



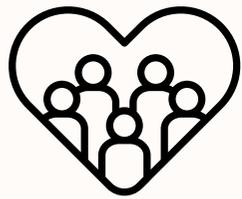
COMMUNITY OVER CARS

What's Going on with the Northville Seasonal Street Closures?

HOW WE GOT HERE...



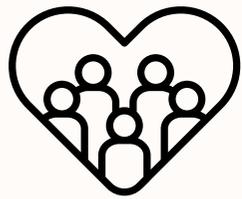
Check it out



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Walk Down Memory Lane ...

- ♥ In 2020, Northville closed two blocks of Main & Center year-round to support local businesses + allow for social distancing.
- ♥ The beloved closures quickly became a “third place” and set Northville a part in Metro Detroit.
- ♥ In a Spring 2022 community survey, 74% supported continuing the closures in some form.
- ♥ In 2023, the City Council adjusted to seasonal closures.



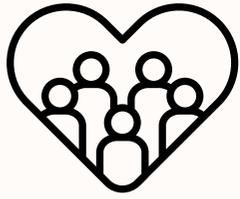
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Walk Down Memory Lane...

♥ In 2023, a few City residents formed Let's Open Northville (LON, 501c4). With anonymous funding, they hired Varnum Law to sue the City to reopen the streets to vehicles.

♥ In July 2025, Judge Elder ruled in LON's favor, based on the pre-automobile 1840 plat. The Judge ordered the City "to open Main and Center Streets to vehicular traffic within seven days."

♥ The City complied within 6 days.



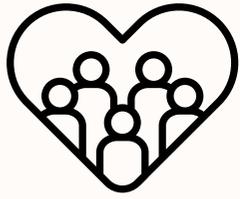
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On Street Dining

♥ In July 2025, LON filed an emergency motion to hold the City in contempt for allegedly violating the Order.

♥ LON claimed 10 outdoor dining street parking spaces was an “alternate form of street closures” and asked the Judge to remove on-street dining.

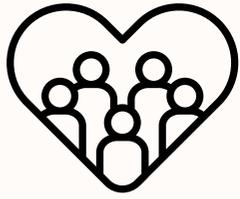
♥ In October 2025, the Judge ordered the City to permanently remove all on-street dining, which had been permitted by the City since at least 2011.



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What's Next?

- ♥ In July 2025, City Council voted to appeal the Judge's Opinion and Order, with an appeals court slated to hear the case.
- ♥ As of February 2026, the appeal process is delayed due to an extension request from Wayne County Courts to provide transcripts.
- ♥ The Judge's order has no end date, so unless changed, LON and the court will be making decisions about the pedestrian district for the foreseeable future.



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Strategic Priority

♥ In January 2026, City Council identified a new strategic priority:

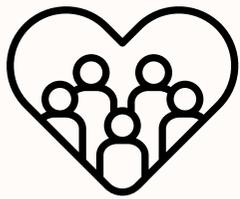
Explore legislative solution to ensure local governmental control of public right of ways.

♥ This means:

Clarifying in state law that cities have authority to manage their own streets.

Preventing 19th-century plats from overriding modern local governance.

Ensuring policy decisions are made by elected officials — not private litigants.



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From Courtroom to Chambers

♥ The legal appeal addresses the current ruling.

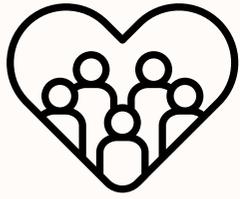
♥ The legislative strategy addresses the long-term issue:

Who controls Northville's streets?

How do we prevent repeated litigation?

How do we protect democratic local decision-making?

♥ This is a structural solution
— not a temporary workaround.



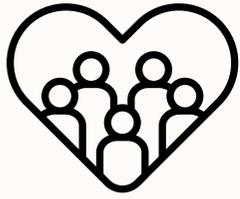
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Path Forward

- ♥ Work with state legislators to clarify municipal authority over public right of ways.
- ♥ Engage **bipartisan** representatives whose districts include downtown communities.
- ♥ Build a coalition of Michigan municipalities facing similar legal vulnerabilities.

♥ Partner with:

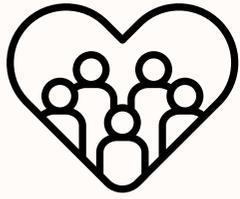
Michigan Municipal League
Downtown Development Authorities
Local business associations



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What Success Looks Like

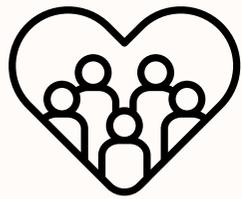
- ♥ Appeal clarifies the court ruling.
- ♥ Legislature affirms local control.
- ♥ Northville regains the ability to determine how the pedestrian district functions — through elected representation.
- ♥ **Decisions return to City Hall, not courtrooms.**



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Why This Matters

- ♥ Strong placemaking drives economic vitality and civic pride.
- ♥ Losing control of ROW limits Northville to:
 - Host outdoor dining**
 - Create pedestrian zones**
 - Support festivals and seasonal experiences**
 - Adapt to evolving downtown needs**
- ♥ Disenfranchises city residents and their votes by taking power away from their elected officials.



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What You Can Do:

♥ **Support local:** Shop, dine and patronize downtown businesses!

♥ **Show up:** Attend City Council meetings.

♥ **Speak up:** Send a letter or email:
www.communityovercars.com/comment

♥ **Participate:** Volunteer with
Community Over Cars

♥ **Donate:** Support
City of Northville or Community Over Cars