

Request for Proposals Identity and Branding for the Calumet Heritage Area

I. Overview

The Calumet Collaborative is seeking a consultant that will develop an identity and brand for the bi-state Calumet Heritage Area, which spans southeast Chicago, south Cook County, and northwest Indiana.



The Calumet is a complex and historically fragmented region. This fragmentation is due in part to the intersecting rail, highway and waterways that are both transportation assets as well as challenges, the Illinois – Indiana State line, the 91 Counties, cities, towns, villages in over 1,900 square miles, and the patchwork of underutilized land and Brownfields throughout the Calumet. Fragmentation is also due in part to a lack of a coordinating entity or brand that brings communities together, versus communities

competing against each other, to advance the region. The Calumet region boasts globally rare natural areas alongside industrial corridors and cultural heritage with national significance. By creating a unified identity and brand, the region can come together to promote this nationally significant place, and a positive identity and brand will also bring a renewed sense of place to those that work in the Calumet and call this region home.

The identity and branding work will be used in two ways:

1) This work will be the identity and brand of the **Calumet Heritage Area (CHA) and the eventual (with Congressional approval) Calumet National Heritage Area (CNHA)**. A bi-state coordinating committee is creating and managing the Calumet Heritage Area, which is a lived-in landscape that tells stories of the region's national significance. Programming and content that will bring the heritage area to life is being provided by numerous local historical societies, environmental organizations, arts organizations, planning agencies, companies, and citizens.

2) A **"toolkit"** will be created and used to roll out this brand into current and emerging wayfinding systems (signage) that will capitalize on placemaking opportunities and build community engagement, while letting residents and visitors know that they are in the Calumet region. This toolkit will also be used by any partner that wishes to add Calumet region branding and messaging to their print and digital collateral and communication materials.

II. Background

Calumet Heritage Area

Calumet Heritage Partnership (CHP) and Calumet Collaborative, both bi-state nonprofit organizations, have partnered and are collaborating to create a Calumet Heritage Area (CHA) and eventually (after Congressional approval) a Calumet National Heritage Area (CNHA). A CNHA will elevate the rich stories of heritage and promote the natural and cultural assets of the region.

CHP, an all-volunteer organization focused on protecting and interpreting the Calumet region's cultural, natural, and recreational heritage, coordinated the feasibility study to create a Calumet National Heritage Area (CNHA) and through that process determined that partnering with Calumet Collaborative would be the most effective way to coordinate a heritage area. Calumet Collaborative was created to bring capacity and collective action to regional scale projects that will transform the Calumet through sustainable development.

An MOU was executed to affirm the commitment to work in partnership and create a governance structure to develop, plan, implement and manage a Calumet Heritage Area (CHA). A Coordinating Committee, with equal representation from each organization, meets on a regular basis and oversees the work of creating the heritage area. Read more about the Calumet Heritage Area [here](#).

There are currently [49 National Heritage Areas](#) in the United States, and these National Heritage Areas are helpful examples of what the Calumet region is trying to accomplish in terms of a region-wide identity and brand. The National Park Service defines National Heritage Areas as “places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes. Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes. Consequently, National Heritage Area entities collaborate with communities to determine how to make heritage relevant to local interests and needs.”

Becoming a [National Heritage Area](#) (NHA) will bring many benefits. It will give place esteem to residents and increase pride in the region after years of disinvestment. A heritage area will act as the entity that brings coordination to actions and breaks down the barriers of fragmentation between communities and Calumet area organizations. As part of the program, federal funding would become available; although the funding is not a significant amount, for every \$1 of federal funds invested, NHAs leverage an additional \$5.50 to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism. Federal designation would also give us National Park Service arrowhead designation and access to a network called the Alliance of National Heritage Areas. Acting as a heritage area, even without federal designation, shows congress we are already well on our way to becoming a heritage area and will operate as one even without designation, and this gives an advantage when advocating with congress.

Calumet Collaborative

Calumet Collaborative catalyzes innovative partnerships between Illinois and Indiana community, government, business and nonprofit stakeholders to advance a thriving Calumet region through sustainable development. Spanning southeast Chicago, south Cook County and northwest Indiana, the bi-state Calumet region boasts proud and diverse communities, important natural ecosystems, and a powerful industrial heritage. As the region builds on these assets toward a vibrant future for

people, wildlife and businesses, the Calumet Collaborative is fostering a new level of collaboration in sustainable development.

Calumet Collaborative's work is organized around four focus areas:

- 1) Economic Opportunity, that will advance a world-class, inclusive economy that builds on the region's industrial heritage while cultivating innovation and resource efficiency;
- 2) Livable Communities, that support places and identify opportunities that connect people to where they live, work and play;
- 3) Culture and Heritage, to celebrate the Calumet's proud heritage and elevate its vibrant cultural scene; and
- 4) Environment, to restore, protect and connect natural areas and improve the quality of land, air and water.

