

# **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (TCDDA)**  
*In Partnership With*  
**Lower Boardman River Leadership Team**

**TCDDA Strategic Plan Area of Focus: Boardman River**

October 2018

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## 1) The TCDDA Strategic Plan

Concurrent with the appointment of Ms. Jean Derenzy, Chief Executive Officer of the Traverse City Downtown Development Authority (TCDDA), the Board of Directors for the TCDDA developed a Strategic Plan for the period 2017 – 2020. That strategy recognizes that *“Traverse City’s downtown is unlike all others. It is at the center of the Great Lakes that hold 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the World’s fresh water.”*

The TCDDA’s Vision established by the Board also reflects the water dependency of the community:

*“Traverse City is America’s most inclusive, family friendly fresh water destination – featuring world class dining and shopping, a growing economy, entrepreneurial opportunity and all-season recreation.”*

The Strategy established that the Mission of the TCDDA is to:

*“Collaborate with all stakeholders to provide a world class downtown that is active, thriving and inclusive. Through investments in sound, sustainable infrastructure and civic amenities, the DDA corrects and prevents deterioration in the Downtown District to encourage historic preservation, to create and implement development plans and to promote economic growth.”*

The Strategic Plan established three areas of focus: (1) Real Estate Development; (2) Parking and Transportation; and (3) Business Recruitment and Retention.

## 2) Relevant TCDDA Strategic Goals

Under Real Estate Development, the Strategic Plan has a goal: *“to optimize economic sustainability and growth through the development of real estate in keeping with the needs, opportunities and character of downtown.”* In keeping with this goal an objective of the Strategic Plan calls for the TCDDA to:

*“Complete and begin implementation of a definitive plan involving protection and restoration of the River corridor and various forms of access and amenities for the lower Boardman River that complement the Union Street dam modifications and include but not be limited to:*

- ***Access for people of all ages, needs and abilities to use and enjoy the River; and***
- ***reduction/elimination of nonpoint sources of pollution within the downtown district and overall restoration and rehabilitation of the River, including review and development of appropriate policies, programs and projects.”***

This goal and objectives are the focus of this RFQ.

### 3) Plan Assumptions

There are several assumptions and values that should be reflected by and included in the Plan. The Plan should:

- Reflect the City's commitment to the River as a public resource and asset to be passed to residents and visitors in perpetuity.
- Contain public goals for the River and City, in keeping with the community's visions about what the River is and can become as a centerpiece for downtown identity and ethos.
- Use the natural and cultural values of the River as a guide for decisions about the commercial, economic or utilitarian values to be leveraged for the public good.
- Be explicit to the commitment to improve, restore and protect the health and integrity of the Riparian ecosystem of the lower River.
- Provide that the recommended initiatives contained in the Plan will account for the impact of those initiatives on residents, habitats and the ecological status of the River.
- Serve to foster and sustain partnerships with shared responsibilities among public and private stakeholders who share the value that the Boardman is a "common resource" that connects everyone.
- Identify/prioritize opportunities for multi-modal access to the River.
- Enhance ecological and aesthetic River conditions, take advantage of and integrate iconic structures and identify new sites and structures that serve as destination or centers of programming to attract year-round access.
- Integrate existing river walks and pathways with new connections between sites and destinations that link the River to the city in ways that are physical, visual, aesthetic and psychological.
- Be consistent with best riparian and aquatic science, best water and land management practices and must be harmonious with the River.
- Make nature-based stormwater best management practices (BMP's) a priority.
- Help ensure that new or rehabilitated developments along the River are compatible with the City's renewable energy goals.
- Establish that development sites, destinations and structures must protect the health, aesthetics, accessibility and health of the relationship between the river and residents/visitors.
- Manage invasive vegetation and protect and retain existing native vegetation and add native vegetation where possible.
- Prohibit further hardening of the shorelines that are inconsistent with the Plan.
- Ensure that the natural flow of the River is enhanced and not curtailed or impeded by any element of the Plan.

### 4) Working Vision Statements

Following are working vision statements that reflect the **ideal future state** of the River:

- a. The natural essence and environmental integrity of the Lower Boardman River is actively celebrated, recognized and respected.

