



Downtown GR Recovery:

Safe Outdoor Dining Project Performance Report

October 2020

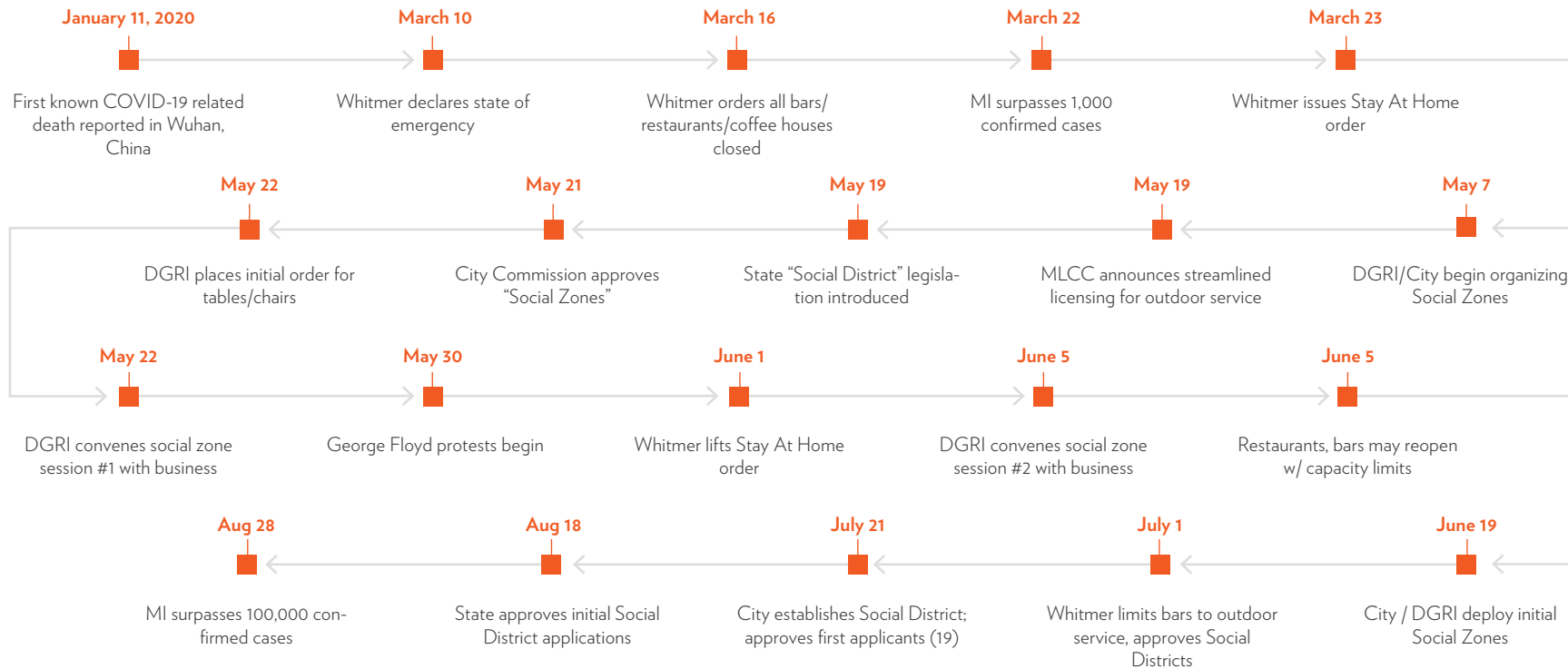


DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.



CITY OF
GRAND
RAPIDS

Pandemic & Response Timeline



A Sudden Major Drop in Activity

- 79% decrease in hotel occupancy.
- 48% decrease in foot traffic.
- Rise of remote work.
- Trips to/from Downtown GR most dramatic car travel reduction in Kent County.



Hospitality Industry Propels Downtown Economy & Vibrancy

- Food and beverage establishments comprise **36%** of all Downtown storefronts.
- Hospitality industry (restaurants, bars, hotels, etc) is **2nd** largest Downtown employer after health care.
- Biggest job losses in leisure/hospitality industries nationally.
- Restaurant industry down **2.3 million** jobs nationally.



