

Silver Medal Winner

Grand Rapids Downtown Market

Grand Rapids, Michigan

A new public market and gathering space promoting local food, education, and entrepreneurship



Grand Rapids Downtown Market



This is an excerpt from:

Challenging Conventions

The 2015 Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence



BRUNER FOUNDATION, INC.

Richard Wener, PhD; Jay Farbstein, FAIA, PhD; Anne-Marie Lubenau, FAIA; and Robert Shibley, FAIA, FAICP

Edited by Elizabeth Chesla, MA

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016944071
ISBN: 978-1-890286-10-1

© 2016 by the Bruner Foundation, Inc.
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
www.brunerfoundation.org

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

Cover photo credits (clockwise from left): Billy Michels, Rosales + Partners, Mike Buck, Rien Van Rijthoven, Panza

DESIGN: Alexandra Trinanes/T2Design, trinanes@comcast.net



Jeffrey Grooters

Overview

Submitted by: Grand Rapids Downtown Market, Inc.

Completed: 2013

Total Development Cost: \$29.5 million

Grand Rapids Downtown Market is a new, state-of-the-art public space in West Michigan that provides access to fresh local food, supports local food entrepreneurs, and provides opportunities to learn about nutrition and healthy lifestyles. It is located just south of the downtown business district in Heartside, one of the area's most economically challenged neighborhoods and home to food pantries, homeless shelters, and social service organizations. The Downtown Market celebrates the local food system by linking the Grand Rapids community with many of the 12,220 farms in 11 surrounding counties. It attracts a diversity of customers and has brought additional investment to the southern edge of downtown.

The first LEED Gold certified public market in the country, the Grand Rapids Downtown Market was designed by Hugh A. Boyd Architects in collaboration with Michigan-based Progressive AE and based on a concept developed by Market Ventures, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in the planning and development of innovative food-based projects and programs.

The first-floor market hall is home to more than 20 permanent vendors who showcase locally grown, produced, and prepared foods. Upper floors house educational classrooms, a commercial kitchen incubator, a rooftop greenhouse, offices and meeting rooms, and event spaces. A 52-stall outdoor shed provides sheltered space for additional food and craft ven-

“THE MARKET LEVERAGES THE FARM-TO-TABLE MOVEMENT TO CREATE A ‘FOOD HUB’ THAT ADDRESSES SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL IMPACT GOALS.” *–2015 Section Committee*

dors from May through September. The ground floor also includes two full-service restaurants.

Educational programming is at the core of the market’s mission and is provided in partnership with organizations including Grand Valley State University, Kent Intermediate School District, Michigan State University Extension, and Spectrum Health Healthier Communities. Cooking and nutrition classes are offered in the teaching kitchen, which features adjustable-height countertops that can be lowered for children. An incubator kitchen program helps start-up entrepreneurs develop, produce, and market food products using a shared commercial kitchen.

The Downtown Market offers a variety of fresh and healthy food options in a neighborhood once considered a food desert. Vendors accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps, and the market partners with local nonprofits to provide educational scholarships to low-income residents along with complimentary transit passes and “produce bucks” that can be used to purchase ingredients from Relish Green Grocer. The Heartside Gleaning Initiative collects excess fresh produce from market vendors for distribution to local food pantries.

The Grand Rapids Downtown Market was made possible through a public-private partnership led by Grand Action, a not-for-profit organization that has revitalized downtown through investments in major projects like the new \$75 million Van Andel Arena, the \$212 million DeVos Place Convention Center, and renovation of the historic Meijer Majestic Theatre. “The city seeks to be a community of the future, not the past,” says Dick DeVos, co-chair of Grand Action. The organization believes in “thinking boldly, planning collegially, and acting urgently.” The \$29.5 million market received funding from private donors and foundations, the City of Grand Rapids, the

Environmental Protection Agency, and the State of Michigan. Local public agencies contributed infrastructure improvements including new streets and sidewalks and enhanced public transportation access through the rerouting of bus lines.

The project has sparked \$50 million in new investment in the neighborhood, including the conversion of two adjacent, vacant warehouses into 170 units of affordable housing, helping to draw development southward from the downtown core. It has also generated interest from over a dozen cities in the United States and Canada seeking to develop similar markets.

Since its opening in 2013, the Grand Rapids Downtown Market has been a source of civic pride for the city. Opening day attracted more than 30,000 people, and the space has become an important venue for hosting events and meetings. More than a market, it has become a popular local and regional destination, a beacon that celebrates the surrounding rich West Michigan agricultural community and brings together local residents, foodies, and city visitors in a light-filled public space.



Grand Rapids Downtown Market (left), Mike Buck





Project at a Glance

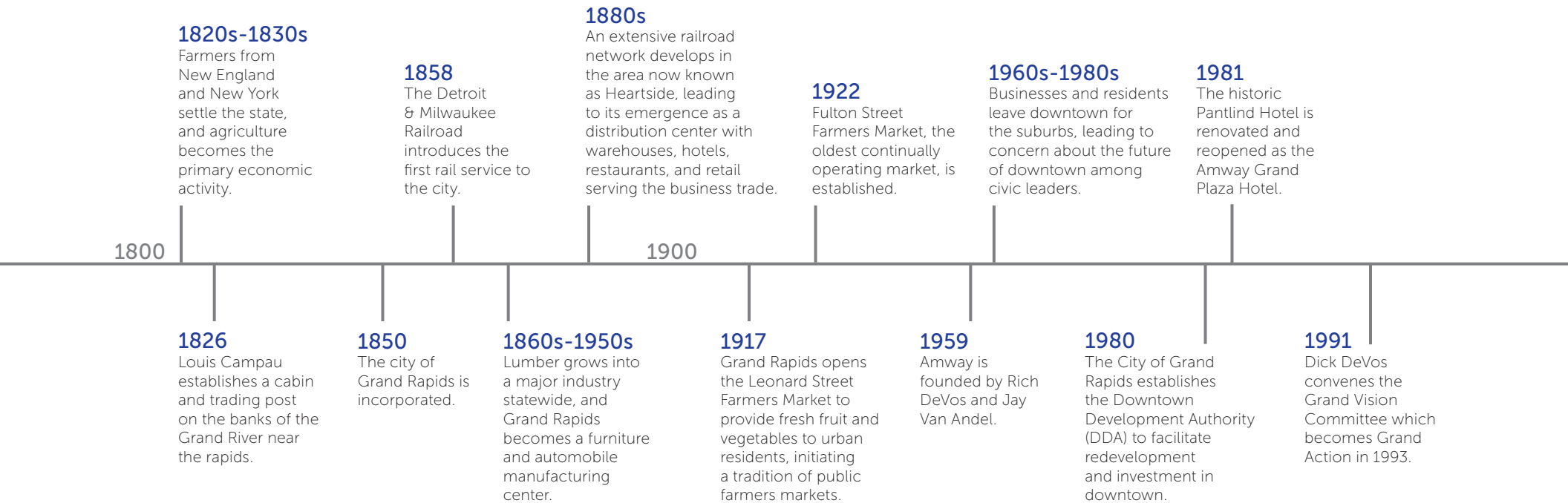
- A state-of-the-art LEED Gold certified facility that celebrates the West Michigan agricultural system and brings food education and local food production, distribution, and marketing to the community.
- A 24-vendor, year-round indoor market hall with two full-service restaurants and a 52-stall seasonal outdoor market shed offering a variety of local and organic products, specialty items, and prepared foods.
- A teaching kitchen featuring fully adjustable countertops where classes on cooking, culinary skills, and nutrition for children and adults are offered.
- A shared commercial incubator kitchen that provides aspiring entrepreneurs a place to develop and produce food products and a program that assists start-ups with development and marketing.
- A rooftop greenhouse used for cultivation, education, and special events which serves as a glowing beacon at night.
- A popular civic venue that brings together the community for food shopping, educational programming, and special events.
- Commercial space including classrooms, labs, and offices for educational partners that offer high school culinary arts and health-related programs.
- Extensive educational programming that promotes public health.



Project Goals

- Support local entrepreneurship and innovation, in part by providing affordable vending opportunities for farmers and traditionally marginalized entrepreneurs, resource sharing, and one-on-one mentoring.
- Create hundreds of jobs and provide substantial economic impact.
- Strengthen and celebrate the West Michigan food system.
- Promote public health, particularly with innovative approaches to addressing the area's obesity epidemic.
- Bring diverse people together in an active public space through events, cooking demonstrations, culinary and nutrition classes, event rentals, community partnerships, and more.
- Extend downtown activity and development south from the Van Andel Arena.

Chronology



c.1998

Ray Kisor, at the time with Grubb & Ellis Company, puts together a plan for a market and mixed-use development on a 3.5-acre site including the vacant Sonneveldt Produce warehouse.

2000

2005

The DDA's *Arts and Entertainment Strategy* for Grand Rapids recommends expanding development southward from the Van Andel Arena to the proposed market site.

2007

The DDA acquires the Sonneveldt site as part of a broader land banking strategy.

2008

Joe Thomaselli, president of Amway Hotel, commissions Wondergem to evaluate local interest in developing a public market. Thomaselli and nonprofit leader Kayem Dunn present the findings to the Grand Action executive committee.

2009

Grand Action engages Market Ventures, Inc. to complete a concept plan and feasibility study for a market.

The first ArtPrize event is held in Grand Rapids.

2010

MARCH: Grand Action announces plans to proceed with development of the market on the Sonneveldt site.

JUNE: Grand Action selects Design Plus and Hugh A. Boyd Architects to design the market.

AUGUST: Grand Rapids Downtown Market, Inc. is recognized as a Michigan nonprofit corporation.

The DDA and Grand Action enter into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the market.

2011

JANUARY: The DDA approves an amendment to the MOU redefining the project as new construction.

APRIL-SEPTEMBER: The first board members for the market are appointed. Market Ventures leads a nonprofit board training and orientation program.

SEPTEMBER: The DDA, Grand Action, and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA) enter into an MOU with the DDA agreeing to lease the Sonneveldt property for \$1 per year and the BRA agreeing to issue bonds for street work.

2013

MAY: The outdoor market opens to the public three days a week with weekly kids' activities and chef presentations. The first facility rental follows in July.

SEPTEMBER: The market hosts its grand opening. Culinary and yoga classes begin.

2012

JANUARY: Existing structures are demolished. Grand Rapids-based M Retail is engaged by the board to manage leasing of space.

MARCH: Construction begins.

SEPTEMBER: Market President and CEO Mimi Fritz is hired following a national search.

2014

JANUARY: Greenhouse classes begin.

JULY: The building receives LEED Gold certification.

SEPTEMBER: The Downtown Market Education Foundation receives 501(c)3 status.

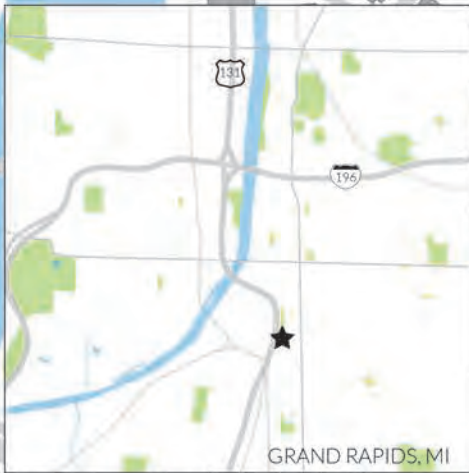
OCTOBER: The first Downtown Market Education Foundation fundraiser is held, and the National Association of Produce Managers holds its fall conference at the market.

