



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PITTSBURGH DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP REIMAGINES THE  
2020 HOLIDAY SEASON WITHOUT 'LIGHT UP NIGHT'**

- **WITH SAFETY A PRIORITY, LIGHT UP NIGHT CANCELED FOR 2020**
- **RECONFIGURED HOLIDAY MARKET WILL OCCUR, WITH SAFETY PROTOCOLS IMPLEMENTED**
- **NEW 'SANTA ZOOM' OFFERS INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCE *LIVE* FROM THE NORTH POLE**
- **ADDITIONAL FESTIVITIES TO BE ANNOUNCED MID-NOVEMBER – INCLUDING ONE GIANT SURPRISE**

**Downtown Pittsburgh** – On what would have been the 60<sup>th</sup> year of Light Up Night, the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership officially announced today that it will be cancelled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The event is the largest one-day event in Pittsburgh, and typically draws hundreds of thousands of people, but with public health and safety a primary concern, and amid input from local officials, the PDP has pivoted efforts towards a reimagined holiday experience for 2020.

A key attraction that will be returning to Downtown this holiday season is the **Peoples Gas Holiday Market** in Market Square. With outdoor holiday shopping offering one of the safest consumer options, and the reconfigured market providing greater safety protocols, the PDP is excited to be able to implement a core component of the traditional Downtown holiday experience. The Market will again feature live music on its centerpiece stage, although this year the acts will be reduced in scale to allow for social distancing. A diverse array of genres and community acts will be featured every lunch time and early evening during the week and all-day on weekends. The Market will officially open on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving – a slight modification to the usual Light Up Night debut.

“Peoples is honored to join the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership in presenting the **Peoples Gas Holiday Market** for the ninth year,” said Michael Huwar, president of Peoples. “The Market has become a holiday tradition for our region, and this year, more than ever, we are excited to host visitors in Downtown Pittsburgh and raise funds for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The Market will look a little different this year to ensure social distancing, but local artisans and vendors from around the world will be offering unique holiday gifts right in Market Square. I hope you will join us at the Peoples Gas Holiday Market to celebrate the season.”

A new addition this year, is **Santa Zoom: Live from the North Pole** powered by Xfinity, which replaces the Santa House typically used for in-person Santa Claus interactions during the holidays. With kids very much accustomed to connecting with friends, families, and teachers through their screens, **Santa Zoom** will offer a unique split-screen experience for a chat with Santa, who will be broadcasting ‘Live From the North Pole’ due to his need to put in extra time at the workshop this year. The new attraction is being located in a safer, more well-ventilated space on the periphery of Market Square. Participating visitors will receive and view a video clip of their real-time interactions with Santa and easily share the link via social media through an individualized microsite. Open daily between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Santa Zoom is free with a minimum \$5 suggested donation to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Foodbank.

“Downtown is at the heart of Pittsburgh’s holiday celebration, so we’re thrilled to be able to offer these reimagined experiences for our community,” said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. “We expect folks will be especially welcoming of the holiday spirit Downtown – something we all could use right now. The Holiday Market offers a terrific outdoor opportunity to browse and shop, along with dozens of specialty stores around Downtown, and our new **Santa Zoom** attraction is sure to be a hit with the kids, providing a great way for them to share their Christmas list with Santa while he’s at the North Pole.”

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The development of programming that supports Downtown businesses through the upcoming holiday season will have heightened significance in a year that has seen restaurants and retailers so disrupted from typical operations. The PDP feels that the reimagined experiences offer a safe and responsible way for the Pittsburgh community to enjoy Downtown and connect with friends and family, all while supporting struggling businesses.

The PDP noted that several other holiday attractions and surprises are to be announced soon, with continued emphasis on safe, well-considered implementations. Notable sponsors Peoples Gas, Comcast, Kraft Heinz, BNY Mellon, Highmark, Pitt Ohio, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Fifth Avenue Place, Shorestein, and RJW, have already committed support to the PDP's 'reimagined' Downtown experience.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, regular check-ins are advised for the very latest updates and information on these attractions. The most up-to-date details will be available at [DowntownPittsburgh.com/Holidays](http://DowntownPittsburgh.com/Holidays).

### **About the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership**

*Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations and residents who provide energy, vision and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers and visitors alike. The PDP's strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, and economic development and advocacy. For more information, visit [www.DowntownPittsburgh.com](http://www.DowntownPittsburgh.com), follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/downtownpitt> and "like" us on Facebook.*

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