

# “Walk-I-Like”

The elevated walkway that adds a new level and new life to the city.



## Introduction

The challenge that I am studying for the Grand Challenge Scholars program is restoring and improving urban infrastructure. To understand a major topic such as infrastructure development as well as to propose and develop and vision for a future solution, I addressed this challenge using entrepreneurial reasoning. To achieve this goal, I participated in the Entrepreneur Scholars Program, E-Scholars. E-Scholars is a one-year program that allows students to create and launch their own business ventures while receiving mentorship. This program consists of 3 entrepreneurship courses which include an introductory, apprenticeship and global entrepreneurship course. I spent my time in this program working on a venture which I named Walk-I-Like. It is an elevated walkway that combines innovative and create designs. Within the structure, I have implemented features that enhance the overall appearance, purpose as well as functionality of the project.

## Executive summary

Walk-I-Like is an elevated walkway structure similar to the Highline in New York City that is built and engineered for the use of pedestrians and cyclists. This structure promotes safety, efficiency and environmental impact. The elevated structure allows pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy a smoother, hassle free commute without interfering with cars, stop lights, signals and busses. At the same time, another one of its goals is reducing pedestrian and cyclists caused traffic incidents and traffic congestion in the city. This walkway is sustainable and aims to

reduce carbon emissions by encouraging carbon free methods of transportation. It also enhances the overall appearance and aesthetics of the city in a large scale and adds a great overall creative and innovative design element.

## Business Venture description

Walk-I-Like includes many beneficial features that can make a positive impact to the city and the environment. Some features that enhance the overall sustainability of the city include solar panels, addition of more greenery, energy generating floor tiles and small scale rain water collection systems. The energy generating floor tiles are able to generate energy once somebody steps on them or runs over them with their bike. The energy from the floor tiles as well as the energy generated by the solar panels will be used to help power the commercial areas of the walkway. The walkway also incorporates green infrastructure and is built upon the concept of sustainable design and building. The rainwater collection system will collect rain and then reuse it to either water the plants or add it to a water feature that only uses collected rainwater to operate. Other features on this structure include a number of mini booths as well as food carts that can be utilized by small business owners, young entrepreneurs and artists who want to share, sell or display their work. There will also be a stage that can be used by performers to entertain the pedestrians in their daily commute and add to the liveliness of the atmosphere. Walk-I-Like generates income that is derived from the booths as well as stage rental area. Since this walkway is designed to be used by both pedestrians and cyclists, cyclists will have their own lanes and the structure will have an area that is designated to be used by cyclists to park their bikes.

With this type of venture and development, we still aim to have a positive relationship with the users of this walkway and our customers. A website with information regarding the walkway, a directory, list of booths that are operating that week, times of booth operation, live performance schedule and a booth rental link will all be available. There will also be a help center on the structure that provides city recommendations for tourists and visitors with a list of interesting places around that are worth a visit in that particular city. The center will help pedestrians navigate their way around the city and become a serve as a resource for tourists and visitors.

With this type of structural development, we will need to identify all critical stakeholders and city officials. We are looking to work with city and urban planners, engineers, construction workers, landscapers as well as the agencies that we will partner with to make this structure possible. Walk-I-Like will primarily be owned by the city who will fund and support this project in the long run. As a result, the cities design standards and regulations must be met at all times. Moreover, the final design, developments and the overall project must be approved by the city before the building and implementation stage

## Market Analysis

This structure is open to the public and can be utilized by everyone. But we are targeting a particular group of individuals with this type of development. The target customers include city dwellers and commuters, cyclists, athletes and residents who enjoy running and exercising in the city, small business owners, young entrepreneurs, artists and performers. These individuals will make up the widest portion of users of this structure as they will either be regularly using this

structure or operating the booths and stage. We also expect tourists and visitors to also use this structure.

At the beginning, we plan to build this structure in a city we are familiar with to see if it will succeed and be utilized the way we want it to. This structure can be designed in many different ways to fit any city, but to start off, in the early stages we will first implement this structure in Portland, Oregon and will expand if we see an increase in the market size in the future. Portland is dedicated to solving problems in sustainable and environmentally friendly approach and has one of the largest bike path networks in the country. It also has the largest number of commuters who cycle relative to its population. Portland bike culture has reduced the negative impact of cars on the climate as well as calmed down increased traffic congestion. To put this into perspective, 7.2% of commuters bike and more than 17,000 people who work choose to cycle in Portland and these numbers keep increasing. Also, 5.7% of workers in Portland walk to work. With that said, the most common mode of commuting is by use of a single van, car or truck which we hope to reduce with a structure like this one. Portland is a great market for small businesses and young entrepreneurs and there are several reasons to why this holds true. The state has no sales tax, while the overall growth of startup in the city is 94% making it high up in the list with great mentorship and a high potential for entrepreneur to obtain opportunities for financing. Furthermore, the economy has been growing by \$10.3 billion due to tourism annually posing a beneficial opportunity for entrepreneurs who own small businesses to grow and attract talented people. At the end of the day, in Portland, an entrepreneur who wishes to start a business in Oregon will easily find employees with great talent and potential. Finally, in Oregon, local and small business are supported more than big brand-named stores

