ACTIVATE THIS PLACE

Placemaking grants available for public space activation including, artwork, window displays, parklets and more Downtown Grand Rapids

DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

About Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.'s (DGRI) mission is to accelerate Downtown Grand Rapids transition to a best-in-class American City.

As a community-based organization, the foundation of DGRI is engaging the community and developing inter-organizational partnerships that deliver successful outcomes. In addition to our staff, the DGRI model is one that involves more than 120 citizens of the greater Grand Rapids community in the organization's fiduciary boards, oversight Alliances, and steering committees - each one, an individual with their own voice and vision for Downtown.

About DGRI's GR Forward Goal 5 Alliance

DGRI hosts five citizen Alliances organized to advance the goals of GR Forward bring together people with different knowledge, perspectives, and backgrounds to solve problems, identify opportunities and support the day-to-day work of improving Grand Rapids' central city.

Each Alliance effectively function as community-driven steering committees helping to guide DGRI's overall body of work. GR Forward Goal 5 Alliance advises on public space program and projects that create an ever more welcoming and inclusive Downtown.

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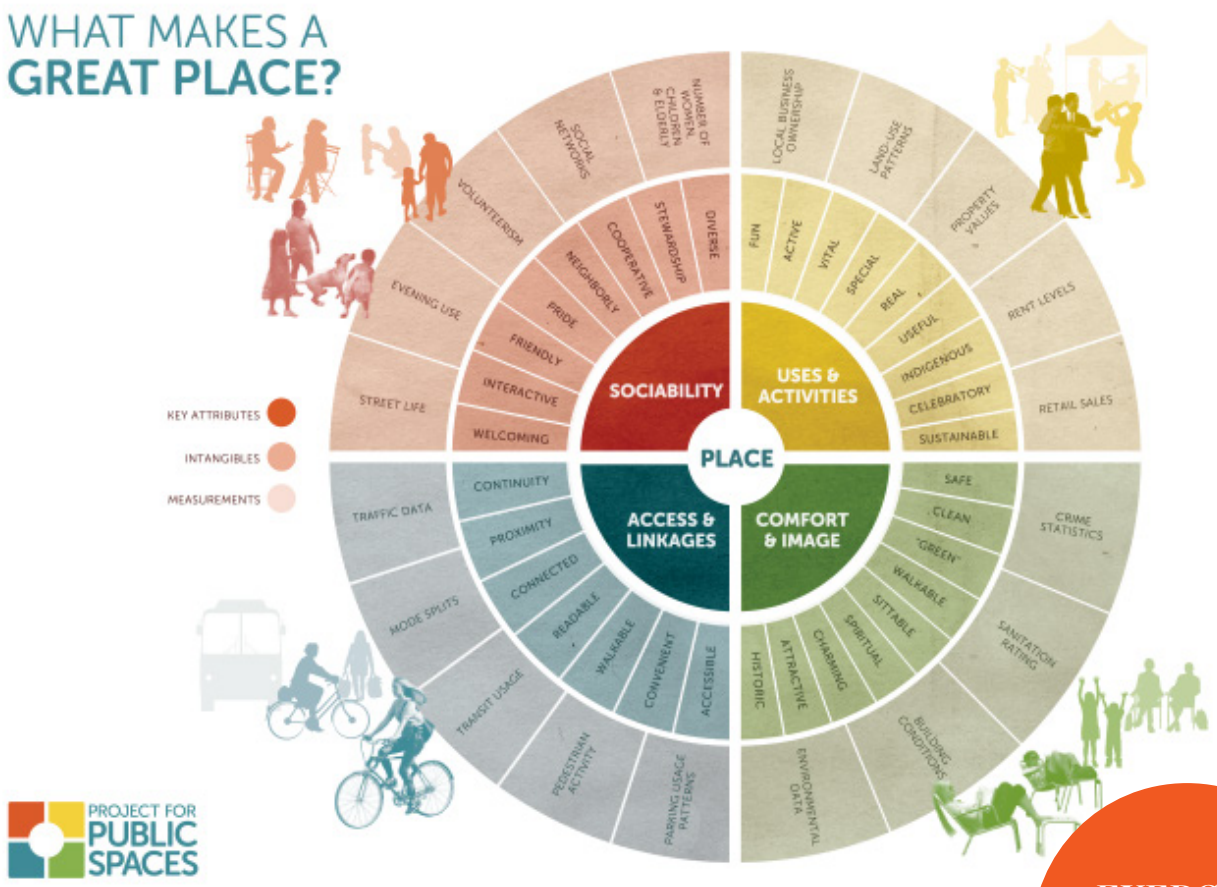
What is Placemaking?

MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning defines placemaking as "The deliberate shaping of an environment to facilitate social interaction and improve a community's quality of life."

Projects for Public Spaces explains that "Placemaking inspires people to collectively re-imagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution."



EXERCISE YOUR IMAGINATION

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About the Activate This Place Placemaking Grant Programs

DGRI offers grant support for activating public spaces to culturally enhance our community by building environments at the local level. The purpose of this grant is to engage the community to be proactive in identifying positive ways to improve the health and well-being of the community, while also providing a platform to be creative with space.

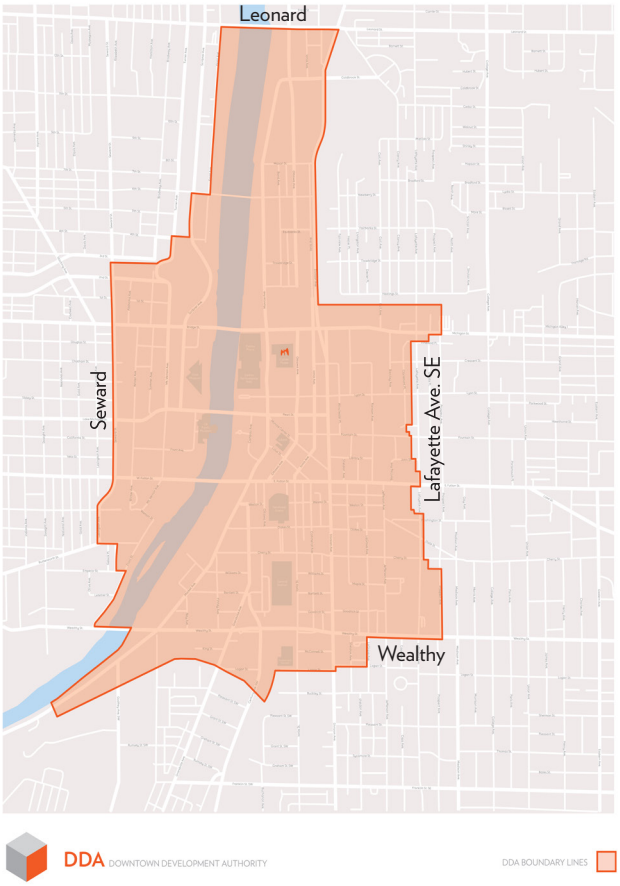
We are looking for creative solutions that transform our community and your Downtown!

GOALS

- Incorporate more art, culture, spaces and design within the Downtown
- Make our streets and spaces vibrant and livable
- Foster stories of our Downtown neighborhood
- Give an opportunity for the public to get involved within the Downtown by using and contributing their own creativity
- Put ownership of public space back into the community
- Bring artists, art organizations, businesses, government and the community together to develop positive experiences

AREAS OF FOCUS

Key areas of focus include; public art installations, programming, and interactive initiatives through the Placemaking Grant, art installations through the Window Activation Grant, and providing a sense of place through the Parklet Grant, all in an effort to activate our public spaces.



ALL PROPOSALS FOR GRANT IMPLEMENTATIONS MUST BE HELD WITHIN THE DDA BOUNDARIES.

TRANSFORM A SPACE

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Three Grants Available for Funding

PLACEMAKING GRANT

Funding Available Up To: $5,000

Summer Submission Deadline: June 1 (reoccuring)
Winter Submission Deadline: January 1 (reoccuring)

The Placemaking Grant provides funding for temporary and semi-permanent installations outdoors on public and private property that affects and helps to activate the public realm that it surrounds. This program provides flexibility for creativity in unique spaces throughout the Downtown that are in need of some public space activation intervention.

