



# Seasonal Event and Programming Grant Program & Application

*Funds Available for Events & Programming  
Happening October – April  
In Downtown Grand Rapids*



**DOWNTOWN**  
GRAND RAPIDS INC



## About Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) works to continually elevate Downtown GR as the best-in-class heart of an American city.

Toward this end, high quality public events and programming deliver four key outcomes:

- More dynamic public spaces
- Happier, healthier people
- Attract new, diverse audiences
- More economic activity

DGRI is especially interested in expanding programming and activities during the cold weather months. The goal is to make GR a more active winter city, which makes GR a more active year-around city.

## About the Seasonal Public Space Activation Grant Program

DGRI is committed to and invested in helping event producers, artists and other public space activation innovators accomplish successful events and programming in Downtown.

Hundreds of events occur Downtown during the warm summer months. DGRI's Seasonal Event and Programming-Grant Program is intentionally focused on promoting more public events and programming during the winter to help establish Grand Rapids as a more vital 4-season city.

This Program is specifically geared to support events and activities that align with and achieve the community's public space activation goals. These goals were defined through the 2014 Special Events Optimization Process as well as the 2015 GR Forward plan of action for Downtown GR, specifically the Goal 5 ambitions to reinvest in public space, culture and inclusive programming.

## Application Process Overview

Here's how the Seasonal Event and Programming Grant Program works:

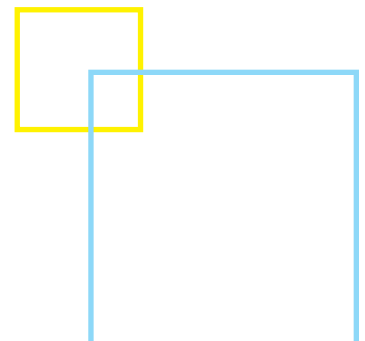
- Read this package of materials and complete the included application and submit to DGRI with all requested paperwork and the sponsorship information for your event or program.
- DGRI staff will review and score your application based on the Evaluation Criteria. (See enclosed)
- If your event/program aligns with community goals and ranks as a good fit for a potential sponsorship, DGRI will follow up with next steps.
- If your request is officially approved, DGRI will connect to confirm sponsorship level, discuss surveys and invoices, and any other relevant details.

## Potential Sponsorship

DGRI staff recommendations for grant support are informed by how individual events and programming proposals align with the Evaluation Criteria. This program grants up to \$5,000 in assistance for high scoring ideas.

When applications for funding received exceed DGRI funds budgeted and available, DGRI may convene a committee of stakeholders, such as the GR Forward Goal 5 Alliance, to support decision-making.

DGRI also reserves the right to decline any application for funding. No event or programming idea is guaranteed sponsorship.



