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ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION





PROJECT #251

Senior Transportation and Mobility and Workforce development

Identify the need for the proposed project

This Program addresses the historical inequities regarding transportation in bipoc communities. The program also addresses transportation inequities that our senior community members face. as well as job and career development inequities in bipoc communities.

Brief Description

We will provide transportation services to our senior residents and residents looking to develop their careers without proper modes of transportation. By providing transportation in our community for our senior residents and those seeking employment will provide a much safer and consistent means of transportation through Seeds of Promise, as well as providing global support to the family as well.

Long-Term Benefit

Our Community will benefit from the Senior and Workforce development Transportation and Mobility Program, by not only making sure our senior residents are able to get to places they need to be safely but providing services for the entire family. This program will also benefit our residents that are struggling with transportation to their job or transportation to job acquisition related duties not limited to interviews, pre-hire screening.

Intended Beneficiary

The elderly and those looking for employment.

Estimated Cost

75000

Project Management Experience

Seeds of Promise has been awarded grants previously.

Federal Funds Experience

Seeds of Promise has been awarded federal grants and has the structure to properly allocate funds to build programs.

Studies on Impact

n/a

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$75,000

Maximum Cost: \$75,000

ARPA Request: \$50,000

Submitter Info

Name: Westly Johnson

Organization: Seeds Of Promise

Project Overview

Funding Group: Economic Innovation and Workforce Development

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 26-50%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

Philanthropy and other Available grants- 20000

Partnership

Grand Rapids & Wyoming PD, GVSU, Griffis Hockey

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

 **Sustainability**

 **Feasibility**

Assistance with transportation to and from a jobsite is eligible

Need more timeline information

PROJECT #283

Grand Rapids Sidewalk Connectivity



Identify the need for the proposed project

The City of Grand Rapids evaluates and ranks potential walkway improvement projects based on the following factors: Demonstrated need; connectivity to transit routes and facilities; connectivity with community facilities, places of worship and commercial centers; proximity to school; walk score (i.e. access to amenities such as groceries, shopping, parks, schools, entertainment); continuity (i.e. gaps); additional funding sources; major, minor, or local roadway; existing infrastructure, and community support. The proposed project addresses sidewalk gaps with high scores indicating a critical need for improvements.

Brief Description

In 2019, over 6,200 pedestrians in the United States are killed in traffic crashes and more fatalities occurred in urban areas (82%) than in rural areas (18%). (U.S. Department of Transportation, Traffic Safety Facts.) Sidewalks are separated from the roadway and are the preferred accommodation for pedestrians. Over the past 20 years, Grand Rapids and the whole metropolitan region have grown, increasing tension between vehicles, buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians forced to compete for safe accommodation in limited space. The City of Grand Rapids' 2016 Vital Streets Plan was created to guide development of complete streets with safe, accessible, multi-modal and attractive streets that serve all people. The City recognized the need to provide greater accommodation for non-auto users and the Plan incorporates street design focusing on multi-modal transportation. It advances the goal to provide efficient transit corridors and safe walking facilities by 2035. Grand Rapids' sidewalk system has about 90 miles of gaps. The City has identified 13 unfunded, high priority critical gaps totaling an estimated \$10.8 million. Most of these are on high volume streets that pose a safety risk to pedestrians, especially during the winter. The City is working systematically to close these gaps but has about \$250,000 total per year for this work. The City proposes building sidewalks in six to ten of these high priority locations to close gaps and increase safety.

Long-Term Benefit

Sidewalks provide many benefits including safety, mobility, and healthier communities. Closing these gaps will provide safe pedestrian access to destinations. It ensures residents have available and affordable options to meet their travel needs regardless of economic status. It encourages and enables active forms of transportation such as walking, which can, over time contribute to reductions in obesity and improve public health outcomes.

Intended Beneficiary

Residents, including children, students, workers, and low income households.

Estimated Cost

\$9,500,000.00

Project Cost

Project Cost: \$9,500,000
ARPA Request: \$8,500,000

Submitter Info

Name: Tim Burkman
Organization: City of Grand Rapids

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure
Project Theme: Roads and Transportation
Project Status: Expanded Project
Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

The City of Grand Rapids will match up to \$250,000 per year from the Vital Streets/Sidewalk fund.