This identity and branding project is related to the Economic Opportunity, Livable Communities, and Culture and Heritage focus areas. Furthermore, this project supports two of the Calumet Collaborative's bi-state initiatives: Advancing the Calumet National Heritage Area to create a comprehensive narrative for the bi-state industrial and cultural heritage of the region, and advancing a comprehensive wayfinding system that capitalizes on placemaking opportunities and builds community engagement.

In 2012 Governor Quinn in cooperation with Illinois Department of Natural Resources created the Millennium Reserve initiative and in 2013 with an executive order, established the Steering Committee and State Agency Task Force to identify projects and programs to transform the region through environmental restoration, economic development, and community revitalization. Governor Rauner issued an executive order in 2016 encouraging the organization to become an independent, bi-state, federally designated non-profit. 6 months of strategic planning occurred in 2016 with over 70 stakeholders from both Illinois and Indiana, and in January 2017, the Calumet Collaborative was formed.

III. Previous Work and Resources

Calumet Heritage Area Feasibility Study

A feasibility study was created by the Calumet Heritage Partnership that describes in detail how the Calumet region qualifies to be a National Heritage Area according to the 10 criteria outlined by the National Park Service. This feasibility study tells the rich history of the Calumet and provides a detailed catalogue of all the natural, cultural, historical, and industrial resources of the region. It is a key resource in understanding the identity of the Calumet. It can be found [here](#).

Lakota Group Wayfinding Concept

During the time of the Millennium Reserve, Lakota Group was hired to develop a Wayfinding narrative and concept or plan for the Calumet region. This concept or plan was introduced in 2016, and also included recommendations and next steps for implementation. The Lakota group's wayfinding narrative and concept can be found [here](#).

Communications Committee Identity and Branding Sprint and Toolbox

In May 2018, the Calumet Collaborative brought various communication professionals together as part of the collaborative's communication committee, and this committee completed an identity and branding sprint. The sprint was completed over 3, 2-hour meetings. The purpose of the sprint was to discover and catalogue the existing identity and branding work that has been done to date for the Calumet region, and then to identify gaps in the current work. The discovery work in this toolkit, plus understanding what work still needs to be done, [can be found here](#), and will serve as a set of resources to jump start the

consultant's identity and branding work for the region. When submitting the proposal, please keep in mind that a large portion of discovery work has already been completed.

IV. Scope of Work

This project will be broken out into 3 phases.

Phase 1: Target Audience Exploration and Outreach

Steps:

1. Review and understand work done to date
 - a. The Calumet Collaborative's communications committee has already completed discovery work in regards to the identity and branding work done to date for the Calumet region. This discovery work has been compiled and synthesized for review [here](#).
2. Create primary and secondary target audience recommendation based on audience research
 - a. The consultant will likely need to hold one workshop with key stakeholders to gain a deeper understanding of potential target audiences. Interaction between stakeholders will help the consultant arrive at the correct target audiences.
 - b. The communications committee identified potential key stakeholders, which can be found in the discovery toolbox. It is important to grow the list of stakeholders involved in the Calumet Heritage Area – these stakeholders will be champions of the brand and help grow the brand. This is something to consider while creating audience recommendations.
 - c. Suggest using one survey and/or holding a few interviews with key stakeholders to obtain any missing audience data not found in the discovery toolbox.
3. Create primary and secondary target audience profiles
 - a. Create one primary target audience profile and a minimum of one secondary target audience profile that demonstrates a strong understanding of who the audience is. The audience profile could include demographics and key values describing the target audience.

Questions to answer:

- Who are the most important people to reach with the new Calumet Heritage Area identity and brand? (Primary target audiences)
- What other audience groups would benefit from the new identity and brand? (Secondary target audiences)
- What are the targets' current perceptions of the Calumet region?
- What would the target audiences like to see communicated through a new identity and brand of the Calumet?
- How could we change audience perceptions of the region if perceptions are negative?

- If perceptions are positive, what it would take to activate partners to promote a shared brand?

Ideal Output, based on the previous work done to date as well as the consultant's own audience research:

- 1x primary and minimum 1x secondary target audience recommendation for the Calumet Heritage Area
- 1x primary and minimum 1x secondary target audience profile

Phase 2: Calumet Heritage Area Identity and Brand design and testing

Steps:

1. Create the identity and brand of the Calumet Heritage Area
 - a. After Phase 1 of the project, the consultant will understand who are trying to reach, what their current perceptions are and if we need to change those perceptions, and if/what recurring themes surfaced during Phase 1. This will be the basis of creating the verbal and visual identity and brand for the Calumet Heritage Area.
2. Test the identity and brand with key stakeholders from the primary and secondary target audiences to make sure the new branding resonates
3. Revise and refine the brand as needed based on feedback

Things to consider

- What messaging resonates with the primary and secondary target audiences?
- The Calumet Heritage Area is currently seeking national designation and will eventually evolve from the Calumet Heritage Area to the Calumet National Heritage Area. Whatever brand is chosen needs to be flexible to accommodate this change in status.
- What colors and visuals do the audiences prefer?
- How does the identity and brand make the target audience feel – does it change negative perceptions, does it promote a sense of unity and pride of place? Or if perceptions are already positive, does the new brand encourage stakeholders to become a champion of the brand by promoting the brand and messaging?
- How do we know that the new identity and brand will be successful with the audience?
- Be creative! Please consider elements of a brand you deem necessary to be successful, even if it is not listed in the RFP.

