Request for Qualifications

Illustrating the Vision
Grand River Greenway Framework
Grand Rapids/Kent County, MI

Deadline:
Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. will receive proposals until December 5, 2022

Deliver to:
Attention: Andy Guy
COO, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.
aguy@downtowngr.org

DOWNTOWN
GRAND RAPIDS INC.

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. (DGRI) seeks a qualified planning and creative design consultant to develop a series of illustrative materials that communicate the concept of the Grand River Greenway in Kent County, MI.

This project also includes original research to better understand, to the extent possible, the population characteristics of stakeholders living and working within and adjacent to the greenway corridor.

The primary purpose of these assets is to help the community "see" the broader Greenway concept by integrating and harmonizing several independent community plans and initiatives that, stitched together, demonstrate the community's collective vision for the Grand River corridor as it runs through Grand Rapids' urban core and across Kent County.

The community envisions building the Grand River Greenway as a signature public amenity in a class with such ambitious civic projects as the Atlanta BeltLine, The 606 in Chicago, the Bentway in Toronto, the Joe Louis Greenway in Detroit and the Greenway movement in St. Louis.

Indeed, the Grand River Greenway similarly is One Big Idea. But the idea currently exists as isolated projects across several different community plans, noncontiguous properties and project sponsors. What's needed is a set of clear and inspiring visual assets that communicate the common vision in an approachable way for a public audience.

Another important purpose of these Greenway Framework materials is to visually show the transformative potential of the Greenway to connect people and place, including a variety of existing and proposed recreational amenities, cultural institutions, employment centers and business districts.

While several municipalities and community groups independently have led considerable Greenway-related organizing effort in recent years, this RFQ seeks a planning, research and communications partner to help pull all the good work together into a singular illustrative vision document for the corridor.

Background Information

The community has worked for several years on various aspects of this multi-faceted and complex greenway project. This section includes relevant background on the extensive community engagement, planning, design and other work done to date. Grand River Greenway-related planning assets include but are not limited to:

- Connect Ada, 2020
- Plainfield Charter Township Parks & Recreation Plan, 2020-2024
- Kent County Parks, Trails & Natural Areas Master Plan, 2019-2023
- River for All, 2018
- City of Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Master Plan, 2022
- GR Forward, 2015
- Grand Rapids Whitewater Plan for River Restoration
- Green Grand Rapids, 2012

The effort to grow the Grand River Greenway in Kent County also builds on, and physically connects to, the ongoing Grand River Greenway implementation efforts of Ottawa County.

Additionally, DGRI has a complete inventory of all known greenway-related projects and plans in the County. This information will be made available to support the development of the creative assets.

Scope of Work

The consultant scope of work for this project includes producing an illustrative framework document with a variety of assets that includes but may not be limited to:

- Visually accessible maps or other creative assets that illustrate the geographic area and nature of the Greenway corridor in the context of the City of Grand Rapids and Kent County.
    - These maps will clearly depict and differentiate existing Greenway infrastructure – such as related parks and trail segments – and proposed future improvements.
    - This likely includes individual maps of special study areas to illustrate, in more detail, future uses and/or opportunities in reaches of the river corridor with more intensity of uses.
- Conceptual renderings of various future trail segments, parks and other improvement projects in the urban, suburban and rural condition.
- A demographic analysis of the people living and working adjacent to the Grand River Greenway corridor.

DGRI anticipates all deliverables will be provided in digital format. Print production is outside this scope of work.

DGRI also is open to exploring a publicly accessible web-based platform to present this illustrative information, although that may be future project phase.

Proposal Submission

Responses to this request for qualifications should be no longer than 10 pages. The proposal should include the following information:

- A summary of project understanding including any observations on particular project expectations, opportunities or challenges.
- A firm overview and identification of proposed project team members.
- A description of experience in completing this type or related work, including specific examples and project references.
- A description of your project management philosophy and approach towards completing this work.
- A summary of hourly rates and/or professional fees to perform the requested services. A full budget is not required at this time.
- Additional information. Please present any relevant data or information which you consider pertinent to the project and selection process.

Responses should be submitted in digital format to Andy Guy (aguy@downtowngr.org).

Consultant Selection

DGRI will evaluate all responses to this opportunity and may conduct interviews with short-listed firms. The basis for evaluation will include:

- Qualifications and capacity to perform the work.
- Related planning, mapping and communications experience and philosophy.
- Experience with, and/or understanding of, relevant civic projects.
- Understanding of local planning and development context.
- Professional excellence.
- Quality of communication.

Project Schedule

- November 9, 2022 – RFQ Issued
- December 5, 2022 – Qualifications Due from Interested Applicants
- December 9, 2022 – Notice of Award
- December 16, 2022 – Commence Project
- February 2022 – Submit Initial Deliverables
- April 2022 – Project wraps