



Proposal Presented by:

***Prairie State Cycling Series LLC
dba***



Village of Lombard
Attn: Local Tourism Grant Committee
December 12, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

In 2019, to grow the sports tourism market in DuPage County, the DuPage Sports Commission (DSC) and DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) partnered with Prairie State Cycling Series LLC (PSCS) to create a new sporting event in Lombard named the "Lombard Cycling Classic", which is part of the well-known Chicago Grit bicycle racing series (formerly known as the Intelligentsia Cup). The Lombard Cycling Classic has been held successfully each year since 2019 (except in 2020 during Covid). The growth of the event since then has exceeded expectations and has provided annual positive economic impact to our community partners.

The Lombard Cycling Classic is very popular in the Village of Lombard. This is attested to by the fact that in 2025, 360 family members registered for the annual Family Fun Ride during the event – and 229 actually participated despite the extreme heat and humidity last July.

For 2026, PSCS will again be the grant applicant and DSC will have a reduced role. PSCS is in the process of seeking a new local partner for the event who will handle such matters as volunteer coordination, obtaining an event permit from the Village, and recruiting event sponsors to supplement the Local Tourism Grant Program as the funding mechanism for this event. DSC has agreed to mentor the new local partner. Based on the successful models of other host communities, such as the Villages of Winfield and Glen Ellyn, we feel there is tremendous potential for growing this event even more and finding new partners to support it.

The Village of Lombard Local Tourism Grant will allow the continuation of the popular Lombard Cycling Classic – a single day pro/am bicycling racing event. Not only does this event foster strong community engagement, it will also continue to provide tourism value and immediate ROI to the Village of Lombard. PSCS will again commit at least 200 guaranteed hotel room bookings in 2026 for its staff for the event in Lombard. (In 2025, PSCS actually booked 223 room nights at the Fairfield Inn in Lombard.) Additionally, PSCS will continue to work with DCVB to provide a convenient hotel booking platform promoting all Lombard hotels to our athletes and visitors throughout the race series week to provide Lombard, and DuPage County, a competitive edge in capturing additional overnight visitor and hotel stays.

We appreciate your consideration for our grant request, and the unique opportunity of staging the Lombard Cycling Classic again in 2026.

Sincerely,
Marco Colbert
Executive Director
Prairie State Cycling Series LLC

CC: Igor Bakovic
Director of Sports
DuPage Sports Commission
DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau

Camille Gale
Sports Coordinator
DuPage Sports Commission
DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
LOCAL TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM 2026 APPLICATION FORM

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization:	Prairie State Cycling Series LLC		
Name of event:	Lombard Cycling Classic		
Date of event:	July 21, 2026	Event location:	Downtown Lombard
Contact person:	Marco Colbert	Title:	Exec. Director
Business address:	36971 S. Golf Course Dr.	City & Zip	Tucson, AZ 85739
Telephone:	847-644-0277	Email:	marccolbert@comcast.net

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Total cost of the project:	\$34,700
Cost of city services requested in this application (if any):	\$TBD (*)
Total funding requested in this application: (*) (net of city services)	\$10,000
Percent of total project cost being requested:	29%
Anticipated attendance:	2500
Anticipated number of overnight hotel stays (PSCS staff + racers):	325

Briefly describe the project for which are funds are being requested:

This will be the seventh year of an all-day athletic event in downtown Lombard called the “Lombard Cycling Classic.” This event features exciting bicycle racing by professional and amateur racers from all over the US and Internationally. The event is spectator and family friendly. It will also include a lifestyle expo, local food vendors, beer gardens at local businesses, a very popular family fun ride and perhaps live music in future years. The event would be part of the ten-day Chicago Grit Cup series, which will include similar events in Winfield and Glen Ellyn in 2026. Visit www.Chicago-Grit.com for more information.

ORGANIZATION

Number of years that the organization has been in existence:	14 years
Number of years that the project or event has been in existence:	6 (2025 will be 7 th year)
Number of years the project has been supported by Village of Lombard funds:	6
How many years does the organization anticipate it will request grant funding?	3-8 years

1) Describe the organization (include brief history, mission, and ability to carry out this project):

PSCS Cycling Series, LLC (“PSCS”) is a Wisconsin limited liability company. Since 2012, we have successfully staged 130+ event days of high-quality pro-am bicycle races in many communities in the Chicago Metro area. These communities include Brookfield, Crystal Lake, Downers Grove, Elgin, Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Lake Bluff, Mundelein, Niles, Northbrook, St. Charles, Waukegan, West Dundee, Winfield and the Chicago neighborhoods of Beverly, Fulton Market and South Chicago.

