



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

TO CONDUCT A BIKE SHARE
FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS &
DEVELOP A STRATEGIC
BUSINESS PLAN

Grand Rapids, MI



Grand Rapids Bike Share Feasibility Study & Strategic Business Plan

Request for Proposals

General Information

The City of Grand Rapids and Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. are working collaboratively to bring a bike sharing system to Grand Rapids. This Request for Proposals represents the first formal step in the planning and eventual implementation of a comprehensive system. This process builds upon recommendations in the [GRForward Downtown & Grand River Plan for Action](#), adopted by the Grand Rapids City Commission in December of 2015 as an amendment to the City's master plan.

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) is issuing this Request for Proposals in collaboration with The City of Grand Rapids' MobileGR Department (MobileGR) for the execution of a feasibility and demand analysis for a citywide bike share system, as well as the creation of a strategic business plan for the system.

Introduction

In recent years, Grand Rapids has made significant progress as a bicycle friendly community. As recently as 2009, the City of Grand Rapids had zero miles of on-street bicycle infrastructure. As of July 2016, 99 miles of bikeway facilities have been completed, with 101 more miles of infrastructure proposed for construction over the next few years. The current 99 miles of bikeway infrastructure includes 57 miles of bike lanes, 11 miles of marked shared lanes, a 1 mile cycle track, and 17 miles of shared use paths, among other routes and paths.

The City of Grand Rapids has also partnered with the Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition since 2011 to perform bicycle traffic counts in three locations with on-street cycling infrastructure. More information on these efforts can be found here <http://www.bikegrandrapids.org/programs-and-projects/bicycle-traffic-count-results/>

In addition to new bicycle infrastructure and general support and awareness for the cycling community, public transit improvements and non-motorized transportation enhancements have increased the amount of mobility options available to the citizens of Grand Rapids. However, gaps in service and access still exist for many members of the Grand Rapids community, and the addition of an equitable, reliable point to point option for non-motorized transportation is a critical component of the future comprehensive transportation network in the City.

Providing mobility infrastructure that can serve as a pedestrian accelerator for short trips, address "first and last" mile trips, and fully integrate with the current transportation network in Grand Rapids is a goal shared by citizens, advocates, City staff and policy makers, as well as community leaders.

Bike Share in Grand Rapids

Initial research and analysis completed as part of the GRForward plan concluded that a bike share system can be supported in Downtown Grand Rapids (at a minimum). High level recommendations from the plan included studying a system of 35-40 stations located in Downtown and near neighborhoods with $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile station density/placement. In addition, recommendations for an innovative membership structure that provides equitable access for low-income and unbanked populations was prioritized.

Regarding organizational structure and revenue management, City of Grand Rapids ownership and independent non-profit operational management were recommended to streamline permitting, diversify funding opportunities, and ensure efficient operations.

Project Goals

The goal of this approach is to establish a strategic business plan for the launch and implementation of a citywide bike share system in Grand Rapids in the next 12 to 24 months. This plan should be based on a high level feasibility and demand analysis to be completed as a component of the overall project.

Recommendations for an innovative funding plan, as well as an ownership and management structure, are expected as part of the project. If multiple options are presented for funding and management, a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of different structures should be included.

At the conclusion of the project, the following goals must be met:

- A complete analysis of the demand for and feasibility of a citywide bike share system
- A recommendation for the optimal ownership and management structure for a citywide bike share system
- A strategic fundraising and business plan for a citywide bike share system that includes the following:
 - A sponsorship strategy to enhance the financial stability and sustainability of a citywide bike share system
 - A business pro-forma complete with revenues, costs, staffing recommendations and structure recommendations
 - 2, 5, and 10 year cost estimates for operating and capital expenditures

In developing the strategic business plan, existing business models from bike share systems around the world should be considered. In addition, a thorough investigation of all potential revenue sources including grants, local subsidy, user revenues, advertising, site and system sponsorship and any other potential sources of revenue should be performed.

Scope of Work

This project will be collaboratively managed by MobileGR and DGRI, with assistance and participation from a variety of community stakeholders. The consultant will work directly with the MobileGR Manager and DGRI's Mobility Manager throughout the project.

In addition, MobileGR and DGRI will create a steering committee comprised of key community partners and stakeholders that will play an advisory role for the overall project. MobileGR and DGRI will lead the process of creating the steering committee structure and work plan in cooperation with the consultant.

