



# **CITY OF LA PORTE**

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

*for*

# **CLEAR LAKE SUB-AREA PLAN**

*Prepared by the City of La Porte*

*Department of Community Development & Planning*

## 1. PROPOSAL DUE DATE AND SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

**Project Summary:** The City of La Porte is requesting proposals from multi-disciplinary urban planning and engineering firms or teams of firms interested in providing consulting services for the preparation of the Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan.

**RFP Issued:** Friday, May 31, 2019

**RFP Deadline:** Friday, June 28, 2019

**Finalist Interviews:** Tentatively scheduled for the week of July 15, 2019

### **Submit To:**

Beth Shrader, Director  
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**Number of Copies:** 7 hard copies and one digital copy

## 2. OVERVIEW

### A. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

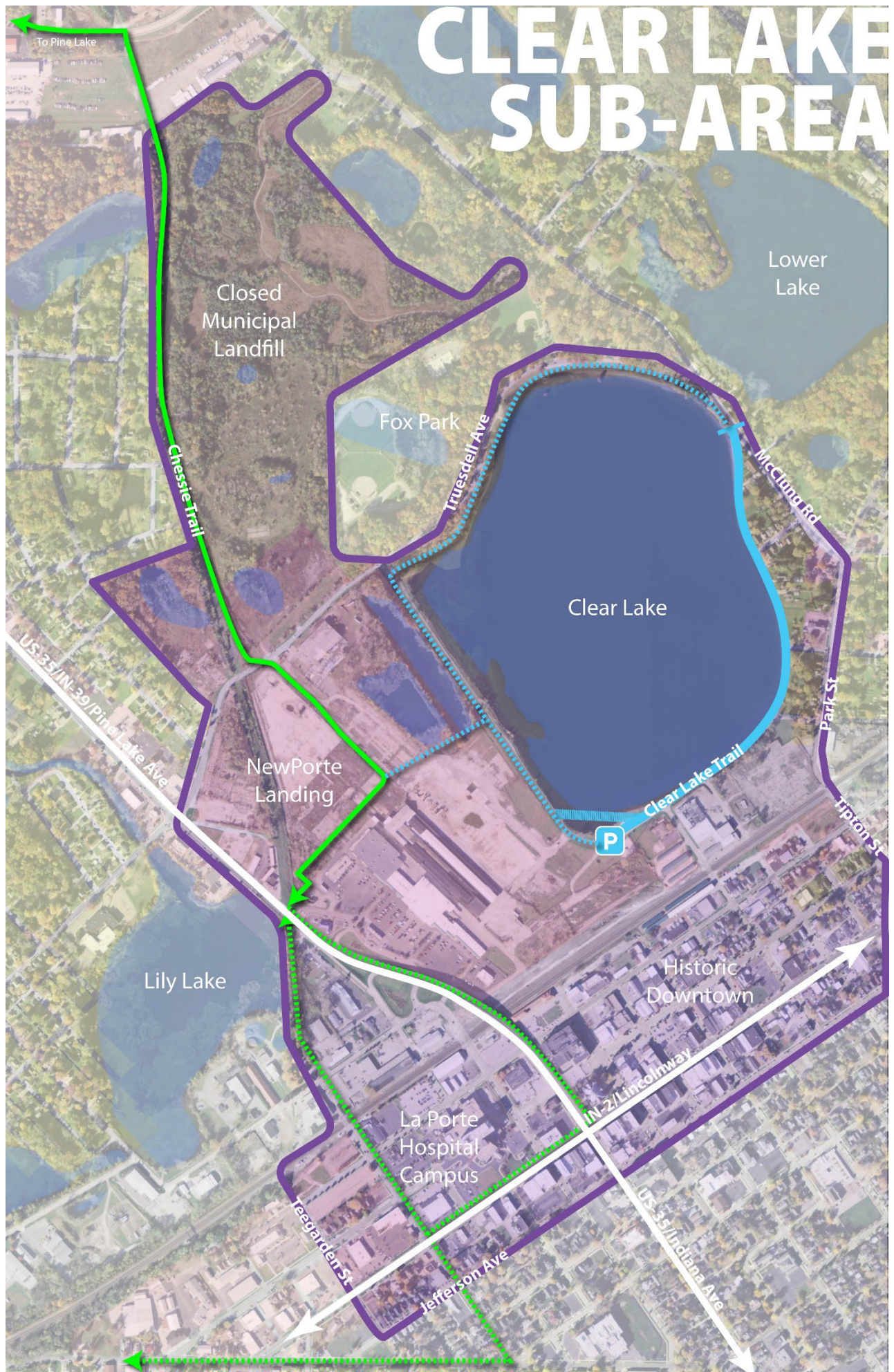
The City of La Porte is the county seat of LaPorte County, Indiana. Our city's population is just under 22,000, and together with Michigan City, Indiana, forms the Michigan City-La Porte MSA, which is part of the greater Chicago statistical area. Although it is surrounded by low density agricultural and residential land uses, La Porte itself is a relatively dense community, built largely on a series of intersecting grids with short blocks and sidewalks. Because of our grid network of streets and sidewalks, La Porte has the potential to be a very walkable and bikeable community.

