DEPARTMENT OF IRON RANGE RESOURCES & REHABILITATION

Request for Proposals for Giants Ridge Management Agreement
Final Questions & Answers – Due 10/21/26

The following are answers from the Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation (IRRR) to the final questions submitted by responders on or before 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2026. For reference purposes, the following questions are numbered 1-78.

Question 1. Who is responsible for funding the resort's working capital, including opening inventory, supplies, equipment, payroll, daily cash needs, and any operating shortfalls? Is this all funded by IRRR? Will the bank accounts be set up to be managed by the operator?

IRRR Answer: The operator will manage Giants Ridge within the approved annual budget, with capital expenditures incorporated into that budget. IRRR will reimburse the management company for authorized expenses as they are incurred and properly documented. Operating bank accounts will be established and managed by the operator.

Question 2. Will the selected operator be the employer of record for Giants Ridge employees? If so, are employee salaries, benefits, payroll taxes, workers' compensation, accrued PTO, and other employment costs fully funded or reimbursed by IRRR? The RFP states that operator is responsible for personnel hiring, but it is unclear whether IRRR reimburses salaries/benefits or whether these must be funded from the management fee?

IRRR Answer: Yes. All expenses are reimbursable including employee-related expenses.

Question 3. Are historical Profit & Loss statements available?

IRRR Answer: Yes, they can be found at the following link:
Click here to view Profit & Loss statements.

Question 4. Are all operating assets owned by Giants Ridge/IRRR? If the current management contract is not renewed, will the current operator be taking any equipment or other assets with them?

IRRR Answer: All assets are owned by IRRR and will remain with the facility.

Question 5. Can you provide details on the current point-of-sale set-up, including the provider and any related agreements?

IRRR Answer: Accesso Paradox for mountain recreation and Lightspeed for restaurants and golf operations.

Question 6. Can you provide loss runs and details of any open or known claims for the past five years?

IRRR Answer: Not applicable. Information is maintained by the current management company.

Question 7. Is the selected operator expected to make any upfront capital contribution, fund capital improvements, purchase or replace equipment with its own capital, or provide any minimum capital investment during the term?

IRRR Answer: No, all capital improvements are funded by IRRR.

Question 8. Please clarify the funding and reimbursement mechanics for approved capital expenditures, equipment purchases and replacements, opening inventory, transition costs, and operating shortfalls, including whether the selected operator will be required to advance funds or guarantee any obligations.

IRRR Answer: Since IRRR reimburses costs, the operator will initially fund expenses as they are incurred. IRRR will reimburse the operator for approved and properly documented expenditures.

Question 9. Is there a required operating reserve, security deposit, letter of credit, performance bond, or other financial commitment from the operator at commencement?

IRRR Answer: No.

Question 10. Regarding the optional lodging-management scope, who is the current lodging operator or manager, and when does its contract expire?

IRRR Answer: The onsite lodging properties are currently owned and operated by private entities. For this RFP, we want proposers to describe their experience managing lodging facilities.

Question 11. Would IRRR consider adjusting the criteria or adding a fifth criterion that evaluates each proposal's expected contribution to the goals outlined in the RFP?

IRRR Answer: IRRR will not be adjusting evaluation criteria.

Question 12. Please describe any operational or infrastructure constraints that significantly limit, or in recent years have limited, Giants Ridge's ability to maximize visitation.

IRRR Answer: There are no operational or infrastructure constraints limiting visitation.

Question 13. Please outline the lodging capacity of the units located on Giants Ridge property that are regularly rented to visitors and explain current IRRR prioritization of future lodging development.

IRRR Answer: The Lodge at Giants Ridge: 67 condominium units.
The Villas at Giants Ridge: approximately 35-40 units.
See websites for additional information.

Question 14. Please list off-property lodging capacity of nearby facilities.

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have that information.

Question 15. Please describe any recent discussions with on-property or off-property lodging facilities for integration of those units into a central reservations service operated by Giants Ridge/Management Company.

IRRR Answer: There have not been any recent discussions.

Question 16. What POS systems are used at Giants Ridge and specify which departments?

IRRR Answer: Accesso Paradox for mountain recreation and Lightspeed for restaurants and golf operations.

Question 17. What accounting system is used at Giants Ridge (e.g. QuickBooks)?

IRRR Answer: Sage Intacct

Question 18. Please list the employees in Giants Ridge's accounting and finance department(s) and outline their roles and reporting structure.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Giants Ridge Organizational Chart

Question 19. Specify any discounts that Giants Ridge provides to local or regional residents on lift tickets or other products and services and if offered, how "local" or "regional" resident is defined?

IRRR Answer: Programs vary by season and activity. See Giants Ridge website for more information.