2015

AUGUST: Slows Bar Bq restaurant opens.

NOVEMBER: Constructions begins on Social Kitchen and Bar.

Project Description



POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Grand Rapids Downtown Market
2. Heartside Park
3. Van Andel Arena
4. Avenue for the Arts
5. Klingman Lofts
6. Baker Lofts

2

IONIA AVENUESW

4

5

1

6

INTRODUCTION

Grand Rapids Downtown Market is a new downtown public space in West Michigan that celebrates regional food, supports its production and distribution, encourages local entrepreneurs, and educates the community about nutrition and healthy lifestyles. It is anchored in a progressive Midwestern community that values agriculture, civic engagement, and sustainability and is the latest in a series of public projects financed through public-private partnerships that have regenerated downtown Grand Rapids. The Downtown Market, like other recent Grand Rapids projects, is the product of a careful planning process initiated by a group of powerful business, philanthropic, and civic leaders who led investment in downtown and championed the market and its ambitious social agenda. Since it opened in 2013, the building, with light-filled public spaces that offer respite from long, gray West Michigan winters, has become a popular local and regional destination and point of significant community pride.

CONTEXT

Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids Downtown Market is located in Michigan's second largest city, midway between Chicago and Detroit in the western part of the state. It is the urban center for a growing region of more than one million people, situated at the heart of a diverse, 11-county agricultural area. The community prides itself on strong traditions of civic involvement, entrepreneurship, and innovation and a culture of "Midwest nice."

The city was founded in 1826 by Louis Campau, who established a trading post along the east bank of the Grand River near the rapids. Incorporated in 1850, Grand Rapids developed as a center for automobile and furniture manufacturing over the next 100 years. But as traditional manufacturing declined in the 1950s and 1960s, advanced manufacturing, agriculture, education, and health sciences emerged as important economic drivers. Today Grand Rapids is home to more than 90 international companies, including Amway, founded in 1959 by Rich DeVos and Jay Van Andel; BISSELL; and Haworth, Herman Miller, and Steelcase, all major producers of office furniture. In 2015, Spectrum Health was the largest employer not only in Grand Rapids but in all of West Michigan.

As in many American cities, Grand Rapids' downtown emptied out during the 1960s and 1970s, although modest growth in overall city population continued. The city's corporate and philanthropic leaders, led by DeVos and Van Andel, responded by investing in downtown, beginning with the \$120 million renovation of the historic Pantlind Hotel into the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in 1981. Since then, the city's business community has raised and invested hundreds of millions of dollars in downtown projects that, like the market, were designed to attract and retain businesses and residents.

These efforts have succeeded in attracting additional commercial, institutional, and residential development to downtown and reestablishing the city as the urban center of the region. As of early 2015, there were 3,650 residential units in downtown, with more than 1,200 additional units approved and/or under construction. In 2011, the *Wall Street Journal's* MarketWatch recognized Grand Rapids as one of the 10 best places to live in the US, and in 2012 *Forbes* named it the best city for raising a family. Grand Rapids' location midway between Chicago and Detroit and its proximity to the Upper Peninsula and Lake Michigan 30 miles to the west make it a popular stop for visitors. According to the Downtown Market, the city attracts approximately 1.4 million visitors annually.



Market Ventures, Inc.



Grand Rapids Public Library

An early 20th-century farmer's market in Grand Rapids; a 1960's aerial view of the city.

Civic engagement is an important point of pride for Grand Rapids and its business community, which values collaboration and participatory planning processes. As one local leader put it, "Social consciousness is part of the Grand Rapids community." Corporate civic leadership in Grand Rapids has created a culture of philanthropy and history of public-private collaboration.

The city is home to ArtPrize, an international art competition and festival that takes place over two and a half weeks each fall, during which "art pops up in every inch" of a three-square-mile area of downtown Grand Rapids. ArtPrize was created in 2009 by Rick DeVos, grandson of Amway cofounder Rich DeVos, to encourage people in the community to get out and share ideas through contemporary art. Prizes totaling \$900,000 are awarded. Half of the winners are determined by public vote, the other half by a jury of art experts.

Agriculture and sustainability have long been important to the community. Grand Rapids is located at the center of a rich, diverse agricultural region dominated by small, independently owned farms. In 2009, there were 12,220 farms in the surrounding 11-county area (approximately 50-mile radius), most of which were small acreage farms. With the arrival of railroads in the 1850s, the city became an important food distribution center, and public markets became an integral part of the local culture. A local Progressive Era (1890-1920) initiative by the city to increase urban residents' access to fresh fruits and vegetables led to the 1917 opening of the Leonard Street Farmers Market, the city's first public market. The Fulton Street Farmers Market, established in 1922, is the oldest and largest continually operating market in Grand Rapids. In 2010, the city was named "most sustainable midsize city in the US" by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Civic Leadership Center and Siemens Corporation, and in 2009, the American Institute of Architects honored Grand Rapids for having the greatest number of LEED certified buildings per capita for any American city.

Heartside

The Grand Rapids Downtown Market is just south of the downtown business district in Heartside, one of the area's most economically challenged neighborhoods and home to the city's highest concentration of food pantries, shelters, social service agencies, and unemployed and homeless individuals.

Also referred to as Arena South, Heartside is anchored to the north on Fulton Street by the Van Andel Arena and on the southern edge by the Downtown Market and adjacent Heartside Park. During the early part of the twentieth century, the area was a center for food and furniture warehouses and distribution. Many brick warehouses from the era remain and are gradually being repurposed to new uses, including affordable housing and lofts. With a growing concentration of artist homes, studios, galleries, and art events in the area, an effort is underway on nearby South Division Avenue to establish the district as the "Avenue for the Arts."

Demographics

In contrast to Detroit, the population of Grand Rapids has remained relatively stable for the past 80 years. After experiencing rapid growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the population reached a relative plateau of 168,592, after which there has been modest growth along with a few brief periods of decline. According to the census, the city of Grand Rapids had 188,040 residents in 2010, 65% of whom were white, 21% African American, and 14% Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander, or one or more other races. The median household income in Grand Rapids in 2011 was \$36,408.

In Heartside, the population was 2,939, and median household income was \$24,585. Similar to Grand Rapids as a whole, 62% of Heartside residents were white, 26% African American, and 12% other races. Heartside and nearby Roosevelt Park and the South East Community are among West



Looking north from the market (top); the Avenue of the Arts along Division Avenue.

Michigan's most impoverished neighborhoods, with a collective poverty rate of 38% and unemployment rate of 32%.

Heartside is home to a number of social service agencies that assist low-income residents in the area, offering services and transitional housing for those struggling with homelessness, drugs, and mental illness. Local service providers attribute the area's need to the loss of businesses that relocated to the suburbs in the 1960s-1980s; displacement of residents in connection with downtown development, which fueled real estate speculation and resulted in the loss of several SRO (single-room occupancy) buildings which provided low-cost housing; and construction in the 1950s of the I-131 freeway, which divided neighborhoods.

There are several housing developments in the area surrounding the new market. The majority of these are affordable (including transitional housing for the homeless, mentally ill, and recovering addicts) and mixed-income, including two warehouse conversions across the street from the market. However, demand for market-rate and workforce housing in downtown Grand Rapids is increasing and pushing the market into Heartside.

PROJECT HISTORY AND LEADERSHIP

Vision

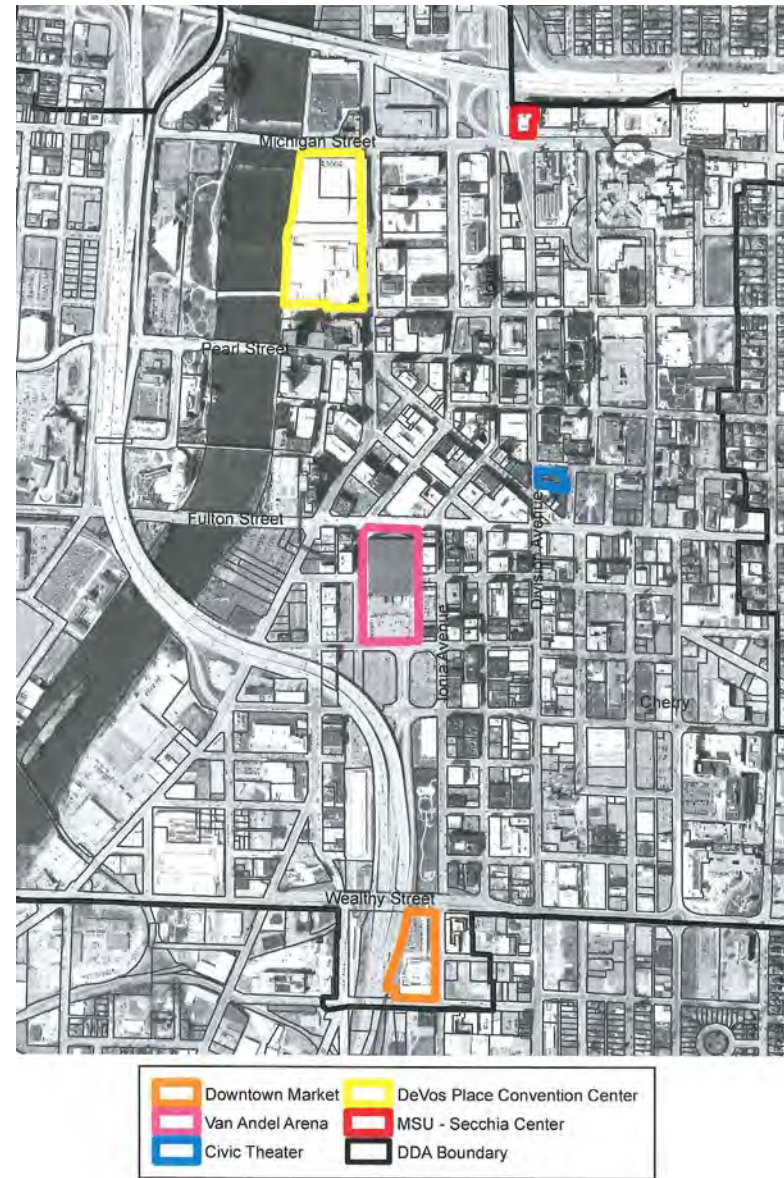
The Downtown Market was made possible through a public-private partnership led by Grand Action and the Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority. It is the product of a thoughtful, participatory planning process that involved the community and leading national consultants in public market development and design. Together they formulated a strategy that leveraged other investments in downtown and capitalized on the unique characteristics of Grand Rapids to yield extensive social as well as economic benefits. As a result of this process, the Downtown Market reflects the aspiration and values of the city.

Grand Action

Grand Action is a collaboration of charitable foundations and public leaders credited with the transformation of downtown Grand Rapids over the past 25 years. It emerged from a desire to reenergize downtown with new investment following the gradual loss of retail businesses to suburban expansion in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1991, Dick DeVos convened a group of more than 50 West Michigan civic leaders from academic institutions, businesses, and local government to explore the possibility of building an arena and expanding the convention center to generate economic activity. As part of its efforts to envision a renewed downtown, the group, which became known as Grand Vision, commissioned economic impact studies that identified untapped demand for entertainment, convention, and medical facilities. In 1993, the group changed its name to Grand Action and shifted its attention and resources to implementation of its vision. Since then, the organization has made investments in major projects like the \$75 million, 12,000-seat Van Andel Arena; renovation of the historic Meijer Majestic Theatre; the \$220 million DeVos Place convention center; and the headquarters for the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.