La Porte is a 1.5-hour drive from downtown Chicago and 20-minute drive to shores of Lake Michigan. Four state or national highways run through the City's downtown, US-35, IN-2, IN-39, and IN-4, as do a busy freight rail line. La Porte has one vehicular rail overpass carrying US-35 and IN-39 over the tracks with another vehicular overpass at Park/Tipton Streets to be constructed within the next four years. The city is currently working with LaPorte County to explore the construction of a north-south connector highway to divert truck traffic away from downtown La Porte while continuing to serve the community's industrial parks. The city will explore relinquishment the national and state highways within La Porte's core as a part of the development of this north-south corridor.

La Porte has five lakes with public access and 16 parks spread over 860 acres. Chief among these is Fox Park, which includes Clear Lake, ball fields, a skate park, walking trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and an outdoor amphitheater. Fox Park is adjacent to NewPorte Landing and within a half-mile of downtown. The newest park is La Porte's first 1.5 miles of the Chessie



# CLEAR LAKE SUB-AREA





Trail, a multi-use trail connecting Pine Lake to NewPorte Landing. The next leg of the Chessie Trail crossing south into downtown and west toward the fairgrounds is set for construction in 2021. The trail is envisioned to extend north into Michigan City, eventually connecting to other regional and state visionary trails and to Lake Michigan.

Downtown La Porte is home to the county courthouse and other municipal government offices, La Porte Hospital, and a revitalizing business district. The downtown core is made up of many Victorian-era commercial buildings, causing it to be recognized as a national register historic district. The downtown has a Business Improvement District which oversees maintenance of public improvements and a Historic Design Standards Committee which ensures private investments retain the historic character to the greatest extent possible. The downtown and NewPorte Landing are overlapped by both a TIF district and an Urban Enterprise Zone which make strategic investments in the redevelopment of these areas, including an active façade program, business grants, and the recent construction of a downtown plaza.

NewPorte Landing is a redevelopment project transforming the site of a former tractor-implement factory and major community employer Allis-Chalmers, which closed in 1983. For the past twenty-five years, the city and its redevelopment commission have worked to purchase land, conduct environmental studies, perform remediation activities, and install infrastructure to aid redevelopment for commercial, residential, and recreational uses. Within the past five years, a Dunkin' and Starbucks have located in the development and construction is planned in 2019-2020 for a 200 unit mixed-use residential project, a medical-use commercial building, and two trailheads as well as major environmental remediation along the western shoreline of Clear Lake.

## **B. PREVIOUS VISIONING**

Over the past 15 years, there have been several plans whose scope overlaps this Sub-Area Plan and should be consulted in the development of the Plan.

- [Youth Council Downtown and Lakes Plan \(2018\)](#)
- [Park Department Five-Year Master Plan \(2018\)](#)
- [Gateway Corridor Revitalization Plan \(2015\)](#)
- [La Porte Trails & Greenways Plan \(2014\)](#)
- [Countywide Land Development Plan \(2011\)](#)
- [La Porte Downtown Action Agenda \(2006\)](#)

Overall, the plans reflect a priority for investing in our downtown core, parks, and lakes and improving non-motorized connections between these priority areas.

Other relevant studies, standards, and ordinances:

- [City of La Porte Wayfinding Sign System \(2018\)](#)
- [City of La Porte Zoning Code \(2017 update\)](#)
- [La Porte Hospital's Community Health Needs Assessment \(2016\)](#)
- [NewPorte Landing Design Standards \(2016\)](#)
- [Complete Street Ordinance \(2015\)](#)
- [Downtown Design Standards \(2007\)](#)

### **C. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The City is looking for a qualified firm or team of firms to manage the development of a Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan. The planning area is centered around Clear Lake and its vicinity including NewPorte Landing and a portion of downtown. The Sub-Area Plan is funded with \$200,000 from the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte and \$50,000 from the Redevelopment Commission. The main purpose for the Sub-Area Plan is to create destinations to drive active living in NewPorte Landing, Clear Lake, and downtown and build infrastructure to support it.

In addition to a cohesive vision for the Clear Lake Sub-Area, the Plan will identify several key infrastructure projects within the planning area and prepare up to 30% construction documents and an engineer's estimate of cost in preparation to seek funding for those projects. It is expected that these projects will include at least the completion of the Clear Lake Loop Trail, a pedestrian rail overpass, and typical plans and cross-sections for Lincolnway and State St through downtown assuming relinquishment of IN-2, IN-39, and US-35 from the state. As a part of the healthy living focus, the plan and key projects will serve to enhance the city's green infrastructure in coordination with our new stormwater district. Finally, a long-term maintenance plan must be conceived for the proposed key projects that will fit into the city's existing asset management plans.

