

DGRI Seeks Youth Programming for Las Canchas

Inquiries and submittals should be sent to Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

attn.: Corey Mathein, Project Manager, cmathein@downtowngr.org

Request for Proposal

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc (DGRI) seeks a community partner or partners who can create a month-long youth soccer program for ages 8 through high school at Las Canchas during the summer of 2026.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to identify a partner who can create a meaningful futsal program tailored to youth while removing financial obstacles to participate.

Background

In 2015 DGRI and the City of Grand Rapids adopted GR Forward, a 10-year master plan for Downtown that was the culmination of significant community input about the future of Downtown. Goal 5 of this plan focuses on reinvesting in public space, as well as expanding cultural & inclusive programming.

Las Canchas was created in 2022, transforming an underutilized parking lot into 3 futsal courts which are open to the public year-round without fees or payments. A primary goal of the project is to activate the Las Canchas as much as possible to provide recreation and community gathering space.

Requirements

To be considered, please provide detailed qualifications of how your organization can fulfill the following aspirations for youth programming at Las Canchas with children who are finished with the school year. You will be able to program for the months of July and/or August. We are open to partnerships and encourage innovative ideas to increase the programming and activation at Las Canchas.

Qualifications must include detailed information about the following categories.

Please be clear, concise and thorough in your response.

1. Concept

- Describe your idea for robust youth futsal programming and instruction utilizing the 3 courts provided at Las Canchas along with a breakdown of the age groups you plan to engage in your program

- Describe the implementation plan and timeline for your concept.

2. Operational Details

- Qualifications: A detailed description of your or your organization's experience with programming youth soccer/futsal programs in Michigan.
- Approach: An overview of your proposed programming model for this location to meet the priorities of the youth, particularly by removing or minimizing financial barriers involved with playing the sport and introducing this sport to kids with less or no experience. Please indicate your planned operation hours and required staffing.
- Product Sourcing: Share the products – what do you plan to use for your programming? (futsal balls, cones, pennies, fitness equipment, etc. if required).
- Estimated Rates or Fees: Explain the costs that will need to be covered for your idea to come to life. If you have other parties who can share costs, please include.
- Promotion for the program – how do you propose to market this program to the appropriate audience? Describe the different strategies via social media, email, flyers, etc.
- Communication – how do you plan to communicate with your audience about the schedule and weather updates/cancellations if needed?

3. Additional Questions

- What barriers do you foresee in administering a youth program at Las Canchas? How do you plan to address them?
- What additional resources might you require to implement a youth program at Las Canchas?

Evaluation Factors

Qualifications will be evaluated by DGRI staff. Rubric scoring will be used to evaluate qualifications based on the following criteria:

- Clarity, conciseness and thoroughness.
- Project understanding and approach for achieving objectives.
- Alignment with Las Canchas goals.
- Diversity of project team and partners.
- Rates & fees to deliver programming.

- Proposed timeline that prioritizes urgency of building a successful youth program

Timeline

- January 6, 2026 – RFP issued
- January 19, 2026 – RFP questions and clarifications due no later than 5 PM ET
- January 26, 2026 – Responses to RFP questions issued
- **February 2, 2026 – Deadline to submit RFP is 5pm ET**
 - Please email a digital copy to cmathein@downtowngr.org or drop off a hard copy at Downtown Grand Rapids Inc. at 29 Pearl St. NW, Suite #1
- February 23, 2026 – notification of RFP selection