



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS / STATEMENT OF WORK

Smart Parking System for Indiana Dunes National Park

**Issued by Save the Dunes Conservation Fund, Inc.
444 Barker Rd, Michigan City, IN 46360**

Submission Deadline: 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Tuesday, October 13, 2026

OVERVIEW

Save the Dunes Conservation Fund, Inc. (“Save the Dunes”), in collaboration with Indiana Dunes National Park (“NPS” or the “Park”), invites proposals from qualified consultants and firms to develop, deploy, validate, and evaluate a pilot system designed to provide real-time and predictive parking availability at high-demand locations within the Park. The goal is to help visitors make informed parking decisions before entering congested areas, improving the visitor experience while reducing traffic impacts on neighboring communities. The selected Contractor shall perform the services described in this Statement of Work (SOW) for the benefit of the Park and in coordination with Save the Dunes and NPS.

As the sole contracting party and the sole source of contractual direction to the Contractor, Save the Dunes will enter into and administer the resulting contract. NPS may provide technical input, review project materials, and exercise its independent authority over access to and installation of equipment on NPS-administered property and integration with NPS information systems. NPS is not a party to the contract, however, and may not modify its scope, direct additional work, obligate funds, or accept deliverables on behalf of Save the Dunes.

The Contractor shall refer any request that could affect contract scope, schedule, cost, deliverables, or other terms to both the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator and Project Manager before proceeding. Technical discussions or comments from NPS personnel do not constitute authorization to change the contract. Nothing in the contract obligates the United States or NPS to purchase or accept equipment, provide funding, or assume responsibility for operating or maintaining the resulting system.

The anticipated notice to proceed is January 4, 2027, with the base project performance period continuing through January 31, 2028.

About Save the Dunes

For over 70 years, Save the Dunes has been a leading force in protecting the unique natural heritage of Northwest Indiana. As an official partner of Indiana Dunes National Park, we work to advance shared goals in land preservation, habitat restoration, and public access—ensuring our beloved dunes are protected for future generations to enjoy. *Learn more at savedunes.org.*

Confidentiality and Disclosure

The Contractor shall protect nonpublic information provided by Save the Dunes or NPS that is identified as confidential or that a reasonable person would understand to be confidential based on its nature and the circumstances of disclosure. Confidential Information may include personally identifiable information,

security-sensitive information, nonpublic information concerning NPS facilities or systems, and confidential commercial or financial information.

The Contractor may use Confidential Information only to perform the contract and may disclose it only to personnel and approved subcontractors who require access for that purpose and who are subject to equivalent confidentiality obligations. The Contractor remains responsible for compliance by its personnel and subcontractors. The Contractor shall apply reasonable administrative, technical, and physical safeguards and shall report any material unauthorized access, use, or disclosure to Save the Dunes promptly and, unless a shorter period is required by applicable law or NPS requirements, no later than 24 hours after discovery.

These obligations do not apply to information that the Contractor can demonstrate: (1) is or becomes publicly available without breach of the contract; (2) was lawfully known to the Contractor before disclosure; (3) was independently developed without use of the Confidential Information; (4) was lawfully received from another source without a confidentiality obligation; or (5) was approved for release in writing. If disclosure is required by law, regulation, subpoena, or court order, the Contractor shall, to the extent legally permitted, provide prompt notice to Save the Dunes before disclosure.

This project is intended to generate information and deliverables that may be shared with NPS, the National Park Foundation, project partners, governmental entities, and the public. Project data, reports, and other deliverables are therefore not Confidential Information unless specifically designated otherwise in writing. The Contractor shall identify and conspicuously mark, at the time of submission, any discrete material it believes contains trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information and shall explain the basis for the claimed protection. Blanket markings covering entire submissions or deliverables will not, by themselves, establish confidentiality.

The Contractor acknowledges that materials provided to NPS may become federal records and may be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, federal records requirements, and Department of the Interior disclosure regulations. Save the Dunes and NPS will address disclosure requests in accordance with applicable law, but neither Save the Dunes nor NPS guarantees that submitted information will be withheld from disclosure. Save the Dunes may provide project information to NPS, the National Park Foundation, grant administrators, professional advisors, auditors, and other project participants as reasonably necessary for project administration and oversight.

