

**Village of Empire
Master Plan Update
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

The Village of Empire requests proposals from qualified professionals in the fields of planning, economic and community development, or related fields, to assist the Village of Empire Planning Commission in updating the Village of Empire Master Plan.

It is expected this update will include an addendum that will identify accomplishments, a community questionnaire, and the results of the questionnaire. In addition, the body of the 2019 Master Plan will be updated to reflect 2024 data, new input based on the community questionnaire and new goals and objectives.

Proposals will be accepted until **1:00 PM Thursday, May 2, 2024**, at the Empire Village Office, PO Box 253; 11518 S. LaCore Street. Empire, MI 49630-0253, at which time the proposals will be opened and read aloud in the Village Office. To assure that the respondents' submittal arrives at the proper place, on time and to prevent opening by unauthorized individuals, submissions must be clearly identified on the outside, as follows: **Village of Empire Master Plan Update Proposal**.

Electronic submissions will be accepted. Once received, submissions will not be returned. Formal communication such as requests for clarification and/or information concerning this solicitation shall be submitted to Alacia Acton, Planning Commission Recording Secretary, via email addressed to deputyclerk@villageofempire.com, by phone at 231-326-5466 or by mail to PO Box 253; 11518 S. LaCore Street, Empire, MI 49630-0253

The Planning Commission reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to reject any or all proposals, to waive irregularities, informalities and/or non-conformities in any submission, to select the proponent and proposal deemed to be in the best interests of the Village and to negotiate with the selected proponent(s).

I. SELECTION PROCESS

Selection of a consultant will be made at the discretion of the Planning Commission and staff. The proposals will be evaluated through consideration of several factors. The review of all documents submitted will be in accordance with the following criteria:

Review Criteria (Total 70 points)

- Experience and qualifications in similar communities and similar projects (10 points)
- Evaluation of team by member expertise, structure, and capacity (10 points)
- Approach to public engagement (10 points)
- Demonstrated understanding of project goals (10 points)
- Overall costs (fees) value proposition and references (10 points)

- General approach to project scope of work (10 points)
- Capacity to perform the services in the required time desired by the Planning Commission (10 points)

Proposals will be reviewed following the May 1, 2024, deadline.

Following a review of the submittals and reference checks, the selected consultant shall begin working with the Planning Commission no later than June 4, 2024.

II. Project Deliverables

- 5 two-hour meetings with the Planning Commission to revise and update the Village's goals and objectives, based on the 2019 Master Plan, the 2024 questionnaire and public input session.
- Develop questionnaire/poll to gather community input on Empire's future direction (5 years) regarding infrastructure, social and economic goals for continued vitality. This will include working with the Planning Commission and others to draft the questionnaire instrument, recommending distribution methods, and presenting the resulting data to the public and in written form as part of the plan addendum.
- Update demographic and socioeconomic changes in Empire since 2019 (population, median income, median home value, seasonal homes, short term rentals, age pyramid, etc.). This should include relevant county and regional data affecting the Village.
- Offer a two-hour facilitated public input session focusing on the questionnaire results. This can include but is not limited to input on specific issues (2-3) or goals.
- Documented (written) recommendations and goals related to the five (5) year focus of the updated Plan based on polling, surveys, or public meetings in addition to those that may be in the current Plan.
- All materials presented by the consultant for potential use in the update shall be provided the Village in digital formats that are compatible with the Village of Empire software suite. (Word, Excel, Publisher, PDF)

III. Project Schedule

It is anticipated this project will be ongoing from May 15, 2024, to November 5, 2024. All public input shall take place between July 1 and August 15, 2024. Below are the anticipated milestones and other applicable dates. The Planning Commission is agreeable to a variation of the schedule assuming justification is provided. Shorter timeframes are encouraged.

