

FEBRUARY 2020

**SMITHGROUP**



*(This page intentionally left blank)*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

---

Thank you to everyone who participated in the process including many residents, community advisory groups, City administrators, and council members. A special appreciation is owed to City staff who led the process to envision a healthy La Porte.

### CITY OF LA PORTE

Tom Dermody, Current Mayor  
Mark Krentz, Former Mayor  
Beth Schrader, Director of Development & Planning  
Nick Minich, City Engineer  
Mark Schreiber, Parks Superintendent

### DESIGN TEAM:

## SMITHGROUP

Madison, Wisconsin  
(608) 251-1177  
[www.smithgroup.com](http://www.smithgroup.com)



Indianapolis, Indiana  
(317) 762-6767  
[www.sehinc.com](http://www.sehinc.com)



Portage, Indiana  
(219) 841-6416  
[www.holladayproperties.com](http://www.holladayproperties.com)

### STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Nate Louks	Ashley Williams	Jeff Bernel
Ashley Dickinson	Jacki Dermody	Drew Mullen
Jim Pressel	Jennifer Noll	Carey Garwood
Lori Tubbs	Mark Francesconi	Dale Parkison
Tim Larson	Tom Dermody	Dennis Meyer
Bert Cook	Nicole Krol	Clay turner
Tony Lara	Laura Krentz	Jerry jackson
Jerry Fedorchak	Thaddeus Cutler	Todd A Taylor
Jim Kaminski	Lisa Smithson	Denis Conlon
Paul Cincen	Michelle Shirk	Don Babcock
Charity Hvlasa	Katy Gartland	Tom MacLennan
April Kelly	Brian Chalik	Mark Ann Richards
Kristi Chadderdon	Mike Riehle	Lynn Cains
Troy Clark	Maggie Spartz	Julie Smith
Eric Gaunt	Deb Varnak	Tim Franke
Angela Rose	Jack Arnett	Lisa Pierzakowski

### PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Thank you to the residents who provided input by participating in the open houses, site tours, and online engagement during the planning process. A special thank you is sent to Nate Louks and the State Street Church, who opened their doors to welcome the design team and community throughout the 3-day charrette.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>1</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>		
<b>5</b>	<b>THE PROJECT: THE HEART OF LAPORTE</b>		
6	Why this Plan? Why Now?		
7	Past Community Planning Efforts		
<b>11</b>	<b>THE PROCESS: CRAFTING A SUCCESSFUL VISION</b>		
11	A Process of Engagement		
16	NCI Charrette		
<b>23</b>	<b>THE PLAN: RECOMMENDATIONS TO FUEL LAPORTE FORWARD</b>		
25	Fox Park		
27	Clear Lake		
29	The Stitch		
39	Downtown		
41	Hospital Campus		
43	NewPorte Landing		
<b>49</b>	<b>THE PROPOSED: TARGETED INTERVENTIONS FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY</b>		
51	Non-Motorized Circulation		
53	Vehicular Circulation		
55	Streetscape Amenities and Furniture		
57	Public Space		
59	Recreation		
61	Infrastructure + Sustainability		
63	Remediation		
<b>65</b>	<b>THE PRODUCT: STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b>		
65	Tools		
67	Economic Impact		
68	Redevelopment Tools and Strategies		
69	Implementors + Partnerships		
70	Action Table		
75	Future Plans and Studies		
<b>77</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>		
78	A. Map Compendium		
99	B. Photo Map		
101	C. Public Sign In Sheets		
109	D. Charrette Public Voting		





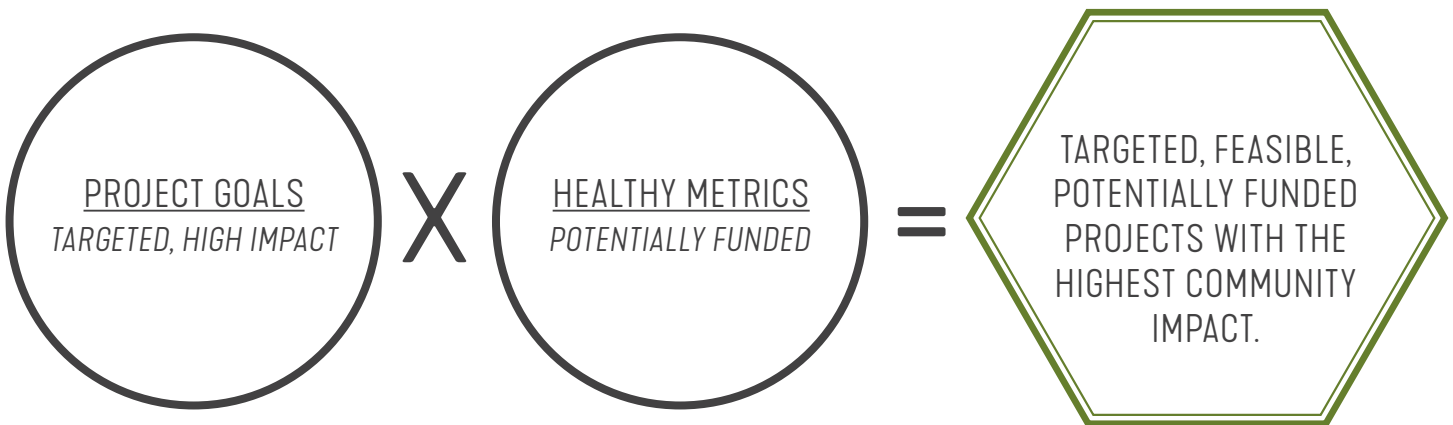
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

This report represents a milestone in La Porte’s long-term journey toward a healthier, more vibrant future. The following pages outline key findings from the community and stakeholder process, as well as drivers guiding the physical plans and policies that make up the Heart of La Porte Healthy Living Plan. Subsequent chapters of this document explore the planning process, plan components, recommendations and implementation strategies in greater detail.

## A VISION TO CATALYZE HEALTHY EFFORTS

From early interviews and tours, to the three-day community charrette, the planning team sought measurable results that align with a wide range of known funding sources to make the plan action-oriented and easily phased as funds become available.



## PROJECT GOALS

A series of specific goals were established at the onset of the project based on analysis and research, pertinent previous studies, input from project stakeholders and the community, and professional best practices. These goals intend to guide and evaluate the physical and policy recommendations developed during the Heart of La Porte planning process and provide a litmus test for future study and detailed design in the project area to maintain consistency with the plan.

- 1 Develop multi-modal connections between Downtown, Clear Lake, and NewPorte Landing.**
  - Provide linkages and access to parks, trails, and on-street lanes (gateways, trailheads, wayfinding).
  - Provide access to locally and regionally sourced, healthy food.
  - Develop long- and short-term solutions to heavy truck traffic along Lincolnway and State Street to develop and encourage non-motorized circulation.
  - Identify Complete Street opportunities as multi-modal connections and linkages to parks, trails and social centers.
  - Explore and mitigate railroad corridor overpass conflicts and issues; identify rail crossing quiet zones; and minimize at-grade crossings.

**2 Develop an identity for the Study Area and the City holistically by drawing upon existing assets, creating a series of local destinations, and linking these assets and destinations to regional amenities.**

- Link open and public spaces, YMCA, hospital development site, La Porte Downtown, Clear Lake and Pine Lake.
- Identify linkages and destination relationships with Indiana Dunes National Park and community assets.
- Connect all water bodies with kayak routes in addition to pedestrian walking and non-motorized routes.
- Focus on north- to south- connections and linkages to/from downtown as a social district to individual lakes and Fox Park by overcoming railroad corridor conflicts and real or perceived issues.
- Focus on east- to west- connections to the Chessie Trail with the goal of connecting to regional trails.
- Provide environmental and local historical land use awareness and education at Fox Park or on Clear Lake.

**3 Identify and develop assets and anchors to draw residents, visitors and travelers with opportunities for social engagement through mixed-use development within Downtown and at NewPorte Landing.**

- Create a thriving mixed-use dynamic downtown social district with live/work/play assets and development specifically constructed to develop a healthy community and local culture.
- Identify adaptive reuse opportunities within the Study Area, with specific focus on Downtown, to create and develop a social center for all ages.
- Investigate opportunities for high quality, low-income housing for all ages.
- Assess parking and provide adequate on- and off-street public parking alternatives based on actual need.

**4 Identify, develop, and create a healthy culture. Celebrate getting outside into great, well-connected open spaces anchored by Clear Lake regardless of age and ability.**

- Provide opportunity for wandering and discovery, creating an environment where recreation is locally and personally valued as an asset and a resource of community pride that is visible, approachable, and free.
- Celebrate access to quality health care.
- Create identity, such as photo moments, a feeling you take with when you leave and something to bring when you come back.
- Place art along the water.
- Bring perception of the lakes into downtown with a stormwater and sustainability plan.
- Utilize diverse media to promote events, including calendars, social media, local art, print and billboards.
- Celebrate local and regional sourced food and goods, developing pride in the local agri-business industry.
- Develop a pattern of normative behavior for economic resilience, fostering overnight to multi-day stays to experience La Porte and surrounding amenities with restaurants, activities, and social events.
- Make Study Area and community cleanup efforts visible to improve community perceptions, support economic development, and improve community buy-in for the Heart of La Porte initiative.
- Identify and develop a coordinated and cohesive lighting strategy for public safety and aesthetics in evenings.
- Develop a collaborative marketing strategy to both internally and externally promote and celebrate La Porte assets, resources and brand.



5

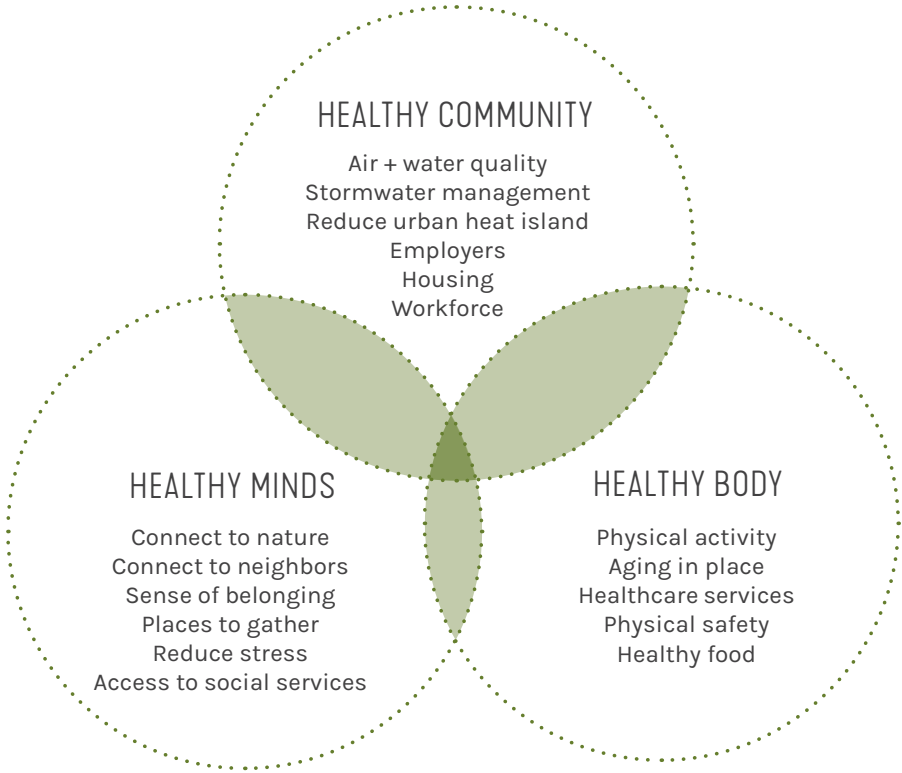
**Build long-term fiscal responsibility and resiliency to ensure success of public investment and public-private partnerships, resulting in development opportunities to complement the Heart of La Porte initiative.**

- Balance capital improvements with funding earmarked for maintenance and operations for the life-cycle of each project or program identified as a Heart of La Porte initiative
- Balance visionary ideas and initiatives with realistic and implementable strategies, goals and objectives designed for results that may be monitored, evaluated and re-assessed for continual yet long-term implementation.
- Leverage proximity to lakes and waterways as an economic driver.
- Seek public-private partnerships leveraging financial resources to expedite and implement Study Area goals wherever and whenever possible.

**METRICS FOR HEALTHY LIVING**

The Heart of La Porte Plan creates a vision to drive active living in NewPorte Landing, Clear Lake, and downtown by building infrastructure to support healthy lifestyle choices. Healthy communities integrate land use decisions with environmental amenities to yield healthy citizens. Healthy options should not be difficult choices, rather they should be normative behaviors available to the entire community. The Heart of La Porte is a long-term vision which identifies short-term redevelopment, placemaking, and recreation opportunities to create an environment for healthy living.

The success of this plan depends on identifying potential funding sources for catalytic projects. The Healthcare Foundation of La Porte, a potential funding source, has outlined three categories defining their holistic vision for healthy living: Healthy Minds, Body, and Community. Consideration of these metrics influenced the planning process described in the following report sections, leading to the recommended priority projects.





