

1. Are there any special areas/sub areas that the county would like a more detailed analysis?
-The I-65 Corridor, Route 41, and possibly 231, depending on St. John's future plans for annexation.
2. Are there any key issues that the county needs addressed like agricultural heritage, wind farms or farmland preservation?
-Farmland preservation should be a major component of the plan. Possibly wind farms, but they are not a major focus at the moment.
3. Do we need to plan any specific outreach to the individual incorporated areas on regional issues?
-The future annexation plans of St. John, Cedar Lake, Lowell, Crown Point, Winfield, Merrillville, and other towns bordering Unincorporated Lake County will have an impact on the Comp Plan and planning for Unincorporated Lake County. NIRPC will likely have some valuable input regarding trails, etc.
4. The ordinance legal and the comp plan are bid separately. Would you prefer a single team work on both concurrently?
- We would like to have the Comprehensive Plan completed first (or substantially completed), then use information from the Comprehensive Plan to guide changes to the Zoning Ordinance.
5. The section on infrastructure and utilities calls for locating and analysis of all systems. Are we to provide surveys as part of this work or does the County have the surveys available?
- The County has some information on utilities, but it would need to be compiled from different departments. Information obtained from individual utilities and other government agencies on the location of existing utilities would be preferable.
6. How will the submittals be scored? Is this a price proposal or a qualification based selection process?
-A consultant will be selected based on qualifications. Interviews will be held towards the end of March.

Zoning Ordinance

1. Has staff completed an analysis of past variance requests and rezonings?
-We have detailed records of past requests/ decisions dating back many years. We also have annual reports summarizing actions taken by the Board of Zoning Appeals and Plan Commission over the past years.

2. Has staff audited the existing zoning ordinance to determine where the inconsistencies, conflicts, or omissions might be?

-Some analysis has been done and areas in need of updating have been identified. As the Zoning Ordinance update will occur after substantial work on the Comprehensive Plan has been completed, we would like recommendations on items that may be incorporated into the Ordinance that will help to fulfill some of the objectives identified in the new Comprehensive Plan.

3. Is this zoning ordinance update more of a strategic update to certain sections or is this anticipated to be more of an overhaul/complete rewrite? What is the starting point?

-It is a strategic update to certain sections. However, we anticipate additional areas in need of change to be identified after the Comprehensive Plan has been completed.

4. Are you amenable to staggering the text amendments and any subsequent map amendments (i.e. rezonings) where by the text gets updated and adopted first, followed then by map revisions?

-We would like for all of the text amendments to be adopted at one time. Of course, if it becomes necessary to spend more time on a particular section, that is understandable. The work on the zoning map will take more time and may be completed after the adoption of the changes to the text.

5. Are you amenable to using a set of work sessions with technical city staff, as opposed to a steering committee, to determine the appropriate changes to the ordinance language?

-The composition of the work group is open for discussion. Certain individuals who are not considered technical staff may want to provide input.

6. How frequently would you anticipate the Plan Commission, Board of Commissioners, and County Council updates to take place?

- I don't foresee more than one update being necessary, however if it is requested or if an issue requiring a great deal of discussion is identified during the process, we would like to leave the door open to additional presentations.

7. Is the current zoning map for Lake County available as GIS shapefiles?

-The zoning map will be a substantial portion, if not the bulk, of the Zoning Ordinance update. The County Surveyor's Office has zoning shapefiles, however all need to be reviewed and compared to the zoning books in the Plan Commission office for accuracy. The goal is to establish GIS files that accurately reflect the zoning of all parcels in Unincorporated Lake County.

Comprehensive Plan

1. When was the last update completed? Is a copy of it available on-line?

- The Plan was adopted in 1996. It is not available online, but can be obtained in our office.

2. Are elected and appointed officials, and staff using the existing comp plan to make local policy decisions about land use and transportation, among other things?

- The Plan Commission looks to the Comprehensive Plan when considering rezoning requests, etc. Many of the County Highway Department's initiatives are consistent with the transportation goals listed in the Plan.