The mission of PSCS is to promote and celebrate cycling in Chicago and the Metro area with events that are fun for participants and the public and which promote exercise and a healthy lifestyle. Stated simply – we love cycling! We want to share our passion with our community partners by creating events that will evolve into enduring summer festivals of cycling for the entire family.

PSCS has a proven track record of successful events in the communities named above. References are available upon request. Bios of the principal owners of PSCS are attached. These individuals work during the off-season to plan and coordinate the next season with communities, local organizing committees, racers, vendors, USA Cycling and other parties. Then, during the season, PSCS’s staff expands dramatically to around 25 people including professional announcers, registration staff, work crew, professional photographer, social media interns, and others.

2) Please describe how the program and any proceeds from the event support the goals and objectives of the organization, other local groups or initiatives, and the community at large:

The business model of PSCS involves three sources of income to finance our operations: series sponsorships, racer entry fees and payment of a “race fee” for each venue to PSCS by a local organizing committee (LOC) in that venue. The standard race fee for an event on Monday through Thursday in the 2026 Chicago Grit series will be \$9,000 (the race fee is higher for other days of the week). Additionally, each LOC is requested to provide \$1,000 for race “primes” (ie, prizes) paid to the racers. The funding requested in this application will cover the 2026 race fee and primes for an event in Lombard. Typically, the LOC raises funding through local sponsorships. PSCS is seeking a new LOC to support the continuation and growth of the Lombard event year-over-year. Some examples of LOCs in other communities are 501c3 organizations, neighborhood associations, bicycle clubs, local businesses, BID districts or chambers of commerce, local municipal governments, etc. It is hoped that a new LOC in Lombard will take over all local funding and management responsibilities and thereby the need for funding under the Village’s Local Tourism Grant Program will be reduced and then eliminated. As it enters its 7th season, the full potential and benefits of the Lombard Cycling Classic can be appreciated. Once fully realized, the Village of Lombard can expect a self-sustaining community event that is popular with residents, which has a favorable economic impact on local businesses (especially hospitality businesses like restaurants and bars), which increases overnight hotel stays in Lombard and which generally promotes the image of Lombard as a favorable destination.

3) What is the organization's plan to make the project self-sustaining?

As stated above, PSCS is seeking a new LOC in Lombard. Normally, the main responsibilities of the LOC are: 1. Obtain funding to pay PSCS's race fee and other expenses through local sponsorships or other revenue sources; 2. Act as main liaison with the Village of Lombard to obtain events permits and secure a "safe" racecourse with adequate police supervision; and 3. Obtain and manage an adequate number of volunteers to act as "course marshals" on race day.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Is the event open to the general public?

☒ Yes

Do you intend to apply for a liquor license for this project?

☒ No

Will any revenues from this event be returned to the community?

☒ Yes*

(*) – the LOC will often partner with a local charity.

Have you requested grant funding in the past?

☒ Yes

If yes, provide grant awards for past 5 years:

2019 - \$7,000 grant plus city services
2021 - \$7,000 grant plus city services
2022- \$9,000 grant plus city services
2023 - \$9000 grant plus city services
2024 - \$9000 grant plus city services
2025 - \$10,000 grant plus city services

1) Provide a full detailed description of the proposed project or event.

