

# East Bay Charter Township US-31 Corridor Economic Improvement Visioning & Community Engagement



## Request for Proposals

### 1. Introduction

East Bay Charter Township, in Grand Traverse County, Michigan, is requesting written proposals from consultants interested in assisting the Township in the development of an implementable vision for public investments and revitalization of a section of the U.S. 31 corridor in East Bay Township (The East Bay Beach District). The consultant will facilitate stakeholder and community engagement sessions, develop conceptual design renderings for public infrastructure improvements and advise on the engineering feasibility of these improvements, and work with willing property owners to develop a vision for two to three (2-3) sites that could be redeveloped to maximize mixed use opportunities and offer quasi-public “third” spaces and placemaking amenities. The consultant will also provide the Township with an implementable action plan for the corridor that details goals, actions, timeline, responsible party, and achievable financing mechanisms.

### 2. Submittal Requirements

Sealed submittals marked “East Bay Beach District Visioning” must be delivered to East Bay Charter Township, 1965 N Three Mile Road no later than 5:00 pm, **Thursday, October 12, 2023.**

Any questions concerning this RFP are to be directed to:

Claire Karner, Director of Planning & Zoning  
1965 N Three Mile Road Traverse City, MI 49696  
P: (231) 947-8681 x2  
E: [ckarner@eastbaytwp.org](mailto:ckarner@eastbaytwp.org)

One (1) electronic copy or one (1) printed copy with a flash drive of the proposal must be received via email, mail or hand delivery at the address listed above not later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, October 12. Each proposal must be clearly marked on the email subject line or outside envelope with "East Bay Beach District Visioning". The Township may choose not to accept any RFP submittal by any method other than stated in the RFP. The Township reserves the right to cancel or modify this solicitation at any time if it deems, in its sole discretion, that such measures are in the Township’s best interest.

### 3. Project Description and Background

The East Bay Beach District has long been identified as a priority district in the Township, in need of an actionable framework for placemaking, safety improvements, and public infrastructure investment. The recently adopted 2023 Community Master Plan identifies a series of priorities for this corridor, including improved pedestrian amenities, better access to East Grand Traverse Bay, enhanced tree canopy and preservation of iconic white pines, and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties. Future improvements should be rooted in resiliency and green infrastructure best practices, facilitate improved safe connections to corridor destinations,

the Grand Traverse Bay waterfront, and surrounding multimodal transportation routes, and promote expanded outdoor dining opportunities and public streetscaping. In early 2023, the Township secured two (2) federal grants to support this initiative. This larger effort includes quarterly business networking breakfasts with educational opportunities, a unified branding and marketing effort for the corridor, and an ongoing implementation team to ensure priority actions are implemented over time. With support from Traverse City Tourism, the Township has worked with Business owners and managers to develop a logo for the Beach District.

The consultant shall collaborate with all project partners including but not limited to LIAA, Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails (TART), Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA), The Watershed Center of Grand Traverse Bay (TWC), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Traverse City Tourism, and Traverse Connect. LIAA will serve as a subcontractor and will assist in developing an inventory of assets. This analysis will include an inventory of pedestrian, bicycle, transit, vehicular, and water trail routes in the district, digitization of impervious surfaces, tree canopy, critical infrastructure, environmental assets (creeks, wetlands, etc.), redevelopment sites, and existing businesses.

The project grant agreement to support this visioning effort is anticipated to be signed in October 2023, and the Township anticipates that the visioning process will last approximately 12 months. There is \$100,000 budgeted to support costs associated with this process.

#### **4. Scope of Work**

a. **Task 1: Project kick-off Meeting with Staff**

The consultant shall meet with staff to determine schedule, identify stakeholders, discuss goals and desired outcomes of the project. A site visit will be conducted during this meeting.

b. **Task 2: Background Information & Data Gathering**

The consultant will work with LIAA to develop a series of maps that document existing conditions along the corridor. The consultant will also gather data and analysis to document economic and demographic trends along the corridor. Information and inventory of existing businesses gathered by Traverse Connect along the corridor will feed into this effort.

c. **Task 3: Public Survey**

The consultant shall create an online survey, with copies available at the Township Hall, to solicit input on the interests and desires of the community, on the future uses and development of the corridor. This survey shall be reviewed and approved by staff prior to being made available to the public. The consultant shall host the survey and provide marketing materials for the Township to use online and in print. Complete, raw survey results shall be provided to the Township.

d. **Task 4: Public Input Sessions**

The consultant shall design and facilitate a series of public input opportunities for the Township. Content shall be generated by the consultant and reviewed and approved by staff.

- **Stakeholder Focus Groups:** The consultant shall facilitate a series of focus groups meetings with key stakeholder groups, including existing business owners, developers, and residential neighbors, as well as along specific topic areas including resiliency and stormwater management, tree preservation, and multimodal transportation options.
- **Public Visioning Session:** The consultant will hold a public visioning session to provide input

- on future improvements and priorities along the corridor.
  - Open House: Based on all input gathered, the consultant will present a series of preferred conceptual design alternatives along the corridor for the public to review and provide feedback on.
- e. Task 5: Vision for 2-3 Priority Redevelopment Sites
 

The consultant will work with staff and willing property owners to develop a vision for two to three (2-3) sites that could be redeveloped to maximize mixed use opportunities and offer quasi-public “third” spaces and placemaking amenities.
- f. Task 6: Implementation Committee
 

Throughout the process, the consultant will interface with a stakeholder group composed of business owners, property owners, and nonprofit/agency partners. The implementation committee will review public input plan and advise on implementation of the corridor vision, goals, and priority actions. A key responsibility of the implementation committee is to develop financing solutions for implementation.
- g. Task 7: Planning Commission Updates/Presentation
 

The consultant shall provide written monthly updates for the Planning Commission and attend a Planning Commission meeting to explain scope at the beginning of the process and present the final report at the end of the process.
- h. Task 8: Development of Corridor Plan (RRC Best Practice 1.1.3)
 

The consultant will develop a Corridor Plan per RRC Best Practice 1.1.3. In addition to meeting the RRC criteria, the Plan shall detail the findings, outcomes, and recommendations based on the community input received during this process. This Plan shall include (1) conceptual design renderings for public infrastructure improvements and a vision for two to three (2-3) sites that could be redeveloped to maximize mixed use opportunities and offer quasi-public “third” spaces and placemaking amenities; and (2) an implementable action plan for the corridor that details goals, actions, timeline, responsible party, and achievable financing mechanisms.

## 5. Proposal Requirements

Proposals shall include the following items listed below.

- a. Brief introduction to the company
- b. A work plan describing the precise scope of work to be undertaken
- c. A detailed project schedule/timeline
- d. Resumes of company personnel, including any subcontractors
- e. Three (3) references of other clients that similar work has been completed for
- f. Disclosure of any competing interest or potential conflicts of interest in the Township including consultants work for individuals or businesses in the Township
- g. Proposed itemized budget, including an hourly rate for any items beyond the project scope that may be added by mutual agreement