Grand Action is now a nonprofit organization comprised of more than 250 business and institutional leaders co-chaired by John Canepa, Dick DeVos, and David Frey, all of whom were instrumental in the Downtown Market’s development. Canepa is the consulting principle for Crowe, Horwath & Company LLP; DeVos is president of the Windcrest Group and former president of Amway International; and Frey is chairman of the Frey Foundation and previous chairman of Union Bancorp, Inc. (now JPMorgan Chase). The organization’s primary objectives are “to identify downtown building and revitalization projects, to galvanize public opinion and support for these projects, and to design and implement funding strategies for each project, including securing enough private sector support to guarantee



Grand Action investments in downtown Grand Rapids.

funding from existing public funds.” Grand Action seeks to “Think Boldly. Plan Collegially. Act Urgently.”

Grand Action has been powerful and effective in leading investment in downtown development and assembling the public and private resources to make it possible. The organization is careful and thoughtful in its approach, completing thorough studies and due diligence before committing to new projects. Once the commitment is made, the expectation in the community is that it will succeed. As several people interviewed commented, Grand Action “doesn’t fail.”

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a municipal development agency that uses incremental property taxes (TIFs) collected from downtown properties to finance public improvements. Since 1980, the DDA has invested about \$120 million in various improvement projects, including the Van Andel Arena and expansion of the DeVos Place convention center.

The board of the DDA, like that of Grand Action, is comprised of local business and community leaders, and the organization engages in thoughtful research (including identifying other projects and cities from which to learn) and participatory planning processes to inform its investment strategies. Since 1980, the DDA has completed more than a dozen studies and plans to guide investment in downtown Grand Rapids.

The DDA’s 2005 *Arts and Entertainment Strategy* offered an “action plan to guide the development and evolution of arts and entertainment in downtown Grand Rapids, both in the immediate term and for the next 10 years.” Increasing diversity and improving linkages were key goals that emerged from the study, along with the vision of expanding development southward from downtown into a new “contemporary” district south from the Van

Andel Arena to the current market site. In 2011, the DDA commissioned *Framing the Future: A Framework to Guide Future Planning and Investment*, a plan for downtown development. The “participatory community visioning and priority-setting process” yielded a “market-based vision for downtown and [...] a new construct for guiding DDA investments, decision making and organizational structure.” It reinforced the goal of extending downtown development towards the south and identified the Heartside district and its “innovative and edgy retail corridor” as one of four primary areas for targeted investment.

Public Agencies

Public agencies, including the City of Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BRA), the State of Michigan, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), provided critical support for the project, including funding for environmental cleanup of the site and infrastructure improvements such as new streets, sidewalks, and public transportation enhancements. Funding included a grant for the environmental cleanup, the Michigan Brownfield Tax Credits Program, tax increment financing, and low-interest community revitalization loans.

Grand Rapids Downtown Market, Inc.

In 2010, Grand Action established Grand Rapids Downtown Market, Inc. (GRDM), a Michigan nonprofit corporate entity, to operate the market and selected a board of directors representing Grand Rapids business and civic organizations. Although classified as a nonprofit, the corporation is not tax exempt. A separate 501(c)3 nonprofit, tax-exempt Downtown Market Education Foundation (DMEF) was created in September 2014 “with the goal of making a healthier community lifestyle through culinary and nutritional education, entrepreneur opportunities, and a place for local food production. The DMEF enables the receipt of donations and grants to support community programming at the Downtown Market.

In September 2012, following a national search, GRDM hired the market's first employee, President and CEO Mimi Fritz. Fritz, a native and resident of nearby Holland, brought two decades of design and marketing experience to the position. She has been an extraordinarily effective and nimble leader, successfully navigating a number of challenges associated with a growing startup organization within a relatively short period of time. In less than three years, Fritz has assembled a highly effective and talented 28-member team to support the growth and vision of the Downtown Market.

Creating a Downtown Public Market

The idea of creating a public market in downtown Grand Rapids had been percolating for at least a decade prior to the initiation of development for the current market, and for a few years in the 1990s a temporary market operated downtown on Thursdays. In the late 1990s, Ray Kisor, a founding partner of Grubb & Ellis|Paramount Commerce, proposed a plan for a mixed-use development with a public market on the property known as the Sonneveldt site, where the current market is located. The proposal failed to take hold, but the concept emerged again in the summer of 2008 when Joe Thomaselli, president of the Amway Grand Hotel, initiated a conversation with local business colleagues about developing a downtown market in Grand Rapids and commissioned the hotel's public relations consultant Wondergem to evaluate local interest. At the time, Thomaselli served on the board of the DDA along with Kayem Dunn, a local nonprofit leader with experience in education, publishing, and accreditation. Dunn shared Thomaselli's interest in public markets and joined him in the initiative.

On October 22, 2008, Thomaselli and Dunn presented the Wondergem study to the Grand Action executive committee. The findings indicated that Grand Rapids residents had a strong interest in access to fresh food and the buy-local movement. Their report included examples of public markets in other cities and cited their benefits: attracting a diversity of people, encouraging gathering and socializing, activating public space

and street life, catalyzing redevelopment, providing access to local food and services, promoting healthy life styles, incubating small businesses, and creating jobs. Grand Action was convinced the idea warranted more exploration. Wondergem then identified potential consultants, including Market Ventures, Inc. (MVI), to take the next step.

Market Ventures, Inc.

In 2009, Grand Action engaged MVI to complete a concept plan and feasibility study for an urban market. The study was led by MVI President Ted Spitzer and Senior Associate Hugh Boyd, FAIA. Both are national consultants in the development, design, and programming of new, award-winning urban markets, including the Milwaukee Public Market and 1999 Rudy Bruner Award Silver Medalist Portland Public Market in Portland, Maine. Their work was guided by an Urban Market Advisory Committee established by Grand Action and led by David Frey and Executive Director Jon Nunn.

The scope of the study included market research that gauged supply and demand; development of a merchandising plan; site selection and design concept; exploration of potential ownership, management, and marketing; financial analysis; and impact analysis. The MVI team also reviewed reports and studies supplied by Grand Action on arts and entertainment, the local housing market, the Fulton Street Farmers Market expansion, and regional food systems.

MVI conducted more than 100 interviews, talking with a diversity of local stakeholders including farmers and farmers market managers; food distributors and retailers; artists; developers; representatives of ethnic groups; public officials; and leaders from agriculture, education, healthcare, and nonprofit sectors. Overall, MVI found a high degree of enthusiasm for the concept, as well as a belief that the market could be a key component of a regional economic development strategy. The study acknowledged that

“Michigan has been a leader in the local foods movement nationally,” and interviews revealed “a sophisticated recognition of critical issues,” including the “need to pay ample attention to what’s already going on” with existing farmers markets. The interviewees also indicated interest in education and a commercial incubator kitchen, the potential for the market to serve as a wholesale distribution hub, and a preference for a south side location.

Based on their experience and study of comparable markets, the MVI team identified five key criteria present in successful markets: a great site, a supportive physical environment, a local culture of public market shopping, professional management, and high-quality vendors. They also defined a successful market as one that can operate without subsidy after three years.

The team concluded that the proposed market should be “a ‘real’ place that reflects the region’s unique food and farming culture as well as the distinctive qualities of place presented by downtown” while being informed by “national and regional trends with food retailing and local food systems.” The report also identified the following goals that reflected the findings of Wondergem’s earlier analysis:

- Create a dynamic downtown place that attracts the region’s diverse residents and visitors.
- Strengthen and celebrate Grand Rapids’ local food system.
- Catalyze redevelopment around the market.
- Provide opportunities for independent entrepreneurs.
- Promote healthy lifestyles and create a model of sustainable development.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Grand Action, with the assistance of the DDA and MVI, identified and evaluated 20 potential sites for the market in downtown Grand Rapids. Key criteria included visibility, accessibility, parking, supportive adjacent uses,



The main entrance to Downtown Market on Ionia Avenue.

size, availability and cost, potential to influence ongoing revitalization of downtown, and potential reuse of historic buildings and sustainable design opportunities. The search was then narrowed to three sites which were studied in more detail, including the Sonneveldt site on the south side and two riverside locations. In the end, there was a strong consensus for the Sonneveldt site, a triangular property occupied by a series of warehouse buildings once home to a food distribution operation and owned at the time by the DDA. This decision was based on the potential to make an investment in the south side and extend the “perception of downtown’s boundaries,” reuse historic buildings, and create a market district over time through development of adjacent vacant land and structures. At the same time it was acknowledged that the development would need to address challenges including the perception that it was outside the walkable downtown core and concerns about safety and adequate parking. The DDA agreed to lease the land to GRDM for \$1 per year for 99 years.

The development strategy resulting from the MVI study envisioned the market as “the region’s center of ‘local food excitement.’” To succeed, the market would need to “incorporate a complex set of functions generating multiple income streams; be tenanted with local, owner-operated businesses; incorporate food production; and be phased.”

Once the Sonneveldt site was selected, MVI moved forward with development of a preliminary design for the building, along with strategies for programming, operations, and financial analysis. Grand Action issued a request for proposals for design services and in June 2010 engaged local architectural and engineering firm Progressive AE in partnership with New Jersey-based Hugh A. Boyd Architect. An award-winning architect, Boyd had extensive experience in public market design, including the facilities in Milwaukee and Portland, Maine.

Indeed, the elegant three-story brick and glass Downtown Market building is reminiscent of the Milwaukee and Portland public markets designed and programmed by the MVI partnership of Boyd and Spitzer. Major components of the 138,000 square foot building include:

- a 24-vendor indoor market hall and two full-service restaurants
- a rooftop greenhouse
- a teaching kitchen featuring state-of-the-art technology and adjustable countertops
- a shared commercial incubator kitchen
- special event/banquet space with a demonstration kitchen that seats up to 200
- classrooms, labs, and offices for the market and educational tenants
- a 52-stall outdoor market shed

The initial plan was to reuse the existing structures on the site, which included five buildings dating from the 1890s to 1940s, ranging from one to four stories and constructed of brick, wood, and reinforced concrete.



Views of the Ionia Avenue facade.

However, upon further investigation, the design team discovered previously unidentified structural issues that would require several million dollars to address. These included foundation settlement related to poor bearing capacity of the underlying soil (mostly peat bog), damage from previous fires, and additional reinforcement needed to meet floor load requirements for new uses. GRDM decided to proceed instead with the development of a new building, adding approximately \$500,000 in construction costs.

The building hugs the southern edge of the 3.5-acre site and includes an attached, one-story covered outdoor market shed projecting north from the entrance into the parking lot. The main entrance to the building and first-floor market hall is on the north side facing downtown, opposite the outdoor market shed and parking lot. An additional market hall entrance is located on Ionia Avenue. There is a separate building entrance lobby off Logan Street SW that provides access to second and third floor offices and educational space as well as a loading dock and delivery area.

The market hall occupies the majority of the first floor along with two full-service restaurants and the delivery and loading area. The second floor contains classrooms, meeting rooms and offices for the market staff and educational tenants, as well as a teaching kitchen, a commercial incubator kitchen, a banquet/special event space with a demonstration kitchen, a greenhouse, and indoor and outdoor seating areas. The third floor has 9,800 square feet of rentable space that was not yet occupied by the end of 2015. The basement includes storage areas used by the market staff and tenants.

