



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS  
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

**DATE:** December 13, 2022

**TO:** Mark Washington, City Manager

**FROM:** Joel H. Hondorp, City Clerk  
City Clerk's Office

**SUBJECT:** **Communication received from community leaders and residents requesting action to address health and safety concerns in the community**

Prepared by Emilee Dinh



December 6, 2022

Grand Rapids City Commission  
300 Monroe Ave NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

RE: Support for Action to Improve Health Outcomes

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

We appreciate local government’s leadership on the issue of supporting unhoused individuals. The City of Grand Rapids has demonstrated its concern by providing shelter, increasing outreach, offering mental health support, and providing storage capacity for personal belongings. Kent County has also demonstrated its concern through its recent action to invest in new mental health crisis services and outreach.

Despite these important steps, gaps remain in our community’s effort to compassionately support those in critical need of services. No one should have to sleep on a sidewalk, in a doorway or in any other unprotected public space. We can be better at supporting the needs and dignity of individuals in these circumstances, and your actions can help encourage use of available resources and further highlight where additional investments are required.

Combined with other efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, provide mental health support, and improve outcomes amongst service providers, new City of Grand Rapids ordinances should be considered to encourage greater use of available resources while also encouraging a safe and secure environment for unhoused people and the larger community.

In true Grand Rapids fashion, we can be the best practice leaders for other communities. We have the capacity, commitment, compassion, and community support to move forward, and we urge you to continue taking action to address this important concern.

Sincerely,

Darryl Elmouchi, MD  
President  
Corewell Health West

Matt Biersack, MD  
President  
Trinity Health Saint Mary’s

Peter Hahn, MD  
President & CEO  
University of Michigan  
Health-West

Tasha Blackmon  
President & CEO  
Cherry Health

Dennis Van Kampen  
President & CEO  
Mel Trotter Ministries

Thelma Ensink  
Executive Director  
Dégagé Ministries



December 6, 2022

Grand Rapids City Commission  
300 Monroe Ave NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

RE: Request to address public health and safety

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

We, the undersigned employers and residents of Grand Rapids, urge you to take immediate action to promote the safety, health and well-being of unhoused individuals, residents and all persons working in or visiting the City of Grand Rapids.

We are thankful for the investments already made by the City of Grand Rapids in shelter space, increased outreach, mental health support and storage capacity for personal belongings, and are hopeful Kent County's plan to invest and work with partners will provide new mental health crisis services and outreach.

Despite these important steps, it is clear there are gaps remaining in the effort to create a destination city that is welcoming to all as well as outcomes for those in need of services. The ongoing concerns from residents and employers related to harassment, public defecation, trespassing, assault and other disruptive and disturbing behavior needs to be addressed with an intentional and compassionate focus on improving outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness or struggling with mental health.

Cities across the country are facing similar circumstances and have adopted measures that have shown to provide significant improvements to safety, cleanliness and enjoyment, while working on the foundational elements to create a thriving and prosperous community for all.

**We request that you adopt an ordinance to regulate appropriate access and use of the public right of way and solicitation.**

The City has a responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of its residents. The proposed regulations are narrowly tailored to serve a compelling and substantial governmental interest, while preserving ample alternative areas for the valid exercise of constitutional rights. This action, paired with previous, ongoing and future investments, will contribute greatly to reversing the loss of access to and enjoyment of public places and the sense of fear, intimidation, disorder and actual danger to public health, safety and welfare.

This action is not intended to limit any person from exercising constitutionally protected activity, when conducted in a legal manner. The goal is to promote better outcomes for all through appropriate regulation acting to encourage the use of available services, prevent the incentivization of unsafe activities in public spaces and protect individuals from the fear and intimidation by regulating the time, place, and manner for the use of the public right of way and solicitation.



Combined with other efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, provide mental health support, improve outcomes amongst service providers, these regulations will encourage greater use of available resources while preventing unsafe and unhealthy conditions for unhoused individuals and all other stakeholders.

In true Grand Rapids fashion, we can be the best practice. We have the capacity, commitment, compassion and community support to move forward. This targeted approach to addressing only the most concerning behavior will serve a compelling public interest, preserve ample alternatives, and reduce the heightened sense of intimidation and disorder.

Again, we urge you to support the requested changes. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike VanGessel CEO & Founder Rockford Construction	Richard A. Winn President AHC Hospitality	Ross Bartlett Regional General Manager Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
Norina Cadili General Manager JW Marriott	Sara Jorgensen General Manager Courtyard by Marriott Downtown	Melissa Stanley General Manager AC Hotel
Mark Wassink Managing Partner Warner Norcross + Judd	Doug Small President & CEO Experience Grand Rapids	Sam Cummings Managing Partner CWD Real Estate Investment
John Wheeler Owner Hyatt Place	Johnny Brann Jr Owner Woodrows Duckpin Bowling	Jeff Connolly President, WM Operations Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Greg McNeilly CEO Windquest	Mike Ellis President Ellis Parking	Anne Ficeli President Pure Real Estate Management
Bob Schermer CEO Meritage Hospitality	Ryan Wheeler President Wheeler Development Group	Bob Schierback COO Ottawa Avenue Private Capital
John Meilner President 42 North Partners	Pamela Wright Resident Board Walk Condos	Mike Systsma President West Michigan KeyBank
Bill & Tami Coyne Residents Rowe	Jeff Lobdell Owner Restaurant Partners	Birgit Klohs Resident

Attachment: Support for Action to Improve Health Outcomes Communication 2 (Communication received from community leaders and