## Eligibility

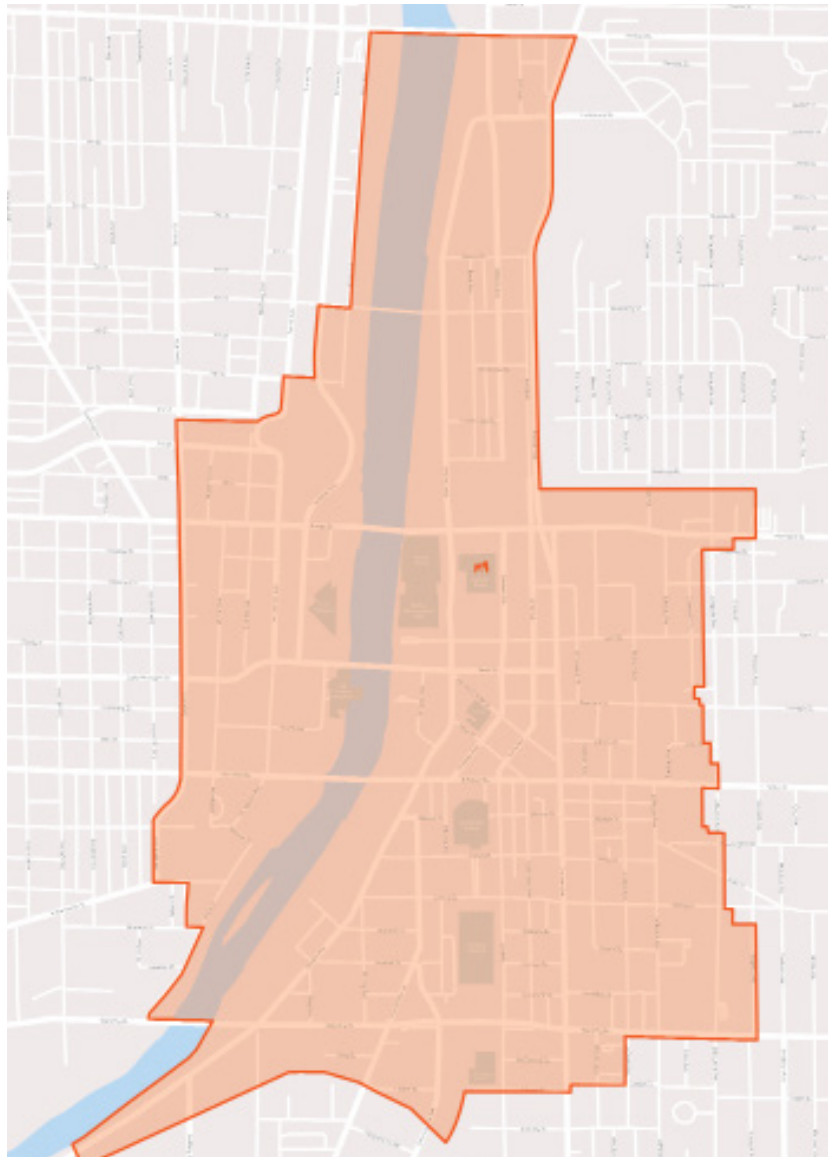
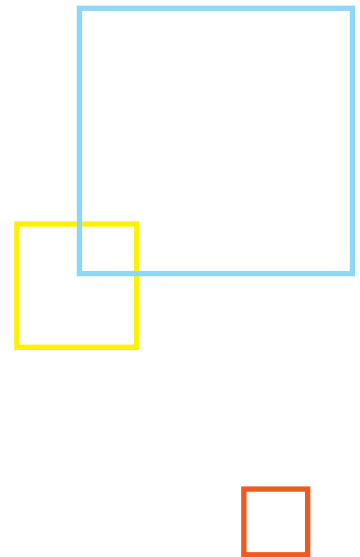
Applicants must meet all criteria below to be eligible for grant funds. Applications that do not meet all criteria will not be considered.

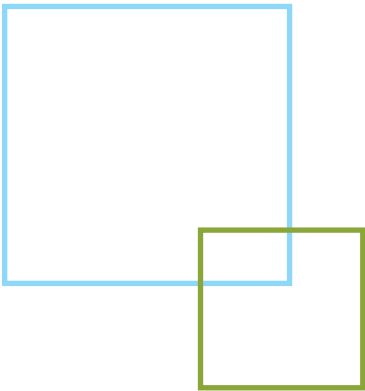
- ☐ The applicant/event organizer attended and completed the Event Management Program (EMP) Course hosted by the City of Grand Rapids and DGRI.
- ☐ The event/program and its organizers are in good standing with both the City of Grand Rapids and Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.
- ☐ The event/program has received all approvals from the City of Grand Rapids Office of Special Events and Parks Department (if held on public property) or from the private venue where the event will occur.
- ☐ The DGRI Seasonal Event and Programming Grant Program Application must be submitted no less than 60 days prior to the event/program start date.
- ☐ The event/program is free and open to the public.
- ☐ The event/program is not political or religious in nature.
- ☐ The event/program date(s) has not already occurred.
- ☐ The event/program is held within the Downtown Development Authority district. (See map at right)

## Application Materials

When applying for Seasonal Public Space Activation grant funds, please submit the following information to DGRI:

- ☐ Your sponsorship package, including sponsorship levels and corresponding entitlements.
- ☐ DGRI's Application (attached) and supporting information outlining the evaluation criteria listed on pages 4-5.
- ☐ If held on public property, please include a copy of your City of Grand Rapids Office of Special Events (OSE) application or proof that the Parks Department approved your event/program.