RFP Distributed: April 3, 2024

Questions Deadline: April 24, 2024

Answers Provided by: As received, no later than April 27, 2024

Completed RFP Due: May 2, 2024

Interviews: May 9 and 10 2024 (or TBD)

Selection and Approval by PC: May 15, 2024 (approximate)

Community Survey Distributed: No later than June 14, 2024

PC and Consultant Planning for Public Meeting: July 9, 2024 (approximate)
Public Input: End of July (23-25) 2024 or Early August (5-7) 2024
Update Draft: September 2024
Public Hearing: October 2024
PC Master Plan Update Approval: November 2024 (to be sent to Village Council)

IV. Requirements

- A. Provide a qualified representative to attend 5 planning commission meetings and to attend a public input session.
- B. Complete the project requirements per the “Project Deliverables” with the “Expected Project Timeline” (see Addendum I) as agreed upon between the Planning Commission and the selected consultant.
- C. Maintain budget control within the specified fiscal range.

V. Project Background

Empire is a Village on Lake Michigan in the northwestern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. Located in the southwestern corner of Leelanau County. In 2021, Empire had a population of 362 people with a median age of 59.7 and a median household income of \$60,781. Between 2020 and 2021 the population of Empire, MI grew from 324 to 362, a 11.7% increase and its median household income grew from \$51,786 to \$60,781, a 17.4% increase (DataUSA: <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/empire-mi>).

The Village is located within Empire Township and is famous for its proximity to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, several parks (Lake Michigan Beach Park, Shalda Park and privately owned, but publicly accessible Johnson Park owned by the Empire Lions Club) and small town character. Empire is home to the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Headquarters and the Philip A. Hart Visitor Center. The Village has seen growth in the residential sector since the 2019 Master Plan was completed. An update to the Master Plan is needed to reflect the experienced growth of the Village as well as looking at how the Village may continue to evolve (i.e., projects and services) while remaining a vibrant community in Leelanau County.

An important element to updating the Master Plan will be to include a strong public participation component. The Village of Empire has enjoyed a long history of active citizen involvement and feels that this is an invaluable resource to include in developing a vivid vision for the Village’s future. It is also important to include the Township in discussions on the update as they have also just completed their own Master Plan update. This is important to ensure that the vision of both municipalities is aligned in a congruent direction.

VI. SCOPE OF WORK

A. Purpose.

The purpose of the work is to update the data and statistics from the 2019 Master Plan and assist the Planning Commission in creating a more achievable focus using the 2019 Master Plan as the foundation. The task of the **Planning** Consultant will be to assist the Planning Commission with:

1. Updating demographic and other relevant data from the 2019 Master Plan.
2. Assist the Planning Commission with the creation, implementation, and summarizing of a community survey. This may be done in concert with a new formed Community Engagement Group – Asset-Based Community Development in the Village.
3. Provide advice and counsel to Planning Commissioners in focusing the plan on the next five (5) years. This will include assisting with developing achievable goals, objectives and narrative that also fit with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation Redevelopment Ready requirements.

It is important to note the 2019 Master Plan may continue to offer future Planning Commissions with inspiration for future updates. It was extensive in scope and depth – in keeping with a 20-year plan.

B. Community Input

The Planning Commission recognizes that meaningful public participation is a critical element of any planning process. The Consultant, in cooperation with the Planning Commission will be expected to incorporate meaningful public participation elements at appropriate times throughout the process. The Consultant will be expected to attend Planning Commission meetings to assist in the public participation process.

C. Goals and Implementation

The Master Plan Update will have goals and implementation statements that are reasonable and realistic within the five (5) year timeline for Village community development. This document will be used by representatives of the Village, those making private sector investments, and by all citizens interested in the future development of Empire. The Consultant will assist the Village in forming meaningful and achievable goals to serve as a guide in defining and implementing the Plan.

Implementation strategies are a key component of any Master Plan. They need to prescribe how the Plan's recommendations and programs can become reality. While a Master Plan is intended to provide the necessary guidelines for making future land use, community facility and capital improvement decisions, its true value cannot be realized unless it is implemented.

