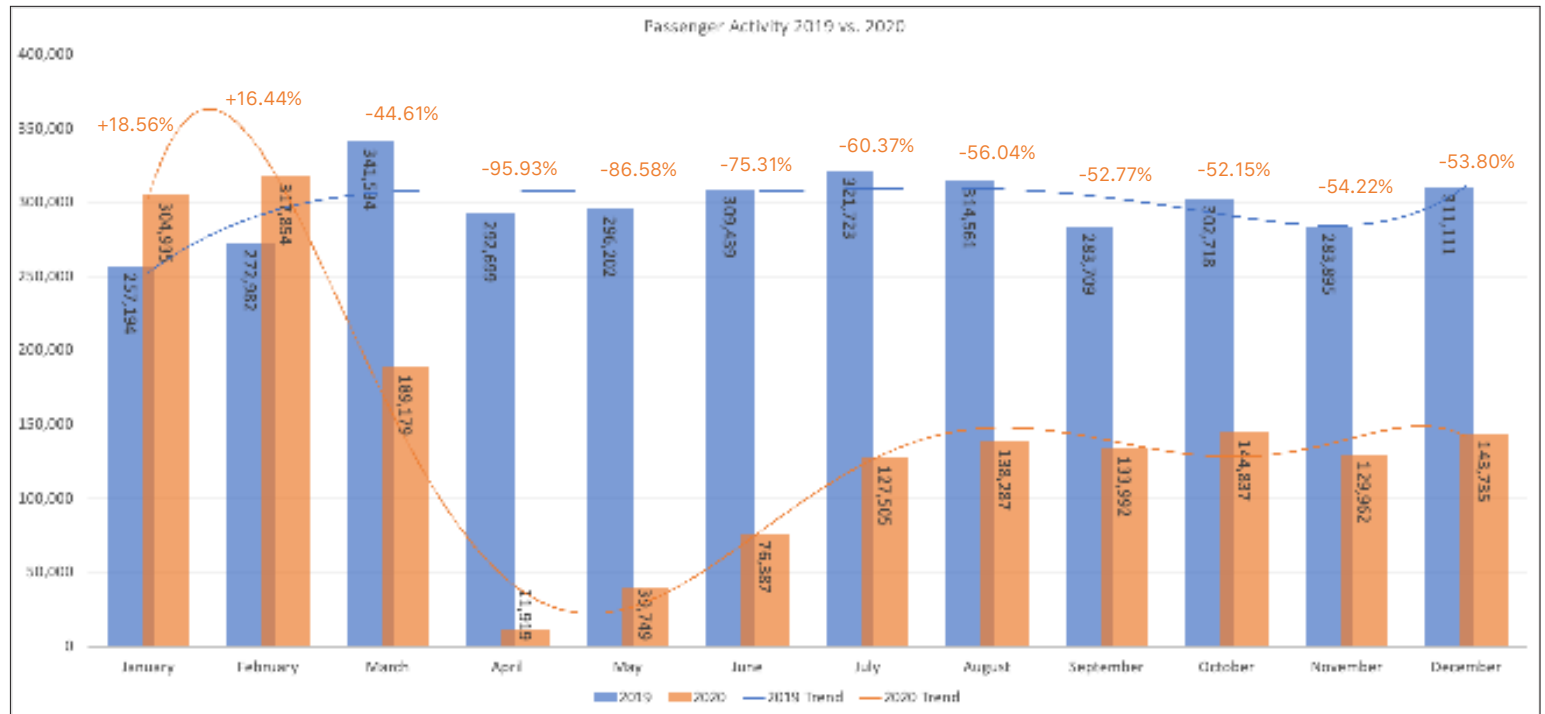
Gerald R. Ford International Airport Activity

65%
overall **decrease** in
passenger activity

2.5%
overall **increase** in
freight activity

41%
decrease in
passenger activity in
February-March 2020

94%
decrease in
passenger activity in
March-April 2020.



Kent County Vaccination Distribution & Administration

Kent County has a population of 656,955 (2019).

DeVos Place administered **over 8,000 vaccines** in its first week.