### Evaluation Criteria

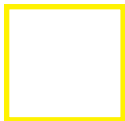
Application will be evaluated and scored based on the community goals outlined here.

Each section below details the evaluation criteria as well as ideas on how to achieve the particular goals. The details are examples, not instructions, for demonstrating how to accomplish each goal.

You will be graded on the evaluation criteria categories listed and will need to explain how you plan to accomplish each criteria metric based on your event/program goals and activities.



DGRI understands that not every event/program can do or meet every criteria listed. That is ok. This is not required to receive grant funds. The more applicants meet the criteria, the more points applicants receive. What's also important is following through on the criteria your event/program proposes to meet.



Events/programs also will be evaluated on the amount requested per anticipated attendee.

Applications must score a minimum of 100 points out of 300 to be considered for grant funds.

### Additional Information

#### Intercept Surveys

If DGRI chooses to award grant funds to your event/program, we may have a third party administer Intercept Surveys asking various questions to attendees at your event in order to gather quantitative feedback. These types of surveys help DGRI gauge various things such as demographics, attendance, reach, transportation choices, age, gender, consumer spending, etc.

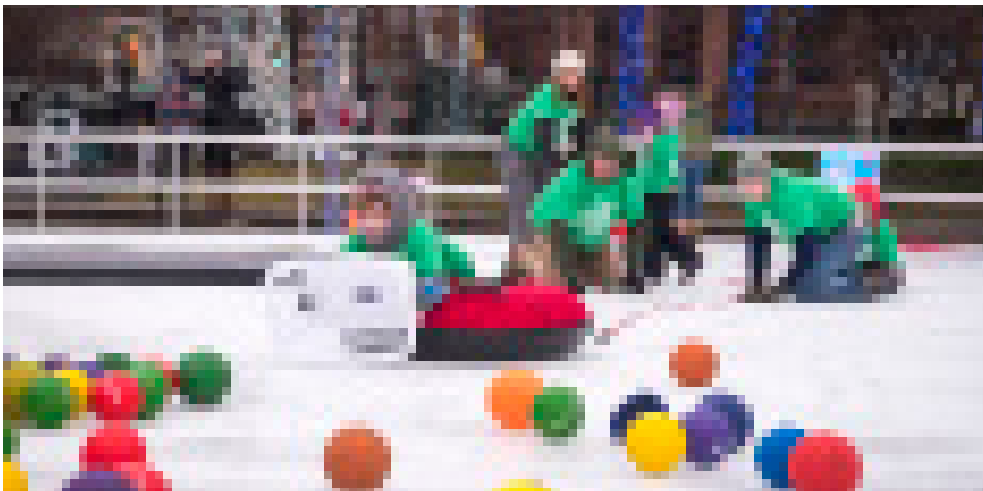
#### Invoicing

If DGRI chooses to award grant funds to your event/program, you must register as a vendor with the City of Grand Rapids. DGRI will provide instruction and we're happy to help.

You will submit to DGRI two invoices for sponsorship based on the sponsorship level DGRI approved. The first invoice will be for half of the agreed upon sponsorship level. After the event is held, you may submit a second invoice for the remaining half of the balance agreed upon.

Once you are registered as a City Vendor, notify DGRI of the registered entity and submit your invoice and all other appropriate documents.

Once an invoice is received, DGRI will initiate the payment process. Payment typically takes 30-60 days.



# EVALUATION CRITERIA

You must score a minimum of 100 points out of 300 to be eligible for funding.

## ATTRACTS BROAD AUDIENCES

### Occurs within the months of October-April (30 points):

The event/program falls within the months of October-April in order to help activate the public realm, showing Downtown GR to be a 12 month, year-round, 4-season city event destination.