Project Data, Deliverables, and Intellectual Property

All data collected specifically for the project, including raw and processed data, metadata, validation results, system configurations, analytical methods, reports, visualizations, interface documentation, and other contract deliverables (“Project Materials”), shall be provided to both Save the Dunes and NPS in agreed-upon, documented, and reasonably accessible formats.

Upon payment, Save the Dunes shall own the Project Materials specifically created under the contract, excluding the Contractor’s pre-existing intellectual property, commercially available software, and properly disclosed third-party materials (“Background Materials”). To the extent the Contractor retains any rights in the Project Materials, the Contractor grants Save the Dunes and the United States, acting through NPS, a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free, nonexclusive license to use, reproduce, modify, publish, distribute, display, create derivative works from, and authorize others acting on their behalf to use the Project Materials for governmental, public, research, park-management, and educational purposes.

The Contractor shall identify in its proposal all Background Materials, third-party licenses, subscription requirements, data restrictions, or other limitations that could affect Save the Dunes’ or NPS’s continuing

use of the system or Project Materials. No undisclosed proprietary restriction, recurring fee, or third-party limitation may be imposed on the Project Materials after award.

To the extent any Background Materials are incorporated into, embedded in, or necessary to use the Project Materials, the Contractor shall grant, or secure for, Save the Dunes and NPS rights sufficient to use the Project Materials for the purposes stated above for the expected useful life of the deliverable. Any expiration, usage cap, transfer restriction, required proprietary tool, recurring charge, or other limitation affecting such use must be expressly disclosed and separately priced in the proposal.

Records Retention

The Contractor shall retain project records, supporting documentation, and underlying data for at least three years after final payment, or longer if required by the applicable grant terms or requested in writing by Save the Dunes. During that period, the Contractor shall provide Save the Dunes reasonable access to those materials. Project data shall not be destroyed or made inaccessible without prior written authorization from Save the Dunes. At the end of the applicable retention period, the Contractor shall, upon written direction from Save the Dunes, return or securely dispose of Confidential Information and certify completion, except for copies required to be retained by law or maintained in routine backup systems subject to continuing confidentiality protections.

Points of Contact

- Save the Dunes Contract Administrator: **Betsy Maher** (betsy@savedunes.org; 219-879-3564 ext. 122)
Authority/Role: Contractual direction, amendments, cost, schedule, and formal acceptance.
- Save the Dunes Project Manager: **Daniel King** (daniel@savedunes.org; 219-879-3564 ext. 105)
Authority/Role: Day-to-day project administration and coordination.
- NPS Technical Lead: **Rafi Wilkinson** (Rafi_Wilkinson@nps.gov; 773-573-6413)
Authority/Role: Technical review, Park coordination, and coordination of necessary NPS site, resource, information-technology, privacy, and operational reviews. The NPS Technical Lead does not possess contractual authority.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Indiana Dunes National Park recorded **2.7 million visits** in 2024, **55% (approximately 1.5 million)** of which were to the **Park's Lake Michigan beaches**. These beaches are uniquely embedded within gateway communities, where local roads, neighborhoods, and small commercial districts sit immediately adjacent to high-demand shoreline access points. The Park has **eight beach parking lots** with **1,128 total parking spaces**, approximately half of which are concentrated in a single lot. As visitation continues to grow, **parking lot overcrowding** creates congestion that **diminishes the visitor experience, impacts emergency-response and life, health, and safety operations, and places additional and undue strain on neighboring communities**.

There is currently no reliable, systemwide method for visitors or Park staff to know which beach parking lots are full or have remaining capacity. The **eight lots** are spread across approximately **15 miles of shoreline**. Visitors may drive to a lot only to find it full, without timely information about alternative locations. This contributes to **congestion on narrow community roads** as vehicles stop, pull off, circulate, or wait for openings. The operational need is to provide accurate parking information early enough to direct visitors toward available parking before they enter congested community roadways.

