City of Grand Blanc

Request for Proposal
Consultant Services – Downtown Parking Study

RFP Deadline: August 3, 2021 at 3:00PM

Overview

The City of Grand Blanc seeks the services of firms or individuals engaged in professional parking and transportation consulting to undertake a Downtown Parking Study that will:

- Determine how parking is being utilized now in order to determine if the existing parking supply is adequate;
- If the existing parking supply is not determined to be adequate, determine where additional supply is needed based on current and future demands;
- Review the City’s management approach and make recommendations for improvements;

The final plan shall reflect knowledge and understanding of the City’s downtown parking inventory and resources, as well as the community’s values and objectives.
Background

The project study area corresponds with the City’s Downtown Development Authority area. A map of the downtown area is attached.

A 2008 Parking Plan was created, but was not finalized. The Downtown Development Authority was created in 2007, with a plan update in 2012. The 2008 City of Grand Blanc Short & Long Term Downtown Parking Plan is attached. The City of Grand Blanc has determined in the Economic Development Strategy a need to complete a parking needs analysis. The 2019 Strategic Plan also identified the need to complete this study. The DDA 2012 Plan update lists the parking improvements as a funding item. The DDA will fund this study request.

The City of Grand Blanc experiences high parking demand throughout the day and peaks at lunch and dinner time. Special events in the downtown such as Food Truck Festival, Concerts in the Park, Festival of Lights, contribute to parking demands.

There is a perception that there may be a “parking problem” in the downtown area, though City staff and officials tend to believe there is usually adequate parking, except at peak times, just not as conveniently located as people would like.

The City of Grand Blanc owns five (5) parcels in the downtown area that are currently for sale. Evaluation of these parcels could be made to add to the parking inventory.

Project Outcomes

This report will be used by the elected officials and staff to evaluate improvements to the parking system, supply and options. Outcomes from the project include:

- A realistic plan for more effective use of parking;
- Credible information that can be communicated to the public and stakeholders;
- A parking system that contributes to a positive image of the City;
- A parking system that supports livability and economic development in
  - Downtown, including provisions for bicycle parking and electric vehicle parking

Scope of Services

A final scope of work will be developed by the City and the selected consultant ("The Consultant"). The items outlined below are the City’s minimum expectations.

- **Project Coordination**: The Consultant shall coordinate with Community Planning & Development Services Department staff regarding schedule, deliverables and the
scope of work. The Consultant shall host a minimum of three steering committee meetings.

- **Existing Conditions Assessment:** The Consultant shall complete a review and analysis of the parking system including location, type, hours of operations, use restrictions and adequacy of public and private parking availability. Create a data collection plan to gather field observations and assist in data collection. The City will provide data from an existing parking inventory to use as a basis.

- **Community Outreach:** The Consultant shall facilitate one community meeting and one stakeholder meeting that is targeted to downtown merchants and businesses. The Consultant shall also develop and conduct a community survey on the downtown parking system. The City is open to additional strategies and approaches to enhance community engagement at the recommendation of the consultant.

- **Public/Private Partnership:** Outline realistic options and parameters for private development of parking facilities for the general public. Identify strategies to encourage private development of parking facilities. Identify the pros and cons of a private/public partnership to develop additional parking facilities.

- **Identify and Evaluate Parking Recommendations:** The Consultant shall review anticipated development and transportation infrastructure changes, as well as parking management recommendations in the Downtown Master Plan (See page 85). They shall evaluate the appropriateness and adequacy of the parking supply, zone structure and pricing strategy for the next 5-10 years. The consultant shall make recommendations for land use/zoning parking standards that will support the vision for downtown and the parking program.

- **Report:** The Consultant shall prepare a draft report for review prior to finalizing the report.

- **Presentation to Downtown Development Authority:** It is anticipated that the Consultant shall prepare and present the final report to the Downtown Development Authority upon completion.