The following proposed Scope of Work will serve as the basis for a project budget to be developed by the consultant and included in proposal submissions. Comments and analysis on this proposed Scope of Work are welcome, and additions, deletions, or modifications will be considered. Please include any additions, deletions or modifications in a separate section of the proposal submission.

Proposed Scope of Work:

1. Kick-off meeting with MobileGR and DGRI
2. Data Collection and Background Research
 - a. MobileGR and DGRI will share information, previous studies and plans, as well as any relevant and available data with the consultant in order to expedite the overall process. This information will assist in orienting the consultant to the overall goals of the project and the history of this and related efforts, as well as understanding the feasibility of the project. The consultant is expected to draw from provided materials, their own research and experiences, as well as those experiences in peer cities across the country.
 - b. The consultant will make a recommendation on the preferred form of a bike sharing operator in the Grand Rapids context. This will be created through analysis of comparable bike share systems in the 5 most relevant (most similar to a potential system for Grand Rapids) peer cities across the country and the world. Comparable seasonal weather and general climate conditions should be considered when selecting peer cities. This section should include the following sub topics:
 - i. General description of each peer system including geographic reach, number of stations, number of bikes, projected system expansions and timetables, membership and daily pass use numbers and annual trip statistics including times and dates of operation.
 - ii. Description of capital costs for each system, phasing of implementation and operating expense and revenues.
 - iii. Description of management structure, staffing and governance of each peer bike sharing system.
 - c. This section will conclude with a recommendation for a preferred governance system for bike sharing management in Grand Rapids along with 1 additional top variant or alternative. Costs, benefits, and potential risks for each governance system shall be described in sufficient detail for steering committee review and analysis.
3. Strategic Business Plan
 - a. The Strategic Business Plan should include at least the following:
 - i. Brief introduction on the state of cycling in Grand Rapids, including demographic information, bikeway and roadway information and a summary of efforts to promote cycling in and around the city.
 - ii. Brief introduction to the concept of bike share and a survey of financial documents from peer systems across the country.
 - iii. Market Analysis
 1. Market information for phased implementation
 - a. Demographics from target areas
 - b. Income information
 - c. Travel mode information

- iv. Proposed Management Structure and Organization
 - 1. Board of Directors - suggested composition (depending on recommended form)
 - 2. Staffing structure
 - 3. Management
 - 4. Fundraising/development
 - 5. Operations
 - a. The costs, benefits, and demand for year-round versus seasonal operations should be considered in this section.
- v. Outreach and Marketing Plan
 - 1. Community outreach and input plan
 - a. This must include a basic strategy for both utilizing neighborhood and community input to inform feasibility and to educate various audiences on the concept and goals of bike share in Grand Rapids.
 - i. This strategy is expected to put significant emphasis on inclusionary and equitably focused outreach that will succeed in engaging a diverse set residents and neighborhoods in Grand Rapids.
- vi. Develop, price and create custom sponsorship model and pricing information
 - 1. This section should contain an extensive examination of different types of sponsorship opportunities at different cost levels including:
 - a. System Naming Rights
 - b. Bike Kiosk Signage - determine revenue potential per station
 - c. Bicycle advertising and sponsorship placement on bicycles themselves
 - d. On system website, social media and mobile app-potential revenues
 - e. Member swipe cards or receipts
 - f. On maintenance vehicles
 - g. On staff uniforms
 - 2. Non-standard revenue streams
 - a. During the launch campaign
 - b. Media partnerships
 - c. Partnership with bike station facilities
 - d. Investment from public private partnerships
 - 3. Proposed cost levels for sponsorships and related revenue opportunities should be relevant and appropriate with regard to market conditions in Grand Rapids.
 - a. This section should include innovative opportunities for small scale sponsorships, as well.
- vii. Pro-Forma and Cash Flow Model - this section should provide a clear understanding of the up-front and ongoing costs associated with implementing and running a bike share system in Grand Rapids.