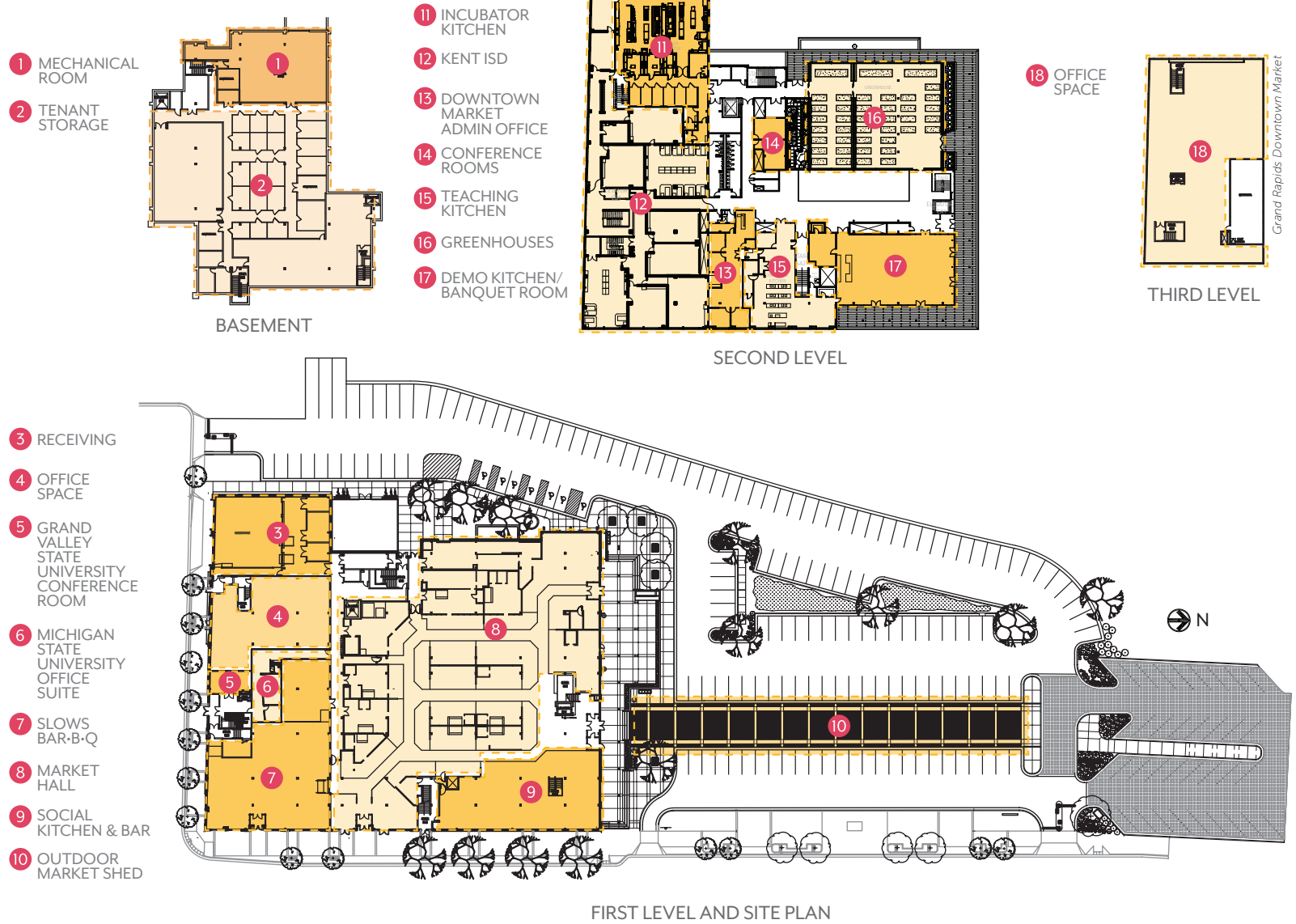
Public areas are clearly organized and welcoming. Most rooms have large windows that look outside or into the greenhouses, admitting generous amounts of daylight and offering views of adjacent activities. An open stairway and atrium connect the market hall with second floor offices and indoor and outdoor public areas, including a mezzanine that overlooks



Rooftop greenhouse

the market hall and landscaped outdoor terraces with tables and chairs. Timber salvaged from the original buildings on the site was incorporated into exposed trusses and wall paneling. High-quality materials were used throughout the building, reflecting the Downtown Market's civic purpose and Grand Action's commitment to quality and consideration of long-term maintenance.

More than 200 on-site parking spaces are distributed along the west side and north of the building in gated lots. Ten preferred parking spaces are available for low-emission and fuel-efficient vehicles. Free parking is available for market customers. The site is served by two bus lines including the new \$39 million Division Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Silver Line that provides express transit connecting downtown with points south and another route on Ionia Avenue that was relocated to enhance service to the market. Streetscape improvements including new road surfaces, sidewalks, and lighting were installed on adjacent streets by the City of Grand Rapids.



Sustainability

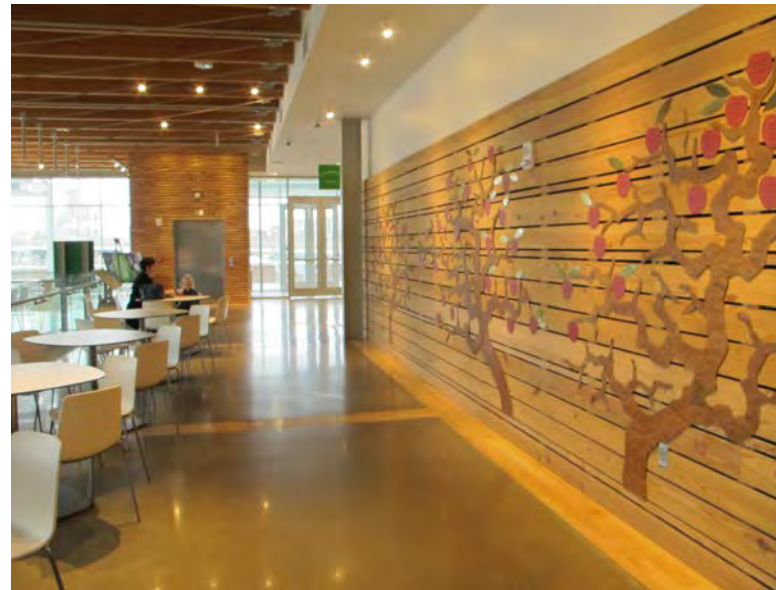
Building sustainability was a key goal for the Downtown Market, which is the first LEED-certified public market in the United States and includes features that reflect its focus on food and public health.

Sustainability objectives for the design of the market included:

- Incorporating innovative approaches such as heating the greenhouse with excess heat from the market hall, implementing food waste composting, and capturing rain water for use in the greenhouses and landscaping.
- Minimizing operating costs in order to keep vendor rents as low as possible.
- Making sustainable elements visible to market visitors to add interest and excitement.

The Downtown Market is LEED Gold certified, receiving a total of 61 points. The sustainability consultants considered the project's focus on human health, energy design, reuse of a former urban brownfield, and access to public transportation to be key features. They pursued credits that reflected the market's focus on urban agriculture, food production, and increasing access to and education about healthy food and included an LEED pilot credit for local food production, the first in the US.

The Downtown Market's physical infrastructure includes a geothermal system with fifty 200-foot-deep wells in the parking lot, an 8,000-gallon rain harvesting system for greenhouse irrigation, 5,000 square feet of green roofs, 1,400 square feet of live walls, and a bio-digester. Tenant Design and Construction Guidelines instruct future tenants on green aspects of the building, and tenant work letters outline required water fixtures, light power density thresholds, and refrigeration systems that connect to the chiller loop.



Meeting rooms overlooking the greenhouse (top) and reclaimed wood paneling on the mezzanine.

Energy modeling was critical to the design of the heating and cooling system as well as seeking to reduce long-term operational costs. The hybrid system includes 64 heat pumps integrated with a heat exchanger and four boilers. The geothermal wells are designed to provide two-thirds of the market's heating and cooling needs. Two boilers supply heat for the greenhouse, which is operated by a separate control system, and for the snow melt system at the perimeter of the building, required by the city in high traffic public areas. According to the systems engineer, the system is designed to reduce energy use by 20% from that of a typical building.

A photovoltaic solar system was considered but determined not to be a cost-effective option at the time. The state-of-the-art facility includes computer programs that manage the complex heating, cooling, lighting, greenhouse shading and ventilation, and security systems, but it required a steep learning curve to use properly. According to the facility manager, the biggest challenge has been fine-tuning the systems to get the most efficiency and reduce utility bills. However, energy bills remain high. According to Fritz, the greenhouse and snowmelt system create substantial loads; in 2014, the green house alone cost approximately \$100,000 to operate, and the snowmelt system cost \$150,000. In part, this is because the greenhouse is increasingly used for special events, requiring additional heating and cooling, which was not anticipated when it was designed.

Reducing long-term operating and maintenance costs was one of the overall design goals and characteristic of Grand Action developments and the City of Grand Rapids, which, as one local leader observed, "doesn't shy away from making investments in public buildings." The Downtown Market features high-quality finishes, fixtures, and systems throughout, from "hidden" infrastructure like the sophisticated electronics that control lighting, heating and cooling, and greenhouse shading to more visible ones like the adjustable countertops in the teaching kitchen and stainless steel partitions and high-end fixtures and fittings in the restrooms.

ACTIVITIES

The Downtown Market hosts a diversity of activities that revolve around food education, marketing and production, entrepreneurship, and healthy living. As one interviewee commented, "The building is secondary to the programming." Together the year-round indoor market hall and seasonal outdoor farmers market, teaching and commercial incubator kitchens, greenhouse, and educational and special event programming support the ambitious economic and social goals of the project, including creating a "center of local food excitement," and reinforce its identity as a civic gathering space and regional destination.

Indoor Market Hall

The indoor market hall is the heart of the Downtown Market's operation. It is open Monday through Saturday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sundays 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. According to staff and vendors, visitation peaks on Sunday afternoons around 3 p.m. Vendors are a popular attraction for guests attending meetings and special events and offer visitors options for last-minute gifts.



Shoppers enjoy a wide variety of vendors in the Market Hall.

The Downtown Market is intended to be a platform that promotes the rich agricultural community of Western Michigan. Therefore, as many products as possible are locally sourced. However, the Downtown Market also aims to offer a full shopping experience and includes vendors that sell cheese, wine, and olive oils from around the world and fish from outside the Great Lakes region. The hall has space for 25 tenants; 19 were in place at the market's opening in September 2013 and 21 in late 2015. Those tenants included:

- Aperitivo (imported and domestic cheeses, charcuterie, beer, and wine)
- Blue Spoon Soup & Spuds (operated by Goodwill)
- Bokay Flower Market
- Dorothy & Tony's Gourmet Popcorn
- Field & Fire Bakery
- Fish Lads
- Grand Traverse Distillery
- Love's Ice Cream
- Making Thyme Kitchen (prepared meals, soups, sides, and salads)
- Malamiah Juice Bar
- Michigan Pantry (Michigan-produced products)
- Montello Meat Market
- Old World Olive Company
- Penelope's Creperie
- Relish Green Grocer
- Rak Thai
- Simpatico Coffee
- Spice Merchants
- Sushi Maki
- Sweetie-licious Bake Shop
- Tacos El Cunado



Vendors include (clockwise from top): Fish Lads, Field and Fire Bakery, and Montello Meat Market.