**Final Products**

The consultant will provide two (2) copies of a final report, one unbound, and an additional digital copy in a commonly accessible format. All work products associated with the project, preliminary or final, paper and/or electronic format, shall be the property of the City of Grand Blanc.

**Schedules and Submittals**

Proposal due: August 3, 2021
Consultant selection by September 2, 2021
Complete project by February 1, 2022
Proposal Submission Requirements

Responses to this RFP shall consist of:

A. *Letter of Transmittal* (1 page) – A letter of transmittal that includes a single contact (Project Manager), mailing address, telephone number, and email address.

B. *Introduction/Summary* (2 pages maximum) – A short introduction and summary of the company/consultant (i.e. how long the company/consultant has been in business, number of employees, etc.). In addition, a description of what disciplines are included within the firm.

C. *Scope of Work* (10 pages maximum) – Include a detailed work program that addresses:
   a. Tasks to be performed.
   b. Estimated timeline.
   c. Schedule of work products.
   d. Proposed budget with a cost breakdown by Scope of Work element and a lump sum fee for the services required to fulfill this RFP, including all expenses. List the names of principal investigators and other key professionals who will be involved. Support personnel may be identified by classification. If subcontracting is necessary, include subcontractors’ key personnel and support staff in the table. Clearly identify the subcontractors’ involvement.

D. *Project Management and Communication* (1 page maximum) – Methods the Consultant proposes to use to manage the project and communicate with the City of Grand Blanc and the public as to project progress, reviews, and conduct of public meetings.

E. *Personnel Qualifications and Experience* (7 pages maximum) – Resumes of the individuals who will be assigned to the project.

F. *Comparable Projects with References* (3 pages maximum) – Identify 2 comparable projects in progress or completed, with the following information: a. Current contact names and telephone numbers
   b. Summary of the project
   c. Nature of public involvement in the project

G. *Representative Work Sample* – A representative work sample similar to the work being requested. The sample may be provided digitally (e.g., a PDF). Directing the City to an online document or file-sharing site is also acceptable. Only one (1) representative work sample is required per submittal.

H. Signature/Certification: The proposal shall be signed by an official authorized to bind the offer and shall contain a statement that the proposal is a firm offer for a ninety (90) day period from the submittal deadline. The proposal shall also provide the following information: name, title, address and telephone number of the individual(s) with authority to contractually bind the company and also who may be contacted during the period of proposal evaluation for the purpose of clarifying submitted information.
Proposal Format and Due Date

Submit six (6) complete proposal sets. All submissions become the property of the City of Grand Blanc upon submission.

Submittals must be hand-delivered or mailed to:

City of Grand Blanc
Attn: City Clerk, Downtown Parking Study - SEALED
203 E. Grand Blanc Road
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Submissions must be received by 3:00 P.M. on Tuesday, August 3, 2021.

Emailed or faxed submittals will NOT be accepted.

Questions Concerning Responses to this RFP: All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to Wendy Jean-Buhrer, citymanager@cityofgrandblanc.com and received not later than 3:00 pm on Tuesday, August 3, 2021.

Proposal Review Criteria and Award

The City of Grand Blanc reserves the right to seek clarification of any proposal submitted and to select the consultant that is best able to address the project purpose and to reject any and all of the proposals. The City of Grand Blanc reserves the right to withdraw this Request for Proposals, to accept or reject any or all proposals, to advertise for new proposals if it is in the best interest of the City to do so, and to award a contract as deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

The City anticipates making the award no later than October 1, 2021.

This solicitation of proposals in no way obligates the City of Grand Blanc to award a contract.

Equal Opportunity – The selection of consultant shall be made without regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or political affiliation. The City of Grand Blanc is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages proposals from qualified minority and woman-owned businesses.

Contract requirements

The Consultant will be registered with the Secretary of State to do business in the State of Michigan prior to contract signing and sign an appropriate contract with the City of Grand Blanc.