Looking at Portland in terms of city traffic and congestion. The level of traffic and congestion in Portland Oregon has been rising in the past eight years. The strong economy in the region of Southwest Washington and Northwest Oregon is growing which is making the daily commute a traffic nightmare. The traffic conditions for driving reach the worst during the evening and peak morning commute periods. The big improvements in the economy has put more cars and vehicles on the road as people are driving to work, commerce and travel. There has been an increase in 6.3% for vehicles in Portland. Furthermore, the population has grown by 3.0% while there has been a 13.6% increase in the hours of congestion and a 22.6% increase in daily hours of delay for vehicle. Above all that freeway lane miles have only grown by 1%/. Based on the market, it is evident that there is a great opportunity and need for a project like this elevated walkway.

## Competition

With a new venture project, there is always competition between new companies and existing companies. With Walk-I-Like, although there are similar elevated walkway structures in many cities and countries around the globe there is no direct competition as this venture has a positive impact on the city and we want as much people using and utilizing this structure. We would support a similar structure of the same idea and concept as Walk-I-like because we believe this structure will benefit the city and more of these types of structural developments means better. In terms of competition, we are planning to generate income through rental space of the booths and

live stages. In terms of competition, this is where a competition will arise between the small businesses on the structure and the small businesses in the city. As a result, we will discover methods to appeal the small booths and businesses to as much costumers as possible. We will also make sure the booths are appealing to the small business owners and entrepreneurs that may potentially rent them out.

## Team

In order to be designed, executed and built, this project will need a team of individuals that are familiar in different disciplines. The team that will work on this project consists of 15 engineers, 8 city and urban planners, 6 architects, a group of construction workers and several representatives from the city of Portland. Within the team of engineers, there will be engineering project managers, transportation engineers and structural engineers. The engineering managers will manage and overlook the engineers working on the project, while the project managers will manage the overall project. Among the engineers, there will be transportation engineers that will focus on the effect of the construction and design aspects of this structure on existing transport systems. The structural engineers involved in this project will work alongside the architects to solve the more technical problems that are related to the size, shape and appearance of the structure and help the architect in their project vision. The city planners will work with the urban planners to establish the best way to use the cities resources and land and help plan and draft the construction of the elevated walkway. The urban planners will more so work with the city planners to develop this structure and its design keeping in mind the economic, social and environmental impact that it poses. Before moving to the actual construction stage, the city of Portland representatives will be in charge of approving appropriate documentation related to this project in terms of the design, size, features, plans, draft, etc.

## Funding requirements

Since this is a public project that will be built on land owned by the city of Portland, it will be funded by the City of Portland. With this project we are partnering with an engineering firm and forming a public private partnership. Through our public private partnership, a company that works in the private sector and a government agency will both be involved in this project. This collaboration will be used to generate the finances that will be used to operate and build the elevated walkway. We chose to finance this project through this type of partnership because it will make the project a possibility and allow it to be completed faster and sooner. This structure is considered a large-scale government project and we are aiming to get private funding and complete the work within out budget and in time. Since the private sector will be providing the funding, we aim to complete the project in time and within a budget. The funding for this project from our partnership with the private sector will cover the cost needed to pay the engineers and provide them will all the equipment, benefits and required expenses. We expect the government to be in charge of the material costs needed for this building and the construction labor and costs that are associated with this project. All in all, public private partnerships can substantially help economic growth through infrastructure developments.

## Sales Strategies

This venture is not one that can be physically delivered to the consumers and costumers. This venture project is a structure open to the public. We will not be charging individuals who use this structure hence we are not physically selling anything to them. The only thing that they are actually purchasing are items form the booths that are operating on the structure. This venture is a structure which means that it is also not a product that can be sold to a client. Instead, with a venture project like this, the idea and concept can be sold but not in a monetary way. This is a new structural development that will have a positive contribution to the city, so we need to make sure it is successful and appealing to other cities in Portland, or even in cities in other states in general. We want as much cities to implement this structure and get the benefits. But first, in order to do that, we must prove to the other cities that the structure is successful, serves its intended purpose and has a positive long-term effect. If that is the case, we believe that the idea and concept behind this structure can be implemented in nearby cities and from there the idea will spread and expand to further areas.

## Prototype







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