Through this contract, Save the Dunes, in collaboration with NPS, seeks to develop, deploy, validate, and evaluate a system that provides real-time and predictive parking availability at the Phase 1 locations

identified in this SOW. The project may include parking-monitoring sensors, data-management services, public-information tools, and standards-based data feeds. Expansion beyond Phase 1 will be optional and contingent upon system performance, available funding, required approvals, and site readiness. The project is consistent with the goals outlined in the Park's General Management Plan and community/regional transportation plans. This effort is intended to reduce congestion and frustration for visitors and residents—a **priority concern for the park and gateway communities that has gone unresolved for decades**. Addressing these access and congestion challenges is essential to meeting NPS visitor-service priorities, improving safety and mobility, and ensuring that both park visitors and local residents can enjoy a high quality of life.

Project Materials are governed by the “Project Data, Deliverables, and Intellectual Property” section above. The Contractor shall provide the data, documentation, and source materials necessary to support the selected solution and required analyses. Any location or movement data shall be limited to the minimum necessary and aggregated or deidentified where practicable. Origin-destination matrices, trip-level waypoint records, purchased datasets, or similar information are required only if expressly approved in the Task 3 or Task 4a plan and separately priced.

Coordination under this SOW will include meetings with Save the Dunes, NPS, and designated technical advisors. Contract authority, technical review, and change control are governed by the “Overview” and “Points of Contact” sections above.

RFP responses are due no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.

See “Responding to the RFP” section on Page 20 for more details.

A Site Visit will be scheduled for shortlisted proposers at a date and location to be determined, following the initial review and evaluation of proposals. Save the Dunes will provide this opportunity to help shortlisted proposers understand the park's environmental constraints, limited-connectivity conditions, and multiple roadway/property jurisdictions. *See “Site Visit & Capabilities Conversations” section on Page 19 for more details.*

PURPOSE OF THE CONTRACT

The purpose of this project is to select, deploy, validate, and evaluate a pilot system that provides near-real-time and predictive parking-availability information at approved locations and communicates useful status information to visitors before they enter congested areas.

Project Goals

Specifically, this project will seek to accomplish the following:

1. **State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis:** Research and compare methods for monitoring and communicating both current and forecasted parking availability. The analysis shall address real-time parking occupancy and status; short-term predictive methods, including historical-pattern, trend-based, and event-, weather-, or holiday-informed forecasting; appropriate forecast horizons; travel times to and within the Park; and, if approved, aggregated origin-destination patterns. The analysis shall compare equipment, software, data services, forecasting methods, data requirements, accuracy and validation methods, confidence and uncertainty, communications channels, deployment considerations, and best practices for data collection, storage, structure, and analysis. It shall also assess methods for producing daily vehicle-entry and exit counts to evaluate seasonal, weekday, weekend, and holiday use patterns and for determining whether validated counts could support NPS visitor-use reporting under the Park's applicable counting instructions.
2. **Phase 1 Pilot Deployment of Parking Monitoring and Communications Systems*:** Develop and

implement an approved plan to deploy, operate, validate, test, and adjust a Phase 1 pilot system. The pilot shall monitor current parking conditions, produce parking-availability forecasts for defined time horizons, and communicate current and forecasted conditions through approved channels. The pilot shall be evaluated against established criteria for accuracy, forecast performance, data quality, update latency, reliability, privacy and security, accessibility, maintenance requirements, and performance under the Park's limited-connectivity and atypical parking-lot conditions. The purpose of the pilot is to determine whether, and under what technical, operational, financial, and policy conditions, the system could be transitioned to sustained production use. Completion of the pilot does not constitute acceptance of a production system or obligate Save the Dunes or NPS to continue, expand, purchase, operate, or maintain any equipment or service after the pilot period.

*The Phase 1 pilot shall include: (1) transmission of parking-occupancy data through cellular, satellite, or a combination of those communications methods to a backend system with a documented, standards-based application programming interface ("API") capable of making approved current and forecasted parking information available to authorized digital platforms and future visitor-information tools; and (2) deployment and operation of eight portable variable-message signs ("VMS") at strategic, approved locations to provide parking-availability information before motorists enter congested community roadways. Any integration with an NPS information system or digital product, and each VMS location, remains subject to applicable NPS approvals.