The awarded contract will be provided on a fixed fee basis. The reimbursement rate for direct expenses, such as meals, mileage, etc., will conform to the City of Grand Blanc travel policy rates. All products and borrowed materials shall be delivered prior to final payment.

The consultant shall be solely responsible for all claims of whatever nature arising out of rendering of services by the consultant during the terms of the contract. The consultant shall indemnify and hold the City of Grand Blanc and other participants harmless against the same to the extent permitted by law.
The selected consultant shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in the performance of service.
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INTRODUCTION

The City of Grand Blanc has initiated this Downtown Parking Plan to establish strategies for the southwest portion of the downtown that will meet both short and long term needs as the downtown redevelops consistent with the Downtown Enhancement Plan. That Plan envisions a more "urban" setting with a mixture of new uses to complement the solid core of businesses that exist today. Much of the downtown developed in a more "suburban" style, where each use has its own on-site parking to meet zoning requirements. In contrast, most downtowns have a mixture of parking options including on-street, municipal lots/structures, shared parking lots and some private parking lots. Oftentimes, parking is managed by the municipality or a parking authority.

This Parking Plan was prepared to identify opportunities to meet the parking needs of new downtown uses through on-street, municipal lots/structures, and shared private lots. Parking needs will vary depending upon the actual uses and their density (e.g. restaurants require more parking per square foot than a hardware store, but have a different peak hour). As a result, this Plan is flexible to accommodate refinements to both parking supply and its management, based on the type and timing of development.

As a catalyst to stimulate private sector investment in the downtown, the city constructed the new Grand Boulevard and will be reconstructing Grand Blanc Road. On-street parking is featured along both streets. A Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and Brownfield Authority were also established to assist with implementation and financing of projects downtown. As city representatives met with perspective developers, one consistent item of discussion has been related to parking needs. Fortunately, the City of Grand Blanc owns many lots in the downtown that provide an opportunity to help meet parking needs.
Long term viability of the downtown partially depends on the availability of conveniently located parking to serve employees, customers, residents and visitors. Through cooperation between the city, private property owners and developers, a downtown-wide wide system of coordinated parking will prove to be more successful than a parcel by parcel approach where each use meets its parking need with an on-site surface lot.

**Study Area.** The Downtown Enhancement Plan envisions redevelopment on both sides of Saginaw Street. The high volumes of traffic along Saginaw Street can be a barrier for pedestrian crossings, even though there are crosswalks and pedestrian signals. As a result, the city policy is generally to have each side of Saginaw be “self-parked.” This Parking Plan evaluates the southwest side only, where most of the new development is expected and where the city owns several key parcels. A similar analysis of parking needs will be needed to coincide with redevelopment plans on the east side of Saginaw that may be easier since there are fewer property owners involved.

**Short Term Strategies**

**50% Parking On-site.** One suggested standard is that new development provide at least 50% of the amount of parking “required” for the project on-site. The other 50% needed to support a given use must be within walking distance, preferably 300 to 350 feet of the site. This could be established as a general policy of the city, or incorporated into the CBD section of the Zoning Ordinance. In some cases, less than 50% of the parking could be provided on-site if there is ample parking available nearby or there is a shared parking agreement for off-site parking.

As an alternative, a longer walking distance may be acceptable if the streetscape is pleasant and the parking is still viewed as convenient. Another option often used, especially by downtown restaurants, is a valet service to a nearby parking lot. In some cases, a type of temporary shared parking could be allowed to permit the use to “settle in” after which the actual parking need could be better determined. Costs to construct some of the parking could be guaranteed through performance bonds or payment in lieu of parking. This approach may be more practical once the city has additional municipal parking or plans for a parking structure.
Parking Requirements. The Zoning Ordinance lists the amount of parking required for various uses. The actual amount of parking required will vary depending upon the type of use, size of building, location, and availability of alternative parking spaces. Parking requirements in the city's Zoning Ordinance are the benchmark, but the downtown overlay district allows the Planning Commission to adjust parking based on a variety of factors. While the Planning Commission is permitted some level of flexibility in the CBD, the requirements should be reviewed and updated to better match current needs and parking generation standards. The City's standards were originally developed similar to those of Grand Blanc Township for consistency between the two communities. As development occurs in the downtown, the parking standards must be updated to be more reflective of actual needs, rather than the current standards, which are more suburban in nature. Downtown uses typically do not need to provide 100% of their parking on-site due to the number of alternative parking options – on-street, shared parking, municipal lots, etc.