LOWER LAKE

Fox Park

FOX PARK

CLEAR LAKE

Chessier Trail

MCCLUNG RD

PARK ST

NEWPORTE LANDING

THE STITCH

WASHINGTON ST  
STATE ST

TIPSON ST

LILY LAKE

DOWNTOWN

HOSPITAL CAMPUS

# PLAN

# 1 THE PROJECT: THE HEART OF LAPORTE

## 'THE HEART' OF LA PORTE

La Porte's historic downtown and the surrounding natural lakes have always been the heart of the community. Like any living organism, a healthy La Porte requires this heart to be healthy. When the City began collaborating with the Health Foundation of La Porte to improve the health of City and county residents, this "heart" became a logical starting point due to the immense return on investment that could potentially be realized if approached holistically. While this evaluation would have historically centered around the formal downtown, today's leaders recognize the value of the broader district that defines this study area, including its blend of urban development, lakes, open spaces, neighborhoods, connections and reinvestment opportunities. By maximizing the quality of these environs, as outlined in this plan, residents of La Porte can enjoy a healthier community, healthier minds and healthier bodies.



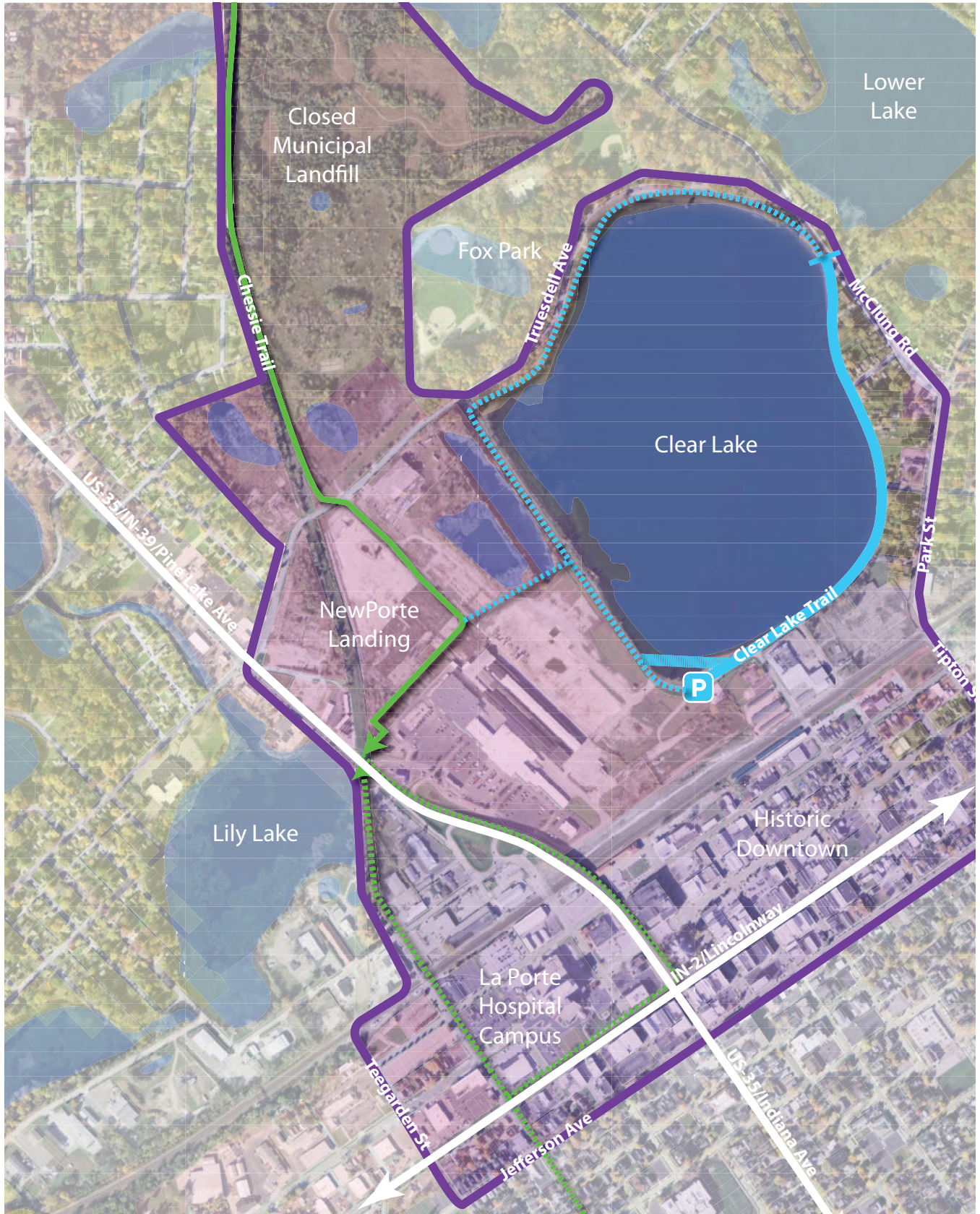
### PHYSICALLY:

- The Catalyst: Pumps life blood throughout body
- The Connector: Provides organs with what they need to function
- The Core: Circulation creates a cycle between the center and all parts

### METAPHORICALLY:

- The Start or Origin
- The Symbol for health
- The Source of emotion

This project creates a plan to drive active living in the Heart of La Porte. Specific focus districts within the study area include the historic downtown, hospital campus, NewPorte Landing, Clear Lake, and Fox Park. In addition to identifying a cohesive vision that connects these districts, the plan identifies several catalytic infrastructure projects which will be further designed in order to seek funding for implementation.



Study Area with Focus Districts

## WHY THIS PLAN? WHY NOW?

---

The City of La Porte encompasses 22,000 residents, located within a short 1.5-hour drive of downtown Chicago and a 20-minute drive to the Lake Michigan shoreline. Although surrounded by agriculture and low density residential land uses, the City itself has a relatively dense urban fabric of intersecting grids with short blocks and sidewalks. An incredible open space network featuring 5 lakes and 16 parks spread over 860 acres is located within the heart of the community. The dense urban fabric combined with the natural green space gives La Porte the potential to be a very walkable and bikeable community.

Despite these features, La Porte is trailing regional and national statistics defining health. This plan represents a step towards changing that statistic...engaging with the Healthcare Foundation to envision real transformations that will impact residents' lives. From redevelopment of the hospital site to trail connections, and lakefront recreation to green infrastructure management of stormwater, City and community leaders can take steps towards a healthier future.

## LA PORTE'S CURRENT STATE

---

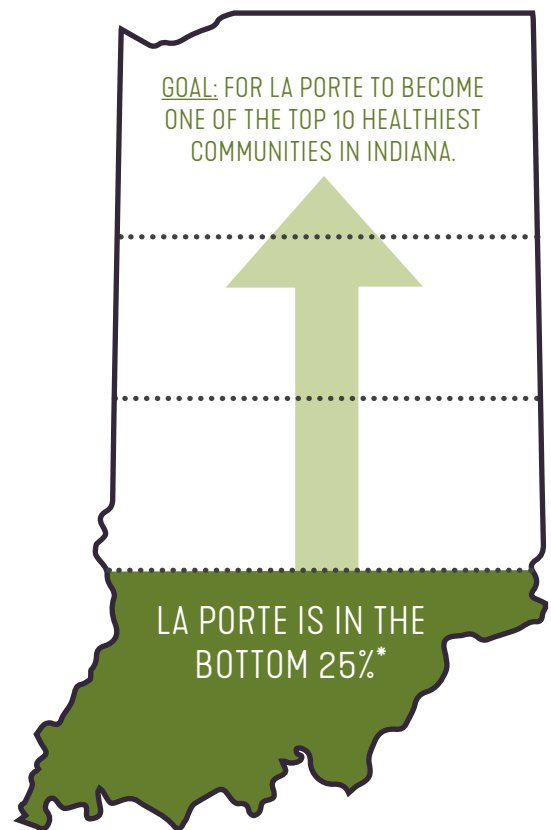
*SOURCE: THE HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION OF LA PORTE*

### About the Foundation:

"The Healthcare Foundation of La Porte (HFL) is dedicated to our mission of empowering residents to live healthy and well within the City of La Porte and surrounding areas. HFL identifies health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' as defined by the World Health Organization. We recognize that wellness is the 'active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence.'

HFL is committed to La Porte becoming one of the top 10 healthiest communities in Indiana. We envision partnering with many types of community organizations through thoughtful grant-making to invest in building a healthier community together."

The following statistics offer a perspective into the current state of La Porte's health. The metrics defined by the Healthcare Foundation of La Porte indicate La Porte is in the bottom 25% of Indiana counties in the following statistics. Furthermore, Indiana's values indicate the State is overall slightly less healthy than the US average.

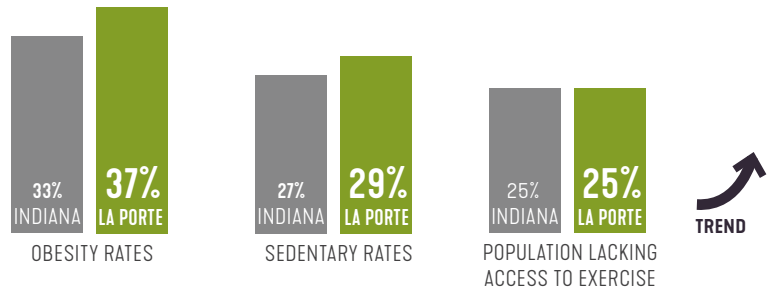


\*IN MOST MAJOR STATISTICAL AREAS MEASURING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE (AS DEFINED BY THE HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION OF LA PORTE) COMPARED TO OTHER INDIANA COUNTIES.

A primary focus of this plan is to enhance the physical environment and promote opportunities for recreation. These enhancements most directly target metrics for improving "Healthy Living," although this plan expresses how a focus on policy, priorities, and perspective will have a holistic impact on improving the overall health of the community.

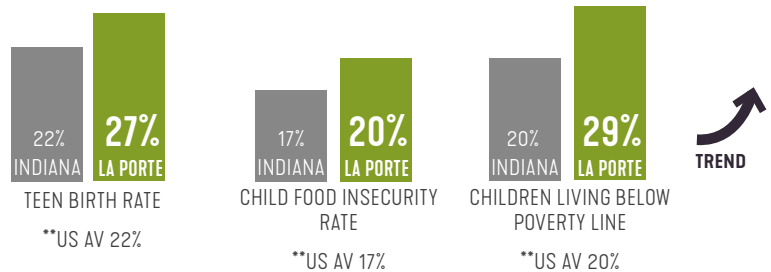
## HEALTHY LIVING

- Reducing obesity and weight-related chronic diseases
- Improving access to healthy foods, reducing food deserts
- Increasing community-wide focus on active living and fit lifestyles



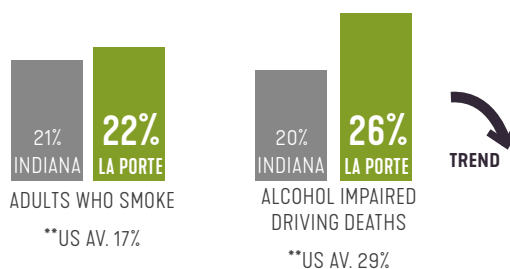
## HEALTHY CHILDREN

- Decreasing the number of low birth weight births
- Decreasing the number of pre-term births
- Reducing childhood obesity
- Reducing teen births
- Improving education about tobacco and drug usage and their consequences
- Increasing access to mental healthcare for children



## HEALTHY MINDS

- Increasing access to care for mental illnesses
- Increasing access to treatment for substance abuse
- Decreasing drug usage
- Decreasing tobacco usage
- Decreasing controlled substances dispensed
- Decreasing alcohol related driving accidents



## PAST COMMUNITY PLANNING EFFORTS

---

Prior plans and studies show the City of La Porte's proactive effort to develop a long range vision for the community, identifying the greatest assets to build upon while candidly looking at areas in need of transformation. These plans clearly depict a priority in investing in Downtown, Clear Lake, and parks, while creating non-motorized connections between areas. Below is a synopsis of previous plans and initiatives which provide the foundation we seek to build upon in this study.