3. **Recommendations and Best Practices Report for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability:** Develop a report with recommendations and best practices for long-term operations, maintenance, ownership, transition, and potential scalability of a parking lot monitoring and communications system. The report shall include the total lifecycle cost of ownership over a defined planning period; ownership and control of equipment, software, administrative accounts, credentials, data, and system configurations; recurring subscription, licensing, maintenance, warranty, replacement, and staffing costs; and options for transition, decommissioning, equipment removal, and site restoration. The report shall evaluate open and documented interfaces and application programming interfaces; use of commonly supported or nonproprietary data formats; complete export and portability of data and configurations; interoperability with other systems; and the ability to transition to another provider without loss of data, unreasonable cost, or material interruption of service. It shall identify all proprietary dependencies, third-party restrictions, and measures necessary to avoid vendor lock-in while meeting applicable federal privacy, security, accessibility, and records requirements.

The technical specifications below provide detail about the requested tasks and deliverables required to achieve these project goals.

General Assumptions

The Contractor shall provide all personnel and services to perform all tasks necessary.

The Contractor shall provide all final reports, editable source files, raw and processed data, metadata, analytical procedures and outputs, system-configuration exports, interface documentation, and other Project Materials necessary to support independent review and future analysis. Deliverables shall be provided at the highest practical fidelity in documented, reasonably accessible, nonproprietary or commonly supported formats, subject to properly disclosed Background Materials and third-party restrictions. Any limitation on future use of raw or processed data, software, interfaces, or other Project Materials must be identified in the Contractor's proposal. Any additional limitation discovered during performance shall be reported to the Save the Dunes Project Manager at the earliest practicable time.

The Contractor shall prepare and deliver print-ready files for all printed documents, editable source files where applicable, and web-ready versions suitable for posting on the NPS website. Digital files shall be

compatible with software and file formats identified by NPS during project initiation. All electronic documents and public-facing digital deliverables developed under this contract shall conform to applicable federal Section 508 accessibility requirements. Draft and final documents submitted for review shall be sequentially paginated; drafts shall also include line numbers. The Contractor shall perform documented quality-assurance and quality-control reviews for factual accuracy, data consistency, calculations, accessibility, and internal consistency before submitting each deliverable.

The proposed solution is subject to applicable DOI/NPS information-security, privacy, records, accessibility, and system-authorization requirements based on the approved architecture and use case. The Contractor shall disclose all hosting and cloud services, data flows, data-storage locations, administrative access, encryption in transit and at rest, logging, vulnerability-management practices, incident-response procedures, backup and recovery, subcontractors or subprocessors, and FedRAMP authorization status. Where NPS determines that FedRAMP requirements apply, only a cloud service with the authorization status and impact level acceptable to NPS may be used. No connection to NPS systems or processing of NPS nonpublic information may begin before all required NPS approvals are completed.

Unless separately proposed and approved in writing, the solution shall not collect license-plate numbers, facial images, precise mobile-device identifiers, or persistent identifiers capable of tracking individuals. The Contractor shall not sell, reuse, monetize, or use project data to train unrelated models. Where feasible, sensors shall process information locally and transmit only counts, status information, and operational diagnostics.

To ensure timely and efficient fulfillment of this scope, the following assumptions are integral:

- The Contractor shall identify the professional qualifications of all key personnel and proposed subcontractors (if applicable) and provide resumes for key personnel. The Contractor shall identify each subcontractor's role in its proposal and shall remain responsible for subcontractor performance and compliance, and shall not materially change a key subcontractor without prior written approval from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator.
- Any travel arrangements for Contractor staff shall be the responsibility of the Contractor.
- The Contractor shall coordinate any and all travel with the Save the Dunes Project Manager, as appropriate.
- The Contractor shall update the project schedule when requested by the Save the Dunes Project Manager; any change affecting contractual milestones, scope, cost, or other contract terms requires prior written authorization from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator.
- Electronic deliverables shall be submitted to the Save the Dunes Project Manager, who will coordinate distribution to NPS and other project participants as appropriate.
- The Save the Dunes Project Manager will provide the Contractor with consolidated comments following coordinated review with NPS on interim deliverables. The Contractor shall address those comments in the revised deliverable and provide a comment-resolution log when required by the applicable task.
- Invoices shall clearly state the beginning and end dates of the invoice performance period and shall identify work completed, costs incurred, and progress by task.
- When deliverables or other materials are posted to an approved external FTP, SharePoint, or other file-sharing site, the Contractor shall notify the Save the Dunes Project Manager by email and provide any access instructions needed for review.
- All materials written for public distribution shall be in user-friendly language readily understood by the general public.
- Review periods will be 15 business days unless a task-specific schedule or written direction from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator provides otherwise.
- Upon completion of each task, the Contractor shall provide the Save the Dunes Project Manager with all required final reports, applicable draft reports, editable source files, supporting data, and other Project Materials required by that task.