### **3. PROJECT COMPLETION SCHEDULE**

The project schedule should enable final adoption of the Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan by August 2020, complete with 30% construction documents. It is expected that the consultant team will be able to formally begin work on the project in August 2019, with completion of a draft plan by March 2020. The project schedule must include provisions for a few public meetings as outlined further in the Scope of Work. The consultant shall provide a detailed schedule of work built around these target dates and shall inform the City if schedule modifications are recommended.

### **4. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

#### **a. Community Involvement**

The consultant will work with City of La Porte staff to ensure an appropriate level of community involvement including at least the following:

- Facilitate small group meetings or interviews with local stakeholder groups, specifically the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, La Porte Hospital, the LaPorte County YMCA, the Business Improvement District, the Urban Enterprise Association, La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership (LEAP), the Redevelopment Commission, the Tree Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, and Downtown La Porte's Mainstreet;
- Create and manage of one or more web-based surveys to be distributed via email, the city website, and social media to help increase community participation;
- Employ specific strategies to engage low-income, people of color, non- English-speaking, senior, and youth residents of the community;
- Prepare promotional materials to help drive community involvement, including content for Facebook posts and the city's website, handouts for local businesses, press releases; and

- Lead at least two community meetings during the preparation of the Sub-Area Plan. The Consultant will also prepare large format graphics and presentation materials for the meetings, as well as meeting summaries immediately following each meeting.

## **b. City Staff Team Coordination**

The Consultant will lead bimonthly progress meetings either in person or via conference call/web presentation with city staff, with additional check-ins as needed.

## **c. Inventory & Analysis**

**I. Inventory of Existing Conditions.** Use GIS and CAD data from city and county departments and other sources to map and quantify existing conditions in project area including:

- Zoning
- Land use with detailed residential breakdown by type
- Vacant properties
- Environmental conditions
- Vehicular circulation
- Non-motorized circulation
- Impermeable and permeable surfaces
- Public vs private land
- Water and sewer infrastructure
- Topography (requires consultant to convert most recent LIDAR to contours for CAD and GIS)
- Environmental conditions
- Assessed value
- Owner-occupied vs. rental residential

On a broader, community-wide scale, compile demographic and economic data that will influence decision-making in the project area:

- Demographics—age, race, income, employment status, disability status, etc.
- Economic data necessary to estimate economic impact of sub-area plan implementation

Final GIS maps must be packaged as .MPK file and provided to city staff. Other data will be formatted in a user-friendly way in the final plan document.

**II. Analysis of Existing Condition.** Summarize what the physical, demographic, and economic conditions mean for future development within the project area. For economic conditions, prepare a “no build” outlook at five and ten years out to compare against estimated economic impact of preferred plan scenarios’ implementation.

**III. SWOT Analysis.** Prepare preliminary SWOT to be discussed and amended with input from stakeholder groups.

#### **d. Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan**

The Sub-Area Plan will address the project area in a comprehensive way, considering at least the following:

**I. Public Space.** Propose design alternatives for public spaces throughout the project area including:

- Passive and active recreation around Clear Lake and other areas as identified through public process;
- Public spaces that make active living the easy and fun choice;
- Public spaces that will compliment and encourage increased private development;
- Adequate public parking for existing and proposed uses based on actual need.

**II. Land Use.** Propose alternatives for areas within project area targeted for:

- New mixed-use use residential;
- New multi-family residential;
- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings for upper level residential;
- A mix of affordable and market-rate residential options; and
- Commercial and institutional uses aligned with recreation and residential uses.

Alternatives must consider underlying environmental issues and costs associated with remediation to commercial or residential standards.

**III. Circulation.** Propose corresponding alternatives for a cohesive vehicular and non-motorized system of circulation prioritizing an interconnected network of sidewalks, bike lanes, and off-road trails in line with Trails and Greenways Plan and Complete Streets Ordinance that makes non-motorized transportation the preferred choice within and around the project area.

**IV. Public Infrastructure.** Utilizing base information provided by the City, the Sub-Area Plan will evaluate the existing infrastructure serving the project area and determine, based on recommended land uses, what additional improvements may be needed to serve the future population.

**V. Sustainability.** Ensure long-term sustainability of public infrastructure in the broadest sense by employing best management practices for stormwater, energy use, and biodiversity; designing for continued economic development; and strategizing a maintenance plan that is practical and affordable into the future.