### 5-YEAR PARK AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN (2018)

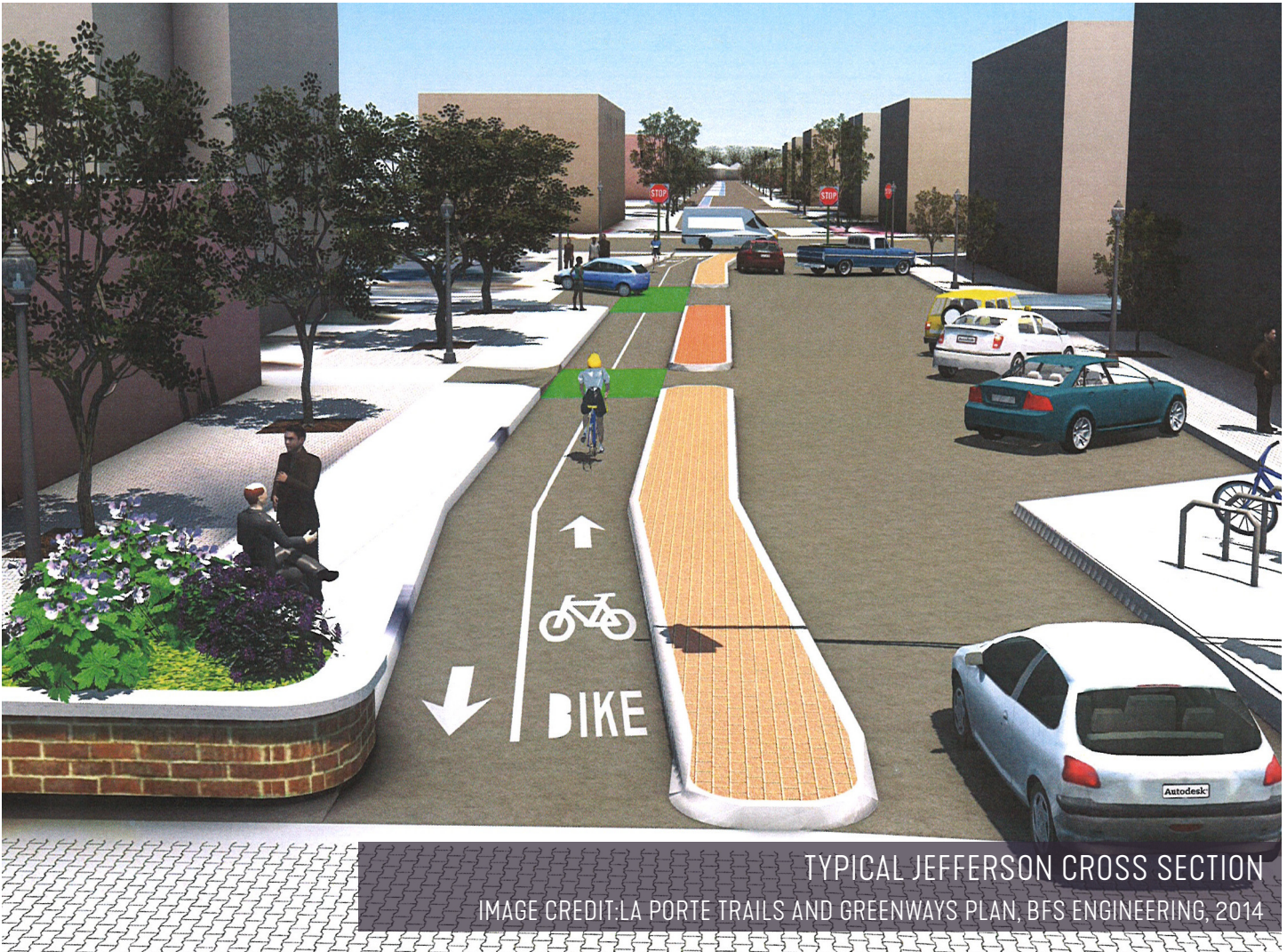
A central theme of the Park Master Plan is to improve the overall health and wellness of La Porte residents, establishing a set of tangible goals through a multitude of public outreach sessions. This plan addresses the condition of all parks in La Porte including the 170-acre Fox Park which is regarded as 'one of the finest' in the network. Imminent priorities for Fox Park include: constructing a Clear Lake bike loop, reconstruct Clear Lake Boulevard and shoreline, and connect the East Pond with Clear Lake using a wetland. This plan also identifies the YMCA as an important partner for recreation opportunities, as well as childcare and youth before and after school programs.

### YOUTH COUNCIL DOWNTOWN AND LAKES PLAN (2018)

In this plan, a team from Ball State identified seven initiatives highlighting and expanding opportunities to attract and retain local youth. The Heart of La Porte Plan seeks to build upon the following initiatives from the Youth Council: (1) expanding art and entertainment downtown, (2) building physical connections to Clear Lake, and (3) providing opportunities along the water. Other recreational opportunities identified by the Youth Council's plan that foster a healthier environment include developing a kayak/canoe rental, improving the ice skating rink, and connecting regionally through an expanded network of bike trails.

### GATEWAY CORRIDOR REVITALIZATION PLAN (2015)

This plan focused on enhancing major thoroughfares for La Porte by identifying roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements to enhance the function and aesthetic of the major gateways to the community. The Complete Streets Ordinance (2015) provided a basis for pedestrian improvements such as improving streetscape through enhanced crosswalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, bicycle lanes, and accessibility for all abilities. Other key initiatives of this plan included establishing Downtown as a vital economic hub, improving public access to the lakes, connecting Downtown to NewPorte Landing, and redeveloping vacant or underutilized parcels along Detroit Street north of Washington to Clear Lake, including housing, recreation, and entertainment options.

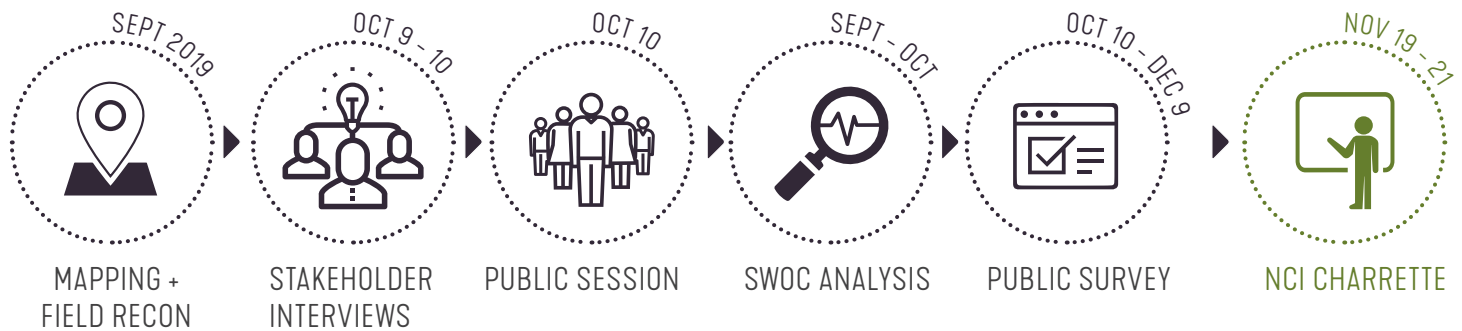


## LA PORTE TRAILS AND GREENWAYS PLAN (2014)

With improving community health as a primary design driver, the planning team identified main greenway corridors to serve as the initial structure to build into a complete network of shared-use trails, cycle tracks, and bike lanes. North of the railroad has space to accommodate distinct recreation corridors, while the urban fabric is tighter south of the railroad which lends itself better to a "Complete Streets" approach. This comprehensive study evaluated the Level-of-Service for all streets and identified opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian enhancements. Proposed improvements included a Clear Lake Loop Trail, a shared use trail along Tyler Street northward establishing the current Chessie Trail, and tying the Hospital Campus to NewPorte Landing with shared-use trails along Madison Street. The major improvement to Downtown included a two-way cycle track along Jefferson Avenue.



# 2 THE PROCESS: CRAFTING A SUCCESSFUL VISION



## A PROCESS OF ENGAGEMENT

Beginning with a kickoff meeting in September 2019, The Heart of La Porte featured a highly interactive process focused on gaining community participation and support. The team held a series of meetings with both the public and selected stakeholders, performed field reconnaissance, and conducted an online-based public survey. Collectively, analysis of this background research formed a foundation of understanding culminating in a three-day charrette at which plans and recommendations were developed.

### Pre-Charrette Participation

- October Stakeholder Interviews - 70 interviewees
- October Public Visioning Session - 70 participants
- Online Survey - 70 responses to date
- DIY Workshop Kits - 10 students and 2 kits to date
- DIY Tactical Urbanism - 14 urbanists



## MAPPING + FIELD RECON

A series of maps were produced to form a basis of understanding for what factors drive the social, physical, and economic makeup of La Porte. Differentiating factors for the community include:

- Downtown is nestled among a crescent of at least 6 major bodies of water, each with distinct character and recreational opportunities. (See Map 2 - Hydrology)
- La Porte has established local bikeways, and has an opportunity to connect regionally. (See Map 8 - Recreation)
- The historic downtown and most neighborhoods are located within a 5-minute walk from green spaces. (See Map 9 - Recreation)

*See Appendix A - Map Compendium for the complete set of analytical maps.*

*See Appendix B - Photo Map for site visit photograph of the study area.*



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Interviews with selected stakeholders provided the first exposure to the community. The team gained first-hand insight from vested members of the community including business owners, long-time residents, and City staff. This discussion formulated an impression of the current state of La Porte: what change carries the most impact, what limitations currently exist, what attributes the community wishes to build upon, and what perceptions the community wants to change.

Two days of meetings were held:

October 9: Hospital, Business Owners, Private Developers, Downtown Group

October 10: Arts Commission, Public Interest Redevelopment Group, Recreation Group, Infrastructure, Community Members

# HEART OF LA PORTE

A PLAN FOR HEALTHY LIVING

SWOC ANALYSIS

PINE LAKE

Passive Recreation

ACTIVE REC

LOWER LAKE

Low Density

Fox Park

"The Aesthetic Lake"

McCLUNG RD

Residential Redevelopment

Connect Chessie Regionally

PROJECT AREA

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Trailhead

Clear Lake

Primary destination. Provide: Trails, Art, Lighting, Activities, Parking, Paddle-craft,

New Overpass

PROJECT AREA

Create Destinations  
Improve Connections Between  
Facilitate Bike/Ped Experience

NPL

Potential Project Site

TRANSFORM

Kroger

Dunes Event Center

Housing + Mixed Use  
Destination Restaurants  
YMCA Downtown  
Need Entertainment

Relinquish from INDOT

LILY LAKE

Down town

At-grade trail crossing

PROJECT AREA

Old Hospital

New Hospital

YMCA

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Railroad is a major barrier

PROJECT AREA

PROJECT AREA

Lincolnway currently a barrier  
Alternative route for trucks

PROJECT AREA

Lincolnway

US-35/INDIANA AVE

JACKSON ST

CLAY ST

MIDWIDE ST

E STATE HIGHWAY

MICHIGAN AVE

DETROIT ST

JEFFERSON ST

PERRY ST

CHICAGO ST

MADISON ST

TEEGARDEN ST

PROJECT AREA

To Pine Lake

Chessie Trail

TRUESDELL AVE

CLEAR LAKE TRAIL

Park St

Washington St

Store St

Tippen St

DETROIT ST

CLAY ST

MIDWIDE ST

E STATE HIGHWAY

MICHIGAN AVE

DETROIT ST

CLAY ST

MADISON ST

TEEGARDEN ST



## PUBLIC SESSION

A public information session in October shared the Team's initial findings from analysis of mapping and interviews. Attendees provided feedback to calibrate the design team's findings and vetted priorities for the broader community. In this session, it became evident that Fox Park including Clear Lake is the primary natural amenity capable of drawing people from downtown while catalyzing development around the water's edge. Barriers for future development were highlighted such as soil remediation and lack of mixed use downtown.

*A public sign-in sheet for all attendees is contained in Appendix C.*



## SWOC ANALYSIS

The collective knowledge gathered in the initial phases was diagrammed to spatially understand both physical and perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges for the study area. A number of challenges were identified that the City has little to no control over, yet influence the success of a healthy La Porte, such as the railroad and truck traffic on Lincolnway. Close collaboration with agencies controlling these factors will be critical toward overcoming or mitigating these challenges.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Active and well maintained historic downtown with low vacancy rate
- Tremendous natural resources: an elaborate park network, trails, and lakes
- Active development in NewPorte Landing
- Community with deep interest in non-motorized circulation
- Dedication to on-going environmental remediation
- Collaboration with INDOT and railroad

### CHALLENGES

- Active railroad
- County Courthouse and Jail
- Existing hospital building
- Truck traffic along Lincolnway
- YMCA, including reuse of current building after relocation
- High water table along west Clear Lake with flood potential
- Basso industrial site, which is still operational but under-utilized
- Celebrate community legacy by transforming perception in a community with industrial roots



## PUBLIC SURVEY

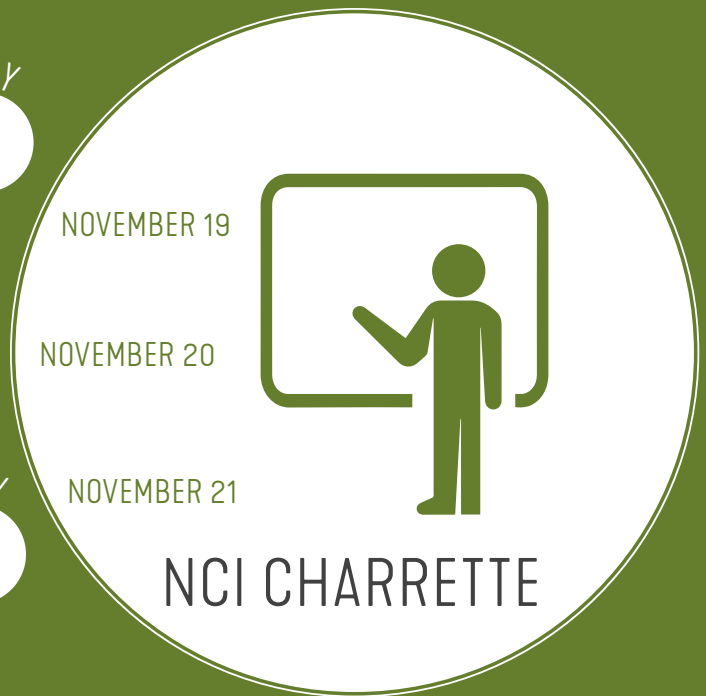
A survey was posted online to engage the public and learn more about the community's perceptions and values. 82 complete responses were logged with major takeaways highlighted below. Generally respondents favored initiatives to promote the lakes and parks, improve safety, and encourage a mixed use and active downtown.

### "WHAT ARE THE GREATEST ASSETS IN THE HEART OF LA PORTE?"



### "HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING AS PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HEART OF LA PORTE?"

	Unimportant	Not very Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Very Important		Responses
Safety	2	0	5	12	60	75.9%	79
Lake promotion	5	4	11	20	39	49.4%	79
Lake recreation	2	4	11	21	41	51.9%	79
Environmental remediation	2	2	9	18	48	60.8%	79
Downtown destinations	1	0	4	20	54	68.4%	79
Minimize truck traffic impacts	6	5	6	18	45	56.3%	80



CHARRETTE PARTICIPATION:

- Day 1 Site Visits - 10 walkers
- Day 1 Design the Heart of La Porte Board Game - 11 players
- Day 2 Drop In - 10 participants
- Day 3 Public Meeting - 50 participants

---

\*\*See Appendix C for list of participants



## NCI CHARRETTE

The charrette process is an opportunity for multiple disciplines to work collaboratively through an intensive, multi-day process in which participants are immersed in problem solving for an uninterrupted period of time. The National Charrette Institute formalizes this process of collaborative, shared learning among design professionals, City staff, and the public. Bringing a multitude of related disciplines together allows specialists to have cross-disciplinary work sessions to immediately develop strategic ideas, effectively breaking down silos, and converging disparate viewpoints into a unified solution. These ideas are shared with the public throughout the process to ensure ideas are specific, measurable, actionable, and relevant.

La Porte's 3-day charrette was an intense work session to dissect community goals and build consensus around a plan to enhance healthy living. The result is a publicly accepted Master Plan which identifies potential transformative projects. Many public meetings, walking tours, and stakeholder discussions took place over three days to ensure design propositions align with the City and the public's priorities.



DAY  
1

## VISIONING

The charrette's foundation relies on all team members arriving at a common understanding of site opportunities and challenges, then working together to create a design that achieves project goals. To launch the charrette process, members of the design team reviewed stakeholder feedback from previous meetings, survey responses, and the SWOC exercise. Discussions with City staff to review previously gathered information formed a collective understanding of the planning area among all team members. Assumptions were additionally vetted with public walking tours of three primary area: Clear Lake / NewPorte Landing, Downtown, and the Hospital Campus. A public meeting provided citizens an opportunity to review collected data before proceeding with targeted design interventions.



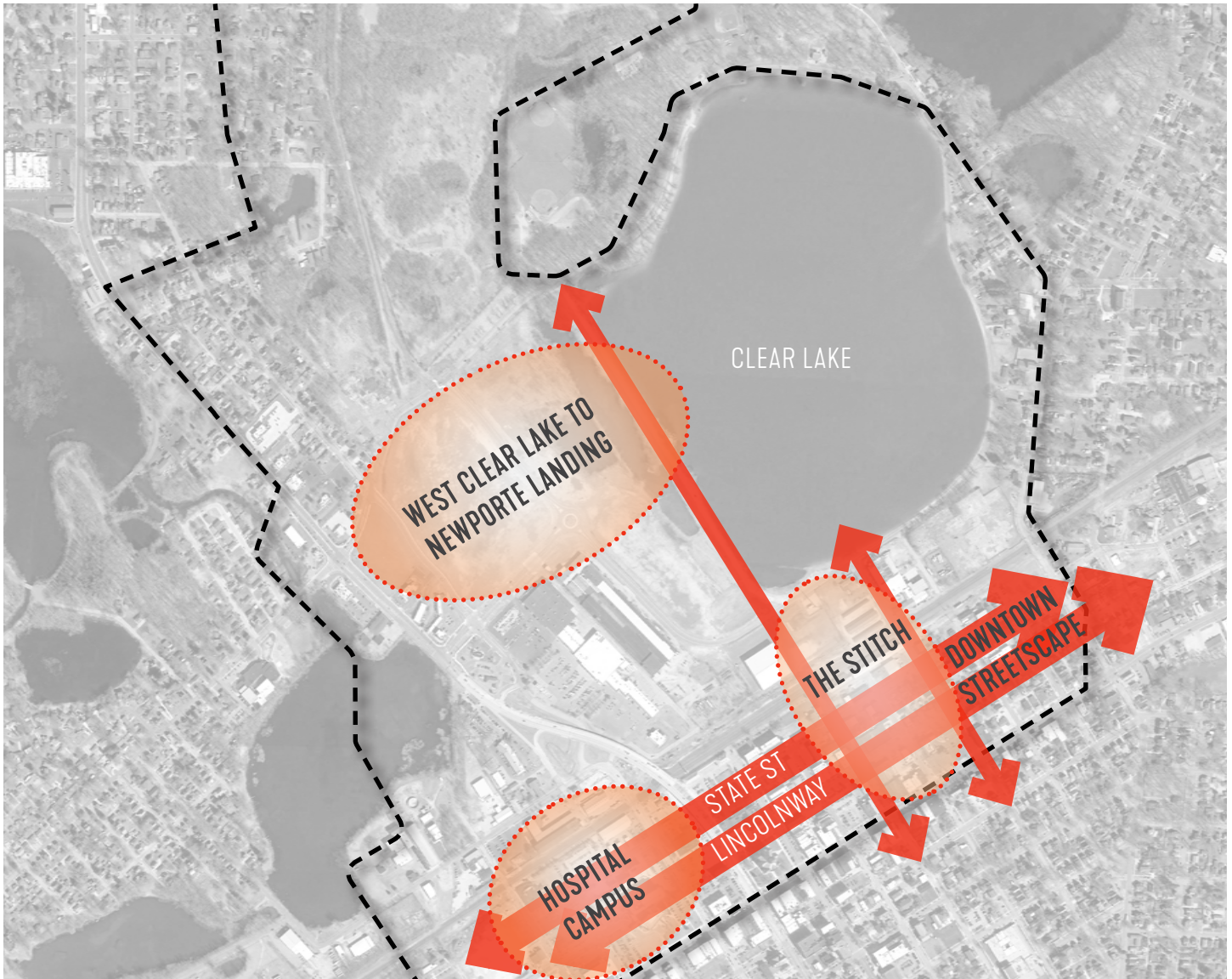


DAY  
**2**

## ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

Day 2 furthered the team’s collective understanding through an open house style work day. Several distinct alternatives were developed for each subarea linked by an overall framework plan to ensure consistency with overall project goals for healthy living. At the conclusion of the day, these alternatives were presented to the public with a voting session to determine preferred alternatives.

*See Appendix D - Public Voting on Charrette Alternatives for subarea alternatives and corresponding public voting scorecards.*

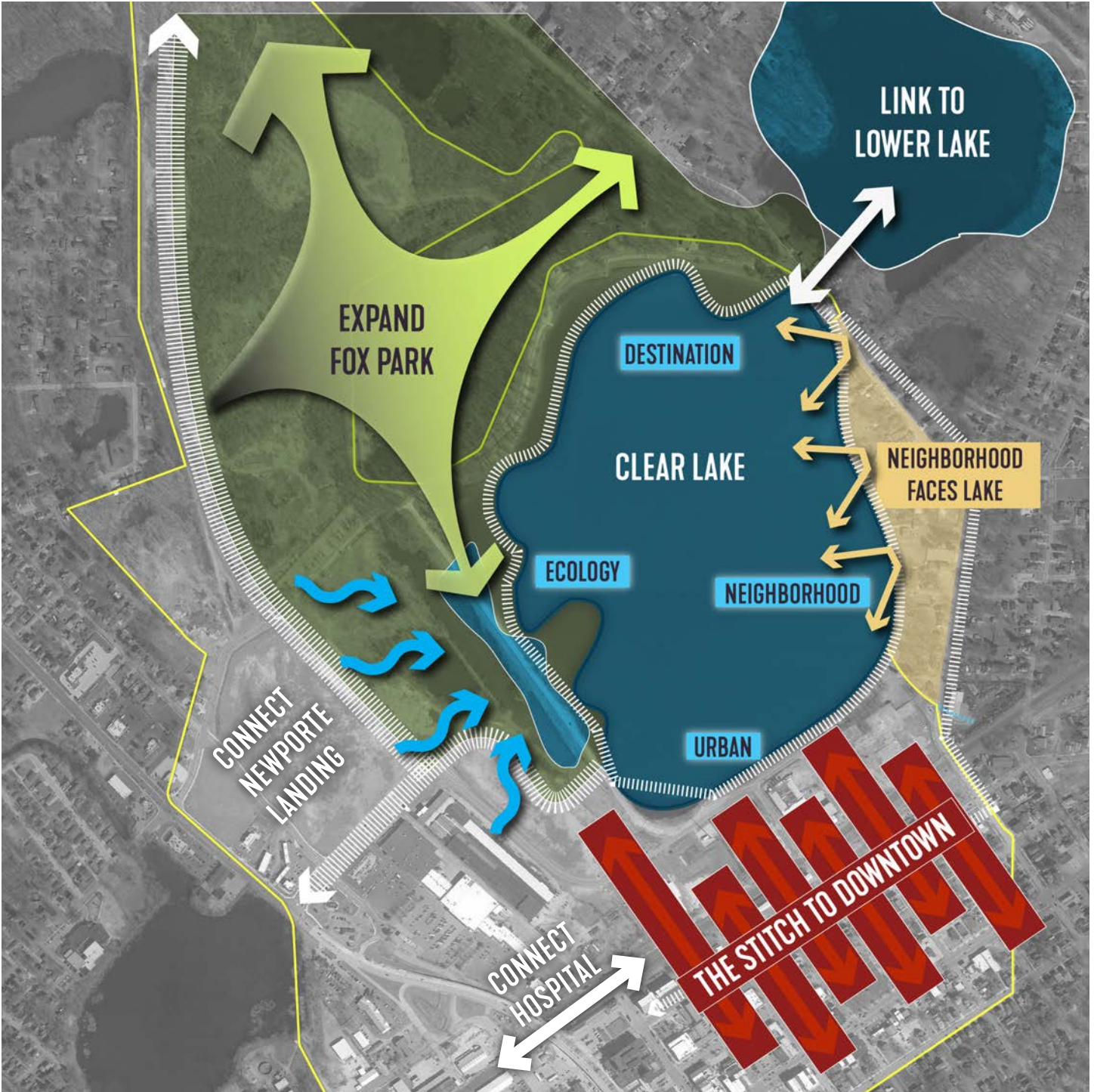




DAY  
**3**

*PRELIMINARY MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT*

On Day 3, the Team refined the ideas preferred by the public on Day 2 into a singular Master Plan for the entire study area. The plan focused on the framework conceptualized on Day 1, expanding the presence of Fox Park and stitching the downtown fabric to Clear Lake.





### OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK SKETCH

Fox Park and neighboring ponds and natural areas were considered as a connected whole. Green corridor fingers were extended to NewPorte Landing and Downtown, the edges of Clear Lake were reshaped, restored, and activated, Fox Park's program was reorganized, and its trails and drives were realigned to improve park access and slow thru vehicle traffic.

# 3 THE PLAN: RECOMMENDATIONS TO FUEL LA PORTE FORWARD

The Heart of La Porte plan is comprised of six districts: Fox Park, Clear Lake, The Stitch, Downtown, the Hospital Campus, and NewPorte Landing. Collectively, plans for these districts build upon the momentum created by the public infrastructure and right-of-way improvements and the private redevelopment projects recently completed at NewPorte Landing. They also leverage and engage recent public investment in Downtown – such as Plaza 618 – and public trails around Clear Lake and within Fox Park.

The proposed improvements within each of these districts target specific goals related to healthy living, including environmental restoration, recreation, community connectivity, and redevelopment. They prioritize and encourage alternative modes of transportation (walking, running, cycling); extend open space corridors to break down or leap over barriers; reestablish the urban fabric where large scale redevelopment opportunities present themselves; and propose appropriate redevelopment typologies at implementable scales.

Taken as a whole, these districts extend downtown La Porte and connect it to some of the City’s greatest assets – the lakes and the open space corridors that connect them – by utilizing mixed use development and green corridors.

## DISTRICTS:

**FOX PARK**














**CLEAR LAKE**

**THE STITCH**

**DOWNTOWN**

**HOSPITAL CAMPUS**

**NEWPORTE LANDING**

-  MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
-  RESIDENTIAL ZONE
-  FORMER HOSPITAL LOCATION
-  PUBLIC GREENSPACE
-  RECREATION FIELDS
-  POTENTIAL COMMUNITY CENTER
-  BUILDING MASS
-  PARKING
-  WATERSIDE AMENITY
-  CHERRY TREE PROMENADE
-  TRAILS
-  STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS
-  PUBLIC GREENSPACE + PLAZA



LOWER LAKE

Fox Park

FOX PARK

CLEAR LAKE

Chessier Trail

MCCLUNG RD

PARK ST

NEWPORTE LANDING

THE STITCH

WASHINGTON ST  
STATE ST

TIPSON ST

LILY LAKE

HOSPITAL CAMPUS

DOWNTOWN

# PLAN

MONROE ST / E STATE ST  
JEFFERSON ST  
MICHIGAN  
US  
POLIT ST  
WILSON ST  
POLY ST



Fox Park is a treasured community resource and destination for many generations of La Porte residents and visitors. Today, it represents one of the strongest assets to leverage in the City’s pursuit of a healthier community and a more vibrant Clear Lake environment. The community showed overwhelming support for investments in this park that will enhance existing amenities through expanded recreational offerings and connections. Integrating adjacent open space associated with the previously decommissioned landfill will expand the size of the park, with additional passive open space, nature-oriented trails and activities, and better engagement of Clear Lake. An alternative concept illustrates the potential to integrate residential development at the fringe of the park, leveraging the unique park address and providing additional economic development and population growth benefits.