Based upon a cursory review, the current parking standards tend to require more parking than is needed for a traditional downtown area. To help illustrate, the following table compares the city's requirements with other ordinances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>City Requirement</th>
<th>Other Ordinances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality Restaurant (4,000 sq. ft.)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Bar (4,000 sq. ft.)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Office (4,000 sq. ft.)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prospective developers may be required to provide a parking analysis on the need for a particular use in comparison with parking available elsewhere to identify any parking “shortfall.”

Additional On-Street Parking. In addition to parking on private lots, shared lots and municipal parking, on-street parking can help meet the parking demand, especially for short term spaces most convenient to building entrances. The new Grand Boulevard includes 44 parallel on-street parking spaces and the design plans for Grand Blanc Road will add approximately 21 parallel on-street spaces. There are also opportunities for on-street parking along existing streets, within the current right-of-way.
Angled parking can be another efficient parking solution that maximizes the number of spaces on a street with relatively low volumes like Reid Road. An estimated 25 angled spaces could be added along the south side of Reid Road within the existing right-of-way (see sketch at right). The current pavement is about 30 feet wide, an excessive width for a two lane street. The angled parking can fit using the extra pavement and the curb lawn between the curb and the sidewalk. Alternatively, these could be parallel spaces; however, this would reduce the number of new parking spaces by about 50%.

**On-Street Parking Management.** Some consumers will spend their time and money elsewhere if they perceive convenient parking is not available. Studies have shown that the lack of available, convenient parking for “in-and-out” customers can cost downtown businesses thousands of unspent dollars. On-street parking is intended to provide high turnover spaces for these customers. Gradually, as the gaps in the downtown are filled in with new buildings, these premium on-street spaces will be used more regularly.

At some point, the city or DDA may need to consider a management system for on-street parking to ensure they are used by customers and not by business operators and employees. These could include signs that help keep spaces open during the opening hours when most business employees park (such as “no parking before 10 a.m.”), limitation of parking to two hours, or something similar. While Grand Blanc will likely not face this dilemma in the short term, it is important that businesses, and especially their employees, do not become accustomed to or dependent upon these prime customer spaces. It will be easier if employers direct employees to park at less convenient locations right from the start and monitor compliance. A voluntary, self-policing system is much easier than city enforcement, meters, or kiosks.
Parking Signs. As municipal lots are developed, signs directing parkers to those lots will be helpful (wayfinding). Similarly if there are parking restrictions within certain lots, signs need to be informative and direct parkers to appropriate locations to avoid potential loss of the customer.

Implementation of Public Improvements. A number of public improvement projects are recommended as part of this Plan, including additional on-street parking, streetscape improvements, wayfinding, the development of a municipal parking structure or lot, and the use of a parking management system. The DDA can provide financial assistance with these projects and as such, the DDA is strongly encouraged to participate with implementation of the recommendations of this Plan.

Recommendations for City-owned Parcels. Please refer to the Downtown Parking Plan on page 9 for specific location within downtown.

- Site A. This site includes the parcel along the north side of Reid Road, adjacent to the park. There are several options for a municipal parking lot, structure, development and/or park expansion. In the short term, at least the western part should be considered for development of a municipal parking lot. Use of pervious concrete may be appropriate to reduce the storm water impact and support the city’s policies to be environmentally friendly. In the long term, this site may be appropriate for a multi-level parking structure or 2-story platform deck. The frontage along Grand Boulevard should be lined with retail to create activity along the street and make a connection with the rest of downtown.
Site B. A portion of this site should be developed as commercial/office with on-site parking to serve users. The remainder of the site should be used for municipal parking to serve nearby uses. Depending upon development of the privately owned parcel (shown as Site N) and other downtown parking needs in the future, this site has long term potential to accommodate a parking platform deck with shops along Grand Boulevard.