- b. The Lower Boardman is an ecologically health, functional and naturalized River throughout its entire traverse through the City.
- c. The Lower Boardman continuously balances development along the River with environmental conservation and restoration efforts.
- d. The Lowe Boardman continuously balances sustainable paddling boating fishing and other recreational uses along the River with environmental conservation and restoration efforts.
- e. The public has interesting and accessible points to access and interact with the River.
- f. Downtown Traverse City embraces, connects with and has turned its face to the River and works to eliminate hard surface edges along the River corridor.
- g. The Lower Boardman actively connects and binds downtown Traverse City and its surrounding neighborhoods and districts.
- h. Development and conservation efforts along the Lower Boardman are driven and managed through citizen engagement and public, private and nonprofit partnerships.
- i. Traverse City actively celebrates the River.
- j. The Lower Boardman River and the way it is used, developed and protected will continue to evolve over time.
- k. The historic qualities, values and uses of the River are understood and the River returns to its original name.

## 5) Project Phases

In keeping with the goals of this strategy, this initiative consists of two phases.

**Phase 1:** Through public engagement guided by a project leadership team, use existing plans and strategies and new input to identify, plan and design a system of policies programs and projects to be implemented on the lower Boardman River to: 1) support the health, well-being and restoration of the River and River Corridor; 2) support universal access, including access to the River’s robust fishery, to protect the river ecosystem and to recognize and acknowledge the diverse array of perspectives in how the river is valued; 3) develop policies, standards and programs to restore and provide for the long term improvement and vitality of the River corridor.

**Phase 2:** Using the results of Phase 1, develop the system of policies, programs and projects that are identified, planned and designed during Phase 1, involving River protection and rehabilitation and access for a variety of purposes with ongoing public engagement and participation.

Phase 1 is the focus of this RFQ.

## 6) Recent Initiatives – Boardman River

The Boardman River and its watershed have been the focus of restoration and planning initiatives for over a decade that have gained national and even international attention that should be consulted by respondents to this RFQ. They include:

- **Public Process – Fate of the Dams.** A public process to determine the fate of four aging dams on the River.
- **Dam Removal.** One of the largest dam removals of its kind in the nation to address safety threats and harness the full potential of the River within its carrying capacity.
- **Restoration/Reclaiming the River.** Restoration of the newly “reclaimed” river following dam removals and the elimination of aging, warm water ponds.
- **Tributary Restoration.** A major emphasis upon the restoration of Kids Creek, a critically important tributary to the Lower Boardman.
- **FishPass Project.** An innovative solution to the lower most barrier (dam) question related to fish species selection and bio-directional passage with strong ties to City Parks, this Plan and public use with a significant educational component.

## 7) Specific Plan and Strategies – Development, Access and Protection of the River

There are eight plans in particular that should be reviewed by respondents and reflected in their responses to this RFQ. They include:

- 200 Block Alley Plan
- “Your Bay, Your Say”
- Boardman River Water Trail Development Plan (Adopted by City Commission, TCDDA, City Parks & Recreation Commission, City Planning and County Parks)
- University of Michigan Boardman River Plan (Adopted by the DDA and City Planning Commission)
- Boardman River Prosperity Plan (recently approved by MDEQ and submitted to USEPA for approval.
- FishPass Project. The development of a Fish Pass initiative led by the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission in partnership with others at Union Street Dam in Traverse City which will ultimately be used to manage and control access to the Upper Boardman by a variety of fish species. FishPass has completed approximately 65% of the design, incorporating public-desired infrastructure and movement of fish through and across the site.
- Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Natural Resource and Environment Department Strategic Plan – Draft 2014
- City of Traverse City Master Plan and Recreation Plan
- “How to Transform a Waterfront,” Project for Public Spaces

Links to all plans may be found at the TCDDA Web Site at [www.downtowntc.com](http://www.downtowntc.com).

## **8) Engagement**

Public engagement is imperative to this process. The TCDDA is accountable for the results of this project. This project will follow the “Traverse City Public Participation Strategy” that provides “policies, procedures and methods to apply across a wide range of City initiatives.” Respondents to this RFQ should read this document that is available online at:

<http://www.traversecitymi.gov/downloads/traverse-city-strategy-document-final-with-new-cover-photo.pdf>. To support engagement and public input, the TCDDA has formed a Project Team consisting of diverse interests that includes:

Harry Burkholder, Executive Director, Land Information Access Association and Board Member, TCDDDA

Elise Crafts, Land Planning and Zoning Consultant and City Resident

Christine Crissman, Executive Director, Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay

Jean Derenzy, CEO, TCDDA

Frank Dituri, Director of Public Works, City of Traverse City, Co-Chair, Boardman River Dams Implementation Team

Brett Fessell, River Restoration Ecologist, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians and Co-Chair, Boardman River Dams Implementation Team

Michele Howard, Commissioner, City of Traverse City

Jennifer Jay, Director of Communications and Engagement, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

Rick Korndorfer, City Resident

Deni Scudato, City Resident, former City Commissioner

Mike Vickery, City Resident

Russ Soyering, City of Traverse City Planning Director

The Project Leadership Team:

- Establishes processes and participates in direct outreach to engage interests in the project.
- Recommends values for the project that are consistent with the long-term welfare of the river and the goal of the project.
- Will screen and interview RFQ respondents and recommended a lead consultant for the project.
- Provides and supports input and outreach throughout Phase 1, including the identification of policies, programs and projects and the plans and designs for the system of projects.