# FOX PARK

## ALTERNATIVE - SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

### DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

- 1
 Expand Fox Park to encompass adjacent landfill and the East Pond wetland.
- 2
 Incorporate new Polk Street connection to improve park mobility and functionality, including the removal of thru traffic on Truesdell Avenue.
- 3
 Reconfigure Truesdell Avenue and the adjacent shoreline to improve character and trail connectivity.
- 4
 Relocate selected sports fields to improve functional relationships and allow for improved parking and service for park events and attractions, including the amphitheater.
- 5
 Implement priority recommendations from the City's existing Five-Year Park and Recreation Master Plan (2018-2022).





# CLEAR LAKE

## DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

- 1 Complete the Clear Lake trail loop.
- 2 Restore the west lake edge as an ecological and water quality demonstration project.
- 3 Improve adjacent wetlands and stormwater tributaries to improve ecological function, water quality and aesthetics.
- 4 Provide public amenities to support land and water-based recreation around the lake.
- 5 Relocate the existing boat launch to a more effective location along the west lake edge.
- 6 Enhance existing and create new residential addresses on Clear Lake Boulevard that leverage and engage Clear Lake frontage and contribute positively to the public lake edge experience.



PICNIC AT THE LAKE **A**

- BOARDWALKS
  - WATERSIDE AMENITY
  - PUBLIC GREENSPACE
  - LAKESIDE HABITAT
- RESIDENTIAL ZONING
  - PARKING
  - RECONFIGURED TRUESDELL AVE.
  - TRAILS

A reimagined Clear Lake is the centerpiece of a healthy Heart of La Porte. Lake-related improvements provide the catalyst for new and improved adjacent neighborhoods, mixed use development and community destinations that engage the shoreline and its continuous ribbon of trails and public green space. A diversity of shoreline treatments and amenities, including accessible edges, piers and potential water-based recreation will enliven the lake as La Porte’s next great address, and provide the environment for outdoor healthy living and fitness.



**A** ACTIVE RECREATION ALONG THE WATER'S EDGE



**B** DUNES CENTER VOLLEYBALL AT THE LAKE

Downtown and the water's edge of Clear Lake are separated by less than a quarter mile, yet an intuitive, accessible, and safe route between is not evident. An active railroad and busy streets serve as major barriers to mobility. When coupled with a lack of destinations on Clear Lake, most pedestrians aren't encouraged to make this venture. 'The Stitch' provides a conduit between a newly catalyzed Downtown and La Porte's most obvious and inherent natural amenity in Clear Lake along Detroit and Monroe Streets. Public input emphasized the ability to walk and bike from Downtown to Clear Lake and adjacent Fox Park through a sequence of destinations, allowing for exploration throughout the Heart of La Porte. Providing access and creating waterfront destinations are crucial for stimulating a healthy future consistent with the opportunities recognized by the community. The Stitch is not merely an accessible route but rather references the entire development on south Clear Lake, including new and existing destinations.



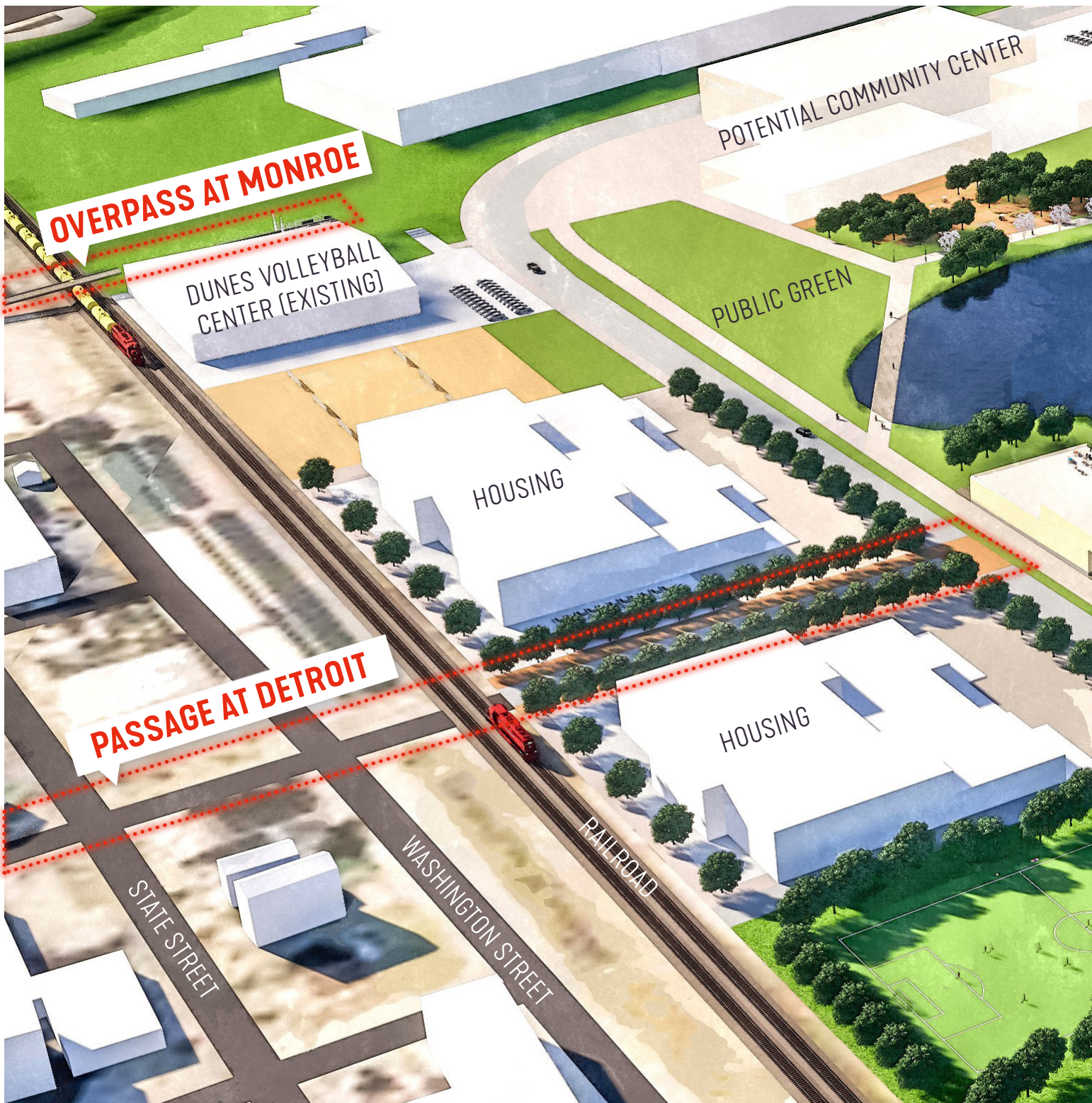
- WATERSIDE AMENITY BUILDING
- DESTINATION NODES
- PUBLIC GREENSPACE
- RECREATION FIELDS
- PARKING

# THE STITCH

## OVERALL CONCEPT

### DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

- 1
 Improve the physical and visual connectivity between Downtown and Clear Lake.
- 2
 Maximize vehicular and pedestrian connections across the existing railroad corridor, including at -grade and grade-separated solutions.
- 3
 Create a signature pedestrian link as the northern terminus of a new Monroe Street Mall, linking Clear Lake and public plazas at Lincolnway
- 4
 Maximize infill development north and south of the railroad corridor, including new and adaptive reuse opportunities
- 5
 Enhance existing and create new residential addresses on Clear Lake Boulevard that leverage and engage Clear Lake frontage and contribute positively to the public lake edge experience.



The Stitch pedestrian overpass will create a vibrant destination unto itself while providing safe access between two anchors, Downtown and Clear Lake. One of only a few elevated features with public access, The Stitch will serve as a branded symbol to residents and visitors alike that the community values pedestrian mobility and safety. This architectural feature will be a high point for viewing and enhancing legibility of Downtown, Clear Lake, and NewPorte Landing. The Stitch will enhance existing amenities, such as the activity generated from the Dunes Volleyball Center, while creating new destinations with dining, housing, and recreational options.



CHERRY TREE PROMENADE

DINING/  
ENTERTAINMENT  
VENUE

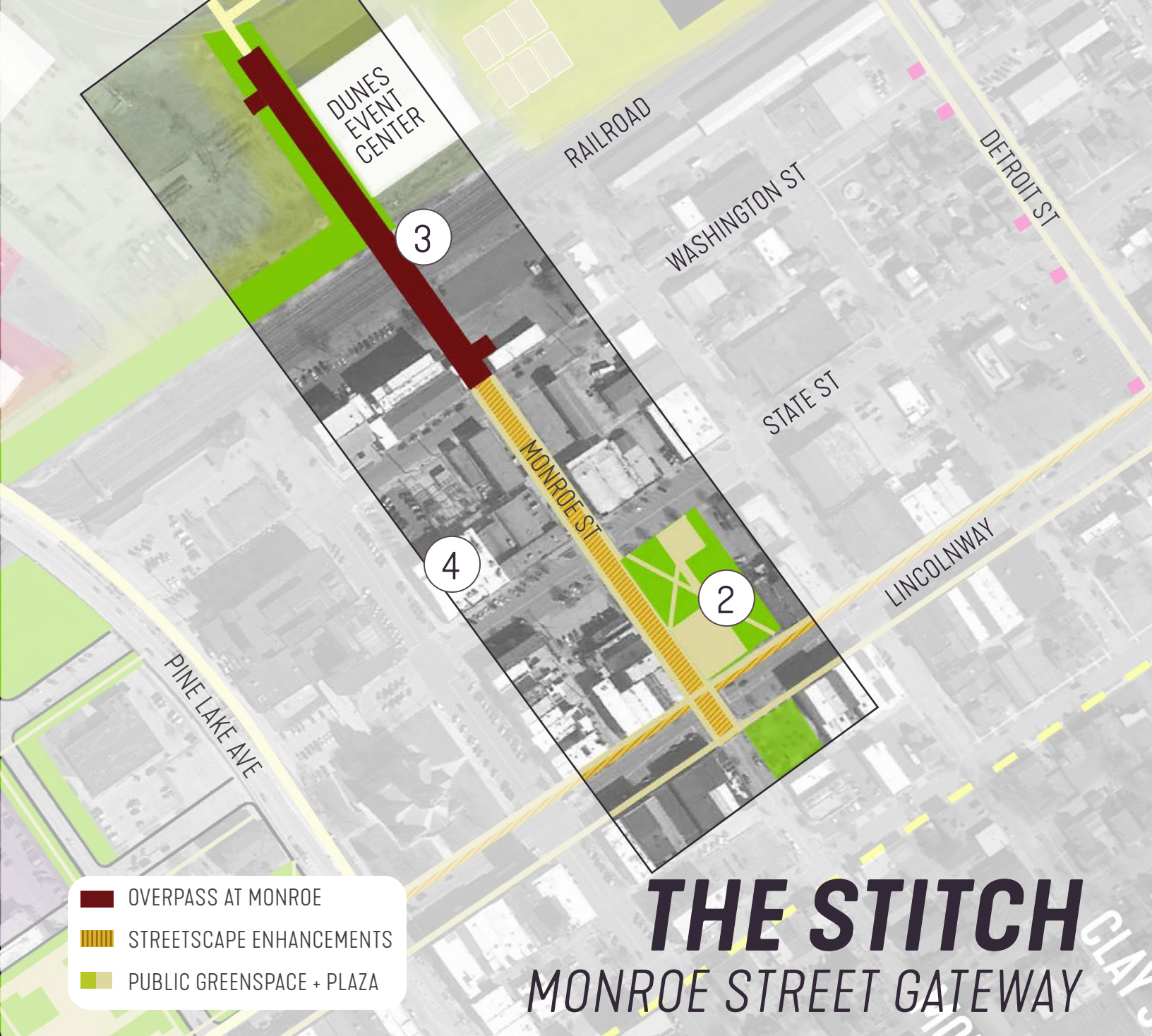
CLEAR LAKE




CLEAR LAKE LOOP TRAIL  
CLEAR LAKE BOULEVARD

NEW REC FIELDS

LAKESIDE DINING - AN ICONIC DRAW FROM DOWNTOWN TO  
LA PORTE'S GREATEST NATURAL AMENITY, CLEAR LAKE









-  OVERPASS AT MONROE
-  STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS
-  PUBLIC GREENSPACE + PLAZA

# THE STITCH

## MONROE STREET GATEWAY

### DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

-  Create a strong urban link along Monroe Street between Downtown and attractions at Clear Lake and NewPorte Landing, including the Dunes Event Center.
-  Convert all or a portion of the existing municipal lot at Monroe and Lincolnway into a multi-purpose, year-round civic event space that complements adjacent Plaza 618.
-  Build a signature pedestrian bridge link over the railroad at the northern terminus of Monroe Street.
-  Integrate the proposed new bridge link and mall into existing historic structures and environs along the corridor and around the historic depot as a catalyst for adaptive re-use and redevelopment of these parcels.