Partnership

n/a



Project Management Experience

Incorporated in 1850, the City of Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan with a population of 198,917 within about 45 square miles. Grand Rapids is a full-service city providing a wide range of public services including development services, planning, engineering, drinking water, sewer, wastewater treatment, street maintenance, traffic safety and parking, trash and recycling, parks, recreation, forestry and cemeteries, fire, police, and so forth. These functions are fully supported by administrative/central service departments. The Engineering Department employs 37 staff and performs project services for road maintenance and reconstruction, sidewalks, utilities, city facilities, and vital streets (complete streets + green infrastructure). The department also provides support for permitting, surveying, city GIS data, and asset management. Over the past three fiscal years, the department has initiated 286 new Capital Projects and awarded 148 projects with a total value exceeding \$260.4 million. The Engineering Department's internal structure supports the award and management of projects of any size. It utilizes a web-based bidding system, Accela for permitting, and Microsoft Project to manage engineering projects. The Department is experienced in managing projects with multiple funding sources. The City maintains a financial system that includes fund accounting and assigns codes to track grants. This allows proper tracking of project details and prevents commingling of funds. Staff tracks time worked by project. Engineering's own accounting staff audit each disbursement by funding source in compliance with the OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements (2CFR 200).

Federal Funds Experience

The City has extensive experience managing federal funds including EPA, FEMA, EDA, DOE, HUD, and FHA. The Engineering Department has a full-time staff person to support grants.

Studies on Impact

Federal Highway Administration https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/walkways_trifold/

Project Cost

Project Cost: \$9,500,000

ARPA Request: \$8,500,000

Submitter Info

Name: Tim Burkman

Organization: City of Grand Rapids

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

The City of Grand Rapids will match up to \$250,000 per year from the Vital Streets/Sidewalk fund.

Partnership

n/a

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

Sustainability

Feasibility

Using funding for sidewalks is only eligible in disproportionately impacted communities so this can only be done in areas in a QCT

PROJECT #117

Kent County Transportation Assistance for Vulnerable & Underserved



Identify the need for the proposed project

As the main public transportation provider for Kent County, The Rapid works on transportation challenges and solutions every day. The Rapid has the vision of providing transportation solutions that enhance quality of life in the County, ensuring that everyone has access to the opportunities our region provides. As part of this work, The Rapid is in the process of completing a Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan, working closely with the community to determine what transportation needs exist and how to best fill the gaps. This process has identified numerous transportation service gaps in our county, particularly in areas outside The Rapid's current service area. Additionally, The Rapid is about to create a Transit Master Plan (TMP). The TMP will look at transportation needs throughout Kent County and beyond and create a visionary document that will map out what public transportation in our region will look like moving forward. The information gathered through the TMP process will inform this project, and the information and data gathered by this project will likewise inform the TMP, enhancing the value of both projects. There are also several other groups examining the transportation ecosystem in Kent County- W. MI Veterans Coalition (Feonix - Mobility Rising), the Essential Needs Task Force, and Kent County. The County is currently launching a task force to study transportation needs in the County and will also benefit from the data gathered from this project. The proposed Transportation Bank works in tandem with all those other efforts. The consensus in almost every survey, working group, and task force is that there are some transportation resources in the community that work well and meet many needs, but there are also gaps in the ecosystem that need to be addressed to create a robust transportation landscape that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable citizens in the community: individuals living with low or moderately low incomes and individuals with disabilities.

Brief Description

Feonix-Mobility Rising and The Rapid will collaborate with transportation providers and community organizations to establish a Transportation Bank, modeled after a Food Bank. The Transportation Bank provides a one-stop shop, supporting the mobility ecosystem and sourcing transportation funding.