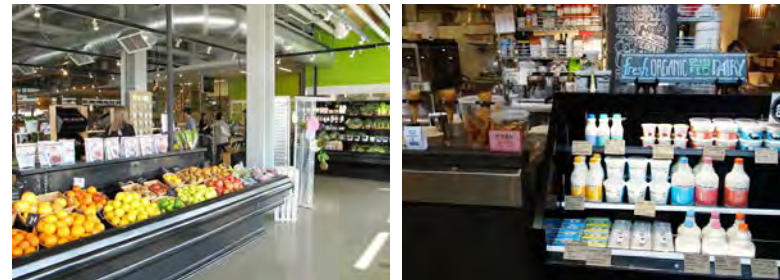
The MVI study laid the groundwork for the types of businesses desired as tenants as well as the structure and design of the market hall. Grand Action engaged M Retail 18 months before the building was completed to lease the market hall. Fritz was promised a majority leased building when she was hired, which was not the case. Ted Spitzer worked to secure board approval to focus Fritz's attention on leasing the market hall, which had 80%

occupancy in time for the opening. Although Fritz and Muller succeeded in achieving a critical mass of vendors necessary for the opening, the effort drew Fritz's attention away from building the market's organization, programs, and staff.

Downtown Market staff now handle the majority of the leasing, assisted by a commercial leasing consultant and leasing committee that meets every three weeks. Rental rates are \$20 per square foot for restaurants and range from \$29 to \$35 per square foot for vendors. Leases include an additional percentage rent that kicks in once vendors meet a specified threshold of sales. The common area charge is \$5 per square foot, with an additional \$1 per square foot marketing charge. Five- to 10-year terms were established with initial tenants, four of whom have since left. In the spring of 2015, two vendor spaces remained to be leased.

Leasing staff work hard to attract and maintain a diverse and vibrant mix of vendors that support the goals and vision for the Downtown Market. This includes reaching out to established businesses within the area as well as tapping new entrepreneurs and people and businesses outside the city to meet the need for a particular type of product, such as convincing a Traverse City native living in Seattle to return to open Fish Lads. Staff members believe in taking time to find the right vendors, ensuring that their products meet the criteria and needs of the market, their philosophy aligns with the market, and their business practices are strong. This includes investing time and resources in cultivating and nurturing first-time operators and start-ups like Field & Fire Bakery and Malamiah Juice Bar, providing extensive design support with tenant fit-out, helping with start-up capital and loans, and on some occasions taking over businesses when operators failed to meet the market's standards.

The Downtown Market offers a variety of fresh and healthy food options in a neighborhood once considered a food desert and that does not yet have



Vendors include (clockwise from top): Relish Green Grocer, Love's Ice Cream, Aperitivo.

the population necessary to sustain a traditional grocery store. In order to make market products more affordable for low-income local residents, vendors accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food stamps. The Downtown Market also partners with local nonprofits to provide educational scholarships to low-income residents along with complimentary transit passes and "produce bucks" that can be used to purchase ingredients from Relish green grocer.



Jeffrey Crookers



Slows Bar Bq restaurant (top) and the seasonal outdoor market are popular destinations.

The two full-service restaurant spaces at the perimeter of the Downtown Market were the last to be leased. Although this resulted in less rental income for the market's first years of business, the general consensus is that it was worth the wait to secure the right tenants. Slows Bar Bq, a well-known traditional Texas-style barbecue from Detroit, opened in summer 2015. Social Kitchen & Bar, a popular Birmingham-based enterprise, will open a restaurant in the market in 2016. Both have been eagerly anticipated, and it is expected that their presence will increase the Downtown Market's popularity as a destination as well as market hall sales.

Vendors commented positively on the quality of the Downtown Market's infrastructure and management, including the investment in systems and equipment that made it feasible "to do something not possible elsewhere." They appreciated the collaborative, supportive environment that helped them feel "set-up for success" and more comfortable with taking the risk of starting up a new business. As one person observed, "The market doesn't let you fail."

Outdoor Farmers Market

The 52-stall seasonal outdoor market offers space for farmers selling products from their own or a neighbor's farm. Downtown Market staff seek to attract a variety of vendors and have established guidelines and rules modeled on other farmers markets, including criteria for vendors and conduct. All food must be from Michigan and vendors must produce 80% of what they sell. Applications from artisans offering handcrafted items are also considered. Seasonal and daily vendors are welcome.

The outdoor market was the first portion of the Downtown Market to open in 2013 and remains an important and visible part of its operations. As the outdoor market entered the 2015 season, the manager acknowledged that staff were still learning, realizing that it takes time to build relationships and trust with farmers and producers and to establish a new venue in a

community with several existing outdoor markets. Market staff have made adjustments to the operating hours and rental cost structure from the prior season, including reducing the months of operation to focus on late spring through early fall and decreasing vendor fees by 50%.

Greenhouse

The 6,000-square-foot rooftop greenhouse was envisioned as the “signature design element for the market” and is one of the most visible and popular spaces in the building. The light-filled space is attractive during the winter months when many days are overcast, and at night the illuminated glass enclosure serves as a glowing beacon. Greenhouse programming and use has evolved as Downtown Market staff have experimented with different ways of using the space to serve the public, seeking to leverage its popularity to generate revenue and offset operating costs.

According to Ben Bylsma, the greenhouse and green roofs manager, the primary purpose of the greenhouse when the Downtown Market opened was to grow plants. With the establishment of the Educational Foundation in 2014, the focus has shifted to educational programming, sharing the space with community partners, and renting it for events. In 2015, the greenhouse’s large open spaces were used for a combination of cultivation, educational programming—including fitness classes and gardening demonstrations—and a growing number of special events including corporate meetings and weddings. The space includes 24 benches used to start plants, the majority of which were rented to nonprofits and vendors like Well House, a Grand Rapids housing organization that uses the greenhouse to cultivate plants for community gardens. The Downtown Market is finding this approach to be a cost-effective and efficient way to share valuable indoor growing space and develop collaborative partnerships.



The rooftop greenhouse is used for cultivation and educational programming.

Grand Rapids Downtown Market

Teaching and Commercial Incubator Kitchens

Food education and production are core activities supported by the Downtown Market's state-of-the-art teaching kitchen and commercial incubator kitchen. Both are designed to support a variety of programs to maximize their use.

Classes on cooking and nutrition are offered in the teaching kitchen which, according to Fritz, is the first in the country to feature adjustable height countertops that can be lowered for children. According to one cooking instructor, other facilities in the area "cannot beat the world-class teaching kitchen."

The Downtown Market's 5,000-square-foot commercial incubator kitchen includes preparation, production, and packaging and storage space available 24/7 for food start-up businesses. The market's incubator kitchen program also offers workshops, networking and collaboration opportunities, mentorship, business support, and technical assistance to help start-up entrepreneurs with the development, production, and marketing of food products.

The incubator program is managed by Crystal LeCoy, who has done an impressive job of establishing a new program along with policies and protocols in a relatively short period of time. The incubator program's rigorous application requires a business plan and liability insurance. LeCoy works closely with applicants to help them find the resources they need to meet the program's requirements. Once on board, participants receive access to workshops as well as a high degree of personalized support from LeCoy, including one-on-one coaching and mentoring to help with business planning and financing, production and packaging, labeling and marketing, and meeting necessary licensing and testing requirements. The Downtown Market offers discounted and scholarship rates to candidates who meet income criteria.



Crystal LeCoy (top left), manager of the commercial incubator kitchen (bottom), meets with incubator tenants.

In 2015, the incubator program hosted 16 tenants including fermented food and kombucha tea producers, a cold coffee brewer, and prepared food caterers. The incubator kitchen provides an opportunity for businesses to keep overhead costs low by minimizing investment of fixed capital. Tenants also benefit from working in the collaborative Downtown Market environment where they have access to classes, educational partners, and vendors and can network with other small businesses. This has resulted in opportunities to teach classes and cooperate with market vendors to source and use each other's products. LeCoy hosts biweekly meetings that give tenants the chance to connect with resources and each other. Program participants reported that they appreciated the high quality and capacity of the equipment, the pleasant light-filled working space, and the supportive staff. One person commented that "going any place else will be a step down."

As with other programmatic elements, operating the incubator kitchen program has been a learning process for the Downtown Market. Challenges include managing demand for the successful program (there is a waiting list of applicants) and kitchen space (including finding ways to fill less popular overnight hours), balancing the desire to provide individualized attention with staff capacity, and finding ways to help businesses that outgrow the space and are ready to move on. As of December 2014, 100 businesses had participated in the incubator kitchen program.

Educational Programming

The Downtown Market offers a variety of programs that focus on healthy lifestyles to support its educational mission and reinforce its role as a gathering place. These include greenhouse and culinary programs that help people learn more about food as well as fitness and yoga classes. Programs are designed to attract all ages, income levels, and ethnic groups. They include summer camps and classes to introduce children, teens, and families to cooking and healthy lifestyles; hands-on adult classes and workshops

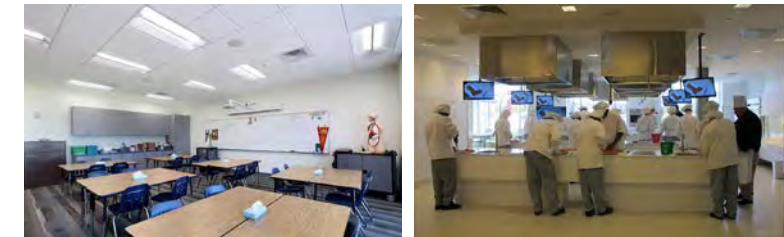
on food growing, shopping, preparation, budgeting, and nutrition; and Spanish-language culinary courses.

The Downtown Market also hosts events and workshops throughout the year in partnership with the city, local chefs, and vendors. In 2015, these included free Saturday morning cooking demonstrations and kids' activities, Monday evening workshops featuring market products presented in partnership with vendors, and a series in April offered with the Michigan Cider Association to celebrate Grand Rapids' inaugural Cider Week.

The Downtown Market also partners with local schools and community organizations, including Spectrum Health, to develop and market its educational programs. Market staff are eager to reach more people in the community, particularly local low-income residents, and are working with more than 30 neighborhood organizations and social service providers to identify topics of interest and overcome barriers to participation, such



Classes and events are offered throughout the year.



Educational classes for children and adults take place in the teaching kitchen and classrooms.

as the perception among many low-income shoppers that the market is “not for me.” They are finding word-of-mouth and outreach via community organizations to be most effective. The market has started offering tours of the building to introduce people to its amenities (as of early 2015, more than 2,000 people had taken part) and classes on the fundamentals of nutrition and cooking, such as knife skills.

The cost of cooking classes varies from \$30 to \$65 per session. The Downtown Market partners with local nonprofits to provide low-income

residents with educational scholarships that fund class fees and transit passes and offer \$10 in “produce bucks” that can be used to purchase ingredients from Relish Green Grocer. In the first year of the scholarship program, 231 participants received scholarships funded by Spectrum Health and more than \$1,400 in produce bucks were provided. The Downtown Market is on track to distribute 650 scholarships at the close of the fiscal year ending in June 2015. Scholarship recipients interviewed for this report appreciated the opportunity to offer their families better nutrition and reduce their dependency on prepared foods. They didn’t feel there was a stigma associated with being a participant and enjoyed using the produce bucks that encouraged their purchase of fresh produce. They acknowledged that not many families they know are aware of the Downtown Market and more could be done to promote its classes and camp opportunities. One found out about the market by volunteering for ArtPrize; another discovered it while researching summer camp options for her children. They enjoy attending classes and shopping in the market and are eager ambassadors who encourage their friends to visit.