The "Lombard Cycling Classic" would continue to be a full day of "criterium" style road racing on a closed loop racecourse (usually one mile or less in circumference) located in the Village. We propose to use the same racecourse as the one very successfully used since 2019, with the start/finish line located at the intersection of W. St. Charles Rd. and N. Park Ave. in the Village. Generally, the most successful racecourses will be located in the downtown area as this will enhance the economic impact on local hospitality businesses like restaurants and bars. (It is not uncommon for such hospitality businesses in other PSCS venues to report that the bike race generated their best day of business for the entire year.) The race day would generally run from 10:00 am to around 8:20 pm. The PSCS crew generally arrives about 3 hours prior to the start of racing for setup and everything is normally torn down within 2 hours after the end of racing. PSCS always leaves each venue cleaner at the end of the day than it was at the beginning. Bicycle racing of this nature proceeds rain or shine. Only severe weather will suspend racing which will resume after the weather threat is over. (Of course, inclement weather can impact spectatorship.) A typical race day will include eight amateur race categories for men and women of various ages and skill levels, plus professional men's, and women's races. Time is reserved for a local event such as a family ride. The Family Fun Rides in Lombard have been very successful, with 173 family riders at our 2022 Family Fun Ride, 206 family riders at our 2023 Family Fun Ride, 245 family riders at our 2024 Family Fun Ride, and 360 family riders registered for the 2025 Family Fun Ride (a new record). Stated simply - local events like the Family Fun Ride are often the highlight of the day and is one of the best indicators of the event's success.

2) If your application is accepted, how will the tourism grant funds be use

As stated above, the tourism grant funds will be applied toward the race fee and “prime” amount normally payable to PSCS for an event of this nature.

- 3) What modifications to the event or other steps will be taken to increase event attendance over previous years (not applicable to first time events)?

Word of mouth among residents is one of the best methods to grow an event such as this one and following good attendance at the 2025 event this will have good effect in 2026. Further, a robust marketing and PR campaign is planned to attract attendees from outside of the Village.

LOCATION

Provide the location of the event or project. If a location has not been secured, list the venue(s) being proposed or considered.

Included below is a diagram of the racecourse used in 2025, and this course is proposed again for use in 2026. A racecourse in downtown Lombard is the most desirable from the standpoint of spectatorship and achieving a favorable economic impact on local businesses.

MILESTONES AND TIMETABLES

Describe the milestones that will mark the progress towards implementing the project and provide a timetable for the completion of each milestone.

1. Confirm award of Tourism Grant Funds to PSCS – by no later than February 1, 2026 but sooner would be preferred. PSCS wishes to publicly announce all its 2026 venues around March 1, 2026.
2. Confirm that all necessary event permits, and similar permissions have been granted or assured by the Village of Lombard and relevant departments (Police Dept., Fire Dept., etc.) – by April 1, 2026 or earlier if possible.
3. The new LOC will be responsible to obtain and manage enough volunteers to act as “course marshals” for the 2026 event.

IMPACT

- 1) Please describe how the event or program will promote overnight stays and/or tourism within the Village of Lombard.

A hotel in Lombard will be designated as a “host hotel” of the 2026 Chicago Grit series. PSCS commits to bring 100% of its 2026 staff business to the Lombard host hotel. We will publicize the host hotel on PSCS’s website and in our communications with our racers and through social media. Further, DSC will offer a complimentary website where racers can view, and book rooms offered at the Lombard host hotel or other hotels in DuPage County. We will also be working with DCVB to capture all team room nights and facilitate those through our in-house housing bureau.

- 2) Please describe the economic benefit to local businesses and the Lombard community. How will your event draw more people from outside the local market (50 miles or more) or attract a new visitor audience?

In the past, more than half of the Chicago Grit racers come from outside of Illinois. Normally, each racer also makes significant local expenditures for food, lodging and miscellaneous needs. Typically, each racer will also bring one or more family members or friends to the events. To the extent any of our racers elect to stay in the Lombard host hotel, this is likely to be a multi-day stay given that the Chicago Grit is a 10-day series. Many of our racers plan their vacations around the series and will compete in some or all 10 of the series events.

3) Who is the target audience for your event or project? What is your anticipated attendance?

Our target audience consists of amateur male and females who are serious bike racers plus their friends and family members who accompany the racers to the event. Our series presents a high level of competition to our racers. For amateur as well as professional bicycle racers, some of the best competition in the country can be found at the Chicago Grit and our reputation nationally reflects that.

In 2023, Chicago Grit averaged around 545 racers per venue. Additionally, depending on the level of publicity given to the event in Lombard, we can anticipate 3000+ spectators in 2026 and this number should continue to grow over time.

- 4) Please identify and detail the estimated cost of any Village of Lombard services anticipated as part of the event (e.g., Police, Public Works, barricades, etc.). For each cost, confirm whether you are requesting the costs for such services will be reimbursed to the Village or will be covered under this grant.

The amount of funding we are requesting under this Tourism Grant Program would be net of city services. We understand that in 2025, city services for the event totaled approximately \$10,000+.