-30 points for events/programming happening in December, January and February

-20 points for events/programming happening in November and March

-15 points for events/programming happening in October and April

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### Happens outdoors (25 points):

The event/program happens outside within the public realm to help activate the space and add vibrancy.

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### Active social media platform (20 points):

The business/organization/event/program must have an active social media presence that is used on a regular basis. The organizer must put together a social media plan by showing posting dates/times and create an event/programming invites so that the event/program can be shared.

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### Has an advertising plan that markets broadly across diverse communities (20 points):

The event/program plans to market and advertise in ways that reach a diverse audience by advertising in specific targeted outlets. This could include (but not limited to); magazines, public library, neighborhood associations, targeted social media advertisements or teaming up with local organizations such as BL2END, LINC, LCC, Out Pro, West MI Pride Center, Hispanic Chamber, etc.

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### Diversifies and expands the Downtown events/programming calendar (15 points):

DGRI invests and supports events that are unique to Grand Rapids offering an experience unlike other events. This helps to add an array of different types of events, programming and activities that appeal to a wide range of audiences, showcasing that Downtown GR has a little bit of everything for everyone. The event/programming coordinator can contact the Office of Special Events, GR Now, and Experience GR to verify what is on their calendar.

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### Advertises beyond the West Michigan region (10 points):

The event/program advertises and markets beyond West MI in order to bring in tourists and out-of-towners. This is but one way we can show why Downtown GR is a leading and up-and-coming city and helps to bring in people from other regions to experience our wonderful city. This could include (but not limited to); advertising in publications that have a reach beyond the West MI region, purchasing ads online at online publications such as Pure Michigan, Awesome Mitten, etc. or advertising on social media channels targeting specific regions.

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### Family-friendly and offers activities for children (5 points):

The event/program has specific activities available for children to participate and engage in. This could include (but not limited to); activities provided by the Grand Rapids Children's Museum, Public Museum, Library, etc. or offering activities such as games, arts, interactive learning, etc.

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## OPTIMIZES THE USE OF DOWNTOWN

### Activates a unique space and venue (20 points):

The event/program utilizes a space within Downtown that is not the typical normal location that helps to activate new and unique areas. This means the event does not happen at Rosa Parks Circle, The Blue Bridge or Ah-Nab-Awen Park.

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### Incentivizes mobility choices (15 points):

The event/program incentivizes mobility choices by showing options on how to get to the event by highlighting bus, Silverline or bicycle routes. The event can show mobility efforts by offering an incentive for taking an alternative mode of transportation to get to the event, such as public transit or by bike. This could include (but not limited to); showing a map that clearly locates areas where bike parking is available, offering a discount/giveaway for those who show their bus pass at the event, providing bike parking or bike valet.

### Utilizes many venues by scattering activities throughout the Downtown at other locations (15 points):

The event/program hosts activities in a variety of locations rather than in just one specific location. Businesses or organizations can host an activity or part of the event within their space. This allows patrons to be able to experience more than just one location as well as other areas and attractions within the Downtown.

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### The footprint of the event/program does not include street closures (15 points):

The event/program does not include any street closures for the event. If the event closes a lane, this will qualify as a partial closed street and receives only five points.

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### The event/programming is not fully enclosed or gated (10 points):

The footprint of the event/program allows patrons to enter and exit at will. This allows event attendees the opportunity to experience other areas and attractions the Downtown has to offer while they are here for the event/program. This means they are not forced to stay in one location during their visit.

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### Green Initiatives (10 points):

The event/program is a zero-waste event by using both composting and recycling bins in addition to trash bins(10 points) or recycling bins in addition to trash bins (5 points).

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### Includes the use of the Grand River (5 points):

The event/program incorporates the use of the Grand River within some aspect of their event. This could include (but not limited to): using a route that goes around or over the river or utilizing Ah-Nab-Awen Park, Sixth St. Park, Canal Park, The Blue Bridge, Gillett Bridge or Lyon Square, etc.