Several nonprofit educational organizations rent space in the facility for offices, classes, and teaching demonstrations. These include the Kent Intermediate School District and Grand Valley State University (GVSU). GVSU, which has a main campus in Allendale and a secondary campus downtown, utilizes the test kitchen and meeting space for its hospitality and tourism management program. The market also hosts the Heartside Gleaning Initiative, which collects excess fresh produce from market vendors for distribution to local food pantries (more than 17,592 pounds of food were collected from the Downtown Market and Fulton Street Market during the 2014 season). The Kent Intermediate School District uses classrooms and the teaching kitchen for its Health Sciences Early College Academy and high school culinary arts program. As of late 2014, 300 students had participated. Michigan State University Extension has an office in the market with staff who work with local farmers and growers. The

program holds classes on culinary medicine and food safety and offers counseling and classes for farmers and vendors on creating and packaging retail products, employee training, and direct market sales.

Tenants pay a base rent for their space as well as a discounted rental rate for use of the teaching kitchen and meeting spaces. Educational partners gave the Downtown Market high marks for the quality of the facility, particularly the teaching kitchen, and its commitment to the community and education. The market's downtown location and combination of teaching, production, and retail facilities offer a unique environment for experiential learning that does not exist elsewhere in the region. It is not unusual for students in the high school culinary program to interview with and work for vendors in the market hall as well as the Downtown Market itself. Educational tenants and market staff have also collaborated in the development of new educational programs, such as a culinary medicine class offered in partnership with the medical school that filled within five minutes of registration opening.

A community advisory group comprised of about a dozen people from local nonprofits, businesses, and health organizations meets quarterly to focus on ways to increase diversity and inclusion at the Downtown Market. Members act as ambassadors for the market, reaching out to the more than 40 service organizations in the neighborhood and supporting the work of the educational foundation. It is clear that the Downtown Market is intended to serve a larger social purpose, and staff are eager to ensure that the building is welcoming.

Educational programming at the Downtown Market continues to evolve. Prior to the Downtown Market's opening, staff members created a list of over 300 potential classes based on market research, then narrowed the list down to ideas they thought would be of most interest to the community. In early 2015, 10 staff members were engaged in developing, managing,



Grand Rapids Downtown Market



The greenhouse (top) and banquet room are popular event venues.

and teaching programs. By all accounts the programs they offered were creative, innovative, and responsive to interests of customers, community organizations, and educational partners, and new options tailored to different audiences were in development. More recent offerings included a holiday open house featuring incubator kitchen products and workshops on cleaning and reduction of household toxins.

Events

From the time of its opening, the Downtown Market has been a popular venue for meetings and events, including corporate gatherings and weddings. The light-filled building and rooftop greenhouse are attractive and appealing. The market hosted 176 events in 2014 and expected to host more than 200 in 2015. Although the Downtown Market was intended and designed to host events, the degree to which it is used by businesses for training and networking—taking advantage of the robust technology embedded in the building—was not anticipated. It has become clear that event rentals offer potential for additional revenue that Fritz and her staff are eager to leverage.

Market staff are also eager to increase the building's role as a community forum as events and meetings offer another way for people to see and experience the building. The Downtown Market hosts a variety of ad hoc and regular meetings of organizations that focus on health and well-being, food production, and sustainability, including the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum and Local First.

Future Plans

Start-up of the facility has been time and resource intensive. Fritz's need to shift attention on leasing the market at the start required putting the work of building the organization and staff on hold for six months. Thorough as the MVI study was, it did not include proposed programming for spaces like the greenhouse, and it has taken time to figure out how best

to use the spaces and balance revenue generation, operating costs, and the Downtown Market's social agenda. Concerned about burnout among start-up staff, Fritz is mindful of managing expectations and taking too much on at one time. In early 2015, she engaged consultant Bill Johnson from the Berean Group to assist with evaluating the Downtown Market's performance and developing a strategic business plan, and Fritz was in the process of restructuring staff to put personnel in places that support revenue generation such as special events.

FINANCING

Properly capitalizing the Downtown Market's development, construction, and startup funds was a key goal identified by the MVI feasibility study and essential to the market's ability to be financially self-sustaining in the long run. Financing for the Downtown Market was assembled by Grand Action, which leveraged its relationships with business leaders and public agencies to raise the necessary funds. However, once underway, the project encountered a series of setbacks—including unanticipated building and financing challenges—that ultimately increased development costs and, in turn, raised operating costs and compromised the market's ability to generate income. All of this resulted in unexpected financial pressures on the organization and its president and CEO in the first year and a half of start-up. While there have been setbacks, market staff and board are proactively exploring ways to increase revenue and reduce operating expenses while continuing to meet the Downtown Market's ambitious social goals. By early 2015, there was cautious optimism that, with some fine-tuning of its strategy and operations, the organization would be on track to meet its goal of long-term sustainability within the next few years.

Six months prior to the Downtown Market's completion, Grand Action engaged Jim Pike from Fusion Business Services to take over the accounting for the project. According to Pike, it is typical for Grand Action to provide

in-house financial management for a project it sponsors until it is up and running, when the responsibility is transferred to the operator. After the transfer, the Downtown Market engaged Fusion for day-to-day accounting services. In early 2015, Fritz and Pike were in the process of restructuring the organization's financial systems to address its evolution and accurately reflect current operations. These efforts included assigning and finalizing costs associated with the Downtown Market's development and start-up, shifting educational programming revenue and expenses from the corporation to the foundation (as intended when the market was created), and moving the organization's fiscal calendar towards a calendar year. The final tabulation of development costs for the building was determined to be nearly \$29.5 million.

Development

The budget and strategy for capitalizing the Downtown Market's development and sustaining its operations was laid out in the MVI report. Key to the financing strategy was the notion that the project be properly capitalized at the beginning. According to the MVI report, "In most communities the initial costs of developing a public market, including land, are paid by public or philanthropic funds, with the assumption that the public market will not carry debt service." This strategy assumed that start-up funding would pay for the building in full and, critically, allow for a cushion by providing support for the first three years of operation, at which point the market was expected to become self-sustaining.

The initial development cost estimate for the Grand Rapids market was \$27.1 million, including \$19.7 million in hard construction costs. Financing from New Market Tax Credits (NMTC)—a federal financing program established to bring private capital investments to low-income communities—was anticipated to account for more than 50% of development costs.

As development of the market progressed, several issues arose which increased the costs and complicated financing and fundraising for the project. The initial construction cost estimate was predicated on renovation of the existing buildings, and the financing strategy relied heavily on NMTC. The need to demolish the existing structures and build from the ground up resulted in an additional \$500,000 in construction costs. Failure to secure the expected tax credits late in the development process required additional fundraising and the use of last-minute loans, secured and in some cases provided by members of Grand Action, to bridge the gap. These unanticipated expenses and the loan financing resulted in increased operating costs and the kind of debt service the initial planning tried to avoid and created additional financial challenges in the market's first years of operation.

In the end, the development totaled nearly \$29.5 million, including \$24 million in construction costs, bringing the cost of the building to approximately \$172 per square foot. It is worth noting that construction costs included infrastructure, equipment, and tenant fit-out for market hall vendors (but not the two restaurants). These costs are usually passed along to tenants in comparable projects, but in this case were considered part of the public investment necessary to attract the right mix of vendors, support the goals of incubating and supporting entrepreneurship, and getting the market up and running. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation provided a \$1.5 million grant after the Downtown Market opened to support tenant fit out for the two restaurants.

Funding for the development came from private donors and foundations, the City of Grand Rapids, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State of Michigan. Local public agencies contributed infrastructure improvements including new streets and sidewalks and enhanced public transportation access through the rerouting of bus routes.

More than half of the funds came from private donors and foundations including the Grand Rapids Community Foundation. State funding included a \$4 million loan from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (\$1 million of which was guaranteed by local foundations) plus nearly \$4.4 million in funding from state Brownfield Tax Credits. The City of Grand Rapids used \$200,000 from an existing EPA grant and received \$1 million from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to fund cleanup of the property. An additional \$184,000 was contributed by the Grand Rapids Parking Services Department (GRPSD).

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT SOURCES AND USES

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENT SOURCES AND USES	
<i>Sources</i>	
Private Donor and Foundation Grants	\$13,588,087
Private Donor and Foundation Loans	\$6,445,612
Brownfield Tax Credits	\$4,380,953
Michigan Economic Development Corporation (loan)	\$4,000,000
DEQ, EPA, and GRPSD Grants	\$1,069,228
	\$29,483,880
<i>Uses</i>	
Predevelopment/Startup*	\$784,287
Construction	\$24,090,365
Equipment, Fixtures and Furniture	\$881,054
Professional Fees	\$3,220,438
Fees, Permits and Testing	\$101,997
Land Costs	\$214,033
Liquor License	\$26,425
Interest	\$165,281
	\$29,483,880
<i>*Includes MVI report and market personnel.</i>	

A reconciliation of development costs prepared by the market's chief financial officer in 2015 is summarized in Table 1.

Operating

From its inception, it was assumed that the Downtown Market would be owned and operated by a new or existing nonprofit organization. The market is comprised of two business entities: the Grand Rapids Downtown Market, Inc. (GRDM), which owns and operates the building and market hall; and the nonprofit Downtown Market Education Foundation (DMEF), which received 501(c)(3) status in 2014 and is responsible for educational programming, including activities that take place in the greenhouse and incubator kitchen. In 2015, the Downtown Market was in the process of sorting out income and expenses for both operations and was working with Johnson on the development of a strategic plan for both entities.

MVI prepared five-year financial projections as part of its feasibility study, estimating annual income to range from \$1.73 million in year one to \$2.22 million in year five, with base rents averaging \$21 per square foot. Operating expenses were estimated to range from \$1.41 million in year one to \$1.6 million in year five. MVI recommended a "robust management team" of professional staff, budgeting approximately \$635,000 annually, and a generous allowance for marketing. The study projected a positive cash flow in year one, including a profit of just under \$250,000.

The plan was for the Downtown Market to become financially self-sustaining within a few years. This presumed that the building would be paid in full and fully occupied when it opened, which was not the case. By early 2015, the market hall had been fully leased and the expectation was that GRDM would begin to generate a modest profit in the 2015/16 fiscal year. The DMEF was expected to break even with income generated primarily through program fees, grants, and event rentals, and the expectation is that it will always require some level of grant funding to support its operations.

**TABLE 2: GRAND RAPIDS DOWNTOWN MARKET, INC.
2015-16 OPERATING BUDGET**

<i>Revenue</i>	
Rent	\$1,061,885
Special Events	\$858,200
Operating*	\$334,495
Loan Payments	\$33,600
Subtotal	\$2,288,180
<i>Expenses</i>	
Personnel	\$866,180
Occupancy	\$452,000
Administration	\$282,700
Other	\$259,400
Events	\$121,700
Promotion	\$95,100
Contingency	\$42,000
Merchandising	\$20,000
Subtotal	\$2,139,080
Total Net Income	\$149,100

**Includes ATM and parking fees, merchandising, and sponsorships.*

According to the 2015/16 corporation and foundation budgets provided by the Downtown Market, the total projected cost to operate the facility and programs for the year is \$2,820,450. The 2015/16 operating budget for GRDM (Table 2) was just over \$2 million, with a projected profit of about \$150,000. Nearly half (46%) of the revenue is projected to be generated by rents and 38% from special events. Of the expenses, 40% was allocated for personnel and 21% for occupancy.