## CONCEPTUAL SKETCH EXPLORING LAKE CONNECTIONS

The Monroe Street Gateway envisions linking the downtown core with the lake through an overpass in combination with holistic strategies to enhance the pedestrian experience including: improving the streetscape character along Lincolnway, repurposing the municipal parking lot into a new civic event plaza, relocating public parking, and integrating new development along the railroad. The new event plaza will complement the existing 618 plaza and create a threshold of public space along Lincolnway. These spaces will serve community functions such as farmer's markets, art fairs, exhibitions, or celebrations. Public spaces will provide sanctuary for the pedestrian while reorienting foot traffic north and south along the gateway. The significant architectural symbol will encourage pedestrians to travel 'The Stitch' and beyond to Clear Lake.





- WATERSIDE AMENITY BUILDING
- DESTINATION NODES
- PUBLIC GREENSPACE
- RECREATION FIELDS
- PARKING

# THE STITCH

## DETROIT STREET CORRIDOR

### DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

- 1

Enhance the connection between Clear Lake and La Porte Civic Auditorium along Detroit Street as a cultural streetscape and bike boulevard linkage.
- 2

Create a public amenity at the intersection of Clear Lake Boulevard and Detroit Street as a community draw and terminus of this axis, including a potential water-oriented facility with second floor restaurant and community space.
- 3

Enhance pedestrian connectivity to Clear Lake along Detroit Street through a grade-separated underpass option.



A

## WATERFRONT DESTINATIONS - LIVE, WORK, AND DINE ALL ALONG THE WATER'S EDGE

Currently Detroit Street is the only street crossing the railroad within the 1/2-mile stretch west of Pine Lake Avenue until Tipton Street eight blocks away. The Tipton Street overpass project plans to close the railroad crossing at Detroit to vehicular traffic further emphasizing the need for pedestrian access and connection. Logical solutions include going over or under the railroad. An underpass is preferred for a number of reasons: functions well with existing grade, public interest, ease of construction, and budget. Detroit Street rises to the railroad, so carving under would open views to Clear Lake and beyond. Additionally, streetscape improvements along Detroit St would enhance the pedestrian environment from Clear Lake, through Downtown, onward to the Civic Auditorium.





LAKESIDE DINING - AN ICONIC DRAW FROM DOWNTOWN TO LA PORTE'S GREATEST NATURAL AMENITY, CLEAR LAKE

The public unanimously agreed the truck traffic of Lincolnway does not create a pleasant experience for pedestrians, al fresco dining, or community gathering due to noise and air pollution. Many residents preferred an alternative cross section with improvements, including a reduction or elimination of parking along Lincolnway, an expansion of sidewalks or vegetated buffer space between the street and walk, improved sidewalks, and clearly defined and accessible crosswalks. Many improvements focused on fostering a walkable environment by reducing the amount of parking along Lincolnway. This approach was supported by the public and was not seen as threatening to businesses. Promoting a walkable environment with a series of destinations provides links from Downtown to surrounding districts (Clear Lake, Hospital Campus, NewPorte Landing) and creates a holistic vision for healthy living. See Appendix D for detailed cross section drawings and public preference on each alternative.

The Downtown district has many positive characteristics to build upon, including well-maintained historic structures, a low vacancy rate, and many active local businesses. The BID and Facade Grant Program have maintained the historic downtown well and established a character for the community. The BID boundary should expand to include both existing and future hospital sites, which will then provide consistent maintenance and aesthetics serving as a visual connection through the downtown corridor.

State Street has a cross section desired by residents. This corridor has significantly less activity and business, but provides streetscape elements including brick crosswalks and lush plantings streetside that create a pleasant environment for ambling. The public preferred that State Street serve as the primary bike route through Downtown rather than Lincolnway. Additionally, the public felt safer parking on a side street rather than Lincolnway due to truck volumes and parallel stalls. The ultimate goal for the Section of Lincolnway would be to reduce to a 3-lane section with a two way left turn lane and angled parking on both sides of the street. The traffic volumes would need to be reduced to an AADT of 18,000 or less in order to make this feasible.

Improvements to the infrastructure of Lincolnway is a long-term investment. Temporary or tactical improvements should be considered before embarking on major physical interventions. These interventions are low cost and seek temporary transformations in the built environment, including converting parking stalls to outdoor dining, pop-up cafes/parks, street bumpouts, or depaving. Many efforts are currently in deployment by an impromptu group of tactical urbanists to promote bikeability and reduce reliance on the automobile.

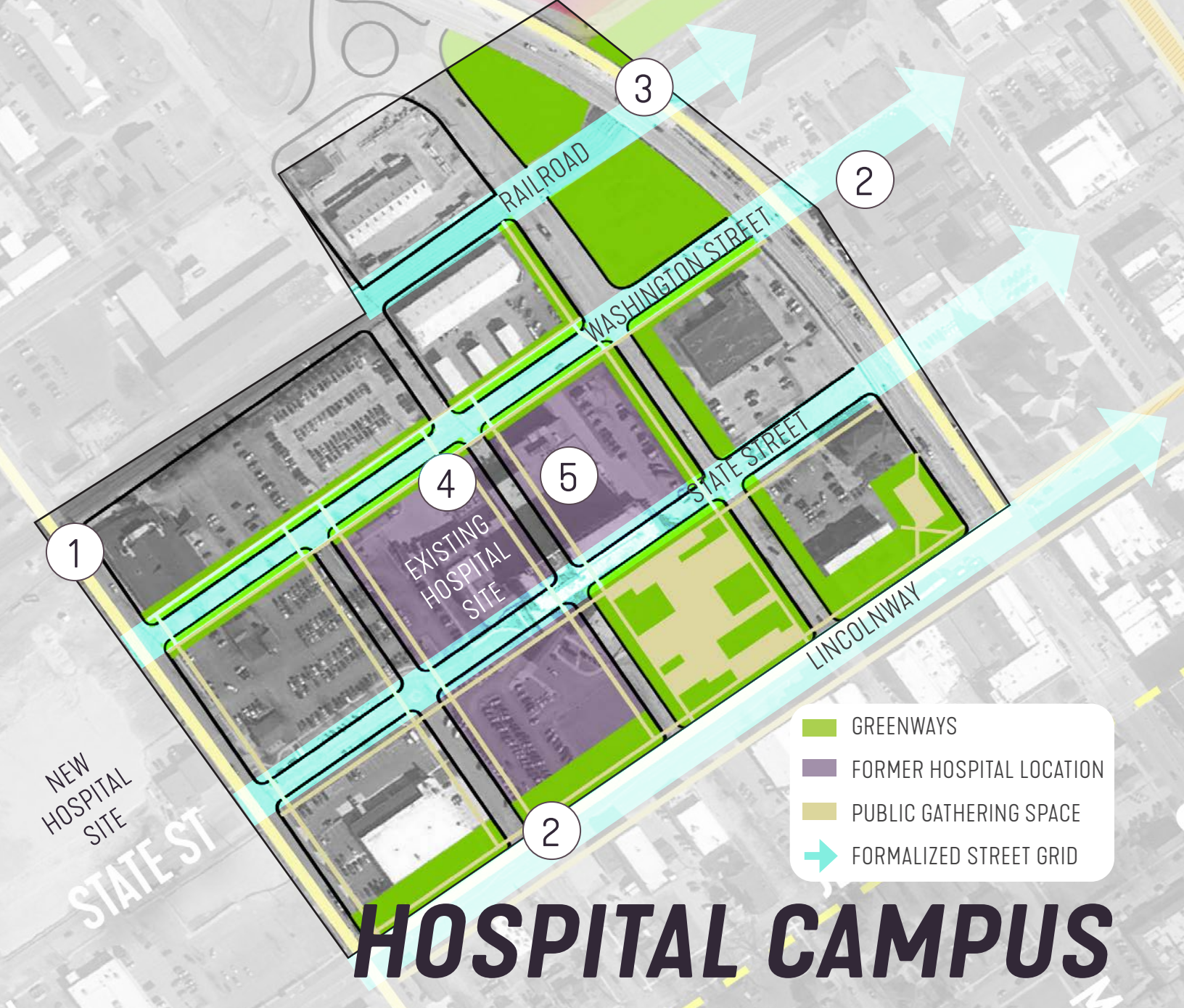
# DOWNTOWN



IMPROVING THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT ALONG LINCOLNWAY IS ONE OF THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOWNTOWN.

## DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

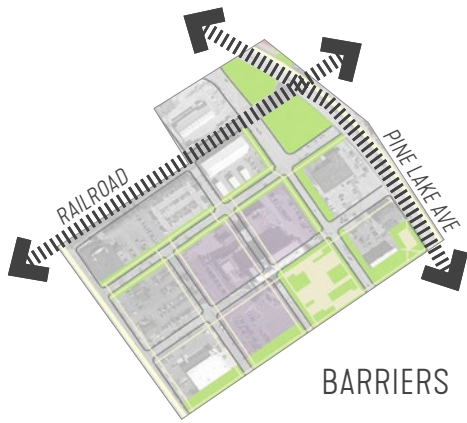
- 1 Support a vibrant mixed-use Downtown with live/ work/ play opportunities that promote a healthy community and local culture.
- 2 Support high quality housing for all ages and incomes. Limit displacement of seniors, retirees, professionals, families, and temporary employees.
- 3 Expand BID to the western side of Tyler Street.
- 4 Pursue a viable truck diversion route alleviating vehicular congestion along Lincolnway. In the interim, remove parking along Lincolnway and expand sidewalks to include more walking space and vegetated buffer between people and cars.
- 5 Transform sidewalks into pedestrian greenways with street trees, plants with seasonal interest, and light levels to support personal security all hours. Streetscaping should be combined with green infrastructure to support a healthy environment.



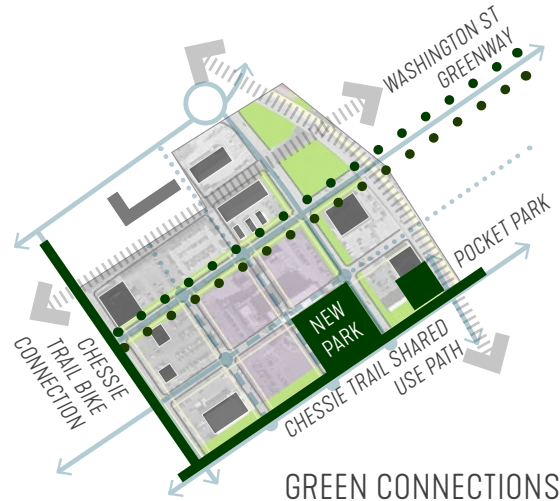
# HOSPITAL CAMPUS

## DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

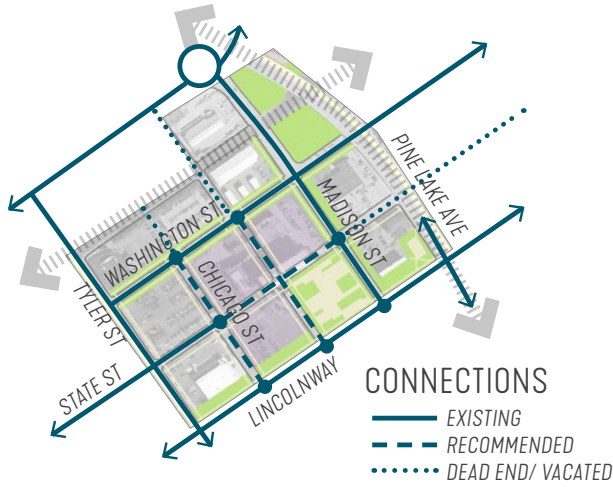
- 1 Implement construction of future phases of the Chessie Trail, including both the upper and lower route.
- 2 Reestablish an urban grid pattern as a framework for redevelopment, including a Washington Avenue complete street enhancement.
- 3 Leverage the existing Pine Lake Road underpass as an active green space and link to Clear Lake and the Dunes Event Center.
- 4 Demolish the existing hospital structure in line with phased relocation to the new hospital complex.
- 5 Commission a focused development planning effort that is informed by a detailed market study, to potential include mixed use, residential, social services, senior center and prominent civic event space.
- 6 Clarify the lead party to champion this process.