Ideal Output:

- An identity and brand for the Calumet Heritage Area, including but not limited to:
 - Name, logo, related branding (colors, style guide), tagline, and messaging recommendations, that have been tested and proven with the target audience.

Phase 3: Branding toolkit development

Steps:

1. Create and recommend strategies for how to roll out the brand
 - a. Strategies should include priorities: where is it most important to implement the brand first?
 - b. Strategies should include steps to roll out the brand, detailing who we are trying to reach with each step, complete with a timeline.
 - c. Strategies should also specify what needs to be updated, such as websites, social media, signage, etc.
 - d. Strategies should take into consideration how we would work with the signage and other systems that already exist.
 - e. What is our overall goal for this roll out? This will help us determine if we are successful in the roll out or not.
2. Develop a toolkit to assist in brand roll out
 - a. This toolkit will be used to incorporate the new brand into current and emerging wayfinding systems (signage). The toolkit will also be used to update all Calumet Heritage Area collateral and communications tools, such as the website, digital media tools, fact sheets, guide books, etc. Any partner that would like to show that they are part of the Calumet Heritage Area through their communications materials should be able to use the toolkit to update their collateral accordingly.

Ideal Output:

- A strategy for brand roll out, inclusive of goals, priorities, who we are trying to reach and when with a timeline.
- A brand roll out toolkit. The toolkit should include but is not limited to the following resources, and as the toolkit will be electronic, it can be shared with as many people as needed:
 - Style Guide: Inclusive of the logo, brand color palette, brand fonts and typography, and related imagery
 - Specifications (measurements):
 - Specifications for printed signs
 - Specifications for digital media
 - Messaging: brand name, tagline, and messaging associated with the Calumet Heritage Area
 - Basic instructions: How to use the elements in the toolkit

V. Proposal Submittal and Selection

Requirements

At minimum, the proposal should include:

- Cover letter that indicates the name and contact information of the key contact for this project.
- Narrative describing the consultant/consulting team's approach to the scope of work.
- Summary of the unique qualifications of the personnel who would be assigned to this project and anticipated roles of each individual.

- Description of the deliverables associated with each phase.
- Project schedule
 - We are hopeful this work could be completed in a 6 to 9 month time frame.
- Total cost estimate and cost breakdown.
 - Please work with a ballpark range of \$50,000

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Proposed approach to the scope of work
- Qualifications of the consulting team, including professional experience with wayfinding concept development, technical capabilities, specialized skills, and management capacity
- Knowledge of and specific experience with local conditions, will be easily available for meetings and phone calls.
- Project schedule, including the ability of the firm to execute and substantively complete the project between a 6 to 9 month time frame.
- Fee structure and cost breakdown, with a maximum professional fee amount inclusive of all fees and expenses, around a ballpark range of \$50,000
- Presentation of the proposal

Terms and Conditions

- Interpretations, corrections, and changes of the RFP made in any other manner will not be binding, and a respondent shall not rely upon such interpretations, corrections, and changes.
- Calumet Collaborative reserves the right to reject any or all, or any part, to waive any formalities or informalities, and to award the proposal to the firm deemed to be in the best interest of the Calumet Heritage Area.
- No consultant will be compensated for submission of a proposal or for any time or services provides as part of the proposal, evaluation, or contract procurement process.
- All work produced by the selected consultant/consulting team for this project will become the property of the Calumet Collaborative to use in connection with any Calumet Heritage Area activity, and it is expected that information pertinent to this project will be shared freely with Calumet Collaborative members involved in the project.
- The award is contingent upon grant funding as the grant is a reimbursement grant.

Work samples may be attached, but should not exceed three examples total and must be samples from recent projects that are similar to identity and branding of a destination or region. These examples should reference only work completed by the consultant/consulting team's members who

would be working on the identity and branding project and specify the role of individual members' contributions.

Proposals must be submitted to the RFP contact below.

Name: Ashley Hodges
Title: Program Manager
Company: Calumet Collaborative
Email: ashley@calumetcollaborative.org
Address: 1000 E. 111th Street, Suite 650
Chicago, IL 60628
Phone number: (708) 297-9162 ext 701

Timeline and Deadlines

- RFP Release: October 4th
- Question and Answer session with interested applicants: Mid October
- **RFP Due: October 31st**
- RFP Evaluation (during this time we may contact you if we need you to provide any follow up): November 1 – 20th
- Consultant Selected: November 20th
- Project Duration: December - May / July 2019
- Final Product Delivered: June / August 2019