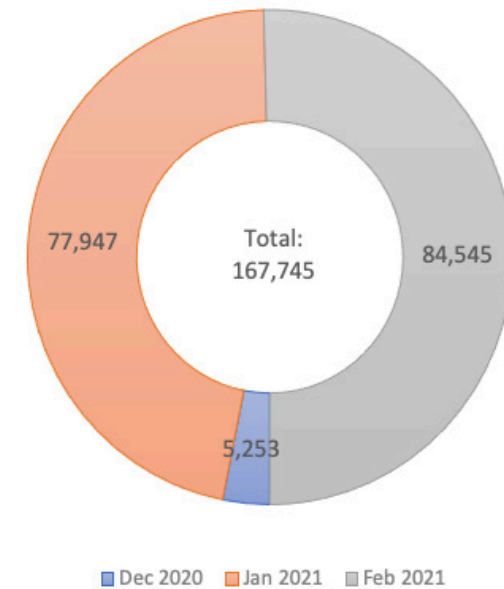
Mercy Health + St. Joe's have administered **70,327 1st doses** and **49,440 2nd doses** as of 2/22/2021.

92%
doses administered
80% nation-wide
87% state-wide
MI currently ranked **7th**

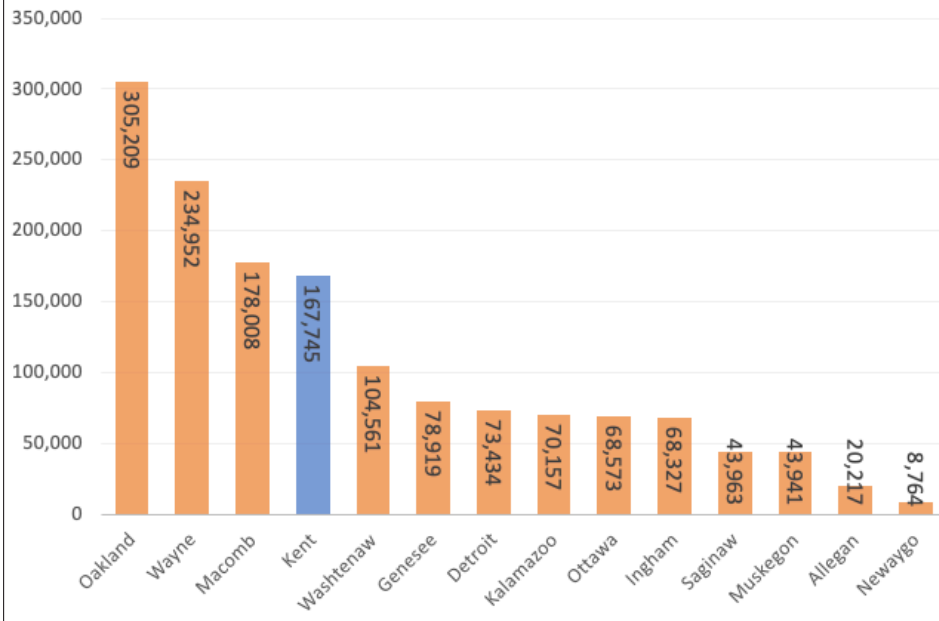
60%
of administered
vaccines are the
1st dose