- 5) Please describe any collaborative arrangements developed or anticipated with other organizations to fund or otherwise implement the project (including in-kind donations).

As discussed above, we are seeking a new LOC to take over from DSC and provide local management for the event in the future. DSC has agreed to mentor the new LOC in 2026.

- 6) Please describe your marketing plan. Detail the strategies your organization will use to promote the event or project (e.g., advertising, public relations, marketing, print materials, promotional pieces).

In 2026, the new LOC will be primarily responsible for local marketing and PSCS's marketing director handles PR and marketing at the series level. PSCS's marketing director is responsible for:

- maintaining a robust and current website
- issuing numerous and timely press releases
- planning and managing a sophisticated social media campaign (especially on Instagram)
- issuing "e-blast" communications to our racers and other constituents from time to time
- placing some but not extensive traditional media (we think the benefit of traditional media is declining)
- coordinate media stories
- coordinating marketing efforts with the local LOC.

The new LOC will work with the Village of Lombard's marketing/communications department to promote the event.

FINANCES

- ☒ Please include a detailed itemized budget for your entire event on the attached budget form (2 years of past actuals and estimates for upcoming event).
- ☐ Attach a copy of the most recently completed agency audit and Federal Form 990. If these documents are not available, please explain why they are not available.

CHECKLIST

- ☒ Completed Local Tourism Grant Program Application Form.
- ☒ Completed detailed budget form.
- ☒ Promotional materials from past events (not applicable to first time events).
- ☐ Post event summary from past event (not applicable to first time events).
- ☐ Copy of the most recently completed agency audit or explanation of why it is not available.
- ☐ Copy of the most recent Federal Form 990 for the agency or explanation of why it is not available.

Additional Notes, Comments or Explanations:

1. Each season, Chicago Grit will designate a “host hotel” for the series. Usually, the hotel will set aside a discounted block of rooms that will be available to racers as well as for the PSCS staff. For purposes of this application, PSCS commits to utilize a hotel in Lombard for 100% of its 2026 staff hotel needs, which is expected to generate 200+ room nights. (In 2025, PSCS actually booked 223 room nights for its staff and VIPs at the Fairfield Inn in Lombard.) Additionally, we will work closely with the DSC and DCVB to market and promote hotel options in Lombard to our racers through our racer registration process and otherwise. This will create a greater potential for cyclists who are competing in Chicago Grit series to choose to stay in Lombard – a centralized location to many of the races in our 10-day series.
2. A Federal Form 990 is not included with this application because Prairie State is not a tax-exempt organization.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that data in this application are true and correct, the application has been duly authorized by the organization and any funds received under this grant will be used for the purposes described in this application.

Name:	Marco Colbert		
Title or office held:	Exec. Director of Prairie State Cycling Series, LLC	Date:	December 12, 2026

Signature: *Marc Colbert*

Attachments:

- A. Detailed Budget
- B. Bios of Principal Staff of Prairie State Cycling Series
- C. 2025 Lombard Racecourse

**LOCAL TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM
DETAILED BUDGET**

Event: Lombard Cycling Classic

Date: July 21, 2026

Organization: Prairie State Cycling Series, LLC

INCOME: Include an itemized list of all actual (past 2 years) and estimated project revenues (entry fees, gate receipts, food/beverage sales, donations, sponsorships, booth rentals, souvenir sales, other revenues)

ITEMIZED REVENUES	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2025	ANTICIPATED 2026	
Lombard Tourism Grant	\$9,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
LOC income	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Racer entry fee income	\$25,790	\$22,217	\$21,436	\$25,000	
Series sponsor income	\$6,774	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	
Note: the revenues and expenses in this sheet were derived from Prairie State Cycling Series' P&L statements, and reflect the average revenues and expenses for each day of the series in the years reported.					
TOTAL REVENUES	\$41,564	\$34,217	\$35,436	\$40,000	

EXPENSES: Include an itemized list of all actual and estimated project expenses (advertising, supplies, labor, rentals, insurance, materials, entertainment, other expenses)

ITEMIZED EXPENSES	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2025	ANTICIPATED 2026
Staff/event expenses	\$14,963	\$12,904	\$19,424	\$20,000
Prize money to racers	\$7,725	\$6,626	\$5,710	\$5700
Other operating expenses	\$5,839	\$8,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Insurance	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Total Expenses	\$32,527	\$32,530	\$34,134	\$34,700