Question 20. Describe any advance-purchase discounts or multi-day discounts offered on lift tickets for 2026-27 or the previous two years.

IRRR Answer: See Giants Ridge website for information related to 2026-2027 season rates.

Question 21. Please share annual paid visitation levels (excluding season pass visits) by recreation category (e.g. alpine ski, mountain bike, golf, cross-country ski, pool/spa facility) for the past 10 years and projected paid visitation levels for 2026-27.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Visitation Statistics.

Question 22. How many alpine season passes were sold (and how many were issued to employees, IRRR staff, volunteers like NSP or distributed as complimentary passes to stakeholders) for each of the five previous years and how many visits did these paid (and unpaid) season passes generate each of the past five years?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Season Pass Statistics.

Question 23. Please provide alpine learning and lesson student counts and annual ski school revenue for each of the past five years.

IRRR Answer: In FY24, ski school conducted 751 lessons generating $60,166 in revenue, and in FY25, it conducted 769 lessons generating $78,930 in revenue.

Question 24. Please provide a copy of the Marketing Plan and Marketing Budget for 2026-27, 2025-26 and 2024-25.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Marketing Plan. The marketing budget for FY27 is $900,000. The budgets for FY26 and FY25 were $650,000 each.

Question 25. Please provide a summary of actual Marketing Expenditures by marketing category for 2025-26 and 2024-25 if not already included in financial statements provided to respondents.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Financial Statements.

Question 26. Please outline the full-time and part-time employees in marketing, sales and/or public relations and their primary roles.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Organizational Chart.

Question 27. Please identify each outside agency or firm used for marketing, sales, or public relations in 2024-25 and 2025-26, as well as those planned for 2026-27. For each, describe its role and services and provide the amount paid or expected to be paid in each year.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Marketing Plan.

Question 28. What email platform does Giants Ridge use?

IRRR Answer: Microsoft Office 365 Outlook.

Question 29. What ecommerce platform does Giants Ridge use?

IRRR Answer: Accesso Paradox.

Question 30. Describe how customer phone calls are answered and whether they are handled by a centralized customer service staff for all departments or routed to individual departments.

IRRR Answer: Incoming calls are received through the main Giants Ridge phone line and routed via calling tree to the appropriate department or the Guest Services desk.

Question 31. Please list future approved or planned capital projects over the next five years, assuming a favorable funding outlook and anticipated timing and relative priorities for such projects.

IRRR Answer: Approved: Legend Golf Course Renovation. Planned: Legend maintenance building relocation (1-2 years). Planning for other projects listed in the Giants Ridge master plan is ongoing.

Question 32. Please provide a list and total costs by project for Giants Ridge capital projects for the last five years.

IRRR Answer: The list can be found at the following link:
Click here to view Giants Ridge project information.

Question 33. Please provide a copy of the Guest Services management contract.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Management Agreement and Amendments.

Question 34. Please share annual fees paid to Guest Services for each of the past five years.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Financial Statements.

Question 35. Please share annual reimbursements to Guest Services for travel or other out-of-pocket costs for each of the past five years.

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have that information.

Question 36. Please share the estimated number of annual onsite visits by Guest Services for each of the last five years, the average number of such staff visiting and the average length (full-day equivalents) of such visits.

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have that information.

Question 37. Regarding the fourth bullet under Section 2.2 Optional Responsibilities and Future Considerations, what is the golf course management company's role with the Legend Golf Course renovation, and what additional compensation, if any, will it receive?

IRRR Answer: Current role of golf course management company is that of a project advisor. No additional compensation is being provided related to the project.

Question 38. Regarding the third bullet under Section 2.2 Optional Responsibilities and Future Considerations, if IRRR hires a new management company with substantial experience managing capital projects like those planned for Giants Ridge, would IRRR expect that company to play a major role in managing those projects? If so, should the Respondent's proposal include a fee structure for those services?

IRRR Answer: IRRR will lead and manage all major capital projects. Capital projects that are allocated as part of the yearly budget are managed by the operator.

Question 39. Please provide event calendars for the last two ski seasons and for 2026-27 focusing on non-competition events designed to attract destination overnight visitors.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Giants Ridge Events.

Question 40. Please provide current organizational chart for Giants Ridge, with heads, assistant heads, hierarchy and reporting relationships.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Organizational Chart.

Question 41. Please specify any vacancies in key management or skilled positions like mechanics or marketing staff.

IRRR Answer: See Giants Ridge website for current vacancies at the facility.

Question 42. Please provide planned operating days and hours for 2026-27 winter and summer operations and explain any significant changes from 2025-26.

IRRR Answer: No significant changes for upcoming season. See Giants Ridge website for additional information related to hours of operation.

Question 43. Please list the dates of major ski races or other alpine competitions for the 2026-27 season and expected paid skier visits per day.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Giants Ridge Events.