BARRIERS

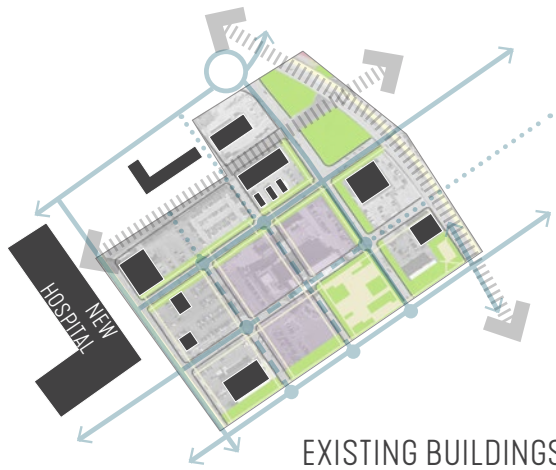


GREEN CONNECTIONS AND OPEN SPACE

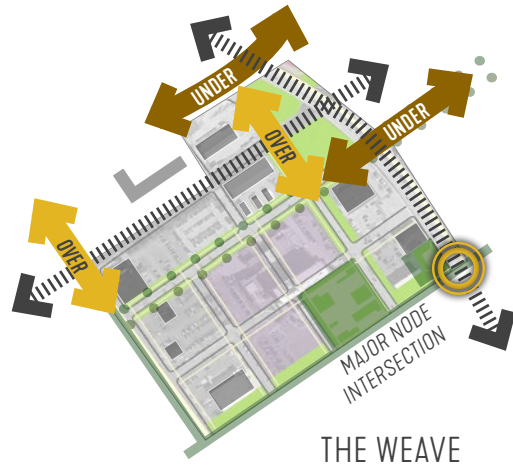


CONNECTIONS

- EXISTING
- - - RECOMMENDED
- ..... DEAD END/ VACATED



EXISTING BUILDINGS



THE WEAVE

Upon completion of the new hospital, the vacated building should be demolished to provide developable land that can serve the hospital district and provide an extension to Downtown. The area is envisioned for urban-style development, with buildings facing the street and parking not facing Lincolnway. The uses are planned to be complementary to the hospital – ancillary medical commercial, fitness and recreation, senior and homeless services and/or housing, a civic square, and townhomes. The building design in the hospital district can be more contemporary than the historic facades of downtown, but should provide a logical transition to the "main street" character in terms of articulation and scale.





**A** CHERRY TREE PROMENADE

- MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
  - WATERSIDE AMENITY
  - PUBLIC GREENSPACE
  - LAKESIDE HABITAT
- POTENTIAL COMMUNITY CENTER
  - BUILDING MASS
  - CHERRY TREE PROMENADE
  - TRAILS

NewPorte Landing is intended for planned development that is complementary to, not duplicative of, the historic Downtown. The area is intended to accommodate bigger box commercial and franchises while blending recreational and residential uses in a "lifestyle center" character. The mixture of uses is planned to be both vertical and horizontal. Quality site design is prioritized with buildings fronting the street, parking screened and preferred in side and rear yards, and walkable streets to connect to Clear Lake and Downtown. Concepts under this planning effort focused on the final phases of development, with recommended refinements to achieve a development niche that complements nearby neighborhoods while leveraging the adjacent lakeshore and open space.



DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

- 1 Build out remaining retail, office, personal service and residential building sites.
- 2 Attract a recreation-focused community center that leverages Clear Lake adjacency and becomes a destination focus point of the Monroe Street Greenway and pedestrian overpass.
- 3 Interface with the improved eastern shoreline of Clear Lake.
- 4 Implement stormwater and other green infrastructure best practices to improve Clear Lake water quality and character.
- 5 Enhance Truesdell Avenue as a park entrance road and the Pine Lake Boulevard gateway.

# 4

## THE PROPOSED: TARGETED INTERVENTIONS FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

The most immediate actions the City can take to shape the vision of this plan include recommendations for capital improvements to Fox Park, infrastructure, street design, and future plaza space. The investment in public infrastructure demonstrated by NewPorte Landing can extend to improvements in Fox Park and the Hospital District, as well as efforts to refresh Downtown's aging streetscapes. As these areas are prioritized for infrastructure improvements, establishing a common design "language" will help knit the fabric of the community together these areas to create a cohesive "Heart of La Porte." Public investment in these amenities will make the area more desirable for future investment by the private sector.

Recommendations are provided for the following categories of public improvements:

- A. NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION**
- B. VEHICULAR CIRCULATION**
- C. STREETScape AMENITIES AND FURNITURE**
- D. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**
- E. RECREATION**
- F. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY**
- G. REMEDIATION**



## A. NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION

---

A transportation system must serve user needs for all modes of travel including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. In some cases, lower vehicle speeds may promote integrated bicycle and pedestrian mobility, while in other places, wider vehicle lanes and higher speeds may be needed to facilitate efficient movement of vehicles and goods. The design of transportation systems must also reflect the context of adjacent land uses. Nationally, this approach is often referred to as "complete streets," harmonizing streets with their surroundings while interlacing transportation networks to meet the mobility needs of all users.

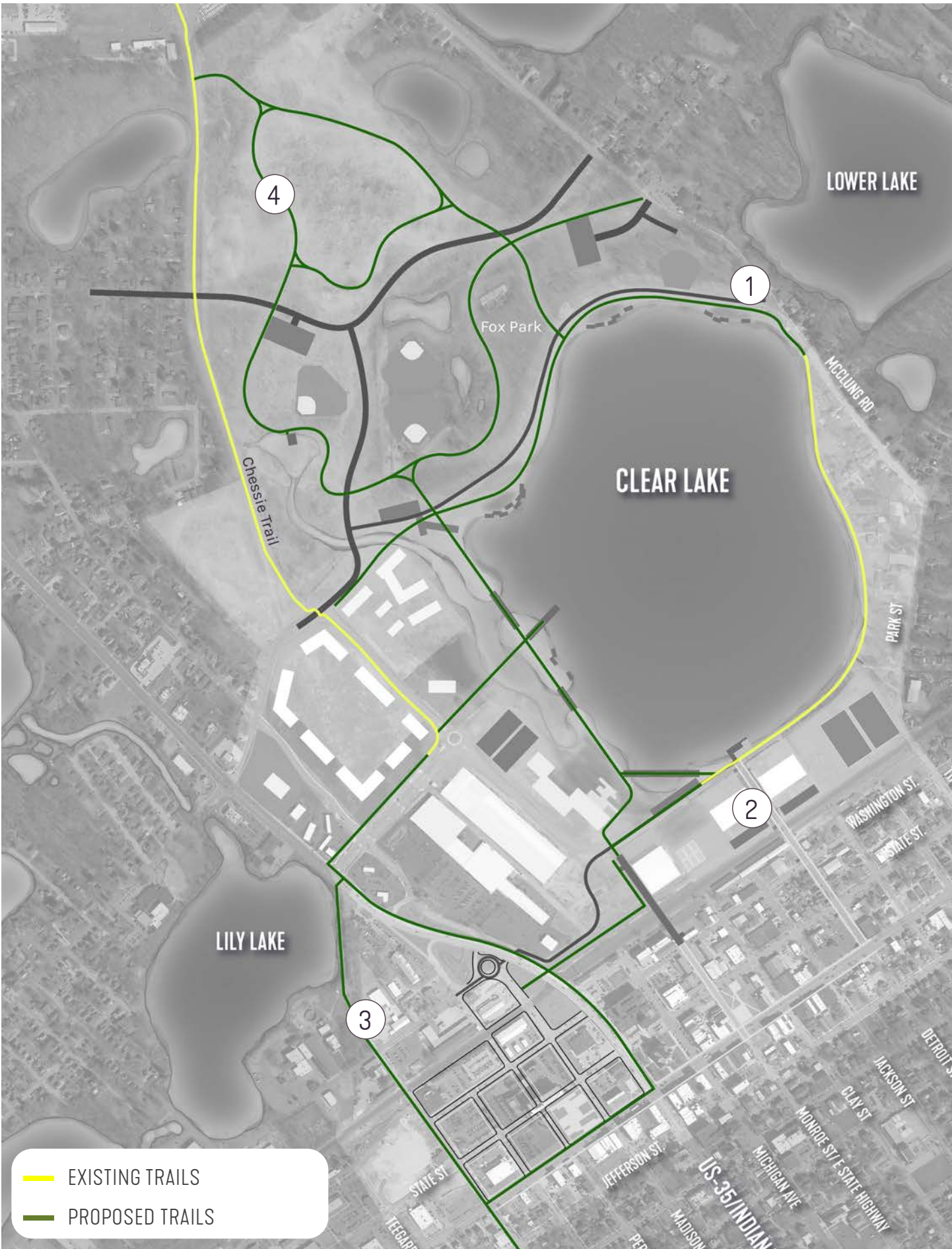
Research demonstrates pedestrian and bike-friendly cities have higher economic vitality. Continuing to provide and invest in a non-motorized transportation system is a priority for La Porte residents and City leaders, including many such as:

- Facilitating connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Improving pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and non-motorized users.
- Providing options to make fewer driving trips, saving money and resources.
- Improving health and fitness through walking and bicycling.

This plan supports the citywide goal from the 2015 Gateway Corridor Revitalization Plan of establishing a connected network of urban greenway corridors encouraging walkable and bikeable linkages between neighborhoods, attractions, open space amenities, and regional trails. Urban greenways in this complete streets system are comprised of a variety of multi-modal design typologies for pedestrians and bicyclists that vary based on context.

### SPECIFIC PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION

- 1 Complete the Clear Lake Trail loop.
- 2 Stitch Downtown and Clear Lake with connections over the railroad.
- 3 Complete the Chessie Trail to connect with the hospital campus.
- 4 Promote exploration and recreation with an internal Fox Park trail network.



## B. VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

---

Enhancements to the street network will improve pedestrian and vehicular safety, slow traffic, reduce conflicts, and better connect the different subareas within the Heart of La Porte. In particular, design of intersections should consider the following best practices:

- Improve pedestrian comfort and safety at intersections, including physical (i.e. bump outs) and operational (i.e. light timing) improvements.
- Consider alternatives to improve pedestrian experience, character and microclimate, including reduction of road-generated noise and pollution.
- Use temporary or tactical improvements to test modifications before embarking on major physical changes.
- Consider roundabouts at Madison Street under U.S. Highway 35 / State Road 39 and at street realignments in Fox Park to help reduce congestion and serve as gateway features.

Bridges and viaducts play a key role in community connectivity given the diverse transportation conflicts. Improvements should target:

- Minimizing at-grade crossings to create rail crossing quiet zones.
- Leveraging existing bridges and underpasses to facilitate urban greenways and broader community connectivity, such as U.S. Highway 35/Indiana Avenue and the Pine Lake Avenue link between the old hospital campus and Clear Lake.

The design of crosswalks is critical to ensure proper safety for pedestrians and vehicles, especially for interactions at mid-block locations. Safety hazards exist whenever pedestrians or bicyclists intersect with individual driveways or where they meet at an intersection. Several crosswalks have been enhanced throughout Downtown, but many more need improvement to increase user safety. Crosswalk improvements should consider the following best practices:

- Install pavement markings to clearly indicate where pedestrian activity will occur, and to prevent vehicles from blocking these areas.
- Use colored or decorative pavement treatments to provide greater awareness of crossings.
- Maintain clear vision zones at intersections to increase visibility.
- Include overhead flashers to indicate non-signalized crossing points. Mid-block crossings can be further enhanced by using pavement markings, texture, and/or signage at the motorists' eye level.

### SPECIFIC PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

- 1 Extend Polk Avenue.
- 2 Narrow and realign Truesdell Avenue into a parkway to encourage reduced traffic speeds.
- 3 Create new vehicular access north of the railroad to connect Clear Lake to the hospital site.



**—** PROPOSED ROADWAYS

**■** PROPOSED PARKING

- ④ Reestablish a formal street grid around the hospital site.
- ⑤ Explore a roundabout at the intersection of Lake Street and Madison Street under U.S. Highway 35.
- ⑥ Consider new bridge and/or underpass facilities to improve the connectivity between Downtown, Clear Lake, Fox Park and Newporte Landing including: 1) Tipton Street roadway overpass and 2) Detroit Street vehicular and pedestrian underpass.



## C. STREETSCAPE AMENITIES AND FURNITURE

---

Recent streetscape investments in NewPorte Landing should serve as the model for a consistent design treatment throughout the Heart of La Porte. Fox Park's loop path is expected to visually and physically connect the park to NewPorte Landing and Downtown.

