

AmplifyGR[™]

2019 Year in Review



Amplify GR by the Numbers

MORE THAN

70

Homes Renovated

through the Neighborhood Strong Homeowner Grant, allowing them to make critical repairs to their homes

OVERALL

\$3M

of investment in the neighborhoods

5

New Businesses

moved into the neighborhood

41

TEACHERS

and over **1,200 Students** were impacted through **Scholar Strong**

96

New Jobs Created

13

community events

held in 2019

MORE THAN

\$50K

has been distributed via Amplify GR's AMP the Good Mini-Grants for community programming

MORE THAN

250

Community Members came out for the Boston Square Together community planning process

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Executive Corner

As we begin the new year, we celebrate the impact of strong community collaborations. Thank you to all the neighbors, community partners and Neighborhood Advisory Committee members for the tireless work you do in support of Boston Square, Cottage Grove and the surrounding neighborhoods. To that end, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge some of the great work that has taken place over the past year:

- Five growing businesses were welcomed to the neighborhood. These companies reside in renovated buildings that were formerly vacant. The business owners have pledged to hire locally at a competitive wage. We are excited that this positive momentum sets the foundation for additional employment and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- Boston Square Together was a collaboration with local neighbors and organizations to envision the future of a 9-acre site in the heart of Boston Square. Through a series of three open houses, more than 250 neighbors provided input to help shape a more inclusive future Boston Square.
- Earlier this year, we began our Scholar Strong grant program that encourages teachers and staff to create unique instructional projects for students. Through this program, we have partnered with area schools to give students and teachers an additional tool to advance learning at every level.

While we've accomplished a lot this year, we realize there is much to be done. Amplify GR is committed to bringing people together to grow a more equitable and inclusive community for everyone. If Grand Rapids is to truly thrive as a city, we need to ensure all people have the support, access and authentic opportunities to flourish and achieve their dreams. Working together, we look forward to another year of tremendous progress in building a stronger, healthier and more inclusive community.

JON IPPEL
Executive Director Amplify GR
BOSTON SQUARE TOGETHER



Amplify GR Milestones



**FOUNDED
IN 2017**



**LAUNCHED AMP
THE GOOD MINI-
GRANT PROGRAM IN
WINTER 2018**



**RELOCATED FIRST
TENANT IN
WINTER 2018**



**LAUNCHED
NEIGHBORHOOD
STRONG PROGRAM
IN SPRING 2018**



**RENOVATED FIRST
BUILDING IN
SPRING 2018**



**LAUNCHED SCHOLAR
STRONG PROGRAM
IN SPRING 2019**

Boston Square



**BOSTON
SQUARE
TOGETHER**

The Boston Square Together project is a community-focused planning process where neighbors, business owners and local partners work together to create a vision for the heart of the Boston Square (BSQ) area.

BSQ Together partners, comprised of Oakdale Neighbors, the Boston Square Neighborhood Association, Amplify GR and Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative are committed to advancing an equity-focused vision by integrating the Project Principles (See p. 7) and using Health, Education, Arts & culture, Recreation, and Technology (HEART) as a design framework.

The BSQ Together team hosted three open houses to gather community feedback on a development project intended to take place on an approximately 9-acre site in the Boston Square business district. At these meetings, individuals had the opportunity to share goals for the development and give

candid feedback about the assets they'd like to see included in the project. More than 250 individuals participated, of which approximately 70% identified as residents of the Boston Square area (defined by Hall, Giddings, Burton and Eastern). The majority of the remaining participants were area business owners, employees or churchgoers.

The neighborhood engagement process served as a funnel to identify community priorities and ultimately incorporate them into the future development site. On August 15, the team shared the Partner Project Principles and listened to community priorities. On September 5, the team presented three different concepts for neighbors to review and share input. At the final event on October 3, the BSQ Together team presented a more refined vision to the community, which was based on the feedback gathered at the previous events.

A Collective Community Design

Working together to create a vision for the heart of Boston Square

NEXT STEPS:

The BSQ Together team, comprised of local community organizations and partner developers, will present to the City of Grand Rapids. Pending approval and amendments from the city council, the team is set to break ground on the project beginning in 2020. New community amenities are set to be available by 2022. To learn more about the approval and financing process, visit bostonsquaregr.org.

