

HELPING GRAND RAPIDS MAKE THE SWITCH



WINDEMULLER

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CUSTOMER

City of Grand Rapids

LOCATION

Grand Rapids, Michigan

CONTRACT BUDGET

\$512,000

START DATE

April 2020

COMPLETION DATE

October 2020

PARTNERS/SUBCONTRACTORS

Traffic Management Inc. (signage and traffic control)

OVERVIEW

Over the past several years, the City of Grand Rapids has been working on upgrading its traffic signal and street lighting system. Windemuller was recently brought onboard to carry out the final piece of that project: switching over the transformers, primary switches, terminations, and primary cables that service the street lights and traffic signals throughout the downtown area. This voltage upgrade changed from an old 2,400-volt system to a new 7,200-volt primary system. We worked within the city's existing manhole system to pull in new cable and systematically switch the old 2400 volt system, to the new 7200 volt system, while maintaining the operation of the traffic signals and street lighting throughout Grand Rapids downtown area.

CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge with this project was the setting. Needless to say, downtown streets in a city of more than 200,000 people tend to be busy at most hours of the day. As such, our

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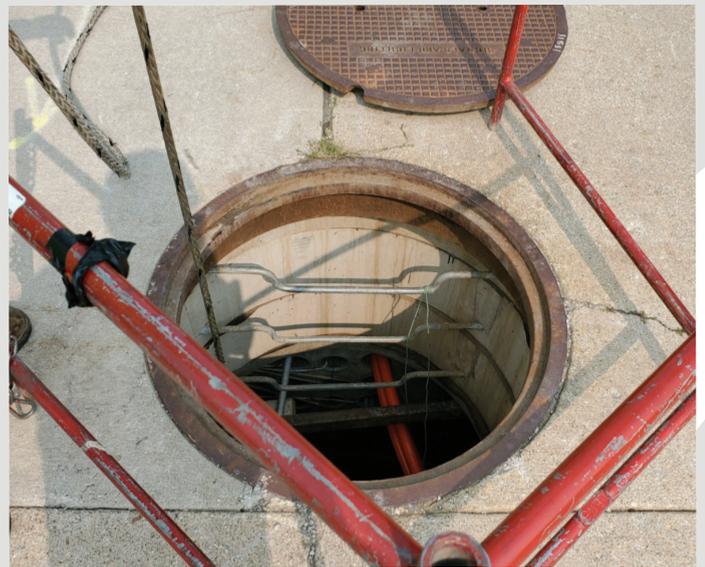
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crews didn't have the option to shut down specific streets or infrastructure for long periods of time. Instead, we needed to keep street lights and traffic signals going throughout the day—and keep traffic flowing throughout those intersections—as we swapped out circuits and moved the lights over to the new system. COVID-19 added to the challenges, not only by causing delays in getting certain materials for the job, but also by adding COVID testing sites in Downtown Grand Rapids that limited our street-closing abilities further.

SOLUTIONS

By using generators for temporary power, we were able to keep traffic signals and street lights running—and daily Grand Rapids traffic flowing—while we moved forward with the project. Our crews did need to work through several nights to complete final switchovers, since that was the only time we were able to completely shut down certain traffic signals and the roads that ran through them. Newly complete, the upgraded system, will provide greater traffic signal and street lighting reliability going forward – for the City of Grand Rapids and for every person or vehicle that travels its streets day in and day out.



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