**TABLE 3: DOWNTOWN MARKET EDUCATION FOUNDATION
2015-16 OPERATING BUDGET**

<i>Revenue</i>	
Programs	\$352,900
Grants	\$219,200
Fundraisers/Special Events	\$105,000
Greenhouse	\$3,600
Tours	\$1,200
	\$681,900
<i>Expenses</i>	
Personnel	\$414,770
Administration	\$95,500
Programs	\$92,600
Promotion	\$38,900
Building	\$24,000
Events	\$9,600
Contingency	\$6,000
	\$681,370
Total Net Income	\$530

The 2015/16 DMEF expense budget (Table 3) was just over \$680,000, a significant increase from the 2014 budget of just over \$270,000. That year, program fees, incubator rental, and special events generated more than 80% of revenue, with grants making up the balance. Expenses exceeded revenue by 20%. In 2015/16, program fees, incubator rental, and special events were expected to generate 68% of the revenue, with grants making up the difference. As of the beginning of 2015/16, the foundation had yet

to assume any occupancy costs except for modest expenses associated with greenhouse programming (mostly equipment and maintenance). As with the corporation, personnel costs make up the majority of expenses for the foundation.

In October 2014, the Downtown Market hosted the first Food A'faire, an annual fundraising event benefiting the Downtown Market Education Foundation. Fritz anticipates that market staff will pursue grants in the future to raise additional revenue.

IMPACT

The Grand Rapids Downtown Market was off to a promising start in its second full year of operation. As the latest project in Grand Action's portfolio of investments in downtown Grand Rapids, the carefully conceived project embodies an ambitious social agenda and reflects the civic aspirations



Simeon Bruner presents the RBA plaque to President/CEO Mimi Fritz (left) and Kayem Dunn.

of the community in its architecture and programming. Although there were development and financial challenges along the way that delayed its progress, the Downtown Market appeared to be on track to meet its goals.

While it is early to evaluate it in respect to all of the project goals, the Downtown Market is clearly making an impact on the community. Overall, the impression in the community is that the market is contributing to increased awareness and interest in the local and fresh food movement and is helping to grow local food businesses. The facility is becoming a popular local and regional destination and has helped to spur additional development at the southern end of downtown. One person referred to the whole market as "a big incubator." A 2012 *New York Times* article "A Michigan City Bets on Food for Its Growth" highlighted the ambitious goals for the project and its connection with city identity.

The Aspirational Small City

There is a high degree of ambition and civic pride among the business and civic leaders in Grand Rapids. As Dick DeVos observed, Grand Rapids "wants to be a community of the future, not the past." Several people commented that "Grand Rapids is a special place," suggesting that there's something about the attitude and culture of the community, including its "vibrant and powerful tradition of corporate/private sector leadership," that has made the resurrection of downtown and projects like the Downtown Market possible. Another suggested that the city is essentially a small town and that people who are involved in the community tend to cross paths frequently with each other, making it easier to get things done.

The Power of Civic Leadership and Collaboration

Several people cited the role of visionary leadership and the spirit of collaboration as something that sets Grand Rapids apart and contributed to the Downtown Market's successful development and completion.

Leadership from the business and philanthropic sectors in particular has been key. According to one source, Grand Rapids has an unusually high level of wealth for a city of its size, and business and philanthropic leaders do not hesitate to use that wealth for the public good. Equally essential has been a high level of civic engagement and investment in community input and process. As one local leader explained, “The culture of Grand Rapids provides opportunities for all of us to participate.” These civic qualities are embodied in Grand Action, which was essential to making the Downtown Market a reality. The organization championed the idea of a public market, advanced the planning and development process, assembled the funding for its construction and start-up, and steered the project through challenges—such as the loss of anticipated NMTC funding—that very well might have derailed or diminished a similar project in another city.

Investing in Quality

Grand Action focuses on building high-quality structures, investing in materials and systems that take into consideration long-term maintenance and life cycle costs. When the market project hit unanticipated financial hurdles, the leaders of Grand Action stepped in with additional resources to fill the gap, throughout the process maintaining its commitment to quality construction and fulfilling the market’s social agenda. As one person interviewed put it, “Grand Action doesn’t do projects halfway.” The MVI report noted that “if you look at some of the projects that Grand Action has done, they’ve changed the perception of all of downtown [...] if Grand Action takes this on [...] it would be something that would be an attraction and destination location.”

Building More than a Market

Grand Rapids Downtown Market is more than a market. It incorporates an ambitious social agenda aimed at improving access to fresh food, supporting local agriculture and food production, and improving public health. The market does this by bringing people together—consumers,



State of the art features, such as adjustable counter tops (top), reflect the commitment to education and quality.

Grand Rapids Downtown Market

farmers and vendors, and educators—and making connections through classes and events in a beautiful public space. Partnerships with local service providers and scholarships increase access to educational classes and fresh food for low-income individuals and families, building human and social capital in the community.

According to MVI's Ted Spitzer, integrating educational programming, special events, and commercial office space into the Downtown Market offers several benefits. Even though the added complexity makes the market more difficult to manage, it helps to diversify revenue streams, reduce reliance on vendor rent, and foster innovation among vendors, who can open the door to wholesale business, reducing their reliance on retail sales. This is one of the lessons Spitzer learned from developing and managing markets in other cities, including the Milwaukee Public Market and the now closed Portland Public Market (1999 RBA Silver Medalist).

Creating a Beacon for the Community

The carefully selected site and thoughtful building program for the Downtown Market complement existing development strategies designed to attract investment in a formerly neglected part of downtown. The well-crafted, LEED-certified structure with its rooftop greenhouse serves as a beacon, reflecting the aspirations and values of the community and signaling that something new is happening on the southern edge of downtown Grand Rapids. Inside, the combination of the market hall and restaurants, educational programs, and warm, welcoming spaces attract a variety of users including shoppers and diners, entrepreneurs, and children and adults participating in classes and events.

The Downtown Market's impact is reflected in its effect on downtown Grand Rapids as well as the recognition it has received for its design and construction and the national and international interest it has drawn from other market operators and those seeking to develop markets in other



Mike Buck

The market has become a beacon for the community.

cities. By spring 2015, the market had generated interest from over a dozen cities in the United States and Canada that are seeking to develop similar public markets.

ASSESSING IMPACT IN RESPECT TO PROJECT GOALS

GOAL: Support local entrepreneurship and innovation, in part by providing affordable vending opportunities for farmers and traditionally marginalized entrepreneurs, resource sharing, and one-on-one mentoring.

The Downtown Market offers a broad spectrum of programs to support entrepreneurship and innovation and is working hard to reach low-income and traditionally marginalized populations. This is reflected in the careful cultivation, selection, and mentoring of market vendors; a comprehensive incubator kitchen program; and extensive educational and public programming. Across the broad Grand Rapids community, belief in and support for the market and its mission is strong.

Servers working at local restaurants reported using products from the market vendors including bread from Field & Fire Bakery. Incubator businesses and vendors reported using each other's products in demonstrations and other activities. The Downtown Market partners with Local First, an organization dedicated to supporting locally owned businesses, to host an annual one-day event that helps to promote community-supported agriculture.

GOAL: Create hundreds of jobs and provide substantial economic impact.

The MVI study projected that the market would generate \$24.9 million in total gross sales by market businesses once the market reached "stabilization" in year three, generating an estimated \$48 million in the region and 615 new jobs. In early 2015, the Downtown Market had been in operation 18 months, and businesses in the market had created 215 jobs. While it appears that the market is on track to reach its "stabilization" or break-even point in its third year and there is evidence that it is generating some economic impact, it is difficult to effectively evaluate its economic impact with the existing financial data.



Programs promote fresh food and public health.

GOAL: Strengthen and celebrate the West Michigan food system.

The Downtown Market's combination of programming—indoor and outdoor public markets, commercial incubator kitchen program, greenhouse, classes and workshops, and events—has been effective in establishing it as a place that strengthens and celebrates the West Michigan food system. The indoor market and outdoor farmers market feature vendors selling locally produced foods. The incubator kitchen program nurtures budding local entrepreneurs and producers. Cooking, nutrition, and greenhouse classes and workshops introduce and cultivate interest in local food and its production. A variety of events celebrate and increase awareness of local food production and vendors such as free cooking demonstrations and kids' activities.

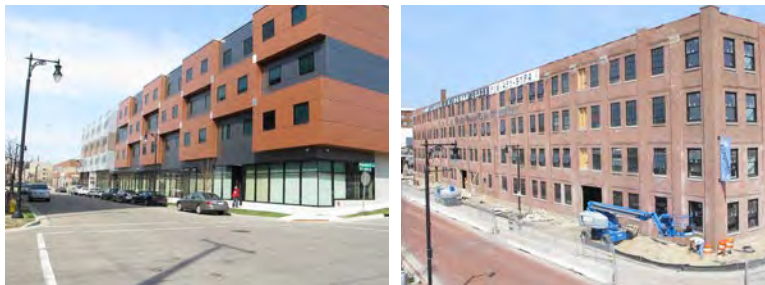
GOAL: Promote public health, particularly with innovative approaches to addressing the area's obesity epidemic.

As part of its core mission, the market has an ambitious agenda for educational programming focused on health and nutrition. Programming includes classes on basic cooking skills, budgeting and nutrition, and fitness as well as scholarships that make the classes accessible to low-income individuals. Indoor and outdoor vendors provide access to fresh produce and organic products previously unavailable in the immediate community, and SNAP food stamps can be used by qualified individuals to purchase products from vendors. While conversations with Downtown Market staff, local social service agencies, and program participants suggest it is beginning to make an impact, it is not yet substantial and at this point is impossible to measure.

GOAL: Bring diverse people together in an active public space through events, cooking demonstrations, culinary and nutrition classes, event rentals, community partnerships, and more.

The Downtown Market has become a popular regional destination for shopping, classes, meetings, and tourists. It hosts a broad array of classes

and events that attract people living and working close by as well as from the outer suburbs. While the market is making an effort to reach a diversity of people through community partnerships and educational programming, it is still perceived by some as “not for me,” particularly among lower-income individuals. The outdoor market is considered to be more accessible. There’s growing recognition that there’s a “need to meet people where they are,” particularly those who are very low income, and



The market hosts art installations during ArtPrize (top); adjacent properties have been developed into housing (bottom).

that going to them and extending personal invitations makes a difference. This requires more capacity than was in place in early 2015. The Downtown Market recently started offering tours that introduce people to the facility and is exploring partnerships with local social service agencies to extend its outreach in the community.

A total of 4,526 people attended classes from September 2013 through November 2014. Of those, approximately 47% were from the city of Grand Rapids, 37% came from other cities in Michigan, and 1% were from out of state (15% did not provide zip codes). The students were 68% female and 22% male (10% did not identify their gender).

GOAL: Extend downtown development south from the Van Andel Arena.

In addition to the primary operational goals of the Downtown Market itself, the project sought to extend downtown development south from the Van Andel Arena into a neighborhood little accessed by most residents of and visitors to Grand Rapids. By all accounts, the market has succeeded in attracting new visitors to the district, drawing activity and development southward from the downtown core and increasing the use of Heartside Park. It has changed the perception of the area surrounding the market and the southern end of downtown among people living in Grand Rapids and its surrounding suburbs.

