

Proposal
To The
City of Barre
Regarding
SPOKE-EZ
A Public Community
Cycle and Information Center

PREPARED FOR
Honorable Mayor
Tom Lauzon
City of Barre
Washington County, Vermont

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Revision History

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SPOKE-EZ A Community based Bicycle Center and Information Kiosk

Introduction

This is a proposal to organize and operate **Spoke-Ez**, a community bicycle facility and tourist information station at the dormant Information Hut located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Main Street and Maple Avenue.

The Information Hut is a central location and when with the implementation of this project and proposal will give show value to the town. The heritage of bicycle use is intimate to Barre. The Information Hut's mid town location has great access; the opening of this facility is expected to be an asset and a complement to this Center City area. It is our intent to engage the community and gainfully employ community teens and other qualifying members of the community.

This center will combine two community-based activities in order to better and promote Barre City and Washington County. These activities are:

1. The **Spoke-Ez** community bicycle center project, which promotes bicycling by providing affordable, used bikes for rental or sale, and community-wide access to the tools, skills and information necessary for bike maintenance and safe riding.
2. Tourist Information center which essentially restarts the original purpose of the Information Hut. This initial purpose will be augmented with the development and distribution of bicycle route maps showing off Barre and Washington County.

Our vision is that **Spoke-Ez** shall be a non-profit, and completely community operated faculty, with the goal of hiring local teens and disadvantaged members of the local community.

Everyone is welcome to join us in building this community information and bike center. Participation can take place on several levels. These levels include but are not limited to:

1. Member
2. Donor
3. Customer
4. Volunteer
5. Mechanics
6. Organizer

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The positive public image of a functioning Tourist information facility easily augments the economic, health and tourist resource refreshments that this project offers to the community..

1 MEMBERSHIP

Members pay yearly dues for access, during shifts, to the space and tools as well as the assistance of our volunteer mechanics. Members also get access to cheap used parts.

Membership is \$0-\$30, on a sliding scale.

2 DONATIONS

We shall gratefully accept any donation of bicycles, tools, parts, supplies and funding. Additionally we currently have an evolving wish listed posted on the Spoke-ez web site. While donations to Spoke-ez cannot currently be considered tax deductible, we expect to offer this avenue in the immediate future.

3 CUSTOMER

It is our vision that this activity be a practicum on how to make money. The facility will be used for at least the following commercial operations:

1. Bicycle Rental
2. Bicycle Safety Equipment Sales
3. Used Bicycle Sales or Exchange
4. Mechanical Services and parts
5. Courses on Bicycle Safety
6. Refreshments

Tourist and bike route information available at this activity shall remain free and open to the public.

3.1 BICYCLE RENTAL

Bicycles shall be available for rent at the **Spoke-Ez** Community bicycle facility for \$3.00 per hour or 20.00 per hour for members and \$6.00 per hour or 40.00 per day for non-members. All bicycles shall be adjusted for the user and shall be rented with a safety helmet.

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3.2 BICYCLE SAFETY EQUIPMENT SALES

All helmets and other safety equipment shall additionally be available for sale as part of the overall stock of equipment available at **Spoke-Ez**

3.3 USED BIKE EXCHANGE

Used bicycles based either on donation or through exchange shall be reconditioned by facility mechanics, who when they aren't helping members or customers, can spend some of their time fixing up used bikes. We keep these bikes affordable and also are open for trades.

We will also be refurbishing bikes for renting out, to folks in town and visiting who want to try out riding around town or for use in daily life.

3.3.1 EARN-A-BIKE

For those wishing to exchange time for a bike instead of money we have an earn-a-bike program. After 20 hours of work at the bike shop or the information center, one may have access to our stock of used frames and parts in storage, and may build a bike for this stock with the help of the mechanics.

The goal of this program is that each needy person have a bike for one's self, and that there be bikes for the community to use and we strive to make the shop as comfortable as possible for a diversity of people and a variety of skill levels.

3.4 COURSES ON BICYCLE SAFETY

The parking area surrounding **Spoke-Ez** at the Information Hut can with the proper permission from the store owners and landholders be used at appropriate times to teach bicycle safety courses to both the tourist and area residents, in order to promote proper and safe bicycle ridership. This activity can be a rental condition, fee paid or optionally, sponsored.