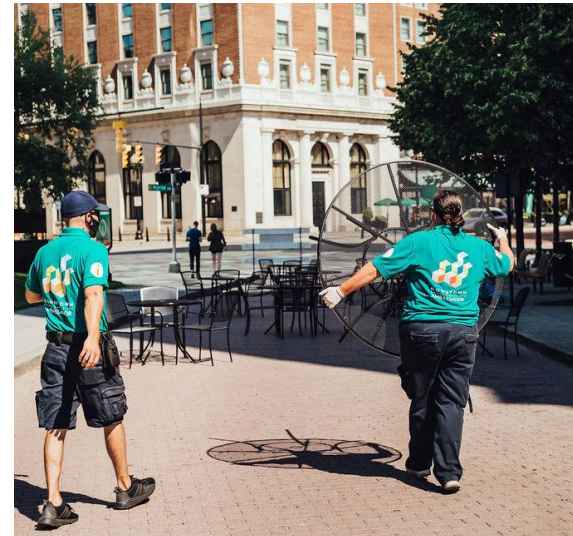
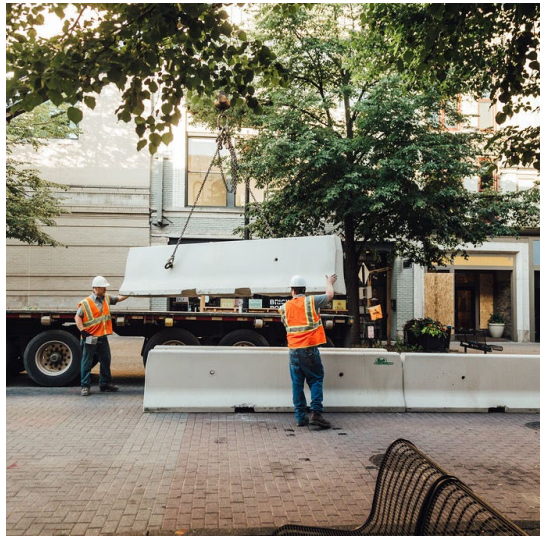
Expedited State & Local Response

- Social Zone: City policy allows businesses to expand onto streets & sidewalks.
- Social District: State policy empowers local communities to establish districts where people can openly carry drinks in designated containers.
- DDA Economic Relief Fund established.



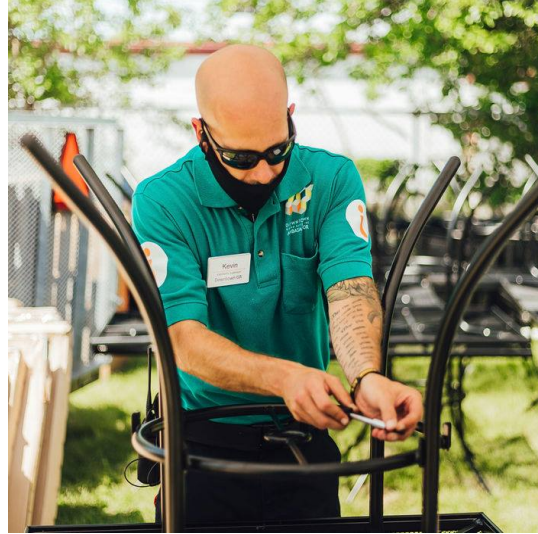
Established Significantly More Space for People

- 203 concrete barriers.
- 48,566 sq ft of expanded seating space. 1+ acre.
- 56% increase in # of businesses offering outdoor seating.