The Downtown Market provides an anchor for local residents and businesses in the Heartside neighborhood which, according to one business owner, “used to feel like a wasteland.” The market has also increased confidence in the area among developers and investors, although some suggested that interest had already started to increase prior to the Downtown Market’s opening. More than \$50 million in new investment was taking place in the neighborhood in the spring of 2015, including the conversion of two adjacent vacant warehouses into 170 units of affordable housing.

Recognition

Grand Rapids Downtown Market has received significant local and national recognition, including the following awards:

- 2014 AIA New Jersey Design Honor Award in the "Built Open" category
- 2014 Excellence in Construction Award for Sustainable Building More than \$10 Million from Associated Builders and Contractors of Western Michigan (awarded to Pioneer Construction)
- 2015 Sustainability Project of the Year from the Association of Retail Environments

SELECTION COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Like the other 2015 winners, Grand Rapids Downtown Market tackles big issues, such as access to healthy food, education, public health, and reconnecting urban communities. The Selection Committee praised the project for leveraging the farm-to-table movement to create a "food hub" which appeals to a broad socio-economic spectrum of people and incorporates an ambitious social agenda. Less than two years after its completion, the Downtown Market is well known among people living in Grand Rapids and a source of significant civic pride.

In selecting it as a finalist, the committee noted that the Downtown Market has "a lot of things going for it," yet they considered the social impact goals and second floor programming to be the most compelling. They were excited about the vision to build human, social, and economic capital through connecting people and resources, education and skill building, and job creation. This combination of goals and programming distinguishes it from other RBA winners such as Pike Place Market, Swan's Marketplace, and Portland Public Market. Although the committee was excited about the project's potential to have a significant impact on a large number of people, they acknowledged that it was still fairly new and that more time would be needed to fully evaluate its impact.



Jeffrey Grooters

The market has become a source of significant community pride.

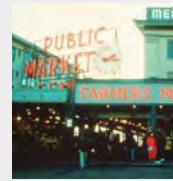
“THE SELECTION COMMITTEE PRAISED THE PROJECT FOR CREATING A “FOOD HUB” WHICH APPEALS TO A BROAD SOCIO-ECONOMIC SPECTRUM OF PEOPLE AND INCORPORATES AN AMBITIOUS SOCIAL AGENDA.”

The Selection Committee praised the thoughtful planning processes undertaken by Grand Action and DDA that set the stage for the market’s development. Like 2015 Silver Medalist Falls Park on the Reedy, they illustrate the impact and value of long-term, intentional planning for development. The committee noted that although the development process was largely “top down” and driven by Grand Action, the organization was careful to seek community input and buy-in and is actively seeking to be more inclusive and increase engagement in the future.

The committee referred to the Downtown Market as a “marquee building” and complemented the elegant design, attention to sustainability, and use of high-quality materials and state-of-the-art systems—all of which reflect the ambition and civic pride of Grand Rapids. Even so, they considered it to be extraordinarily costly, although the investment was calculated and consistent with Grand Action’s philosophy that buildings should be built to last and reduce long-term operating costs. The committee noted that the Downtown Market would not have been possible without Grand Action, which effectively served as a patron, and asked whether they would provide continued operational support. They expressed concern about ongoing financial stability and whether pressure to “make the numbers work” would lead the market to focus more attention on high-end customers at the cost of social programs. Excited as they were about the project, the committee suggested that the combination of the high cost of development and operations and the unique characteristics of Grand Rapids, including the pivotal role of Grand Action that made it possible, would make it difficult to replicate in other cities.

RELATED RBA WINNERS

Public markets offer access to food, cultivate and promote local businesses, and provide gathering spaces for communities. There are many public markets among RBA winners, ranging from revitalized markets to new ones, often in conjunction with larger, mixed-use developments.



PIKE PLACE MARKET (1987 Gold Medalist) preserved a group of historic buildings on Seattle’s waterfront as a public marketplace selling local fish and produce. The project included the renovation of historic buildings on the waterfront, new mixed-use buildings, and careful management and programming to support the local residential population.



SWAN’S MARKETPLACE in Oakland, California (2001 Silver Medalist) is a \$20 million mixed-use development that involved the adaptive reuse of a historic downtown public market and incorporated new housing, commercial, and arts-related uses. The project attracted middle and upper income households to live and invest in the area without displacing existing residents and businesses.



PORTLAND PUBLIC MARKET in Portland, Maine (1999 Silver Medalist) aimed to showcase local food and agricultural vendors that would attract local shoppers and tourists and spur renewal downtown. Despite receiving widespread attention and accolades when it opened in 1998, the market was not financially sustainable and closed in 2006.

Additional RBA winners that address urban food issues include 2003 Silver Medalist Bridgemarket, a new, mixed-use urban marketplace housed beneath the Queensboro Bridge in Manhattan; 1991 Gold Medalist Greenmarket, a collection of farmers markets operating in five boroughs of New York that brings fresh farm products to inner-city neighborhoods; and 2013 Gold Medalist Inspiration Kitchens in Chicago, which offers healthy, affordably priced meals prepared by culinary workers in training.

More information about these and other RBA winners can be found at www.rudybruneraward.org.

Resources

This case study was compiled from information gathered from the project application, an extensive site visit in April 2015, discussions with the RBA Selection Committee, and research and interviews conducted during those processes and throughout the writing and editing of this book. Titles and positions of interviewees and URLs listed below were effective as of the site visit unless otherwise noted.

INTERVIEWS

Staff:

Mimi Fritz, President/CEO
Jacob Bandstra, Chef
Sharonda Bridgeforth, Administrative Assistant (and neighborhood resident)
Ben Bylsma, Greenhouse Coordinator
Mike DeVries, Facility Manager
Claire Duthler, Leasing Manager/Special Events Manager
Jolon Hull, Office Coordinator/Outreach Coordinator
Crystal LeCoy, Incubator Kitchen and Program Manager
Shannon Sadoski, Education Manager
Sarah Tupper, Private Event Manager
Michele Van Dyke, Farmers Market Coordinator

Board of Directors:

George Aquino, Amway Hotel Group
Wayman Britt, Kent County Administrator
Juan Daniel Castro, Spectrum Health, Healthier Communities
Lew Chamberlin, West Michigan Whitecaps
Kayem Dunn, Kayem Dunn LLC
John Green, Founders Brewing Company
Brian Ryks, Gerald R. Ford International Airport
Doug Small, Experience Grand Rapids
Diane Stampfler, Promote Michigan

Advisory Committee:

Kris Larson, Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc.
Bill Kirk, Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc.
Juan Daniel Castro, Spectrum Health, Healthier Communities and
Downtown Market Board Member

Marge Palmerlee, Degage Ministries
Reb Roberts, Sanctuary Folk Art
Eddie Tadlock, DeVos Place/DeVos Performance Hall/Van Andel Arena (SMG)

City of Grand Rapids:

George Heartwell, Mayor
Greg Sundstrum, City Manager
Kara Wood, Economic Development Director
Wayman Britt, Kent County Administrator, Downtown Market Board Member
Brian Harris, Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority Board

Design:

Hugh Boyd, Hugh Boyd Architect*
Craig Nicely, Progressive AE
Eric Doyle, Catalyst Partners
Keith Winn, Catalyst Partners
Roger Maddox, FTC&H Engineers
Jim Reimenschneider, JRA Design

Development and Financing:

John Byl, Warner, Norcross & Judd
Dick DeVos, Grand Action*
Ron Foor, Fifth/Third Bank
David Frey, Grand Action/Frey Foundation
Bill Johnson, Berean Group
Jon Nunn, Grand Action
Jim Pike, Fusion Business Services*
Sarah Rainero, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, State of Michigan
Diana Sieger, Grand Rapids Community Foundation
Steve Wilson, Frey Foundation
Jason Zylstra, DeVos Foundation

Programming and Leasing:

Ted Spitzer, Market Ventures Inc.*
Chris Muller, M Retail

Market Hall Tenants:

Mario Cascante, Tacos El Cuñado
Anissa Eddie, Malamiah Juice Bar
Yang Hang, Rak Thai
Shelby Kibler, Field & Fire Bakery
Amy Ruis, Aperitivo

Incubator Tenants:

Emily Helmus, Bloom Ferments
 Jodie and Paul Krumpel, Cultured Love
 Jason McClearen, The Everyday Chef
 Holly McManus, Cooking Under the Moon
 Kasey Spencer, Artisan Cuisine Catering
 David Wentworth, Prospectors Cold Brew Coffee

Education Tenants:

Anavel, Kaselyn, Maddie, and Ryan, Kent Intermediate School District
 culinary program students
 George Dennis, Chef Instructor
 Mike Hagerty, Kent Intermediate School District
 Kendra Wills, Michigan State University Extension Office
 Mark Rambo, Grand Valley State University

Educational Program Participants:

Quiana Thompson, scholarship program participant
 Patricia Cannon, scholarship program participant
 Sommer and Alice Grieser, class participants

Community Partners:

Brian Burch, ArtPrize
 Kathy Crosby, Goodwill/Blue Spoon Kitchen (Downtown Market tenant)
 Jill Graybill, Spectrum Health
 Hanna Schulze, Local First of West Michigan
 Lisa Sisson, Heartside Gleaning Initiative and Grand Valley State University

Neighboring Organizations, Property Owners, and Residents:

Mike Jacobson, Baker Lofts/Klingman Lofts
 Jean Schaub, The Dwelling Place and Avenue for the Arts
 Denny Sturtevant, The Dwelling Place
 Joe Voss, Spectrum Industries

Private Event Rental Clients:

Jan Burns, Grand Rapids Community Foundation
 Trista Harroun, PNC Bank
 Helena Hudson
 Cindy Smies, Mel Trotter Ministries
 Carroll Velie, Varnum, LLP
 Kim Voutila, Amway

**Interview conducted by phone.*

REFERENCES

- "A Brief History of Michigan." Michigan Legislature. 2002.
<http://legislature.mi.gov/documents/publications/manual/2001-2002/2001-mm-0003-0026-History.pdf>.
- Grand Rapids Downtown Market. "Grand Rapids Is Missing One Crucial Ingredient." Leasing document.
- Downtown Market Grand Rapids. "Grand Rapids Urban Market." http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-rrd-Success_Story_Grand_Rapids_Urban_Market_455784_7.pdf.
- Market Ventures, Inc. *Grand Rapids Urban Market Concept Plan & Feasibility Study*. September 30, 2009.
- Otto, Jayson Daniel. *Broadening the Concept of Civic Agriculture: The History of Civic Food Systems in Progressive Era Grand Rapids, Michigan*. Master's thesis, Michigan State University, 2011.
- Schneider, Keith. "A Michigan City Bets on Food for Its Growth." *New York Times*. November 13, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/14/realestate/commercial/grand-rapids-mich-bets-on-a-food-market-for-growth.html?_r=0.
- The Philanthropic Collaborative. "From Grand Vision to Grand Action: Revitalizing a Downtown and Demonstrating Philanthropy." [http://michiganfoundations.org/sites/default/files/resources/Grand Action Report_0.pdf](http://michiganfoundations.org/sites/default/files/resources/Grand%20Action%20Report_0.pdf).
- Tuffelmire, Michael. "Development in Heartside - Part I: The Homeless Perspective." *The Rapidian*. February 25, 2010. <http://www.therapidian.org/development-heartside-part-one>.