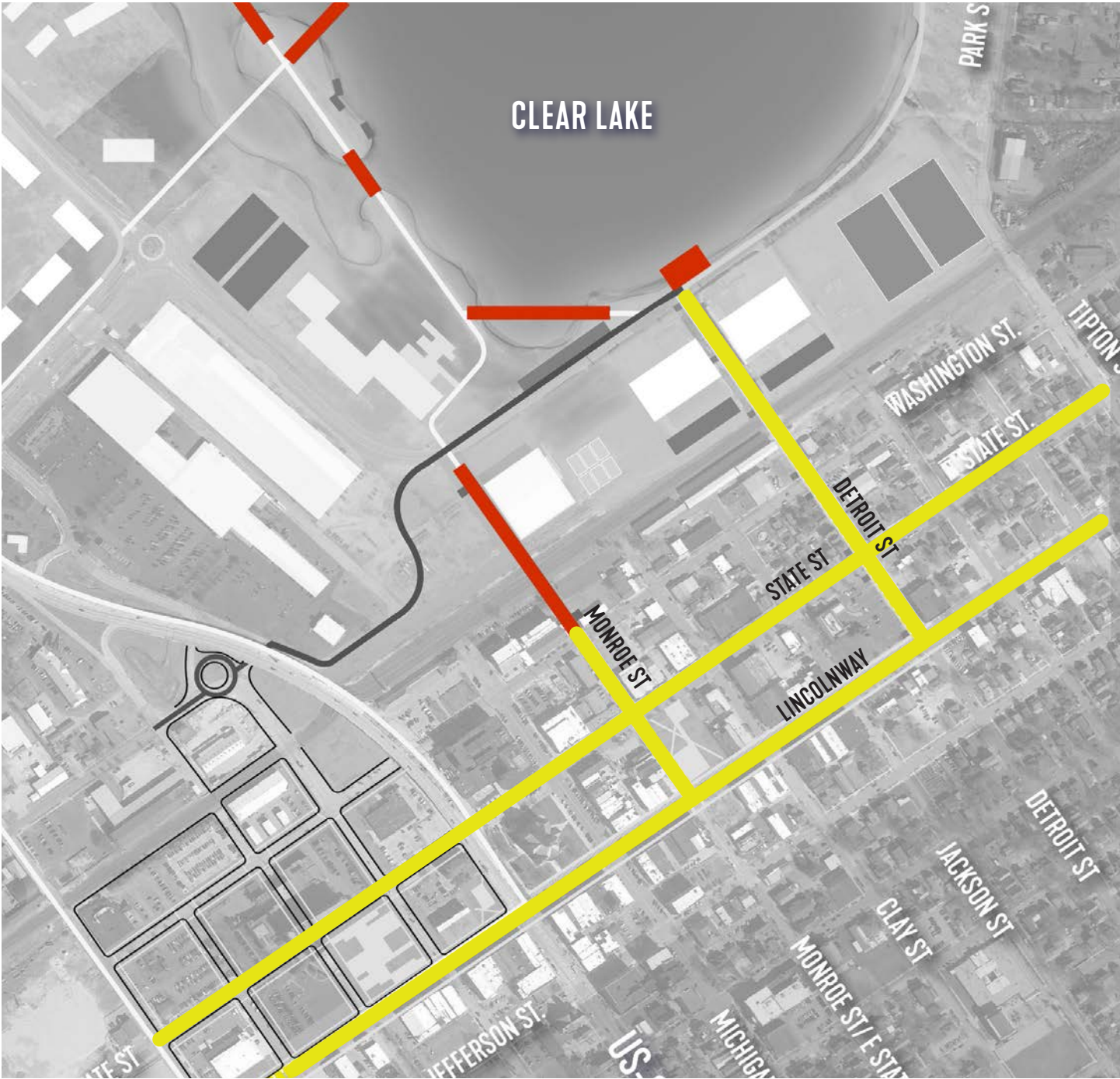
The Business Improvement District anticipates replacing the aging streetscapes in the Downtown. Consideration should be made to expand the BID boundary to the Hospital District for consistent design and funding in reestablishing the street network. Recommended design considerations for the streetscape renovation are listed below:

- Select shallower planters.
- Integrate conduit for seasonal light displays.
- Reduce brick for improved safety and maintenance.
- Replace wood furniture with more durable materials.
- Provide additional bike racks.
- Incorporate gateway and wayfinding signage using durable materials.
- Celebrate cultural, environmental, and industrial heritage through educational signage and art.
- Develop a coordinated and cohesive lighting strategy.

Visitor and shopper experience are linked directly to a guest's ability to understand a place easily and navigate through a visit with limited stress and anxiety. Even in today's generation with near universal use of navigation aids, visual clues directing visitors to their desired location and assisting them with locating parking stalls can make the experience more pleasurable. The City recently completed a wayfinding plan that should be implemented to complement this plan's objectives.

Creating an inviting streetscape considers design elements including building facades, landscaping, sidewalks, street paving, street furniture, signs, awnings, and street lighting. Recommendations specific to streetscape design include:

- Accommodate ample space for pedestrians, street furniture, prominent storefronts, and outdoor dining within the sidewalk environment where feasible.
- Create a comfortable separation between vehicular parking / drive lanes and pedestrian areas using street trees and other elements.
- Strategically place receptacles, planters, benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other such amenities throughout the District.
- Provide bike racks near entrances to buildings.
- Decrease street width at pedestrian crossing points by installing sidewalk flares and curb extensions.



- BOARDWALKS AND DECKS
- STREETScape ENHANCEMENTS

## D. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

---

Recent improvements to Plaza 618 and the bandshell at Fox Park demonstrate a commitment to public spaces for informal gathering and programmed events. Public comments highlighted existing festivals and concert series as key cultural assets that could be expanded if there were additional venues available, such as an urban city square flex space in the Hospital District. In addition, the plan illustrates a series of urban greenways punctuated by smaller community plazas and open spaces that encourage a range of activities, from small concerts and events to environmental and cultural interpretation. These include:

- New pocket plazas on Lincolnway.
- Detroit Landing, a water-centric development with associated public amenities at the junction of Detroit Street and Clear Lake.
- A series of nodes and public access points along the Clear Lake shoreline and trail.

Successful urban public spaces have common characteristics that should be considered for the location and design of a plaza or park, including:

- Locate where human activity is highly visible, since people-watching is a primary draw for park users.
- Provide food vendor services or proximity to food sellers for convenient access to lunch, ice cream, or other snacks.
- Organize event programming on a regular basis (as many as several per week) to link the community to the space. Layering of events at different times or days of the week and appealing to different user groups can be effective.
- Keep the space visually linked to street activity or pedestrian corridors to increase a sense of safety. Narrow, deep lots that dead end can be inefficient and unsuccessful.
- Provide flexibility to allow for multiple uses and events, so that the space does not stand vacant when programs are not in progress.
- Provide shade, restrooms, and movable, comfortable seating. People are much more likely to linger in places when they have a choice of sun or shade and can move site furnishings to accommodate their needs.
- Provide amenities that draw people to the space on non-event days, such as water features, rotating art exhibits, or retail sidewalk sales.
- Shape adjacent development to take advantage of the space for outdoor dining and entertainment.

### SPECIFIC PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

- ① Complete the Clear Lake Boardwalk (currently in progress).
- ② Identify Clear Lake activity nodes for dining, entertainment, community gathering, and recreation.
- ③ Utilize The Stitch to serve as public access with ancillary gathering spaces on and adjacent to structure.
- ④ Construct Cherry Tree Promenade to connect south Clear Lake to NewPorte Landing and beyond to Fox Park.
- ⑤ Create plaza space for community events such as farmer's markets, art fairs, exhibitions, or celebrations.



- BOARDWALKS AND DECKS
- PUBLIC PLAZA
- PUBLIC GREENSPACE

## E. RECREATION

---

Recommendations for expanding recreational opportunities is the cornerstone recommendation of this plan to help build a Healthy Heart of La Porte. Along with non-motorized circulation discussed above, addressing the following objectives will expand both active and passive recreational opportunities at Fox Park and elsewhere in the Heart of La Porte:

- **Active (fields, facilities):** Complement the renewed energy sparked by the Dunes Volleyball Club at adjacent sites in NewPorte Landing, along Clear Lake Boulevard, and at Fox Park. Seek complementary indoor and outdoor recreational amenities including fitness, play, and athletic fields/courts for all ages.
- **Passive (natural areas):** Create an environment where recreation is locally and personally valued as an asset and a resource of community pride that is visible, approachable, and free. Provide opportunities for wandering and discovery. Expand Fox Park to include extensive pathways. Connect Fox Park to the Chessie Trail.



SCENIC VIEWS ALONG THE CLEAR LAKE LOOP TRAIL



## F. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY

---

La Porte owns and manages their own sanitary, water and storm sewer infrastructure. Most of the infrastructure is aging and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. A significant portion of the sanitary and storm sewer networks are still combined sewers. As capital improvement projects are developed to implement this plan, additional funds should be budgeted for the separation of sewers and replacement of water main within the Downtown and Hospital Campus.

As NewPorte Landing was developed, new infrastructure was installed to meet the proposed capacity demands of the project. Unless some unforeseen development occurs at NewPorte, the area will not require any utility upgrades.

The area north of Truesdell Avenue and west of Fox Park is not currently served by utilities. As roadways are realigned with the Clear Lake Boulevard and Polk Street extensions, water main and sanitary sewers will need to be placed in the right of way. The neighborhood between the proposed development area and Pine Lake Avenue currently experiences stormwater issues which should be addressed. Additionally, a few local ponds will need outfalls connected into the stormwater system for the new developments.

As the plan comes to fruition, all projects should work to incorporate innovative and sustainable stormwater management and treatment features. Incorporating these best management practices will reduce the strain on the City's lake levels and other stormwater system components.





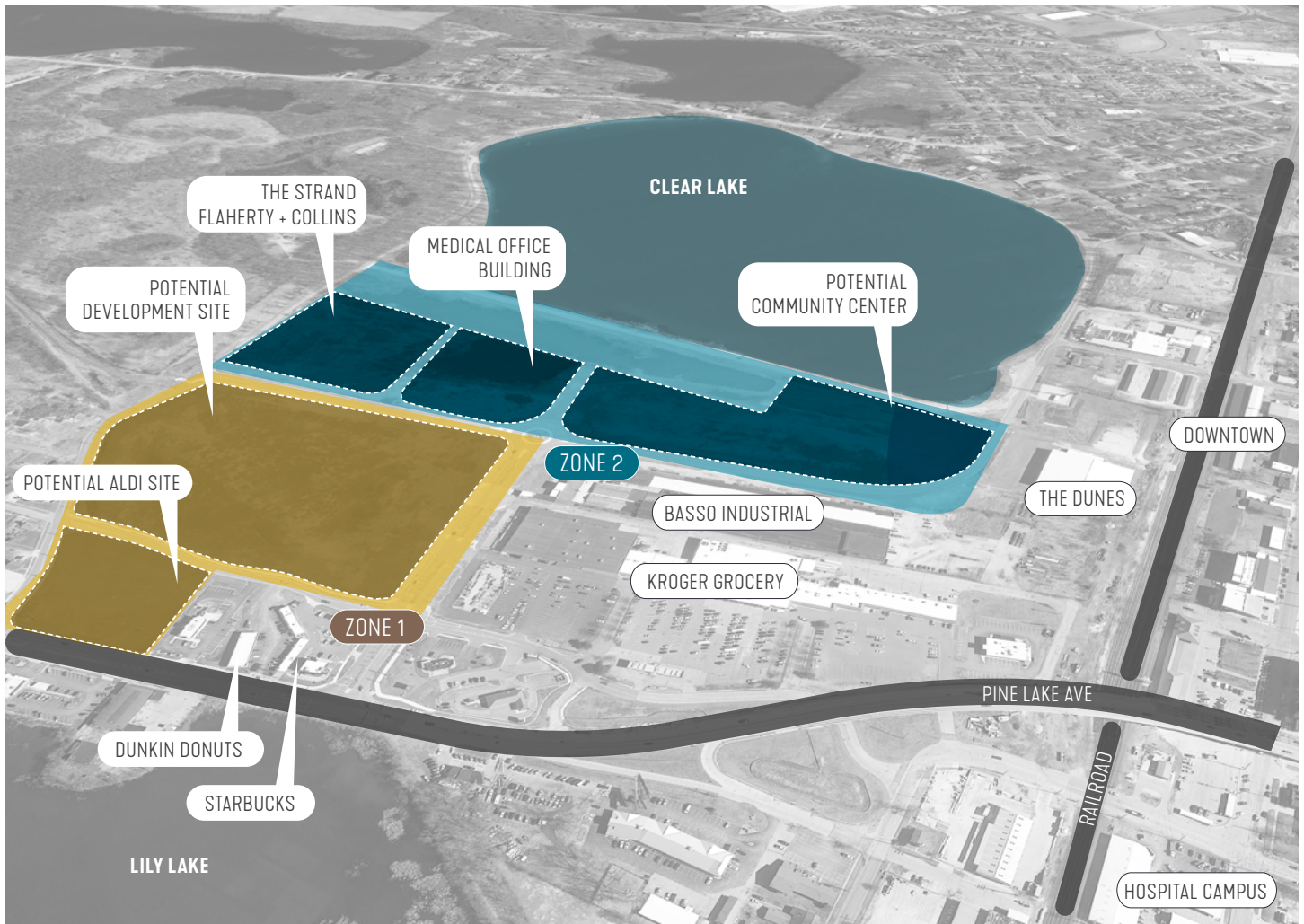
## G. REMEDIATION

---

Environmental remediation is ongoing within the project area, and is being designed and implemented on an area by area basis. IDEM Environmental Remediation Guidelines and the anticipated end use determine the scope of remediation activities. In addition to environmental clean-up, soil conditions at various locations throughout NewPorte Landing require additional foundation considerations to accommodate larger buildings.

NewPorte Landing demonstrates how public-private partnerships can successfully meet remediation goals:

- First phase of clean-up was included in an \$8 million bond that removed industrial debris and installed infrastructure for the development of the site.
- The bond was covered by the City's existing allocation areas. No development was necessary to cover the expenses of the bond.
- The City is in a position to not rush development, but instead can wait for a proposed development that is beneficial to the community's goals.
- The current \$4 million remediation project is covered partially by trust funds of \$1.5 million.
- The remediation has attracted the following developments and private investment:
  - » Starbucks - \$1 million
  - » Dunkin' Donuts - \$1 million
  - » Dunes Event Center - \$4 million
  - » Medical Office Building - \$3 million
  - » The Strand (Flaherty and Collins) - \$30 million



### ZONE 1: CLEANUP MOSTLY COMPLETE

- Federal Brownfield Grants, 1996 - 2009
- Redevelopment Bond, 2015
- Insurance Recovery Funds
- TIF Funds

### ZONE 2: CLEANUP UNDERWAY

- Additional Funding from Sources Listed for Zone 1
- Private Partnerships: Healthcare Foundation and Developer Contributions