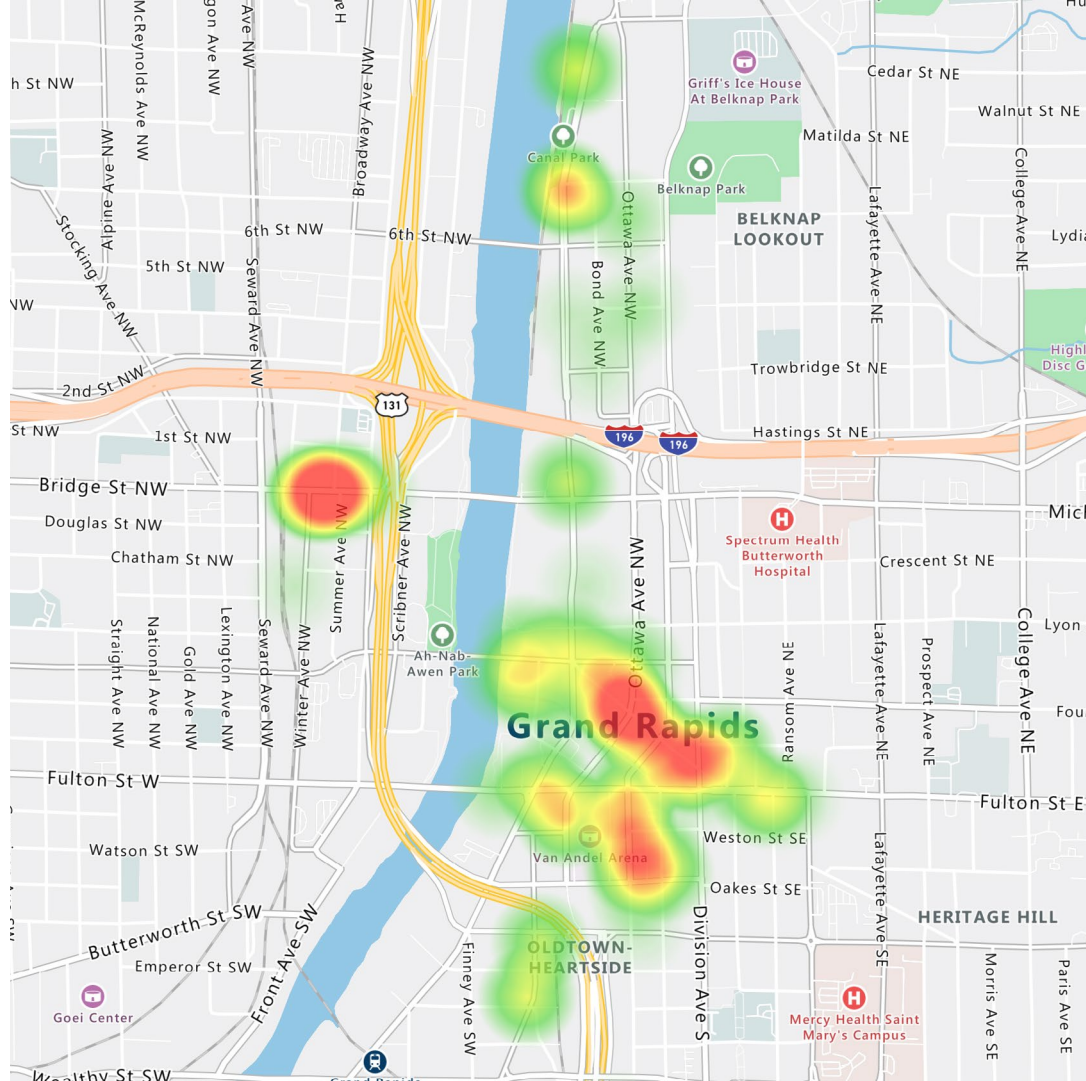


Transformed the *Spaces* into *Places*

- 244 Tables
- 817 Chairs
- 76 Umbrellas
- 22 Benches
- 111 Planters
- 1600 Plants
- 148 Hours of Pop Up Performers



Map Key



Opened for Safer, Physically Distanced Business **Bridge Street Deployment**



“The social zone activations have been
TREMENDOUSLY successful.”

“Our social zone allowed us to retain average sales,
even though we have reduced capacity inside.”

“I love Bridge Street so much!”



Monroe North Deployment

“The Social Zones were a welcome life-line.”

“Customers have been very vocal with their support of the concepts.”

“We’d be big fans if this was brought back next year.”

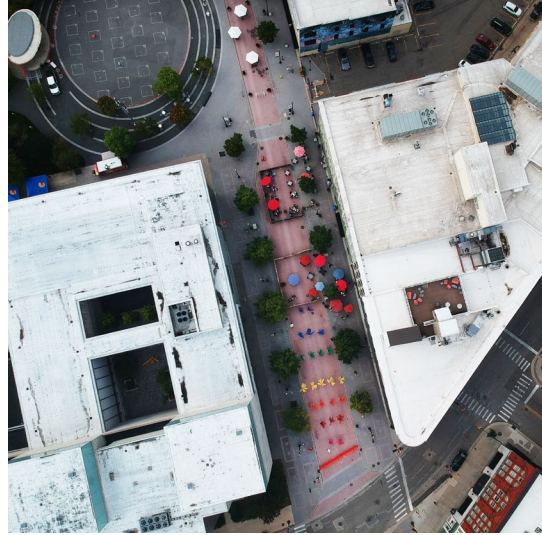


Downtown Deployment

“The new infrastructure kept us alive and allowed us to create new collaborations between businesses.”