1. Capital Funding Model
 - a. Public
 - i. Federal
 - ii. City/Bond
 - iii. State Grants
 - b. Private Fundraising
 - i. Foundations
 - ii. Private/Institutional partners
 - iii. Cash
 - iv. In kind sponsorship
 - c. Operating Income Model
 - i. Rider/Subscription Revenues
 1. This section should include innovative pricing models that take into account revenue limitations related to annual memberships, as well as visitor versus resident revenue/use potential.
 - ii. Sponsorship revenues
 - d. Cash flow analysis
 - i. Staffing
 - ii. Parts
 - iii. Service, parts and tech support
 - iv. System redistribution and management
 - v. Capital replacement costs
 - e. Two, five, and ten-year cost/revenue projections
- viii. Equity Plan
 1. Create a plan for facilitating use by all socio-economic levels of residents, with special emphasis on unbanked populations, seniors, and residents with limited access to transportation, both public and private.
- ix. Local Policy and Infrastructure Analysis
 1. This section should include a high-level analysis of ordinances, codes, and regulations at the local level that may need to be amended or adjusted in order to implement the recommended system, i.e. regulations related to signage and advertising on both public and private property, regulations related to encroachment and the public right-of-way that could affect station siting, etc.
 2. This section should include a brief assessment of public power options to consider (street lighting, traffic signals, etc.) for station infrastructure as an alternative to solar power due to potential limitations and increased capital costs.

4. Marketing and Outreach Plan

The consulting team is asked to prepare a plan for approaching potential sponsors and building consensus and support for the idea of bike share in Grand Rapids. The goal is to create customized sponsorship packages for the bike share program that are designed to meet the financial goals of the program, as well as engage the corporate community in this new initiative. Based off the research and analysis identified in item #1, coupled with a survey of the funding landscape in the region and across the nation, packages will be developed with attractive benefits and aggressive, but realistic, pricing tiers. The consultant team will be asked to:

- a. Develop a detailed roster of benefits that can be offered to prospective funders through sponsorship packages. These benefits will include branding and visibility benefits, community engagement opportunities and employee discount opportunities which are an added benefit for sponsor's staff and an opportunity to engage a broader audience of participants in the bike share program.
- b. Produce background information that tells the story of the bike share program in a concise and compelling manner and that is attractive to corporate funders and can be retooled for foundation and government applications.
- c. Identify a costing structure that includes price points for sponsorship levels, specific benefits to be offered at each level and the number of sponsorships to be sold at each level. The combined total of this structure will equal the dollars needed to be raised to successfully implement the bike share program.
- d. Brainstorm unique and compelling branding and visibility opportunities and "stunts" that can be presented to targeted prospects to sweeten the sponsorship deal and that can create impactful and truly unique corporate awareness, branding and visibility opportunities.
- e. Aggregate bullets A-E into a comprehensive sponsorship deck that can be presented and delivered to prospective clients and that serves as a leave-behind document. The sponsorship deck will be delivered in the form of a PowerPoint presentation that can be customized depending on the prospect. Key components of the deck will include: overview on the bike share program including background, vision and funding structure, value proposition for the prospect, benefits of support/sponsorship and investment level.
- f. The Consultant will craft an execution strategy using the provided materials and techniques that details the best approaches for identifying prospects, conducting outreach and following up, and that contains a list of 10-15 vetted and qualified funding prospects for immediate outreach. Through an evaluation of event and program sponsors that have complementary missions and/or audiences, as well as our experience and relationships with regional and national corporate funders, the team will provide a short, qualified list of hot prospects for immediate outreach and engagement.
- g. Community Outreach – The consultant will work with MobileGR and DGRI to collaboratively create a community outreach plan designed to educate residents and critical stakeholders about the project, and solicit preliminary feedback on high-level recommendations for system operations (general station locations, etc.).

Final Work Products

1. Short briefing paper containing comparables from peer city bike sharing systems.
2. Short report outlining the potential demand and feasibility of a bike share system in Grand Rapids.
3. Memo recommending a preferred management structure for bike sharing operations in Grand Rapids based on findings from briefing paper.
4. Strategic business plan following above outline, including Pro-Forma and Cash-Flow model.
5. Customized sponsorship package and program to share with prospective funders and sponsors as described above.

Submission Requirements

Proposals submitted shall be limited to 10 pages (front and back), not including resumes of key staff.