Site C. A catalyst use that attracts many people, such as a restaurant, entertainment venue, or specialty grocer, is recommended on this parcel due to its important location. The building should be situated at the corner to provide a presence on both Grand Blanc Road and Grand Boulevard. The site should accommodate 50% of its parking on-site with the other 50% met by on-street spaces along both roads and shared parking on neighboring private lots or the city hall lot.

Site D. Part of this site should be developed with commercial and office uses with a municipal shared parking lot on the remainder. A quick sketch indicates this site could accommodate roughly 16 parking spaces, but will vary depending upon building dimensions. Preferably, the building should be situated towards the proposed streetscape enhancements along Grand Boulevard to provide a more comfortable pedestrian environment. The design of the building should be such that it complements the park-like setting and pedestrian amenities of the streetscape terminus. As pedestrian crossings become more frequent at the corner, the intersection of Grand Blanc Road and Grand Boulevard might be a good candidate for the new style of pedestrian activated traffic signals.
• **Site E.** Recommended development of this site includes a building at the corner with on-site parking to serve the use. The remainder of the site could accommodate an expansion of the city hall parking lot.

• **Site F.** A restaurant or other catalyst use, excluding a medical office or drive through bank, is recommended on this site due to its valuable location along Saginaw Road. The Plan illustrates a 2-story, 4,000 square foot (gross) building with the ability to locate approximately 20-23 parking spaces on-site. Additional parking needed could be accommodated through a combination of on-street parking, shared parking, valet service, or other alternatives. To help avoid parking disputes with the neighboring Big Boy restaurant and resale shop, some combination of signage and monitoring will be needed. Shared parking with nearby properties should be explored.

• **Site G.** This site adjacent to the railroad tracks is likely too far from downtown activity to support commercial uses, therefore residential and office uses may be more suitable. The site is large enough to accommodate its required parking on-site and provide overflow parking for community events or as overflow parking for downtown uses, including space for employee parking, thus freeing up more valuable spaces for patrons. Additionally, restaurants could use this lot for valet service. As an alternative, this site could accommodate up to 180 spaces as a municipal parking lot or more as a structure. A lot could be developed in phases as development continues and demand increases. Sensitivity to stormwater impacts must be given if developed as a municipal lot or parking structure. Use of grass pavers or pervious concrete could potentially be incorporated into its design.
Shared Parking on Private Property. Several existing, large parking lots provide excellent opportunities for shared parking on private property if the owners see the benefits. Excess parking is available in both areas and both are centrally located to serve the broader downtown area. This would require agreement with the owners for shared use and assistance with lot maintenance. Management for such shared parking areas could also be through a private parking authority. If shared parking is agreed upon, signs would be used to inform parkers that these spaces are available for patrons of other downtown establishments along with restrictions on use of any particular spaces.

Recommendations for Privately Owned Development Sites. Most of the downtown parcels are under private ownership. A few that are considered key redevelopment sites are as shown as Sites L, M, N, O and P. The size of buildings and uses appropriate for those sites will vary by site based upon parking needs/supply. Greater density could be accommodated if some amount of deck parking is provided within those sites. Likewise, shared parking could help meet the overall need.
Downtown Parking Plan

City of Grand Blanc, Michigan
LONG TERM STRATEGIES

In the long term, depending upon density of use and parking demand, the fractured surface parking lots may need to be replaced or supplemented with a public parking structure (multi level) or platform deck (one level of parking above surface lot). This would also allow for infill development opportunities on those sites with large surface parking lots as the excess surface parking would no longer be needed. If some type of parking structure is built, its design must be complementary in architecture and materials to the desired appearance of downtown, consistent with the city’s Downtown Design Guidelines.

