

Patronicity | CASE STUDY

RETURN THE RAPIDS TO EATON RAPIDS

Public Spaces, Community Places | Eaton Rapids, Michigan



THE NEED

The community of Eaton Rapids, Michigan looked to improve the quality of life in their community by redeveloping their riverfront, one of the community's greatest assets. The project aimed to improve river access for recreation and eliminate safety hazards posed by the West Low-Head Dam, building on the community's already successful river tourism.

THE PROJECT

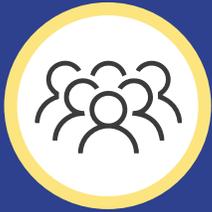
The project, completed in 2016, removed and reengineered the West Low-Head Dam along the Grand River to create river access points for water-based activities and enhanced fishing. The project brings back the rapids and restores the ecosystem, improving water quality, fish habitat, and recreational safety with a step pool fish ramp and canoe/kayak river rapids elements. Beginner classes in whitewater paddling consisting of eddying, lining, poling upstream, ferrying across current, and the Eskimo Roll can be taught in the rapids channel and step pools. New fish migration openings allow for the migration of species upstream, further enhancing the fishing opportunities and creating guided fishing tours, with recreational land-based casting, with an emphasis on fly fishing and canoe/kayak-based fishing excursions. The project has resulted in a healthier community, increased fishing and paddling tourism, improved water quality on the Grand River, and created an Activity Center at the Mill Street Landing.



“Ten years ago, you would never see people down here. Now because of the removal of the dam and creation of the rapids, on any given Saturday or Sunday this place is packed with 200-300 paddlers and visitors. This could be a blueprint for other communities now. This is a half a million dollar project that we did for less than \$200,000, it could be replicated elsewhere.”

Russ Hicks, President of the Quiet Water Society

THE IMPACT



**146
PATRONS**



**\$55,906
CROWDFUNDING
RAISE**



**\$50,000
CROWDGRANTING
MATCH**



**\$300,000
LEVERAGED
FUNDING**



**\$400,000
TOTAL PROJECT
ESTIMATE**

The project raised \$5,000 over its \$50,000 goal from a wide range of community support in the small town with a population of 5,229 people. The project had 146 patrons from all spaces in the community: the local Meijer, local plumber, local insurance agency, community foundation, funeral home, local bank, and medical center. In addition, the project held a silent auction event to support the campaign.



**PUBLIC SPACES
COMMUNITY PLACES**

Public Spaces Community Places (PSCP) is our crowdgranting partnership with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). This crowdgranting initiative provides matching grant funds to eligible projects that improve public space in the state of Michigan. Projects can receive a matching grant of up to \$50,000 if they reach their crowdfunding goal. Learn more about the program and apply at www.patronicity.com/puremichigan.



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DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

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