

## TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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We're reaching out for your support.

As we've all experienced, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended our traditionally vibrant and active summer season that without intervention will carry into the new year. This was punctuated by the announcement that ArtPrize would not occur this fall. This has had an impact both on our collective quality of life and the personal and financial prospects for those in our tourism, arts and entertainment industries.

The City of Grand Rapids, DGRI, Experience GR and the GRACC have been working since June to reimagine how we might activate our commercial corridors and neighborhood business districts with a focus on our cultural assets. A few weeks ago, we announced *The Bridge* – a month-long event celebrating our local arts, cultural festivals and community spirit.

The idea is simple, but impactful: We've challenged our local organizers and organizations to propose creative ways they might showcase their work in innovative ways that are consistent with current public health and distancing requirements. Those activities would take place throughout September spanning four pillars: arts, music, culture and community. The celebration will kick off with a critical community conversation on race and a live auction of mural art created in the wake of the protests we saw in May.

The response has been impressive – more than 30 proposals have come in from event organizers, local cultural festivals and community organizations, all seeking to reactivate community, support local artists and create the space for shared self-expression in a time where the definition of “community” is being fundamentally upended.

DGRI and the City of Grand Rapids have each committed \$50,000 to help support their work, but more is needed. To fully fund these initiatives, we have a goal to raise another \$300,000 that would directly support these groups, organizations and artists in realizing their respective visions, and the overall vision of *The Bridge*. All programming and activity will follow current safety requirements from Federal, State and local authorities – and all venues will be equipped with appropriate PPE and monitored for crowd size and appropriate mask wearing.

This is a bridge between where we were in March, and where we are today. It's a bridge between what we've experienced and where we intend to be as a community in the future. It's a bold statement about who we are here in Grand Rapids and that we remain creative, resourceful and optimistic about the future of this community we love.

If you'd like to join us in building a bridge between our past and our future in this important way, please consider a \$25,000 donation payable to the Greater Grand Rapids Chamber Foundation (instruction below). Funds will be administered by DGRI and all donations will go directly to organizations and artists participating in *The Bridge*.

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Donations can be mailed to:  
Greater Grand Rapids Chamber Foundation  
250 Monroe Ave NW Ste 150  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

For ACH/Wire Options please email [kate@grandrapids.org](mailto:kate@grandrapids.org) for info.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Tim Kelly



Mayor Bliss



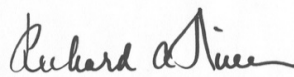
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