D. Redevelopment Ready Communities Compliant

The plan should address items that are required for Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC) certification so that the Village may continue progress towards RRC certification.

VII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Written in an 8 1/2" x 11" format.
2. A cover letter shall be signed by a member of the consulting firm empowered to commit the firm to a contractual arrangement with the Village. The cover letter shall also identify the person who will be responsible for regular communications with the Village, including meeting attendance.
3. Delivered in sealed envelope(s) by 1:00 PM Thursday, May 2, 2024. Addressed to:

The Planning Commission Recording Secretary, Alacia Acton
Empire Village Office,
PO Box 253; 11518 S. LaCore Street.
Empire, MI 49630-0253

4. Provide information on the firm's background, including:
 - a. Organization and Michigan office locations.
 - b. The office location where work associated with the project would be performed.
 - c. A description of the range of services provided by the firm. Please list the other master plans the firm has completed for other communities and provide some detail on said plans.
 - d. The qualifications of the person identified above who will be providing the planning services to the Village. List their experience in providing services to cities and villages similar in size and character.
5. Experience and References: Provide a short description of recent prior experience with similar communities. For each project, include the name, title, and telephone number of a representative that the Village may contact to discuss their experience with the firm.
6. (Optional) Samples: Include representative samples of deliverables, as prepared by the individual who would be assigned to work with the Village, and other material and/or correspondence that may be helpful in assessing the level and quality of the services proposed.
7. Disclosure: The Village of Empire expects potential Consultants to identify any potential conflicts of interest and the plan for handling these matters.
8. Work Effort and Timeline:
 1. Description of the total number of anticipated hours (minimum to maximum) to complete the scope of work and a timeline for the entire project.
 2. Timeline showing anticipated work schedule.
9. Fees: Fee schedule should include all fees charged for performing the required services. Fee schedule must be stated as a total not-to-exceed fee for all services outlined in the proposal (including but not limited to labor, time, printing, mileage, sub-consultants, etc. and other expenses). No fees over the not-to-exceed estimate will be paid without prior approval by the Planning Commission. Describe any modifications you would recommend to the work scope described in this Request for Proposal and state what impact of those modifications would have on your fee proposal. The Village has set a range for this project between \$8,400 and \$10,000.

Exhibit A: Authorization Page

Village of Empire Planning Commission

Please submit this completed form with your proposal.

Firm Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Website: _____

Representative Authorized to sign the offer and contract:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Authorized Point of Contact/Project Team Lead:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

I certify that I am authorized to execute and submit this proposal on behalf of the Firm listed above; that all of the RFP instructions and rules, exhibits, addenda, explanations, evaluation criteria, submittal requirements, terms and conditions and any other information provided by the Village of Empire Planning Commission has been reviewed, understood and complied with; and that all the information in this submission is true, correct, and in compliance with the terms of the RFP.

I hereby state that I have the authority to submit this proposal with will become a binding contract if accepted by the Village of Empire Planning commission. I further state that I have not communicated with nor otherwise colluded with any other person or Firm, nor have I made any agreement with nor offered or accepted anything of value from an Official or employee of the Village of Empire Planning Commission that would tend to destroy or hinder free competition.

Authorized Representative Signature Date

Addendum I

Expected Project Timeline

Meeting One (June 2024)

- Overview of the deliverables, scope of work
- Public engagement discussion (questionnaire/input session planning)

Meeting Two (June 2024)

- Review draft of questionnaire
- Determine deadlines and delivery methods
- Review and edit community description and categories

(Questionnaire released)

Meeting Three (July 2024)

- Review previous plan goals and objectives
- Provide updated data

Public Input Session (August 2024)

Meeting Four (September 2024)

- Review Public Input
- Develop goals and objectives

Meeting Five (October)

- Review and edit goals and objectives
- Assign responsibilities for timelines and implementation
- Prioritize goals and objectives