Question 44. Please provide a copy of Guest Services' Proposal submitted ~9 years ago and describe the transition plan implemented at the beginning of its tenure.

IRRR Answer: IRRR did not retain that information pursuant to its approved Records Retention Schedule.

Question 45. If not shown in the financial statement information provided to respondents, please provide annual maintenance budgets for each category listed in Section 2.3.6.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: FY27 Repairs and Maintenance Budget.

Question 46. Golf course management company.

a. Please provide a copy of the current management company contract.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Golf Course Subcontract.

b. Please share annual compensation paid to such management company for the past 10 years.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Golf Course Subcontract.

c. Please share annual reimbursements to management company for travel or other out of pocket costs for past 10 years.

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have that information.

d. What tasks, if any, are completed offsite by the management company or contractors hired by the management company?

IRRR Answer: Agronomy support, payroll processing for directly contracted staff, marketing, procurement support and general operational guidance.

e. Estimated visits per year to Giants Ridge by management company staff for the last five years.

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have that information.

Question 47. What is the remaining term of the golf course management contract?

IRRR Answer: Current subcontract with golf course management firm aligns with the expiration of the current operator's agreement.

Question 48. Is the golf course management company paid from funds reimbursed by IRRR or is its fee paid out of Guest Services' fee?

IRRR Answer: Paid out of current operator's fee.

Question 49. Please describe agronomy specialists employed by Giants Ridge and agronomy services provided by the golf course management company.

IRRR Answer: Staff in current positions are qualified. The golf course management firm provides support as it relates to general agronomy concerns and helps develop annual agronomy plans for both golf courses.

Question 50. Please provide detailed annual financial statements for Giants Ridge for the past 10 years including sales and costs by recreation category and/or department.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Financial Statements.

Question 51. Please provide the starting wages for entry level seasonal positions for 2026-27 and whether those wage levels are lower, on par or higher than similar positions in the area. The estimated levels shared on the tour seem lower than other ski areas and we are concerned that Giants Ridge will not be able to hire seasonal staff with the requisite skills without raising wage levels – please comment.

IRRR Answer: The current entry-level starting wage is $15 per hour. In the past Giants Ridge has been successful in filling seasonal positions at that rate. There are higher starting rates for jobs that require additional skills and experience. Future increases to the starting wage for entry level positions are being considered.

Question 52. Please summarize the benefits and package for year-round employees, including the 401(k)-match structure, health care deductibles and copay percentages, and the average out-of-pocket cost per employee for Giants Ridge.

IRRR Answer: Information not available as it is private data of the current operator.

Question 53. What perks do year-round and seasonal employees receive such as free season passes and discounts on food and beverage and retail?

IRRR Answer: **Please visit the Giants Ridge website to find information related to this question in current job postings.**

Question 54. Please share any templates for setting staffing levels based on expected visitation levels or other factors.

IRRR Answer: **No templates exist.**

Question 55. Please list the annual operating subsidy for each of the past 10 years and the projected operating subsidy for 2026-27.

IRRR Answer: **See attachment: Financial Statements.**

Question 56. Please provide an estimate of how much golf revenue will be lost each of the next two years due to the renovation closure of the Legend Golf Course.

IRRR Answer: **$587,000 has been budgeted for lost Legend golf revenue in FY27.**

Question 57. What is the anticipated timetable, if any, for a similar renovation of the Quarry Golf Course over the next 10 years or so?

IRRR Answer: **Construction is likely to commence in seven years.**

Question 58. Staff Retention & Corporate Boundaries: Which current operational, administrative, and management positions are tied directly to the Giants Ridge asset versus centrally employed by Guest Services, Inc., and what mechanism is in place to ensure facility-level staff stay on-site through the transition?

IRRR Answer: **Staff currently employed at the facility work for Giants Ridge and are not considered part of the corporate management structure. Most of the current staff live in the area. There are no guarantees that all staff will remain through the transition.**

Question 59. Key Personnel & Institutional Knowledge: Can the agency provide a roster of key department heads (golf superintendents, lift maintenance supervisors, F&B directors) and their tenure, and are they currently under retention agreements or subject to corporate relocation upon contract termination?

IRRR Answer: **See attachment: Organizational Chart.**
Current staff are qualified for the positions they hold and are not subject to retention or relocation agreements.

Question 60. Transition Mechanics & Liabilities: How will the transition of active payroll, employee files, and accrued benefits (such as paid time off or sick leave) be handled between the outgoing operator and incoming operator to prevent workforce disruption during an active operating season?

IRRR Answer: These concerns could be addressed during the one-month overlap period of the operating agreements.

Question 61. Compensation & Perks Structure: What does the complete current compensation and perk package look like across full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees – to ensure the operator remains competitive in the local labor market and fair to the team?