Parking Structure Criteria. As development in the downtown occurs, a parking structure may eventually be needed to help meet the overall parking needs. Given that potential outcome in the future, this Plan identifies several conceptually suitable locations, based on a variety of assumptions and factors as follows:

- A parking structure performs best if centrally located or sited on the edge of an activity area with a large parking need. Parking structures located more than 300-350 feet from uses will be used less frequently.
- In locations that appear to be optimal for a future parking deck, new development should be designed to accommodate an appropriately dimensioned deck in the future. This is most easily done through design of a parking lot that leaves area for building sites and can be converted to a platform or structure in the future.
- Construction of parking spaces in structures costs more than surface parking. While a surface lot typically costs $2,000 per space to construct, a multi-story structure costs $14,000-$18,000 per space and a two-story platform deck costs $11,000 - $13,000 per space (in 2008 dollars).
- Parking structures require funding for maintenance and operating costs. Most municipal decks collect a parking fee, either from businesses that use the parking to meet their parking requirements or directly from parkers, to help offset those costs.
- Many parkers, especially those looking for short term parking, are more inclined to seek out on-street spaces and surface parking lots. Parking structures are most appropriate for downtown residents, employees of offices and businesses, and visitors during larger events.
- Modern parking structures can be very attractive and include first floor retail with parking on upper floors or below grade levels. An appealing design, integrated commercial and office space, and good lighting can improve the attractiveness to users.

- Parking structure dimensions need to be considered to maximize the parking efficiency. Some typical dimensions and structure designs are shown in the table and reflected on the long term concepts.

- A growing number of communities have had successful partnerships with developers that either contribute funding toward a municipal deck, or construct a deck that offers municipal parking in some areas.

### General Parking Structure Specifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2-Ray Single Helix</th>
<th>3-Ray Side-by-Side Helix</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum width</td>
<td>125'</td>
<td>130'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum length</td>
<td>200'</td>
<td>250'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaces per floor</td>
<td>(minimum area): 80</td>
<td>(minimum area): 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example photos of parking structures lined with residential (left) and commercial (right)

There are four potential locations based upon current information that were evaluated based upon location, size of property and ownership of property. Please refer to the Long Term Parking Concepts on page 14 for specific location with in downtown.
• **Block Bounded by Saginaw Street, Reid Road, Grand Boulevard and Grand Blanc Road.** This block provides a centralized location and large surface parking areas. Any development should be designed to eventually accommodate a parking structure, or at least the potential should be discussed. Since the property is privately owned, some type of public-private partnership to build the structure may be ideal. The first floor along Grand Boulevard and Reid Road should provide liner shops to maintain street activity and a connection with the downtown area. The site could accommodate up to 80 spaces per floor in a parking structure.

• **Site A.** This parcel is of sufficient size to accommodate a parking structure or platform deck and the site is owned by the city. However, this is not the most central location given its distance from the concentration of activity in the downtown. As described above, retail should be incorporated as liner shops. This site could accommodate about 80 spaces per floor in a parking structure or platform deck. The design would need to be considerate of the adjacent park.

• **Site B.** This site is sufficient in size for a smaller platform deck. The Grand Boulevard frontage should be lined with shops/services, as noted above. This site could accommodate about 30-32 spaces per floor in a parking platform deck.
• **Site G.** This site provides a large enough area for a parking structure or platform deck and is owned by the city, both of which are important criteria to consider. However, its proximity to the core of activity in the downtown is not as desirable as the other options previously discussed.
Long-Term Parking Concepts
City of Grand Blanc, Michigan
CITY OF GRAND BLANC
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
DISTRICT BOUNDARY MAP

ADOPTED
05-17-06

MAP 1

Legend:
- PROPOSED DDA BOUNDARY
- RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY