

MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS · DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Agenda Item #5
July 8, 2015
DDA Meeting

DATE: July 2, 2015

TO: Downtown Development Authority

FROM: Kristopher Larson, AICP
President & CEO

SUBJECT: Signature Event Support

Continuing with the structure established in the FY16 DDA Non-Tax Budget, DGRI staff has purposely delineated a few signature events for a more specialized form of support. These events have a very wide appeal and generally attract more than 25,000 people to Downtown, include aspects that provide a significant public benefit to the community, and are not athletic race oriented.

At this time, DGRI staff is advancing recommendations to sponsor two Major Events, ArtPrize and GGrandJazz Fest.

ArtPrize (\$30,000) - City Site Curation Underwriter

DGRI, and the DDA before it, has traditionally supported the curation of some of the city's most important placemaking spaces: parks and bridges. The economic return to Downtown Grand Rapids was well articulated by Andersen Economics following ArtPrize 2013, with findings that indicate more than 400,000 people visit Downtown for the event, 250 jobs are created, and more than \$22 M in economic return is delivered to the city.

In 2015, the following parks, bridges, and spaces will each have a paid professional curator to activate the site with art:

- Ah-Nab-Awen Park
- GR&I Railroad (Blue) Bridge
- VandenBerg (Calder) Plaza
- Grand River
- Fish Ladder Park
- Sixth Street Bridge Park
- US-131 Retaining Wall
- Oakes Street Park
- Gillett Bridge
- Lyon Square

GGrandJazz Fest - \$12,000

To be held on Aug 15&16 this year, GGrandJazz Fest is a free, family-friendly, two-day live jazz festival with 10 performing groups featuring both local and nationally acclaimed jazz artists. GGrandJazzFest is a community-building event, bringing people together to experience the American art form – jazz. GGrandJazzFest is held in Rosa Parks Circle.

Relative to the recently adopted community outcome oriented event grant criteria, GGrandJazz Fest scores very highly. Their mission is to provide a world-class jazz festival in Grand Rapids that is

available to the entire community and visitors at no cost, to promote Grand Rapids as a Center for the Arts, to diversity on stage across race & ethnic heritage and jazz genres, and attract a diverse audience that includes people of all ages, races, ethnicities, religions, socio-economic levels, and gender orientations. Their mission also includes supporting local by using local vendors and service providers, local performers, and partnering with local businesses.

The funds to support these initiatives were budgeted in the Non-Tax Fund: Vibrancy: Signature Event Sponsorship line item.

Recommendation:

Approve a sponsorship amount of \$12,000 to GRandJazz Fest, and a sponsorship in the amount of \$30,000 to support ArtPrize.