3. What is driving the need to complete an update to the comprehensive plan? What are you in anticipation of happening? What are you hoping to accomplish with this update?

-The Plan was adopted in 1996. Much has changed since then and an update is long overdue. We would like for the Comprehensive Plan to provide an up-to-date and accurate analysis of existing conditions and identify the vision that the community has for Unincorporated Lake County going forward.

4. What do you believe to be the most critical components of the plan?

-The Land Use Analysis section and recommendations for future land use is central to the Plan. Input from the residents of Unincorporated Lake County is important in setting the tone for objectives in each of the sections, particularly for future development patterns.

5. The RFP for the comprehensive plan mentions that the Steering Committee will be established prior to awarding a contract. Will the selected consultant have any input on the makeup of the steering committee such that additional members could be added?

- Yes. The makeup of the Committee is flexible and staff is open to suggestions.

6. The RFP for the comprehensive plan stipulates that the Steering Committee will meet on a monthly basis, following the Plan Commission and BZA meetings. Is there a scheduled end time for both meetings such that the start time of the Steering Committee would be a set time?

-There is no set end time for the meetings. Both are held on the third Wednesday of the month: Plan Commission meetings start at 5:30 PM and the BZA meets immediately following the conclusion of the Plan Commission meeting, with a scheduled start time of 6:00 PM. The BZA meetings typically run 30 minutes to 1 hour, sometimes longer. An average start time for Committee meetings would likely be 7:00 PM.

7. How frequently would you anticipate the Plan Commission, Board of Commissioners, and County Council updates to take place? What is driving the need for the individual updates given the fact that there will be representation of each governing body on the Steering Committee?

-Infrequently. The presentations are suggested as a courtesy, to provide information to the decision makers as the Plan moves along.

8. Will all of the county's GIS data (i.e. shapefiles), past studies and plans, and staff be made readily available to the chosen firm/team?

-The past studies and plans will be available. Access to the county's GIS data/ shapefiles will be available, but a data sharing agreement must be signed and the data may only be used for the Comprehensive Plan.

9. Are you anticipating that the consultant will need to conduct field work to document existing land uses, or can the review of the existing land uses be done by reviewing and analyzing an existing land use map for the unincorporated parts of the county?

-Some field work will be necessary, but many land use records are available in the Plan Commission office.

10. Have existing flood hazard areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas all been identified and appropriately delineated, such that the comprehensive planning process can focus on the implications of such features?

-The County GIS website has many of these areas identified.

11. In terms of the housing analysis, is there an existing inventory and housing conditions study to base this work off of, or do you anticipate the chosen team needing to complete a housing conditions study as an interim deliverable?

-Some work has been done to identify unsafe housing in the county. Generally speaking, an analysis of supply and demand for different housing types is needed.

12. It appears as if there is a current parks and recreation master plan for Lake County. Are you anticipating that the comprehensive planning process will assess the needs of the parks and recreation master plan in relation to the other land use components of the comprehensive plan?

-Up to date information from the parks and recreation master plan should be discussed in the Comprehensive Plan. As community input is gathered regarding county parks, the information should be considered for inclusion in the Plan.

13. The transportation analysis indicates that transportation system conditions should be analyzed. Does the county have a current assessment of conditions or will the consultant be expected to document the road, trail, and sidewalks and conditions as part of this process?

-The County Highway Department has a current Roadway Asset Management Plan. With regards to sidewalks, the County is primarily only responsible for sidewalks within subdivisions in Unincorporated Lake County. NIRPC has the most detailed information on trails.

14. Is it accurate to say that the scope of services provided by the comprehensive plan RFP calls for a comprehensive review of every component of the unincorporated parts of Lake County; components that then can be used to formulate a comprehensive plan?

Yes.

15. What role would you expect the individual municipalities to play? How much input might they have, if any?

-The Lake County Plan Commission only has jurisdiction over Unincorporated Lake County. As such, the focus of the Comprehensive Plan will be on Unincorporated Lake County. Input from the municipalities is only needed in instances where there is a direct impact on those municipalities or vice versa.