IRRR Answer: The question asks for a subjective response that cannot be provided.

Question 62. Skier Visit Volume & Data: What are the historical total skier visits over the past three to five operating seasons? If possible, broken down by category day tickets and season passholder visits.

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Visitation Statistics.

Question 63. Effective Ticket Yield & Pricing Models: What is the historical average lift revenue per skier visit?

IRRR Answer: Average alpine ski revenue per skier visit was $36.62 in FY25, $34.04 in FY24 and $31.41 in FY23.

Question 64. Season Pass Concentration & Retention: What is the total unit volume, revenue contribution, and historical renewal rate for season passes, including a breakdown across tier types (adult, family, mid-week, senior/junior)?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Season Pass Statistics.

Question 65. 12-month P&L & General Balance Sheet: Can the agency provide a multi-year departmental P&L statement that clearly separates gross revenues, direct operating expenses, and net operating margins between winter operations and summer operations (with summer further isolated by golf versus mountain/bike/lodging)?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Financial Statements.

Question 66. Centralized Overhead vs. Direct Costs: What portion of the historical operating expenses represents centralized corporate overhead, management fees, or shared administrative allocations from the outgoing operator versus direct, facility-level site costs?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Financial Statements.

Question 67. What specific capitalization and working capital commitments are required from the incoming management group upon transition? Specifically, does the agency provide an initial operating cash float or reserve to ensure a smooth operational handover, or is the operator expected to fully fund all pre-season ramp-up, payroll, and cash flow troughs out of pocket prior to revenue realization or reimbursement?

IRRR Answer: IRRR will reimburse the management company for authorized expenses as they are incurred and properly documented.

Question 68. How are capital improvement projects (like the recent golf course or snowmaking investments) funded year-over-year, and what portion of deferred or routine maintenance is passed directly to the operating account versus covered by agency capital?

IRRR Answer: IRRR will collaborate with the management company to prepare, establish and fund the operating budget and capital plans for Giants Ridge.

Question 69. What does the current management fee and incentive structure look like, and what preference does IRRR have on performance-based models versus flat fee models?

IRRR Answer: See the attached Management Agreement for the first part of the question. IRRR has no specific preference regarding the fee model.

Question 70. Where have previous operators experienced the most friction with the IRRR regarding fast-acting operational decisions, chain of communication, or emergency maintenance spending?

IRRR Answer: The question asks for a subjective response that cannot be provided.

Question 71. Golf Play Volume & Utilization: What are the historical round counts, utilization rates, and shoulder-month traffic curves for The Legend and The Quarry over the past three to five seasons?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Visitation Statistics.

Question 72. Golf Yield & Ancillary Spend: What is the average green fee yield per round, and what are the corresponding per-player ancillary spend metrics across pro shop merchandise, club rentals, lessons, and clubhouse dining/beverage?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Green Fee Revenue Per Round.

Question 73. Mountain Bike & Adventure Volume: What are the total historical lift-served mountain bike visits, scenic chairlift rides, and alternative summer activity volumes (such as hiking or climbing wall access), and what percentage of those users are season passholders versus day-ticket buyers?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: Visitation Statistics.

Question 74. Summer Operating Expenses (Golf): Can the agency provide a detailed P&L expense breakdown for golf operations, isolating turf maintenance labor, agronomy inputs (seed, fertilizer, water, chemicals), and equipment lease/maintenance costs?

IRRR Answer: See attachment: FY27 Repairs and Maintenance Budget.

Question 75. Summer Operating Expenses (Mountain/Trails): What are the direct operational and maintenance cost structures for the mountain bike trail network, lift operations during summer hours, and non-golf guest amenities?

IRRR Answer: Payroll, repair and maintenance, and general operating expenses support these operations.

Question 76. Marketing Strategy & Channel Mix: What does the current annual marketing strategy and channel mix look like – specifically regarding digital acquisition, regional feeder markets (such as the Twin Cities), and the relative budget allocation and ROI between winter ski promotions and summer golf/bike campaigns?

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have any responsive information to provide.

Question 77. Customer Demographics & Target Segments: What comprehensive demographic data exists for core visitor segments across winter (skier/passholder) and summer (golf/mountain bike), and what are the primary target markets or untapped demographics the agency expects a new operator to capture?

IRRR Answer: Accesso Paradox provides sales data segmented by age group, customer location and product mix percentages. The agency will expect the operator to make these determinations.

Question 78. Past Successes and Failures: What major marketing initiatives, promotional partnerships, or operational strategies have proven most successful over the past three to five seasons, and conversely, what significant campaigns, pricing models, or market expansions failed to yield results or were subsequently abandoned?

IRRR Answer: IRRR does not have any responsive information to provide.