- a. Qualifications
 - i. Respondent shall have experience in successful business plan development. It is highly recommended that this experience include development of business plans for transportation infrastructure, and more specifically some experience in the consulting team in the field of methodology for planning, designing, funding, and construction. Respondents should list and describe that experience.
 - ii. Respondents having experience in previous bike sharing systems is a plus. However, if the Respondent intends to bid for a future phase of the bike sharing system in Grand Rapids, such as becoming an owner, operator, or supplier to the bike sharing system, the Respondent or Respondent sub-consultant must clearly state their interest in future phases in the Proposal.
 - iii. Respondents having experience in addressing federal, state, and/or local regulations is a plus and Respondents should list and describe that experience.
 - iv. Provide description of three representative projects demonstrating the team's ability to successfully complete projects of similar scope. Include references for each project including the names and contact information for persons directly familiar with your team's work.
 - v. Respondent must identify if each project has been funded and/or constructed. Continued involvement in a project is a plus.
- b. Resumes of Key Staff - Please keep resumes to 1 page per person
- c. Proposed Work Program
 - i. Describe in detail how the Respondent will achieve the Scope of Work and produce the Final Work Product outlined in the Scope of Work.
 - ii. The proposed work program must also show organizational chart with names of staff and hours devoted to the project.
 - iii. Please provide a breakdown chart that allocates the time to complete each task in the Scope of Work. Points will be awarded for the ability to complete sections ahead of the overall project deadline.
- d. Proposed Fee and Schedule

- i. The fee will be broken down by staff member, hours, and rate for each task and subtask of the Scope of Work. Direct costs must also be clearly identified.

Registration

All interested consultants are encouraged to send an email to DGRI Mobility Manager Bill Kirk (bkirk@downtowngr.org) registering their intent to respond to this RFP. All firms expressing interest will be added to an email distribution list and will be notified if additional information related to the RFP becomes available. Firms failing to register in this manner may not receive all information relevant to the preparation of their proposals. In addition, all interested consultants are encouraged to register with the City of Grand Rapids Vendor Self Service System: <http://grcity.us/fiscal-services/Purchasing-Department/Pages/Supplier-Registration-Instructions.aspx>

Question Period

Any questions regarding the proposal may be submitted by email to DGRI Mobility Manager Bill Kirk (bkirk@downtowngr.org). Questions must be submitted by Monday, October 10, 2016. Responses will be sent to all registered participants no later than Friday, October 14, 2016.

Project Schedule

The following is a proposed project schedule. All dates are subject to change:

- September 30, 2016: RFP Issued
- October 20, 2016: Proposals Due to Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. by 12:00pm
- October 27, 2016: Proposals Reviewed with Project Team
- November 9, 2016: Recommend Consultant Contract to Downtown Development Authority Board
- December 2016: Project Kick-Off with Consultant and Project Team
- February 28, 2017: Final Materials Delivered

Project Management, Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

1. MobileGR and DGRI will coordinate the project, and specifically some elements of the public involvement work.
2. MobileGR and DGRI will accomplish project evaluation and award in accordance with this RFP and with guidance from a project steering committee consisting of representatives from the City of Grand Rapids, DGRI and a team of reviewers selected by MobileGR and DGRI. If a contract is awarded, it will post notification of such an award for public review on the MobileGR and DGRI websites.
3. Upon passing of the deadline for receiving RFPs, MobileGR and DGRI will open and evaluate the proposals with the assistance of the project steering committee.
4. Proposals from Respondents will be judged on an evaluation of the following criteria:
 - a. Team's overall qualifications
 - i. Previous experience with business plan development
 - ii. Previous experience in research and management consulting

- iii. Previous experience with bike sharing systems
 - iv. Previous experience with creative marketing, sponsorship, and outreach plan development
 - v. Diversity of the team's skills
- b. Proposed Working Relationship
 - i. Team structure
 - ii. Communications strategy with MobileGR, DGRI, project Steering Committee, and with the public
 - iii. Ability to deliver on schedule
- c. Innovation
 - i. Level of innovation in working method, in the vision of proposed business and outreach plans
 - ii. Incorporation of equity and inclusion into working methods or final product
 - iii. Fee
 - 1. Overall Fee Proposed

After review of the proposals, MobileGR, DGRI and the steering committee will select a short-list of Respondents for team interviews. After final selection, a Notice to Proceed will be issued with a proposed project completion date to be agreed upon by the consultant and MobileGR and DGRI.