PROJECT PRINCIPLES

By working with a group of committed neighbors and local community organizations, we are dedicated to achieving the following objectives on the 9-acre site:

- **An equity-focused design in the H.E.A.R.T (Health, Education, Arts & Culture, Recreation and Technology) of the Boston Square business district**
- **Affordable housing options for a wide range of income levels**
- **Homeownership opportunities on both the site and in surrounding neighborhoods**
- **High-quality and sustainable design**
- **Dedicated community spaces**
- **Emphasis on construction contracts for minority and women-owned companies in the 49507 area**
- **Neighborhood-based construction employment opportunities**
- **Dedicated spaces for local business ownership, with an emphasis on reflecting the diversity of 49507**
- **High-quality Early Learning Center**





Neighborhood Strong Homeowner Repair Grant

“I’ve been in my house 45 years and needed new windows. Because of the grant, I was able to get new windows and save hundreds of dollars on my gas bill. This program is a blessing. I would recommend this program to anybody, especially if you need help and are on a fixed income.”

VIRGINA BURNS, Neighbor



NEIGHBORHOOD STRONG

NEIGHBORHOOD STRONG HOMEOWNER REPAIR GRANT

To date, 70 individuals have received Neighborhood Strong Homeowner Repair Grants to make improvements to their homes. The grant is intended to alleviate the burden of unexpected, costly renovations and is provided through a partnership between Home Repair Services and Amplify GR.

Scholar Strong Mini-Grants

Amplify GR partnered with neighborhood schools to introduce Scholar Strong – a mini-grant program designed to encourage teachers and staff to develop innovative and experiential instructional projects that motivate and challenge students to learn and achieve.

To date, 41 grants have been awarded, impacting more than 1200 students in the areas of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math), literacy, college readiness and leadership development.

“The Scholar Strong mini-grants are a testament to the confidence in urban learners to expand their God-given abilities and be afforded quality experiences and access to the same excellent education that other students receive”

MS. GLORIA CURRY

Grandparent, long-time educator, & Scholar Strong review committee member



Tenant Update



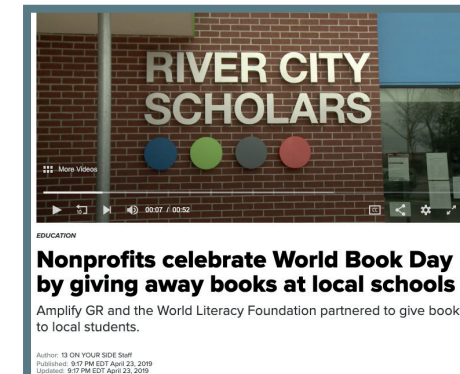
“We’re proud to be able to offer opportunities for both new and existing employees from the area. As active members of the community, moving our business to Cottage Grove was a great fit for our company. We want NaturaShield and the community to prosper, and what better way to do that than by combining forces and striving for more local job creation. Thank you to Rockford Construction and Amplify GR for helping bring this move and our vision to fruition.”

- BILL SLEEMAN
NaturaShield Owner

With support from our partners, Amplify GR has renovated five buildings in local neighborhoods to welcome new tenants who are committed to upholding our Project Principles. We believe that by bringing viable new businesses to the area, we can continue to build a stronger community, together.

Recently, NaturaShield moved into 1501 Madison Ave. SE in Grand Rapids’ Cottage Grove neighborhood. The 17,500-square-foot property building, which sat vacant for almost 15 years, provided NaturaShield and its 21 employees the opportunity to add almost 10,000 square feet of new space.

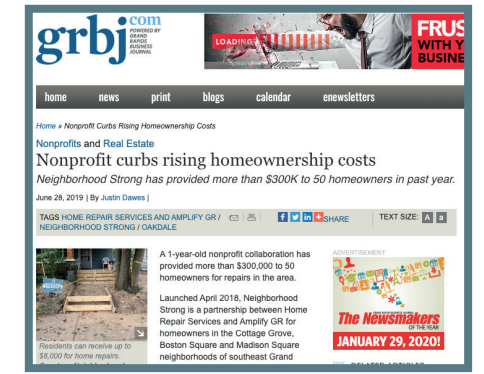
Amplify GR in the Headlines



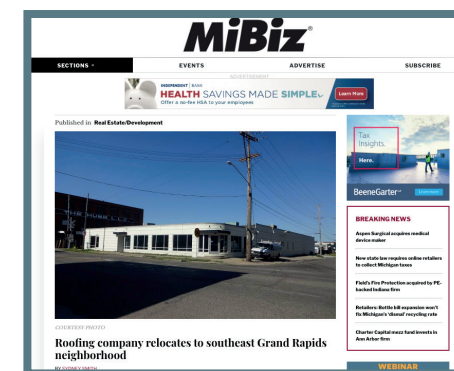
Nonprofits celebrate World Book Day by giving away books at local schools



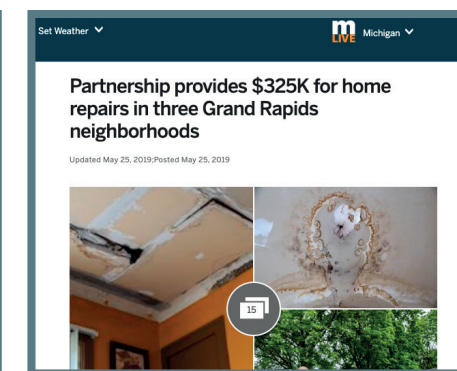
HVAC Contractor invests \$700k in new space



Nonprofit curbs rising homeownership costs



Roofing company relocates to southeast Grand Rapids neighborhood



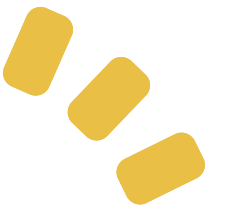
Partnership provides \$325K for home repairs in three Grand Rapids neighborhoods



Amplify GR Talks Scholar Strong Mini-Grants

Community Partnerships

partners



The Amplify GR team was fortunate to have numerous opportunities this year to connect with local organizations to widen pathways for our neighbors. Here are several key partnerships from 2019:



HOME REPAIR SERVICES

Through a partnership with Home Repair Services, a local nonprofit that offers services to create safer, healthier homes, Amplify GR was able to assist 71 homeowners. The Neighborhood Strong Homeownership Grant, developed by Home Repair Services and Amplify GR, allowed local homeowners to make critical repairs to their homes like the installation of a new furnace or repairing a roof. We would be remiss not to acknowledge that a large part of the program's success comes from the commitment of Deb Armstrong, a local resident and Home Repair Services employee. Deb has worked alongside us to ensure a seamless process. Thank you, Deb, for your dedication to strengthening supports for local homeowners and our community.

BOSTON SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BOSTON SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

As one of the newest organizations in the neighborhood, Amplify GR was ecstatic to welcome this group through partnership in its early stages. The Boston Square Neighborhood Association is a growing organization committed to providing opportunities to residents within the neighborhood. Our team is proud to have worked with the Association during its first year as project partners for BSQ Together and we are eager to strengthen the relationship in future years.



EARLY LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD COLLABORATIVE (ELNC)

In the final stretch of 2019, we are fortunate to be starting our collaborative efforts with the Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative. One of Amplify GR's core principles is to invest in education opportunities for the children of our neighborhoods. ELNC and Amplify GR are committed to a cradle-to-career approach to education. Through this partnership, we look to provide more resources to educators, more programs for students and more tools for parents – one of which is the proposed early learning center in the Boston Square neighborhood. Through our partnership with ELNC, we look forward to working toward opening a center in the heart of Boston Square that provides childcare services and learning opportunities for our neighborhood's youth.

A big thank you to all of our partners for the continued opportunity to strengthen our communities together.

Partner with Amplify GR

Email info@amplifygr.com or call 616-555-1122



ICCF (INNER CITY CHRISTIAN FEDERATION)

Serving residents for more than four decades, ICCF has been a staple organization in the Grand Rapids community. Amplify GR is proud to partner with ICCF to increase homeownership opportunities to neighbors in the 49507 zip code. Many residents who received the Neighborhood Strong Homeowner Grant were also able to take homeowner classes with ICCF, which not only provides grants and loans to families, but gives them the tools necessary to be successful homeowners. Amplify GR looks forward to continuing its partnership with ICCF in 2020 to bring more homeownership opportunities to neighbors.



OAKDALE NEIGHBORS

Oakdale Neighbors, a Christian community development organization that has a goal to create a neighborhood of grace and vitality by discovering, developing and connecting skills and resources, has been a key organization within the Oakdale neighborhood for more than 20 years. Amplify GR partnered with Oakdale Neighbors to host the Summer Celebration in partnership with Revolution Church. Oakdale Neighbors also partnered with Amplify GR and the Boston Square Neighborhood Association for the BSQ Together community planning process. We're thankful to work with an organization like Oakdale Neighbors that is steadfast in its devotion to its community.



Neighborhood Advisory Committee

Amplify GR remains committed to working in partnership with neighbors to explore new opportunities for our community. The Neighborhood Advisory Committee is comprised of 15 community members (a diverse representation, including individuals of different ages, races, backgrounds, numbers of years living in the neighborhood, etc.) from the neighborhoods we serve. This Committee serves as an advisory group for the following:

- Review of Amplify GR opportunities and projects before they go public
- Share feedback on processes and strategies
- Vet ideas and provide neighbor input
- Learn the goals and objectives of Purpose Built Communities

Some of the opportunities and initiatives that the Neighborhood Advisory Committee is helping to shape and/or participated in include:

- The site visioning and planning process for 9-acres in Boston Square
- Amp the Good mini-grant program
- Increasing homeownership rates, with a particular emphasis on first-time homeowners
- Increasing open space and supporting neighborhood beautification efforts
- Planning and engaging neighbors in community events
- Public art

Our team



BACK: **ASHANTI BRYANT** Education Director, **KIM DUNCAN** Admin Assistant

JON IPPEL Executive Director, **DANIELLE WILLIAMS** Director of Economic Development

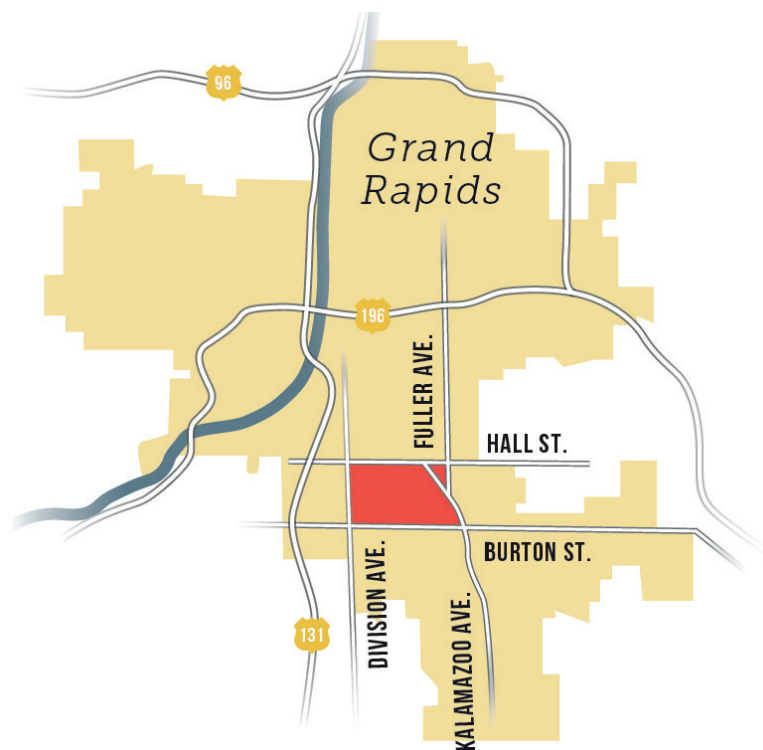
FRONT: **BETHANY UNDERWOOD** Operations Coordinator, **LEAH BAKER** Neighborhood Lead

LATESHA LIPSCOMB Engagement & Relationships Manager

AmplifyGR[™]

Thank you for your continued collaboration. We appreciate your commitment to the neighborhoods, and we're eager to work alongside you to make our neighborhoods stronger, together.

This work cannot be done without you. If you are interested in joining Amplify GR as volunteer, please visit amplifygr.org for more information or to sign up.



In A Defined Area

AmplifyGR[™]

seeks to widen pathways so that all residents can participate in and benefit from community growth.

By working in partnership to:



EXPAND
economic
opportunities



INCREASE
healthy and
affordable
housing



STRENGTHEN
cradle-to-career
educational
outcomes



SUPPORT
community
health and
well-being



CONNECT



CREATE



AMPLIFY