Once the DGRI Goal 5 Alliance reviews each application, they will make a recommendation for funding. Once a recommendation is made, DGRI will be in touch with you regarding funding for your application. Funding is limited and highly competitive. Funding is not guaranteed.

If funding is approved by the Goal 5 Alliance, you will then need to submit any and all paperwork to the City of Grand Rapids Arts Advisory Council (AAC) for approval. The Goal 5 Alliance and the AAC review time could take up to 3 months or more. Please plan adequately on your application for installation timeline based on application and review timeline.

WINDOW ACTIVATION GRANT

Funding Available Up To: $5,000

Spring Submission Deadline: May 1 (reoccuring)
Fall Submission Deadline: October 1 (reoccuring)

The Window Activation Grant provides funding for temporary installations that activate Downtown's street space by showcasing vacant storefront(s). Renting the space can be included as part of the funded grant. The program can engage available storefronts as retail business opportunities by spotlighting the talents of local artists. Engaging the right tenant will be critical for the success of this placemaking project. Funding is limited and highly competitive. Funding is not guaranteed.

Window Activation cannot include spaces that are:

- Indecipherable, provocative or controversial imagery and language
- Alter the facade in any capacity
- Encroach more than 6' of sidewalk clearance in the public right of way (if artwork is outside)

PARKLET GRANT

Funding Available Up To: 50% of project cost

Spring Submission Deadline: Applications accepted through May. Parklets may go out on public streets starting in April and must be removed by the beginning of November.

A parklet re-purposes part of the street into a public space for people. Parklets are intended as aesthetic enhancements to the streetspace, providing an economical solution for the need for increased public open space. Parklets provide amenities like seating, outdoor dining, planting, bike parking and art. While parklets are funded and maintained by neighboring businesses, residents, and community organizations, they are intended to provide benefits to all users of the public rights-of-way.

For those interested in learning more about this program and requirements, please refer to Grand Rapids Parklet Manual. Approved parklets shall be permitted for installation and approved through the City of Grand Rapids and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In a seperate document, please list how you plan to accomplish each category and topic listed below. Please also attach all documents listed in Application and Installation Background to your application submission. Each application is graded on the following criteria (some criteria may not be applicable based on the type of Activate This Place grant application that was submitted). Total of 30 points available. Make sure to be detailed and thoughtful in your response to each evaluation criteria.

Applicant and Installation Background

Completed entire application requirements (7 points):

- Completed application to it's entirety.
- Submitted artist bio.
- Submitted resume/CV.
- Submitted artist statement of installation.
- Provided rendering and site-map.

- Submitted goals of the project/installation.

Community Engagement

Teams up with local community partners, organizations or non-profits (1 point):

Involves community members to help with concept, installation, design or location.

Encourages the support of Downtown businesses and neighborhood partnership (1 point):

Works with business and property owners to obtain permission for the location of installation. Allows input and acknowledges feedback.

Educational opportunities (1 point):

The project/installation promotes understanding through arts and culture activities.

Uses local vendors and/or locally sourced products (1 point):

Uses and purchases project supplies/resources from/within the local Grand Rapids community.

Diverse activities (1 point):

The installation allows for a programmatic approach to inclusive and diverse activities to happen within or around the installation.

Space vs. Place

Location (1 point):

Activates a unique and underutilized space within the Downtown footprint.

Time of year (1 point):

The installation help GR Forward city master plan efforts of activation during the cooler months of the year.

Maintenance(1 point):

The applicant provides a detailed plan for maintenance and upkeep of the project/installation.

CREATE PLACES FOR PEOPLE

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Criteria continued to next page.

EVALUATION CRITERIA (cont)

Merit

Activation (1 point):
Explain how your project/installation qualify as a window, placemaking or parklet activation initiative.

Creativity (1 point)
Explains how the installation unique, innovative and engaging.

Unique and distinctly Grand Rapids (1 point):
The installation/project is a one of a kind installation and unique to Grand Rapids. Explain what makes it unique.

Safety (1 point):
The applicant provides details of how the project/installation helpst to enhance public safety.

Beautification (1 point):
The project/installation helps to beautify the Downtown area. It improves the physical environment of the space. Explain how.

Accessibility (1 point):
The project/installation accessabile all or most of the time. Explain any viewing time or date(s) restrictions.