3.5 REFRESHMENTS

A limited selection of light refreshments should be available; we expect these to be acquired as consignment from the local merchants.

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4VOLUNTEERS

In Barre City and Washington county there are many individuals who might want to consider a community service, and they will be welcome at **Spoke-Ez**. In addition to the regular mechanics and facilitators, volunteers filling a variety of positions are expected to be the backbone of **Spoke-Ez**.

On occasion, **Spoke-Ez** will need to mobilize many volunteers for moving bikes, setting up events and so on. Announcement for these occasions will be sent out via our email news list and placed on the website.

5MECHANICS

Mechanics are hired and sign onto a weekly work shift. Hiring and placement for this position is based upon the submission of a resume. Development of resumes is an activity outside the scope of **Spoke-Ez** but is an activity available at the Barre City Teen Centers (e.g. HUMCTC.ORG). The senior mechanic shall hire and other mechanics will help a new mechanic learn as she or he goes along. It is a great way to learn, and a rewarding part time job.

6ORGANIZERS

We will also rely on both paid and volunteer organizers for maintaining the information center, organizational planning, public relations / outreach, fund raising, refreshments, and businesses activities.,

7SUMMARY

The **Spoke-Ez** facility will open and expand the Barre Information Hut, fulfilling the initial promise of this facility as a tourist information center. Additionally this facility shall make community bicycle transportation facilities available including but not limited to; bicycle rental, exchange or sale, community bicycle care clinic with mechanical service, air and adjustment available. A bicycle safety program center will be organized and available, and finally refreshments will be available with the cooperation of local merchants.

COST MODEL

Please find below a sample income statement for the **Spoke-Ez** operation based upon the following assumptions:

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Assumptions
1. Ten percent yield on Bicycle Rentals
2. Repair revenue at 50 percent load
3. Material Sales at 30 percent of labor
4. Courses include 10 people each
5. Half of the safety participants need helmets
6. All business days are not optimal for rental

Table 1 Notional Model Assumptions

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SPOKE-EZ Income Statement					
SEED INCOME					
IBM Grant	\$1,000				
INCOME FROM OPERATIONS	June	July	August	September	October
Members Signed Up	10	20	20	10	5
Membership Sales	200	400	400	200	100
Bicycle Rental Operation					
Days in month	17	24	22	23	23
"Rentable" Days	10	20	20	20	15
20 Bicycles rent-able @ 40.00	800	1600	1600	1600	1200
Bicycle Repair					
Mechanical Adjustments @25.00 per hour	850	1200	1100	1150	1150
Material Sales	255	360	330	345	345
Safety Training Courses Per Month	1	3	4	3	2
Course Fee	100	300	400	300	200
Helmet	50	150	200	150	100
Lock Sales	100	300	400	300	200
Tourist Information					
Food and Beverage	70	140	140	140	105
Internet Terminal Rental	170	240	220	230	230
Pass the Hat	50	100	100	100	75
TOTAL INCOME PER MONTH	\$3,390	4430	4560	4170	3360
EXPENSES					
Labor					
Rental and Tourist Agent @ \$8.00/hr FT	1632	2304	2112	2208	2208
Mechanic @ 12.00 /hr PT	560	1120	1120	1120	840
Management	150	151	152	153	154
Materials Expenses @ 50% cost	202.5	405	465	397.5	322.5
Interest & Principal	200	200	200	200	200
Insurance	1000				
Office Rental					
Telecom	60	60	60	60	60
Advertisement					
Office Supplies / Forms	50	50	50	50	50
Professional	50	51	52	53	54
TOTAL EXPENSE PER MONTH	3904.5	4341	4211	4241.5	3888.5
TOTAL PROFIT (LOSS)	-\$515	\$89	\$349	-\$72	-\$529

Table 2Notional Spoke-Ez Income Statement 2008

The table above illustrates that this facility will at best break even. It is expected that there will be enormous need for community and volunteer support necessary for this activity to be an economic success. Overall it is projected that this project shall loose about \$700.00 during what remains of the summer of 2008. The benefit to

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local commercial and community enterprises and events is expected to be the indirect profit of the **Spoke-Ez** activity.

Kindest Regards,

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