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**4<sup>th</sup> of July Grand Rapids Fireworks**

**Grand Rapids, MI June 17, 2020 – Cancellation of Fireworks**

Riverbank Events and Media announced Wednesday it was canceling all planned activities surrounding The Grand Rapids Fireworks. “We understand how much the residents of Grand Rapids and surrounding areas look forward to coming together as a community this year, maybe more than other years to celebrate our history, traditions and everything we love about America.” said Russ Hines CEO of Riverbank Events and Media.

“To protect public health and abide by state restrictions with regards to social distancing, the annual firework display will have to wait until next year. Each year our fireworks display draws tens of thousands of people to Ah-Na-Ab-Awen Park and surrounding areas in downtown Grand Rapids. Ultimately, the community’s safety is our number one priority. Acceptable social distancing measures would be difficult, if not impossible to maintain between those in attendance. In addition, the costs to add the PPE equipment, police and fire personnel that would be needed make this financially challenging for all parties,” Hines went on to say.

“The event organizer and our Special Events Office have made several attempts to “reimagine” how the event may take place, but do not feel there is a way to effectively maintain the annual fireworks display without creating adverse potential health impacts and/or running afoul of mass gathering restrictions implemented by state and county health authorities. We have consulted with Dr. Adam London, who agrees that any mass gathering will be problematic until an effective vaccine is in place for this coronavirus,” said Mark Washington, City Manager.

“Most communities across the state have already made the difficult decision to cancel July 4<sup>th</sup> events. This includes Detroit, Grand Haven, Kentwood, Wyoming and Grandville. Lansing has postponed their event until September. We are recommending that Grand Rapids do the same, and either cancel or postpone this year’s celebration to a time where we can feel confident it is safe for residents and visitors. Given other cancellations across the state, we feel this only increases the likelihood of large crowds – in areas where safe social distancing won’t be possible – should we proceed,” Washington added.

For more information on the 2021 Grand Rapids Fireworks:

Web: [4thOfJulyGR.com](http://4thOfJulyGR.com)

Facebook: [facebook.com/4thofjulygr](https://facebook.com/4thofjulygr)