“The only hard thing has been parking.”

“This addition of consumer space has been crucial to the survival of our business.”



Heartside Deployment

“The social zone on Ionia Street was an excellent quick solution.”

“With the addition of outdoor seating, our restaurant was able to post about a 20% increase in sales in August 2020 over our pre-pandemic August, 2019 numbers.”

“We encourage social districts not just for the duration of the pandemic, but as an economic tool to help through the recovery and beyond.”

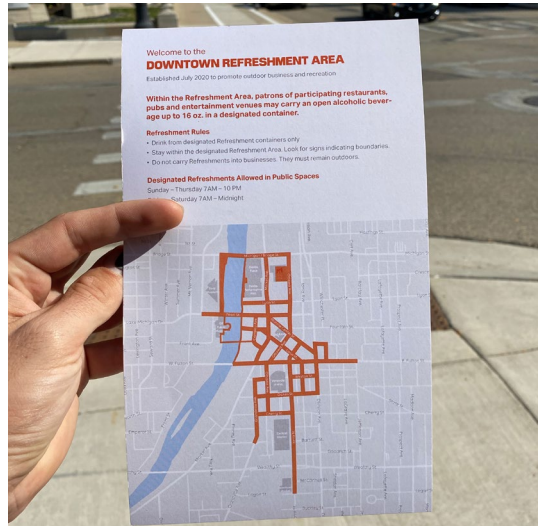


Refreshment Areas Out to Good Start

“The Refreshment Area is doing amazing.”

“People are loving the freedom and the safety of drinking outside.”

“An amazing addition to the drinking experience of Grand Rapids”



Winter Presents Opportunity To Pilot Year-Round Activation Measures

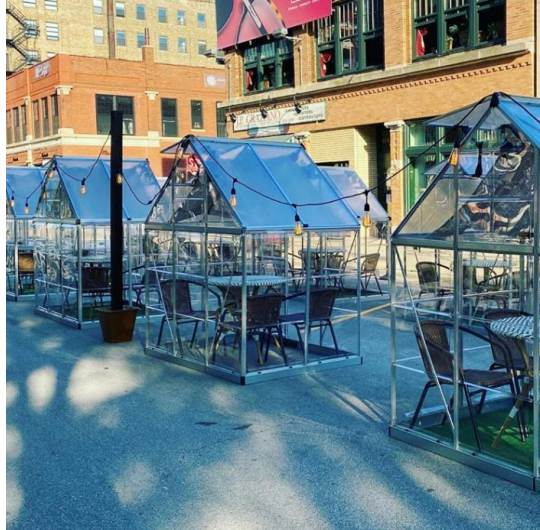
5.1 EXPAND ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENTS AND TEMPORARY PROGRAMMING TO FURTHER ACTIVATE THE PUBLIC REALM YEAR-ROUND

As part of the Downtown residents survey, participants were asked to rate a number of aspects of their community. One of two aspects tied for the top rating among them was "Availability of arts and culture destinations and programming." Without discounting the value and importance of Downtown Grand Rapids's many significant arts and cultural institutions, an important part of this is events and temporary programming. Towards that

temporary programming, such as Movies in the Park at Ah-Nab-Awen Park, ArtPrize, parklets, and many more, has ramped up interest in these types of activities and there is additional demand for more.

DESIGN AND PROGRAM PUBLIC SPACES TO ACCOMMODATE WINTER ACTIVITIES

Part of the challenge is ensuring that Downtown Grand Rapids feels as active during the winter months as it does during the rest of the year. Events are an important way of encouraging foot traffic Downtown to sustain businesses through the winter, not to mention boosting morale and fostering community when everyone has had



More Information

[Map of Outdoor Dining and Refreshment Areas in Downtown GR](#)

[Social Districts, known locally as Outdoor Refreshment Areas](#)

[Outdoor Social Zone Overview, City of Grand Rapids](#)