Benefactors (1 point):
Applicant explains any groups groups that can engage and benefit from the project.

Interactive (1 point):
Explains how the public is able to interact with the installation.

Quality of Materials (1 point)
Applicant explains materials used for installation/project.

Evaluation (1 points):
Applicant explains how they will be measuring aany successes and failures of this project.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Representation (1 points):
The project/installation promotes and amplifies a diverse and inclusive representation of the many cultural and ethnic backgrounds of our city.

Access (1 point):
The applicant addresses how the project/installation expands accessibility for all.

Awareness (1 point):
Project/installation helps to raise awareness about placemaking as a catalyst for building sustainable, healthy and accesible communities.

Budget

Sponsors/In-kind/Match funding (1 point):
The applicant outlines any sought out additional funding resources. Gives information about who they have received additional support from.

Project expenses (1 point)
Gives an detailed outlined budget of expenses for project.

Grant Follow-up Submission

If you are a recipient of a grant, you will need to follow up within 6 months of your installation in order to report back to DGRI and the Goal 5 Alliance about your project and installation.

FOLLOW-UP PACKAGE

Along with your invoice please submit all information in one document outlining the following information:

- Did you enjoy this program and experience?
- How did you view the application and review process?
- How did the community respond and interact with your project/installation?
- What was your biggest successes?
- What were your biggest challenges?
- Has this installation/project had a lasting impression on the community? If so, how?
- Did this project spark dialogue and awareness? If so, how?
- How did you engage volunteers and/or community members or partners?
- Did you receive additional funding to support the project /installation? If so, by who?
- How did you market/advertise your project/installation?
- Did you have any events, programming or ribbon cutting for your project/installation?
- Please attach photos of the finished project/installation.
- Please attach any community input, dialogue or additional information you think would be beneficial.
- Could anything have been done or could be done to improve the Activate This Place grant program?

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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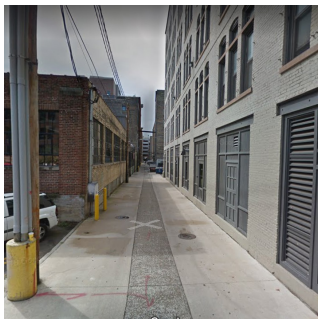
Downtown Areas In Need of Some T.L.C.

As any Downtown, Downtown GR is a living breathing organism with a pulse of its own that is forever changing. In order to help activate a space until a permanent change comes into play, placemaking initiatives are used to help generate activity to the area showing its potential.

LOCATION IDEAS FOR PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

There are many areas within the Downtown district that could use enhancements. Some that we have identified are shown below. You can submit proposals for an area listed below or identify a location that you would like to activate that you have seen a need for a creative intervention as well. These locations are subject to change.

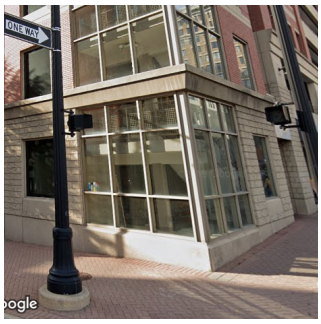
Plaza on east side of Van Andel Arena
Weston/Ionia



Alleyways

Corner of Ottawa/Fulton St.

307 Summer Ave. NW



Parking ramps, decks
and stairwells

Electrical boxes

555 Monroe Ave. NW

Retaining wall
Ionia/Wealthy St. SW

LOCATION IDEAS FOR WINDOW ACTIVATION

Listed below are currently available storefronts that have been identified for activation (but not limited to). These locations are subject to change:

- 35 Oaks St. SW
- 136 S. Division
- 940 Monroe Ave. NW
- 1171 Plainfield Ave. NE
- 20 Monroe Ctr. NW
- 645 Fulton W
- 12 Weston St. SW
- 15 Ionia Ave. SW
- 140 S Division Ave
- 146 Monroe Ctr. NW
- 260 Leonard St. NW Division
- 601 Bond Ave NW #A
- 200 Commerce Ave SW
- 934 Scribner Ave NW
- 8 Jefferson Ave. SE
- 40 Monroe Ctr. NW
- 22 Ionia Ave SW
- 934 Scribner Ave NW
- 351 Summer