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## GROWS AND SPOTLIGHTS THE GR COMMUNITY

### Unique and distinctly Grand Rapids (25 points):

The event can be found in no other place than here in Downtown Grand Rapids. The event/program is not a copy of another event or program in some other location but rather specifically unique to GR. The event/program is a unique idea that does not try to imitate another community's culture by recreating the event here in GR. DGRI wants to help foster our own identity and culture that is distinctive and specific to GR that separates us from other cities.

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### Programmatic approach to inclusive and diverse activities (20 points):

The event/program creates programming that can reach a diverse audience and offers specific activities that are inclusive. This includes (but not limited to); programming, performances, and activities that are different from one another so there is something for everyone. This could mean teaming up with women and/or minority owned businesses, various genres of music, dance, etc.

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### Encourages the support of Downtown businesses (15 points):

The event/program reaches out to Downtown businesses for their involvement and gives them the opportunity to be involved in the event in some way (this does not include asking them for sponsorship). This could include (but not limited to); allowing them to have a table/booth at the event, offering a discount at their business or provide them with marketing collateral to help promote your event.

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### Teams up with local community partners, organizations or non-profits (10 points):

The event/program partners with other organizations and businesses to help share their message, create a larger reach, and highlight other community organizations to share what they have to offer. These community partners could offer an activity at the event, help advertise and share in revenues.

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### Uses local vendors and/or locally sourced products (10 points):

The event/program uses local vendors or vendors that use locally sourced products. Vendors are located within Grand Rapids Michigan.

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### Spotlights local talent or interests (5 points):

The event/program features local talent for part of their programming. This could include (but not limited to); singers, performers, artists, speakers, etc.

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**DOWNTOWN GRAND RAPIDS, INC.**  
**Public Space Activation Funding Award Selection**  
**Administrative Policy**

From time to time, and dependent on available funding and legal limitations, Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc. (DGRI) and its partner organizations choose to fund various types of public space activation projects, ranging from public art installations to major infrastructure construction projects, that contribute to the economic vitality of the City of Grand Rapids and enhance quality of life. Those funding mechanisms include grants, sponsorships, contracts, and less formal financial contributions (collectively, funding awards). This Public Space Activation Funding Award Selection Administrative Policy (Policy) sets forth the general criteria for DGRI's internal evaluation of proposals considered for funding.

The following criteria shall be considered in any recommendation for funding awards:

1. Suitability of the proposed activation project at a particular site
  - a. Physical dimensions, site design, visibility
  - b. Compatibility with surroundings, local character, relationship to existing activation projects
  - c. Public safety, vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns, environmental impact
  - d. Impact on adjacent property owners
2. Durability of the proposed activation project and ongoing maintenance requirements
  - a. Structure and materials
  - b. Resistance to theft, vandalism, weathering, and excessive maintenance costs
3. Budgetary considerations
4. Aesthetic merit and quality
5. Appropriateness of the proposed activation project for all audiences
6. Applicant's ties to the City of Grand Rapids and the greater Grand Rapids area
7. Applicant's history of successful collaboration and cooperation with DGRI and other community partners
8. Public liability and financial risk
9. Conformity with legal authorization and requirements
10. History of defaults, lawsuits, or threatened litigation against DGRI and/or its partner organizations relating to prior funding awards

DGRI and its partner organizations retain sole discretion in the evaluation and selection of fund recipients. DGRI reserves the right to reject any proposal on the basis that the proposed activation project does not satisfy one or more of the criteria set forth in this Policy. DGRI also reserves the right to remove and dispose of any element of an activation project, including artwork if any, at its own discretion.

# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

## Part 1. Event/Program Organization and Planning Information

Organization/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Organizer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Event/Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

About Event/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Website(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time(s): \_\_\_\_\_ End Time(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Funds Anticipated for the Event/Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Funds Requested from DGRI: \_\_\_\_\_

Secured Sponsors: \_\_\_\_\_

Sought out Sponsors: \_\_\_\_\_

Has this organization obtained event insurance? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Insurance Requirements:** Event coordinators and all related parties must provide Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. with evidence of insurance to include the following:

- Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. and the City of Grand Rapids shall be named as additional insured.
- Proof of insurance must be presented to the Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. at a minimum of 1 week prior to the event.



Yes No

## Part 2. Eligibility Criteria:

- |                          |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | •Have you attended and completed The City of Grand Rapids and Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI)'s sponsored Event Management Program (EMP) Course?  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | •Is your organization/business in good standing with the City of Grand Rapids and DGRI?   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | •Has your event received all approvals from the City of Grand Rapids Office of Special Events (OSE) and Parks Department (if held on public property) or from your private venue location?<br>Please provide a copy of your OSE application as well as your Sponsorship Package when submitting this application. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | •Is your event/program less than 60 days out?   |
|                          |                          | •Is the event/program (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Free <input type="checkbox"/> Ticketed <input type="checkbox"/> Registered   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | •Is the event/program political or religious or affiliated to a political or religious organization?  |
|                          |                          | •How many year's has this event/program been put on? _____  |
|                          |                          | •How many times has your event/program requested sponsorship or a grant from DGRI? _____  |
|                          |                          | •How many times has your event/program received sponsorship or a grant from DGRI? _____   |

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## Part 3. Event Evaluation Criteria Information

In a separate document, please answer all of the following questions in a bulleted list (like the following) with each question and your answer. Attach that document to the rest of your Event and Programming Sponsorship Program Application.

- Explain the event's/program's mission with details of all activities.
- Does the event/program happen outdoors in the public realm?
- What active social media outlets are being used to advertise your event/program (list all)?
- In detail, please provide your advertising/marketing plan that will market broadly across diverse communities (list all publications, areas of advertising marketing, etc)?
- Explain how your event/program diversifies and expands the Downtown events calendar. List all Downtown events that are happening on the date(s) of your event.
- Will you be advertising beyond the West Michigan region? If so, where will you be advertising (list all)?
- Is the event/program family-friendly? If so, list what family-friendly activities and/or programming that will occur.
- Explain how your event/program incentivizes mobility options.
- Is this event a zero waste event/program? If so, what company/organization are you contracting with?
- Is the event/program footprint gated? If so, is it fully enclosed or does it allow patrons to enter and exit at will without penalty?
- Does your event/program close any streets or street lanes? If so, please list all streets that will be affected.

- Does the footprint of your event/program utilize other venues than just one? If so, list other venues where the event will be held or take place.
- Does your event/program utilize or include the use of the Grand River? If so, how?
- Explain how your event/program plans on having a programmatic approach to inclusive and diverse activities (list all activities, band/entertainment set list, etc).
- List all local community partners, organizations, and/or non-profits that the event is partnering with.
- Explain how the event/program is unique and distinctly Grand Rapids.
- Does your event/program encourage the support of Downtown businesses? If so, how? What Downtown businesses have signed up to participate in the event?
- What (if any) local talent or interests will you be spotlighting during your event/program (please list)?
- Will there be vendors at your event/program? If so, what confirmed vendors are you using? What local vendors and/or locally sourced products will be used at the event?

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#### **Part 4. Event/Program Package Information:**

Please attach a copy of your event/program sponsorship levels and package information along with any impact report information you have about your organization, business or event. Attach your Office of Special Events (OSE) application (if applicable).

#### **Part 5. Event and Programming Sponsorship Submission Signature Sheet**

By submitting this sponsorship application, the applicant certifies that all the information included in this application is correct, and that they will be bound by all the terms and conditions included in this agreement. The applicant also understands and acknowledges that this application is potentially subject to Michigan's public records law, and any documents presented to Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. regarding this application for sponsorship funding purposes, may be supplied upon request to any parties that request copies.

Event/Program Organizer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please submit application by mail, email or in person.**

[info@downtowngr.org](mailto:info@downtowngr.org)

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

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