Thomas Tooley Executive Vice President Ghafari Associates	Matt Wikander CEO Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge	Kay Fiske AVP Branch Manager West Michigan Community Bank
Randy Phelps Principal HNI Risk Advisors	Jim McKinley Principal HNI Risk Advisors	Nate & Nichole Gillespie Residents Rowe
Amy McCulloch Producer/Partner Lockton Companies	Dick & Diane Sherlock Residents Rowe	Rick Baker President & CEO Grand Rapids Chamber
John Helmholdt President SeyferthPR	Heather L. Emmons General Manager Holiday Inn Grand Rapids Downtown	Greg Williams Co-Founder, Chairman, & CEO Acrisure
Dan Meyering Principal Trillium Investments	Bruce Tuttleman Owner F David Barney	Bob Hughes President Advantage Benefits Group
Mark Berkemeier Partner Strategies Wealth Advisors	William & Bobbi Jo Blanton Owners Le Macaron French Pastries	David Ferszt President DTN Management Co
Paulus C. Heule CEO Eenhorn, LLC	Jean Howard Partner Howard Law Group	James Bossenbroek Chairman Northgate Partners, LLC
Don Hunt President Lambert Global	Raji Uppal CEO DTN Asset Management & Development	Greg Schierbeek President & CEO Eikenhout Inc.
John O'Neill Principal Conduit Studio	Amy Skentzos Resident Downtown	Jason Zylstra Vice President of Philanthropy DeVos Family Foundation
Judie Malec Resident Waters Center	Randy Damstra CEO Ottawa Avenue Private Capital	Valeria Schmieder Principal Via Design
Brian Barkwell Principal Via Design	Pete Scudder Director Impact Credit Partners	Jonathan Jelks Serial Entrepreneur

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Jamiel Robinson  
Managing Partner  
Isle Construction

Doug DeVos  
Resident

Sam Berry  
Founder  
White Pine Digital

Tom Welch  
Region President  
Fifth Third Bank

Carol Van Andel

Dick DeVos  
Chairman  
Windquest

David Emdin  
SVP of Asset Management  
Krimson, LLC

Walid Jamal  
President  
JHG Management

Caleb Hartung  
President  
MAV Lending Services, Inc.

Michael Balk  
Founder/CEO  
Vivid IV Health

Brad Mugler  
Director of Finance  
TXH Fund I, LLC

Lu Quach  
Principal  
Sunny Boba Tea

Zakry Obrien-Khem  
Owner  
Lake Effect Phone Repair

Josh Traxler  
COO  
Campspot

Dan Bockheim  
Principal  
Dart Frog Creative

Zachary Bossenbroek  
CEO  
Northgate Resorts

Chelsea Bossenbroek  
Chief Legal Officer  
Northgate

Diane Maher  
President/COO  
DP Fox Ventures

Ginny Seyferth  
Chairman & CEO  
SeyferthPR

Sejla Sefer  
Property Manager  
Plaza Towers Apartments

Scott Gorsline  
Executive Vice President of Opera  
DP Fox Ventures

Cory Wickham  
Security Manager  
Plaza Towers

Unity Franko  
President  
Eenhorn, LLC

Lindsay Jonker  
Property Manager  
The Lofts Apartments

Michael Van Hooren  
Property Manager  
234 Market Apartments

Katie Ross  
Resident

Brad Mathis  
CP Community Development  
and Inclusion  
Rockford Construction

Lindsey Langlois Wells  
Business Administrator  
The Intersection

Chad Bassett  
COO  
BAMF Health

Nick Adamy  
President  
Adamy Valuation

Jim & Emily Lynch  
Owners  
House of Wine

Will Payne  
President  
Trellis

Charlie Wondergem  
Director, Mergers & Acquisitions  
Aspen Surgical

Attachment: Support for Action to Improve Health Outcomes Communication 2 (Communication received from community leaders and



Bill Payne  
Principal  
BPV

Greg Gilmore  
CEO  
The Gilmore Collection

Paul W. Boehms  
Executive Director  
Warner Norcross + Judd

Dan DeVos  
CEO  
Grand Rapids Griffins  
West MI Volleyball

Monica App  
Senior Vice President  
Rockford Construction

Dave Shaffer  
President  
Interphase Interiors

Jase & Molly Bolger  
Residents  
Rowe

Donald Bohan  
Resident  
Board Walk Condos

Kris Alan Mauren  
President  
Action Institute

Jason Wheeler  
Partner  
WDG Construction

Bill Mast  
Managing Partner  
Homewood Suites &  
Waters Building, LLC

Christine Carson  
Property Manager  
Live Great Properties  
Resident, Gallery Condo Assoc.

David & Paul Reinert  
Owners  
Butcher's Union  
O'Toole's Pub. House

Angela Mann  
VP of Operation  
Hospitality Specialists

James Berg  
Owner  
Bistro Belle Vita

Brett VanderKamp  
Founder & CEO  
New Holland Brewing

Daniel Van Eerden  
President  
Van Eerden Fd Service

Bill Scanlon  
General Manager  
Homewood Suites – GR Downtow

Brian Elve  
Executive Director  
Guiding Light

Kevin Wood  
Security Specialist  
Founders Brewing Co

Rhonda Huismann  
Partner, Consulting  
Crowe LLP

Jerry Tubergan  
Vice Chairman  
Ottawa Avenue  
Private Capital

Cole Gross  
Resident

Matt Dowdy  
Resident

Tim Hall  
Resident

Alexander Drolett  
Resident

Mackenzie Coristine  
Resident

Trudy McLaughlin  
Resident

Monica R. Sekulich  
EVP/Chief Legal Officer  
Deep Creek Holdings, L  
LC

Charles Van Eerden  
Condo Owner  
Tannery Row

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