## **9) Submissions**

All submissions to this RFQ must be received at the TCDDA office on or before 5 p.m. on November 14 2018. The TCDDA office address is:

**Traverse City Downtown Development Authority  
303 E. State Street  
Traverse City, Michigan 49684**

Submissions must not exceed 20 pages in length (12pt font), single sided, not including attachments which may be an additional 20 pages in length. Submissions must include four hard copies and one digital. Submissions must include:

- Cover letter describing why the qualifications of the respondent make them the ideal candidate for the project.
- Contact information for the respondent and for individuals who would have key roles with the project.
- Website URL
- A review of the qualifications of the organization and key individuals to perform the project and attain the goals and objectives for Phase 1 of the project.
- Qualifications of the respondent and key individuals to work with project leadership teams and community stakeholders, including tribal governments and communities, general public and residents to engage them with projects and use their input to attain desired goals.
- Qualifications of the respondent to identify, plan and design policies programs and projects, including systems of access and river ecosystem projects using community engagement and best practices.
- Qualifications of the respondent to develop such a system of projects that are financially and practically feasible.
- Qualifications of the respondent regarding universal access strategies, concepts and designs for special populations.
- Examples of at least three projects that demonstrate the qualifications of the respondent to successfully carry out Phase 1 of this project.

Submissions are also to include a preliminary scope of work, schedule and budget for the project and specifically address the following elements:

- Methods, processes and strategies for community engagement and ongoing community education, learning and two-way communication.
- How the respondent will integrate, use and apply assumptions, visions, core values and principles for the project which have been defined by the Leadership Team and include outreach and partnership with relevant local, tribal, state, federal and international groups and organizations.
- Consideration of prior and existing policies, projects, plans and strategies in identifying recommendations for a system of policies, programs and projects.
- How additional plans and strategies may be developed and, specifically, how a system of interrelated projects will be identified, planned and designed for the lower Boardman River, including:

- River and River corridor protection and restoration which may include bioengineering to stabilize shorelines; restoration of stream habitat; building code or zoning changes; erosion control BMP's and others.
  - universal access so that people of all ages, needs and abilities can enjoy and benefit from a full range of opportunities, including but not limited to family recreation; stewardship education; recreational fishing and others.
- Methods and means for obtaining input and recommendations on scenarios or options for the system of projects.
  - The content of deliverables which, among other factors, are shall be presented in sufficient detail to enable implementation and development of funding requests through such programs as the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and others.

**It is important that submissions reflect a budget of approximately \$40,000 and the availability of project staff to assist with various elements of the project. That will be discussed in more detail with the selected consultant in developing a definitive scope of work and budget for the project.**

### **10) Schedule**

The schedule for this RFQ is as follows:

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFQ Dissemination	October 19, 2018
Pre-Application Meeting/Teleconference	October 31, 2018 10 a.m., Government Center, 400 Boardman Avenue, Traverse City, MI 49684 OR CALL: 231-794-0089
Submissions Due	November 14, 2018 5 P.M.
Approximate Interview Dates	December 3-4, 2018
Approximate Consultant Selection Date	December 10, 2018
Development of Definitive Scope of Work and Budget	December 11-21, 2018

**NOTE: it is important for respondents to recognize that this is a RFQ and that, after a consultant is recommended by the Leadership Team and selected by the TCDDA Board, work with proceed to develop a definitive scope of work and budget for this project. If the parties cannot reach agreement on an acceptable scope of work and/or budget, it is possible that the Leadership Team and TCDDA**

**Board will select another respondent. Accordingly, we will not inform respondents of the results of this process until the definitive scope and budget are completed.**

### **11) Questions**

Questions about this RFQ may be directed to:

Tim Ervin

Ph: 231-794-0089

Email: [timervinassoc@gmail.com](mailto:timervinassoc@gmail.com)

### **12) Limitations**

Nothing in this RFQ shall convey any responsibilities, liabilities, costs or expenses to any party. The TCDDA is under no obligations to select a project consultant as a result of this project or process. This RFQ may be withdrawn or terminated by the TCDDA at any time for any reason without notice. The TCDDA is under no obligation to inform respondents of the status or disposition of their proposal until such time as the TCDDA is able to do so.