- Staffing: Mobility Manager: Collaborates with community organizations to address transportation needs and maintain mobility ecosystem Mobility Community Health Worker: Connects with community organizations on rider intake, works with riders to understand mobility options, schedules travel training, and provides education to support transportation needs Fundraiser: Secures funding for transportation for individuals that cannot afford to pay and matching funds for services Technology: Community Operations Support Center (Call Center) MaaS Technology (Online and Mobile App) Mobility Wallet: Allows social service providers to load passenger accounts with credits for public/private transportation services Portal for organizations to book rides on behalf of the passenger
- Capacity: Public Transportation Partnerships with other Transportation Providers (must meet safety and customer service standards) Volunteer Drivers
- Community Support: Mobility Leadership Circle: Stakeholder group of community leaders and transportation providers Transportation Directory with contact information Transportation Subsidy Library of Options for Access to Social Determinants of Health

Long-Term Benefit

The US Bureau of Labor Statistics says 15 million Americans face transportation challenges. Despite the tremendous effects of a lack of transportation, it is a need that remains hidden in plain sight, causing challenges accessing healthy food, medical care, and employment. Transportation Banks are a solution for those that need wrap-around financial and supportive assistance - enabling other organizations to focus on their core missions and creating a better outcome for community members.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$7,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$7,000,000

ARPA Request: \$7,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Kevin Wisselink

Organization: The Rapid

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Feonix - Mobility Rising, West Michigan Veterans Coalition, Hope Network, Disability Advocates of Kent County, Essential Needs Taskforce, North Kent Connect, Ride Your Way



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$7,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$7,000,000

ARPA Request: \$7,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Kevin Wisselink

Organization: The Rapid

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Feonix - Mobility Rising, West Michigan Veterans Coalition, Hope Network, Disability Advocates of Kent County, Essential Needs Taskforce, North Kent Connect, Ride Your Way

Intended Beneficiary

Transportation is a complicated and intensive social service, and all too often - health care, senior care, veterans, and other organizations are left to "figure it out" with the remaining 3% of capacity left of their staff resources, and often it creates major barriers in delivery of resources and a cascade of downstream effects. In almost every community health needs assessment for the past 20 years and countless research articles, the need for transportation support as a top priority is well-documented. The fragmented labyrinth of resources, policies, and programs for transportation is not working for those who rely on it the most and the bar of progress is not moving in the right direction. Conversations with community partners best illustrate some of the ways a Transportation Bank can serve the residents of Kent County. In talking with North Kent Connect, clients experience challenges using the food pantry because they do not have transportation to get to the food pantry. Sometimes, when they get a ride, they sit for 2 hours or more waiting for their ride to return. A Transportation Bank model can solve this challenge in multiple ways. A partnership with a private provider would allow for on-demand transportation in an area of the county without ample coverage. In addition, a Transportation Bank model would allow us to explore an arrangement with volunteer drivers where the food is delivered to the client's homes. These are just two possible solutions, and the Mobility Leadership Circle would be crucial in coming up with more! Additional conversations with stakeholders in the West Michigan Veterans Coalition reveal that transportation to medical appointments outside of Grand Rapids is a challenge. Veterans who need to access the VA hospital or clinics often have to travel at times and to locations where public transportation cannot fulfill the trip. A Volunteer Driver program can help match those that want to help Veterans with the Veterans in the community that need a ride and fill in the gaps for medical appointments. Right now, Feonix - Mobility Rising operates a pilot program that is doing exactly that. In a little over a year, Feonix Volunteer Drivers have provided about 325 rides to Veterans and their immediate family members. Each of the rides occurred at no cost to the Veteran because of fundraising efforts amongst W. MI Veterans Coalition members. The goal is to maximize mobility options, providing enhanced services for everyone, with an emphasis on underserved populations. The key feature is to provide funding for rides for those that cannot afford transportation. Individuals with low to moderately low incomes and individuals with disabilities, especially those with mobility needs that are currently falling through the cracks will benefit most from a Transportation Bank. The social workers and other service providers will also benefit from the time and energy savings that comes with finally having transportation options for their patients/clients that do not take hours to source. Ultimately, the whole community benefits because increasing wellness in the community strengthens the community as a whole.

Estimated Cost

\$5 million set-up and maintenance for 2023-2026 and \$2 million in ride vouchers for veterans, seniors, and people in poverty, for a total of \$7 million in investment.

*Source of Funding

\$30,000 in ride funding for Veterans, Veteran Family Members, and caregivers from the West Michigan Veterans Coalition, \$10,000 in ride funding for Veterans, Veteran Family Members and caregivers from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation



Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$7,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$7,000,000

ARPA Request: \$7,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Kevin Wisselink

Organization: The Rapid

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

Feonix - Mobility Rising, West Michigan Veterans Coalition, Hope Network, Disability Advocates of Kent County, Essential Needs Taskforce, North Kent Connect, Ride Your Way

Project Management Experience

The Rapid has extensive experience coordinating and implementing count-wide projects. Most basically, The Rapid provides transportation service throughout the County, from fixed-route service in the core urban area to coordinating Ridelink service to seniors throughout the County. The Rapid has a history of implementing large scale capital projects, including the Laker Line and Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit services, both of which came in on time and under budget.