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS: Include an itemized list of all actual and estimated in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions are non-cash donations, contributions or gifts which can be given a cash value (include Village of Lombard in-kind services, where applicable) A

Estimated value of in-kind contributions: City services

ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2025	ANTICIPATED 2026
\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD
LOCAL TOURISM GRANT – POST EVENT SUMMARY

This post event summary must be completed within 90 days of the event completion. Failure to submit a post-event summary may affect the applicant's ability to receive future grant funds.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization:		Name of event:	
Date of event:		Event location:	
Contact person:		Title:	
Business address:		City & Zip:	
Telephone:		E-mail address:	
Estimated attendance:		Estimated hotel stays:	
Method for estimating attendance:			

- 1) Please summarize the advertising and marketing placed to promote the event. Please attach examples of event marketing pieces, advertisements and attribution given to the Village grant program.

Click here to enter text.

- 2) Provide a general assessment of the event. What were the successes of the event? Are there any concerns or recommendations of changes for future events?

Click here to enter text.

- 3) How did the actual outcomes of the program or event compare to your original expectations? How did the event compare to the proposal and concept as initially presented to the Village?

Click here to enter text.

- 4) Summarize how the program performed from a budgetary standpoint and describe how the program and any proceeds from the event were supportive of the organization, other local groups, initiatives or the community at large.

Click here to enter text.

- 5) Describe your organization's long-term plans for funding this project or event.

Click here to enter text.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit the completed form **within 90 days of the event completion** to Nicole Aranas, Deputy Village Manager, by e-mailing aranasn@villageoflombard.org or returning to 255 E. Wilson Avenue, Lombard, IL 60187.



Bios

Tom Schuler (Partner) - Tom Schuler enjoyed a 10-year career as a professional bicycle racer as a founding member of the 7-Eleven professional cycling team and as a member of the 1980 Olympic Cycling Team. During his career as a professional cyclist, Schuler garnered more than 100 career victories including the 1987 US Pro Road Championship. Tom was inducted into the United States Bicycling Hall of Fame in 2006 and the Wisconsin Bicycling Hall of Fame in 2018.

After retiring from racing, Schuler turned to team management, first as the Assistant GM for the 7-Eleven and Motorola cycling teams, and then forming his own sports management company, Team Sports Inc., in 1992. Team Sports has developed and managed 18 unique professional cycling and triathlon teams and has sent more than 30 athletes to the Olympic Games who have won 6 Olympic Medals. In addition to team management, Team Sports manages cycling events in Wisconsin and the Midwest. Schuler is a founding partner in both the Tour of America's Dairyland in Wisconsin and the Chicago Grit Series in greater Chicago.

Tom and his wife Betsey Caron have 3 adult children and live in Milwaukee Wisconsin.

Marc "Marco" Colbert (Partner) - Marco is the Executive Director and founding partner of the Chicago Grit Series; formerly, he was Associate General Counsel, Bank of America Legal Dept.; Operations Manager, 2005 Advantage Benefits Endeavour Professional Cycling Team; Assistant Manager, Team Type 1 Professional Cycling Team – 2007 to 2009; assistant race director, 2010 USPRO Crit National Championship in Glencoe, IL; assistant race director, 2011 Evanston Grand Prix; and promoter and race director, 2012 Lake Bluff Twilight Criterium. He is a USA Cycling certified national/international level "race director", an avid amateur cyclist and former racer. He was previously Treasurer of the National Association of Professional Race Directors (<http://naprd.org/>) for over five years. In 2020, he became the race director of the Tucson Bicycle Classic stage race in Tucson. Marco and his wife, JoAnne, lived in Lincolnshire, IL for over 30 years and in 2020 they relocated to Tucson, AZ.



COURSE LENGTH: 1.10 KM / 0.68 MI
Tuesday, July 22nd, 2025



ELIZABETH ST

Volunteer
& Kids/Family
Checkin

#3

LINCOLN AV

#5

ST CHARLES RD
MICHAEL MCGUIRE DR

PARKSIDE AV

Lilacia
Park

REGISTRATION
STAGE
EXPO

CHICAGOGRIT

HAMMERSCHMIDT
LOT RIDER PARKING