192
enrolled vaccination
locations

Total Vaccines Administered in Kent County

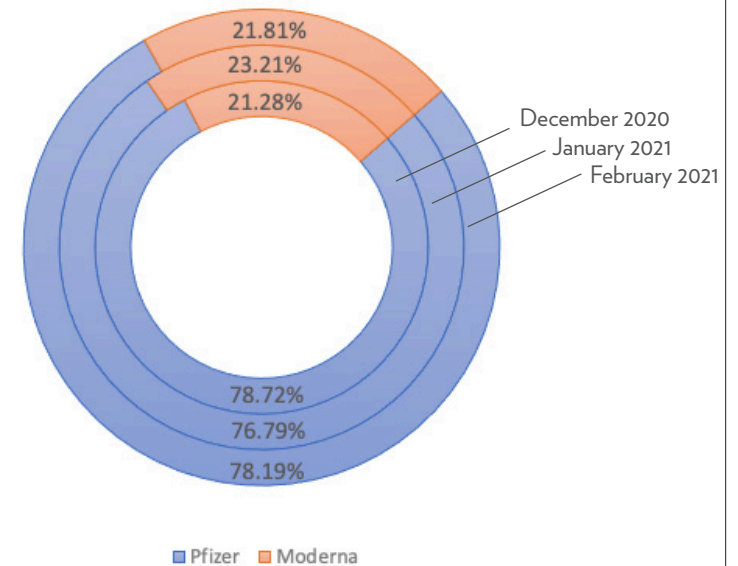


Number of Vaccines Administered Per County



Vaccine Distribution Per Vaccine Type in Kent County

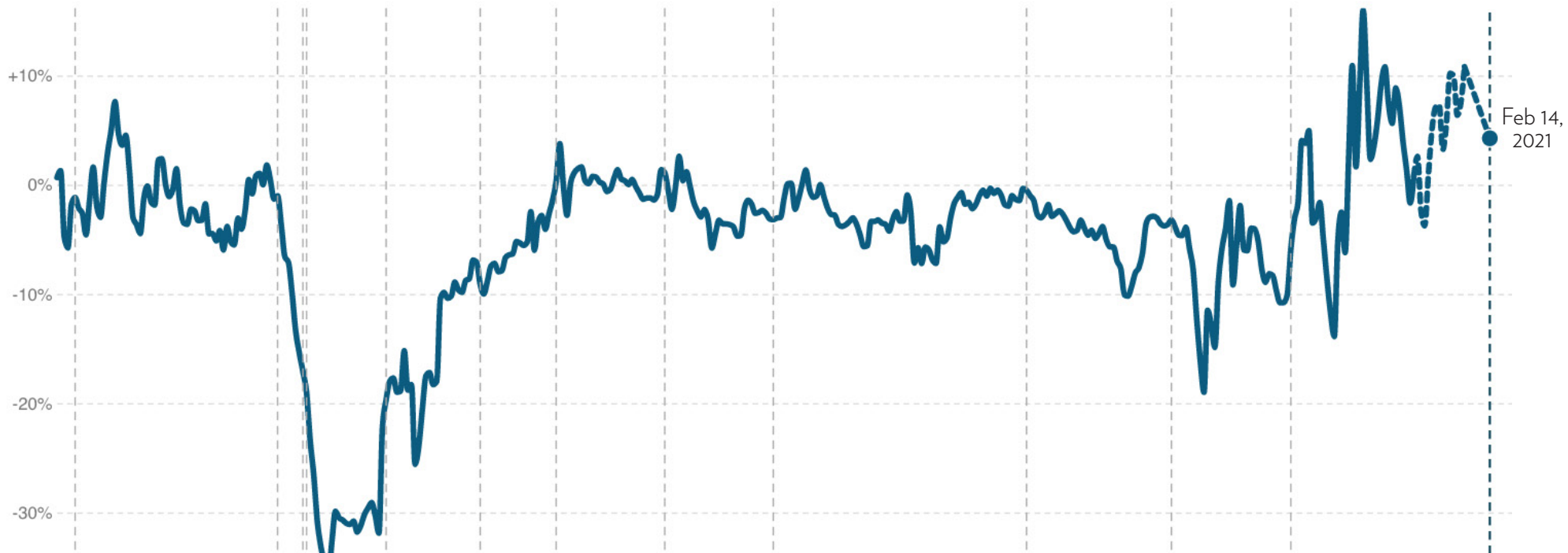
Overall
78%
Pfizer
22%
Moderna



Michigan Consumer Spending

Percent Change in All Consumer Spending*

In **Michigan**, as of **February 14 2021**, total spending by all consumers **increased** by **4.3%** compared to January 2020.



Key Dates

March 10, 2020 - Michigan confirms its first two COVID cases; State of Emergency declared

March 13, 2020 - Gov. Whitmer closes all K-12 schools; bans gatherings of 250 or more

March 15, 2020 - Gov. Whitmer orders the closure of bars/restaurants for dine-in, gyms, theaters, and other public places

March 24, 2020 - statewide stay-at-home order begins (subsequently extended 4 times)

April 13, 2020 - first round of stimulus payments begins

June 19, 2020 - stay-at-home order expires

September 9, 2020 - gyms, pools, and organized sports are allowed to reopen/resume

October 9, 2020 - movie theaters, performance venues, arcades, and other businesses can reopen at limited capacity

November 15, 2020 - Gov. Whitmer orders the closure of high schools and universities, as well as other businesses (extended on December 7, 2020)

December 18, 2020 - partial shutdown extended but allows for some businesses like theaters, casinos, and bowling alleys to reopen at limited capacity

December 29, 2020 - second round of stimulus payments begins

February 1, 2021 - Indoor dining reopens with limited capacity, curfew, and other requirements

MEMORANDUM

MONROE
NORTH
TIFA



TIFA

DATE: March 4, 2021
TO: Monroe North TIFA
FROM: Andy Guy, COO
SUBJECT: **Grand River Governance Recommendation**

Agenda Item #03
March 10, 2021
MNTIFA Meeting

This memo recommends a governance model to develop, manage, program and maintain the public capital assets associated with the revitalization and activation of the Grand River Corridor from Riverside to Millennium Parks. This memo also requests funding to continue the governance organizing effort.

When Grand Rapids Whitewater (GRWW) and the City of Grand Rapids complete their work, a 2+ mile reach of the Grand River will emerge as a renewed social, economic and environmental asset flowing through the urban core of Kent County.

The transformation of the *waterway* will catalyze significant new community building opportunities along the *waterfront*.

Conceptual community planning to date has identified more than two dozen “opportunities sites” that can rise to higher and better use as much-needed housing, business and public recreational space. Community partners already have begun organizing for major improvements on several sites.

The full vision also involves building out the river edge “trail” or “green ribbon” to tie together Downtown, the opportunity sites and existing amenities such as Millennium and Riverside Parks – ultimately transforming this currently isolated, industrialized and underutilized reach of river into an active and vibrant 5-mile stretch of Grand River greenway.

Similar to public facilities such as Van Andel Arena, DeVos Place Convention Center or Meijer Gardens, the joined public assets in this future rejuvenated corridor – the whitewater and restored waterway, trail and expanded green space – has powerful potential to become, not just a major new attraction for visitors to our region, but also an important driver of local growth towards an increasingly more livable, equitable and prosperous place for all Grand Rapidsians.

This clearly has proven the case in other forward-thinking cities with similar projects – including but certainly not limited to riverfronts in Memphis, Denver and Detroit, the Cultural Trail in Indianapolis, and the Atlanta BeltLine. Lessons drawn from these and other cities also affirm that – to truly be successful – these unique public facilities require special focus, expertise, partnership, and management, not unlike an arena, convention center or Downtown district.

The question is how do we execute? GRWW organized specifically to lead implementation of the in-channel improvements. But once that work is complete, how does the community sustain those *waterway* improvements over time, provide accessible recreation opportunities and ensure all users are safe?



DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

How does the community organize itself to revitalize, program, manage and maintain the *waterfront*, specifically the public trail and park spaces, and thereby reinforce and maximize the Grand Rapids Whitewater initiative and investment?

Collaboration is uniquely important. The Grand River waterfront is perhaps one of the most complicated locations to advance community building and improvement initiatives. A multitude of different property owners, institutions, organizations, stakeholders and permitting agencies have an interest in the corridor, and they all have different needs, roles, responsibilities, capacities and decision-making processes.

Deliberately and intentionally cultivating collaboration, joint effort and support is critical to bring the community's vision for the river to life and make the most of this generational opportunity.

Working together as the Organizational Leadership Committee (OLC), a diverse group of community stakeholders convened over several months to consider these governance questions and recommend an approach. Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. facilitated the process with support from the staff of partner agencies and the retained services of HR&A Advisors and Kathy Blaha Consulting.

There is consensus among the OLC that a two-pronged governance model is the most appropriate and promising approach:

- Establish a new nonprofit entity capable of serving as a backbone agency that cultivates collaboration and coordination to implement the community vision for river corridor revitalization and activation.

The NGO model should be flexible and evolve with the needs of the project, ultimately developing the partnerships, proficiency and capacity to coordinate the long-term leadership needs of the project and corridor. This includes but is not limited to visioning, strategic planning and communications; capital planning, operations and maintenance; programming and public space activation; and the long-term sustainability of the public capital assets associated with the project, as well as public engagement, fundraising support, equity and inclusion organizing and other stewardship services.

- Establish, on a parallel track, a Recreational Authority under Michigan law, through a partnership of Kent County, the City of Grand Rapids and perhaps other key governmental jurisdictions upstream, downstream or otherwise connected to the river recreation system.

Similar to the CAA, DDA and other successful local models, the Authority tool, among other advantages, serves as the foundation for regional coordination, public-private collaboration and greater flexibility to access multiple funding sources. The Authority also helps strike a balance between independent governance (i.e. the ability to define and deliver on the Project's vision) and public accountability with respect to leadership, engagement, funding and public space stewardship.

The OLC and consulting team evaluated a range of governance options, including but not limited to existing local government agencies, local nonprofits, special purpose authorities as well as best organizational practices at similar public facilities in other communities. Agreement emerged that an independent not-for-profit entity, working in tandem with a Recreation Authority, meets the governance objectives and is an appropriate model for the long-term management of the project.

With the endorsement of this governance recommendation by the river corridor revitalization partners, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc will assist the startup efforts for the next 6 – 12 months. DGRl will provide project management, mentoring and organizational support related to:

- Incorporation of the not-for-profit entity.

- Recruitment of a Board of Directors (several OLC members have agreed to continue).
- Supporting initial organizational development ie formation of committees, community advisory, etc.
- Retaining community engagement services to broaden community inclusion in the continued organizing process.
- Developing a Business and Fundraising Plan to guide the not-for-profit entity.
- Drafting an initial memorandum of understanding between the non-profit and key partner agencies.
- Developing an Equity Framework to center equity and inclusion practice in non-profit and, by extension, river corridor revitalization efforts going forward.
- Organizing and initiating a Corridor Connections Plan process to identify partnership opportunities, shape roles, define capital priorities and support implementation.
- Recruitment of key initial staff.
- Convene dialogue to further explore the potential for a Recreational Authority, which ultimately requires approval of local legislative bodies.

This recommendation builds on substantial community conversation to date. The community has invested a tremendous amount of time, talent and engagement specifically to explore potential governance models for the river, parks and recreation services more generally vis-à-vis the City's River for All Strategic Asset Management Plan (2018), the Organizational Models Work Group Report (2015) and the Kent County Multi-Jurisdictional Parks Study (2012).

This recommendation builds on this experience and aims to lay the foundation for the successful completion and long-term sustainability of the river corridor revitalization project the community has put forward.

Now is a uniquely opportune time to move forward quickly and diligently on this governance recommendation. GRWW has begun moving into the formal permitting process. The construction schedule and sequencing for in-channel and subsequent edge improvements is coming into view. And the federal government is designing a once-in-a-decade economic recovery package largely organized around infrastructure investment directly aligned with Grand River corridor priorities.

These recommended organizing and capacity-building next steps position our community to maximize the opportunity and drive transformation of the Grand River corridor over the next decade and beyond.

Recommendations:

1. **Endorse the recommended governance model and support continued DGRI staff effort to organize same.**
2. **Authorize MNTIFA funding not to exceed \$25,000 to a) retain the services of Kathy Blaha Consulting to support formation of the new nonprofit entity and b) retain the services of HR&A to finalize the phase one benefits analysis of river corridor revitalization.**

The following supporting process documents are available upon request:

- Organizational Leadership Committee Roster
- Grand River Governance Memo, prepared by Kathy Blaha, August 2020
- Draft Vision, Mission, Purpose & Values Statements, prepared by Kathy Blaha, December 2020
- Framework for Equitable Engagement, prepared by Sergio Cira Reyes, September 2020
- The Value of the Grand River Benefits Analysis, prepared by HR&A Consultants, February 2021
- Grand Rapids Visit Wrap Up Memo, prepared by Daniel Tellalian, September 2019