**VI. Economic Impact Analysis.** Model preferred land use scenarios' economic impact at five and ten years out from implementation to educate the community about the potential economic benefit the area might see as a result of different development options and to generate community buy-in.

**VII. Implementation and Financing Strategy.** Based on the recommendations in the Sub-Area Plan and planning-level cost estimates of key projects, develop an implementation and financing strategy that includes at least a master list of projects, associated costs, potential funding sources, responsible parties, and timeline.

**e. Key Project Identification and Design**

Once a draft Sub-Area Plan for Clear Lake is complete, the consultant will assist in the identification of several key projects and advance the design for these through 30% construction documentation. The goal of the 30% documents is to advance the design of catalytic projects to a level where the city has a high level of confidence in the constructability of the project and the cost for implementation. We hope to use these documents to make targeted requests from federal, state, local and private funders. We plan to build on the 30% documents in-house or through a consultant to produce a final set of bid documents.

We expect to select approximately six (6) key projects, three of which shall be a loop trail around Clear Lake, a pedestrian overpass of the railroad tracks to link downtown with NewPorte Landing, and typical plans and section/elevations for Lincolnway and State St in downtown La Porte. Additional projects may include recreation areas around Clear Lake, public plazas, or parking areas.

In addition to the 30% construction documents, the consultant shall assist the city to select up to twelve (12) views of key projects and render them for promotional purposes. These renderings may be plans, elevations, or perspectives, depending on the project type.

**f. Work Products:**

The consultant shall submit:

- Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan: twenty (20) bound hard copies and one (1) electronic copy in press-quality PDF and original Word or InDesign file;
- One (1) electronic copy of all spatial data developed for this project packaged into an ArcGIS map package file (or multiple map package files as necessary);
- Two (2) hard copies (one mounted on hardboard backing) and one (1) electronic copy (in press quality Adobe PDF format) of all large format display graphics; and
- CAD files for 30% construction documentation and one (1) PDF copy of the full plan set.

**5. ADDITIONAL DETAILS FOR CONSIDERATION**

This section describes several issues of concern to the City. It is offered so that the consultant can understand where the City thinks emphasis should be placed. This is not an exhaustive list.

**A. User Friendly Documents**

It is expected that the Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan will be a well-organized user-friendly document that clearly establishes the framework for development of the planning area. The City desires the consultant to produce a document that will be highly easy for City staff to administer; and for the public, elected officials, and granting agencies to understand and apply. The Plan should be a concise and lively document that people will want to read, and it should be illustrated by pictures, figures, and tables, as necessary to engage the La Porte community.



30% construction drawings should employ good layer management and organization so that city staff or consulting engineers can build upon the documents to prepare them for bidding.

### **B. Familiarity of Consultant Team with La Porte**

The selection committee will look favorably on consultant teams that include a firm or firms who have recently done work for the City of La Porte and whose office is within 60 miles of the city.

## **6. PROPOSAL FORMAT**

Proposals should be organized in the following sequence and be no longer than 20 pages (40 front to back).

- Cover letter
- Statement of understanding of assignment
- Proposed tasks
- Proposed subcontracting and work scope for each sub-consultant
- Proposed public participation program with roles and responsibilities
- Project schedule/timeline by task and task sequencing (chart format)
- Cost proposal by task and total cost
- Consultant staff assignments and level of involvement of principals
- Discussion of availability of assigned staff
- Previous experience of firms and assigned employees on projects similar to the Clear Lake Sub-Area Plan and Key Projects
- Distance impacts - discussion of how distance (for consultants more than 60-miles from La Porte) will be mitigated during project and effects on fees and project approach
- Consultant concerns or alternative approaches
- Consultant expectations of City staff
- Statement of agreement to standard city consulting contract and insurance requirements

## **7. SELECTION PROCESS**

Following receipt of proposals, City staff will complete an initial review. Each proposal will then be evaluated and rated by a team of City staff members using the criteria shown below. If appropriate, the highest scoring proposals will be interviewed in order to complete the evaluation process and a recommendation to the Redevelopment Commission.

### **Evaluation Criteria Weight**

1. Relevant background and experience of lead consultant firm and assigned employees. **(10)**
2. Kind and extent of involvement in project by firm's principal(s) **(5)**
3. Relevant background and experience of sub-consultant firms and assigned employees **(10)**
4. Previous experience of consultant and sub-consultants in Northwest Indiana and the greater Chicago region **(5)**
5. Understanding of proposal and City's desired areas of emphasis **(30)**
6. Time schedule **(10)**
7. Creativity and problem solving provided in proposal **(20)**

8. Public involvement program (5)
9. Capability of firm to complete all required tasks (5)

**Total Points Possible (100)**

**9. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Documents referenced in this RFP are linked in line and available on the city's website here:  
<https://www.cityoflaporte.com/129/Community-Development-Planning>

All requests for information should be made to:

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