Federal Funds Experience

The Rapid has a long history of utilizing federal funds, primarily as the local recipient of transit funds from the Federal Transit Administration. This funds most of The Rapid's capital purchases, including buses and infrastructure improvements such as the Bus Rapid Transit lines.

Studies on Impact

There are hundreds of research studies and articles about the effects of transportation on medical care, employment, and access to healthy food. We have listed a sample of the research below. Each article demonstrates the challenge and the need - access to healthcare, access to employment, and access to healthy food, and each piece of research illuminates that transportation as one of the top underlying challenges to that access. When transportation resources are available, individuals experience improved access to healthcare, employment, and healthy food. One important point to make is that the rides must be affordable to have any positive effect. Transportation options that individuals cannot afford do not do any good. In locations all across the United States, Feonix - Mobility Rising has implemented community transportation projects like this one to increase transportation options and access.

Studies on Impact

1. [Transportation Assistance Hub Details](#)
2. [Letter of Support #1](#)
3. [Letter of Support #2](#)
4. [Letter of Support #3](#)
5. [Letter of Support #4](#)
6. [Letter of Support #5](#)
7. [Letter of Support #6](#)

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

Eligible under revenue replacement as a government service.

Sustainability

Lacking guaranteed funding after 2026 though partners were identified

Feasibility

PROJECT #226

Transforming Kent County's Road Network



Project Cost

Project Cost: \$30,000,000

ARPA Request: \$20,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Macy Barcheski

Organization:

Kent County Road Commission

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 26-50%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

KCRC works collaboratively the Grand Valley Metro Council, community partners, businesses, and the 21 townships of Kent County to ensure equitable distribution of services and improvements through a data-driven approach to determining projects.

Identify the need for the proposed project

Roads are the “arteries through which an economy pulses,” serving as the critical link to a community’s jobs, schools, services, attractions, parks, and commerce. Building and maintaining high quality road infrastructure is vital to the county’s prosperity because the enhanced mobility supports safer, more efficient, and more equitable access to such social and economic opportunities. The Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) has implemented a strategic plan to become a road network in better condition than any other urbanized county in Michigan, making gains to achieve 90% good/fair condition on its primary road system. From 2016 to 2019, KCRC surpassed annual primary road improvement targets and matched the rising investment from townships. However, COVID-related challenges and reduced revenue, coupled with rising material costs have compromised KCRC’s ability to accomplish its annual program and achieve this vision. The requested \$20 million ARPA infusion would allow KCRC to regain momentum and expedite the timeframe to achieve its transformational objective. With the vision to construct and maintain the premier network of county roads and bridges in Michigan, KCRC’s board, staff and community came together to build a strategic plan. From that, a long-range program was formed, and performance measures were identified to gauge progress towards achieving the collective vision. Expanding the scope beyond the network’s high-volume roads, KCRC continues to partner with the county’s 21 townships to match their investment in local roads and tailor improvement strategies to meet the specific needs of each township. The transformational impact of a \$20 million ARPA infusion would be two-fold. First, on the primary road network, a \$10 million allocation would allow KCRC to complete long-term pavement replacement (resurfacing) improvements targeted at high-volume corridors throughout Kent County for which federal funding assistance is not allocated. Second, an additional \$10 million would be directed to local road improvement. KCRC currently supplements the local road program by approximately \$15 million annually, but the pressure of increased costs and the uptick in township participation threaten KCRC’s ability to keep pace with township investment.

Brief Description

High quality roads have a transformative impact because they are crucial to providing safe and efficient access to serve the daily needs of county residents and the economic prosperity of the region, thus combining long-term investment with an immediate return. \$10 million would translate to 32 lane miles of full depth resurfacing on 11 high-volume, geographically diverse primary roads: 17 Mile Rd, US131 to City Limit Belmont Ave, Jupiter Ave to Post Dr 4 Mile Rd, West River Dr to Alpine Ave Hunsberger Ave, Plainfield Ave to Airway St Pettis Ave, 3 Mile Rd to 5 Mile Rd Vergennes St, Alden Nash Ave to Flat River Dr Alden Nash Ave, Foreman St to Vergennes St Reeds Lake Blvd, Hall St to City Limit Kraft Ave, Broadmoor Ave (M-37) to 60th St Patterson Ave, 36th St Intersection Eastern Ave, 84th St to 68th St Another \$10 million would help sustain the township cost-sharing program, leveraging \$20 million in overall local road investment. Collaboration and data-driven improvement plans have generated steady increases in township investment, with 20 of 21 townships participating in a \$16 million program in 2022. Three years of reduced revenue combined with escalating costs have challenged KCRC’s ability to match townships’ growing demand.

Long-Term Benefit

An improved road network correlates to the region’s competitiveness in addressing population growth, enhancing access, and attracting future investment. This project would not only help advance KCRC’s goal to achieve 90% good/fair primary road condition rating but would also keep good roads in good condition longer. With timely preservation treatments and routine maintenance, the pavement life of the identified roads would be extended by 30 to 40 years.



Project Cost

Project Cost: \$30,000,000

ARPA Request: \$20,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Macy Barcheski

Organization:
Kent County Road Commission

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:
Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 26-50%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

KCRC works collaboratively the Grand Valley Metro Council, community partners, businesses, and the 21 townships of Kent County to ensure equitable distribution of services and improvements through a data-driven approach to determining projects.

Intended Beneficiary

The primary roads identified for improvement in this application are geographically diverse, high-volume corridors across the county spanning ten townships and collectively serving nearly 100,000 motorists per day (an estimated 28,000,000 vehicle miles traveled annually). In addition, the \$10 million that would be dedicated to the local road cost-sharing program would directly impact each township and their ability to customize and finance a local road improvement program to best serve the residents and road users within their given community.

Estimated Cost

\$30 million

*Source of Funding

KCRC exhausts all avenues for funding, but unfortunately no federal or state aid has been allocated for the primary road improvement projects identified. Notably, based on the FY23 state budget, KCRC estimates it will receive an increase of approximately 4.8% or \$2.8 million. However, based on rising material and fuel costs, we estimate inflation will cost KCRC at least \$7 million in 2023. The \$10 million requested to support the township cost-sharing program for local roads would be matched by township investment, thus equating to a \$20 million overall investment in local road improvements.

Project Management Experience

KCRC oversees the improvement projects and maintenance program for nearly 2,000 miles of county road infrastructure. KCRC consistently collaborates with its stakeholders and is guided by sound financial principles to exhaust all available resources to best serve the county's residents, business, and road users.

Federal Funds Experience

Road funding includes a complex mix of federal, state, and local funds. During its daily operation, KCRC incorporates myriad grants, successfully meeting each grant's specific restrictions and requirements.

Studies on Impact

Countless studies have been conducted by various agencies about the impact of infrastructure on the region's commerce, quality of life, and economic growth. KCRC would be happy to share links to such studies upon request.



Guidehouse Ranking Notes



Eligibility



Sustainability



Feasibility

Eligible under revenue replacement as a government service. Ineligible under all other categories.

Project Cost

Project Cost: \$30,000,000

ARPA Request: \$20,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Macy Barcheski

Organization:

Kent County Road Commission

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: Expanded Project

Matching Funds: 26-50%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

(Listed in main description)

Partnership

KCRC works collaboratively the Grand Valley Metro Council, community partners, businesses, and the 21 townships of Kent County to ensure equitable distribution of services and improvements through a data-driven approach to determining projects.

Supporting Documents

[1. Letter of Support](#)

[2. Letter to Administrator Vanderberg regard Revenue Loss](#)

PROJECT #284

US-131 Alternatives Study



Identify the need for the proposed project

As part of their plan to widen and rebuild the segment of US-131 from Market St to 28th St SE, MDOT has sent out PEL Study surveys and posted survey results. Since the project was announced, online forums have seen many discussions expressing frustration over the project, but nobody seemed to be taking any action. This is unacceptable for such a large scale piece of infrastructure cutting through the heart of Grand Rapids and the nearby previously redlined neighborhoods.

Brief Description

According to MDOT, the project entails adding lanes, adding or widening shoulders, and removing some on/off ramps to restrict access to the downtown. MDOT contends that US131 is crucial to the success of the west Michigan economy and must be 'improved'. However, if this widening is successful, one can assume that there will be pressure to widen it again in the future, which will further burden the downtown and affected neighborhoods. MDOT publicly refuses to consider impacts beyond traffic issues, yet US-131 disrupts previously redlined neighborhoods, spreads dangerous PM2.5 pollution, noise and exhaust, and locks up valuable tax-generating land downtown, which could be used for new economic development, affordable housing, parks, reconnecting neighborhoods, expanding the downtown walkable street network, and redressing social equity issues. Possible alternatives to the MDOT plan include routing through-traffic around the city and replacing the freeway with a traffic-calmed boulevard, or fully reclaiming the downtown street grid. The residents and businesses in Grand Rapids need and deserve to have meaningful input into the project, to determine the alternative that works best for all. This can't simply be an engineeringcentric project. This requires a 'Full Fair Study of All the Alternatives' in order to obtain input from those most affected by the freeway before committing to an expanded freeway, bisecting the heart of Grand Rapids.

Long-Term Benefit

Create more vibrant, attractive pedestrian-oriented urban environment
Improve pedestrian access to and across the Grand River
Remove unsightly freeway structures and unsafe spaces beneath them
Attract more businesses and residents to downtown
Provide opportunities for more tax-generating development
Make more land available for parks
Provide new opportunities for affordable housing
Reconnect previously redlined neighborhoods
Reduce exposure to deadly exhaust and fine particulate emissions

Intended Beneficiary

People living near the freeway
People who live, work, shop downtown
Downtown businesses
Tax payers

*Partnership

City of Grand Rapids Planning Department: Grand Rapids is undertaking an update to the City Master Plan and this would be a perfect opportunity to address US-131 as it impacts the city and its residents
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc (DGRI) All affected communities should have a voice in this and a series of public workshops would allow them to participate in the process

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$500,000

Submitter Info

Name: Warren Rempel

Organization: Retired

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:



Sustainability:



Feasibility:



Impact:



Source of Funding

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) has an allowance for a corridor study which, according to my discussions with a representative, may be available.

Partnership

(Listed in main description)



Estimated Cost

\$250,000 - \$500,000

Project Management Experience

We are not an "organization", but DGRI and/or Grand Rapids Planning Department would undoubtedly be able to manage this study

Federal Funds Experience

We are not an "organization", I do not know if DGRI and/or Grand Rapids Planning Department have experience working with federal funds

Studies on Impact

There is a large and growing body of evidence that freeway removal and/or downsizing provides many benefits. With the passing of ARPA, the federal government recognizes the importance of reconnecting (especially previously-redlined) neighborhoods that were torn apart by urban-renewal era highway projects as well as the danger posed by freeways in the form of PM2.5 fine particulate matter, and exhaust emission pollution. A Full Fair Study of All the Alternatives to US-131 expansion is perfectly suited to the ARPA plan:

- <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-02-01/urban-highway-removals-could-get-federal-help>
- <https://www.route-fifty.com/infrastructure/2021/11/highway-removal-funding-infrastructure-bill/186714/>
- https://www.businessinsider.com/highway-closing-city-transformation-2018-5?utm_content=buffer35eed&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer&fbclid=IwAR3xPWYAU048SLa58WwiOtalBQ_9jRLEWMoJvq-B6lubVS_r-vJP2tiAu6E
- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-019-44561-0>
- <https://www.lung.org/blog/highway-air-pollution-and-your-health>

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$250,000

Maximum Cost: \$500,000

Submitter Info

Name: Warren Rempel

Organization: Retired

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:

Roads and Transportation

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 0-25%

Eligibility:

Sustainability:

Feasibility:

Impact:

Source of Funding

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) has an allowance for a corridor study which, according to my discussions with a representative, may be available.

Partnership

(Listed in main description)

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

Eligibility

Roads are not eligible under any criteria except revenue replacement.

Sustainability

One time study

Feasibility

PROJECT #234

GR Cable Car



Identify the need for the proposed project

Creating connectivity to Millennium Park from the core downtown has always been a priority and renewed efforts to continue the Grand River Greenway from Ottawa County through Kent County via nonmotorized trails is one way to accomplish this. The lack of public transit has also been discussed over the years as has the deteriorating condition of Butterworth Road to Millennium Park. There have been planning studies conducted to review unique concepts and proposals to connect Millennium Park to the core downtown and a cable car or aerial gondola is the preferred method. We believe that once the community witnesses the cable car in operation, the desire to extend and expand the system would rapidly occur. Disney recently installed a system at their park in Florida. London has a two-station system that was installed over the river for the Olympics and is still a large tourist attraction today. Paris is in the process of planning for a system. A cable car system would not only be a unique amenity, it would provide an additional form of public transit to Millennium Park. It's clean and green technology with generator backup systems. It's one of the only forms of transit (outside of a bus or vehicle) that's able to navigate the Medical Mile due to the grade of the hill if the system were expanded to the Medical Mile. It could connect the hotel district to Millennium Park. Once the river restoration is completed, the system could bring paddlers and kayaks back downtown. Conventions could host events in the pavilions out at Millennium Park or guests would have easy access to the beach. It would allow for additional winter activation of the park and would instantly become one of the things to do in West Michigan during the winter months (the cabins are heated!). Fall color tours from the city to nature would be a spectacular experience. The opportunities are endless and the unique programming that can be done around a cable car system can be a significant economic driver in the region.

Brief Description

A cable car system would be installed linking the downtown area to Millennium Park. The system would be designed with future expansion in mind and would be constructed with that goal. Every 20-30 seconds a ten-passenger cabin would depart the station with 4 to 6 cabins stacked up in a station at any given time. Cabins roll slowly through a station allowing wheelchairs and strollers easy access. A station attendant has the ability to completely stop a cabin for those needing additional assistance. Allowing residents and visitors easy access to Millennium Park from the downtown area would be a significant boost and unique amenity in the Midwest! Millennium Park is more than twice the size of Central Park in NYC, this would be a tremendous feature that boosts attendance and enjoyment at the park. New strategic partnerships could be formed allowing residents that live along a Rapid bus route to finally gain access to the park since the cable car system would be connected to downtown and in very close proximity to a bus stop. The health and wellness of our community should be a top priority following the past two years of COVID and providing more access to our parks, trails, and beach would be a boost for future generations to enjoy

Long-Term Benefit

As the river corridor and Whitewater project move forward, this project would complement those efforts and would provide Experience Grand Rapids another tool in their toolkit as they are selling our community as a destination. When additional expansion of the system occur, other entities can be tied into a new mode of transit and made more accessible for visitors to move with ease through our downtown area. You could bike from a downtown hotel and this system could bring you back.

Project Cost

Minimum Cost: \$25,000,000

Maximum Cost: \$30,000,000

Submitter Info

Name: Sam Moore

Organization:
Kent County Parks Foundation

Project Overview

Funding Group: Infrastructure

Project Theme:
Roads and Transportation

Project Status: New Project

Matching Funds: 51-75%

Eligibility: 

Sustainability: 

Feasibility: 

Impact: 

Source of Funding

This project would qualify for transportation funding and private philanthropy would also be involved.

Partnership

Groups that could be involved include: DGRI, CAA, Experience GR, Grand River Inc



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Intended Beneficiary

It would be an amenity that all residents could enjoy with the added benefit of being a significant tourist attraction. A GR Cable Car system would likely be featured in most ads featuring Grand Rapids and serve as a key attraction to lure visitors.

Estimated Cost

\$25 million - \$30 million

Project Management Experience

We have facilitated raising over \$25 million for the construction and enhancements at Millennium Park over the past 20 years.

Federal Funds Experience

We don't have experience in this field, but would seek other partners with the necessary experience to manage and facilitate all of the necessary reporting requirements that go along with this funding.

Studies on Impact

We have contracted an outside firm to conduct outside planning studies that validate the effectiveness of a cable car system in Grand Rapids and the tremendous boost in tourism that will result with the construction of this type of system.

Guidehouse Ranking Notes

 **Eligibility**

Individuals or communities served is not clear or does not align with Treasury guidelines' definition of 'impacted' or 'disproportionately impacted'.

 **Sustainability**

Requires startup costs. Does not include a funding plan or fund availability after expending all the ARPA dollars.

 **Feasibility**

Risk to 2026 completion