- For each completed task, the Contractor shall provide a Task Completion Memo as a cover document. The memo shall state whether the task was completed on schedule and within budget and shall explain any approved variation. Task Completion Memos shall be no more than one page and shall be addressed to the Save the Dunes Project Manager, with a copy to the NPS Technical Lead.
- Save the Dunes may reject any deliverable that is incomplete, materially nonconforming, internally inconsistent, inaccessible, or unsupported by required source materials. The Contractor shall correct identified deficiencies within the applicable review schedule or another period agreed in writing. Correction of deficiencies necessary to meet the accepted scope and requirements shall be performed at no additional cost unless the deficiency results from a separately authorized change in scope.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Task 1. Kick-off Meeting

Within 10 calendar days after Save the Dunes issues the notice to proceed, the selected Contractor shall schedule a 90-minute virtual kick-off meeting with the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator, Save the Dunes Project Manager, and NPS Technical Lead. The purpose of the kick-off is to confirm scope assumptions, communications protocols, schedule, deliverable-development and review processes, roles and responsibilities, required inputs, and known approval dependencies. Any proposed clarification or modification that could affect scope, schedule, cost, deliverables, or other contract terms shall be referred to the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator before the Contractor proceeds.

The kick-off meeting shall conclude with a common understanding of required inputs, responsibilities, near-term decisions, and expected deliverables. The Contractor shall prepare and distribute meeting notes within five (5) business days. The notes shall document decisions, action items, responsible parties, due dates, assumptions, identified risks or dependencies, and any issue that may require formal contractual clarification or modification.

Task 1 Deliverables:

- *Summary notes from kick-off*
- *Develop project schedule, with milestones, dependencies, approval points, and critical-path items, and update quarterly (or whenever a material schedule change is proposed or authorized)*
- *Meeting attendance (in person and/or by teleconference)*

Task 2. Project Management and Project Status Calls

The Contractor shall participate in one-hour project status conference calls approximately every two weeks; the frequency may be adjusted by mutual agreement based on project needs. The Save the Dunes Project Manager, in consultation with the NPS Technical Lead, will set the agenda and facilitate these calls. The Contractor shall prepare meeting minutes in the agreed format and submit them to the Save the Dunes Project Manager for review within five (5) business days. After review, the Contractor shall issue final meeting minutes for broader distribution. Project status calls are for general project updates, decisions, risks, and coordination; task-specific working sessions are included within the applicable task.

The Contractor shall prepare and submit invoices and perform other activities necessary to manage the project and Contractor staff. Invoices must include progress updates by task. The Contractor shall coordinate with the project technical team, which may include Save the Dunes, NPS representatives, the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Federal Lands Highway, and the USDOT Volpe National Transportation Systems Center. FHWA and Volpe participation is subject to availability, and neither organization has contractual authority. In coordination with the Save the Dunes Project Manager and NPS

Technical Lead, the Contractor shall establish necessary coordination meetings, develop and track the project schedule and milestones, maintain an issues/risks/decisions log, and provide quarterly progress reports even when no invoice is submitted.

Task 2 Deliverables:

- *Project status calls (approximately twenty-eight (28) one-hour teleconference calls over the anticipated performance period, subject to adjustment by mutual agreement)*
- *Distributed meeting notes*
- *Invoices and progress reports (identifying completed and pending activities; delays and/or risks that could affect scope, schedule, budget, quality, or communications; and pending decisions needed from Save the Dunes or NPS, with the responsible party and requested decision date identified)*

Task 3. Parking Availability State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis

The Contractor shall prepare a technology- and vendor-neutral State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis addressing commercially available and emerging methods for monitoring current parking conditions, producing daily vehicle counts, forecasting short-term parking availability, and communicating current and forecasted conditions to visitors. The analysis shall focus on the conditions and needs of the Phase 1 pilot locations while also considering potential expansion to other Park locations. The Contractor must evaluate alternatives for satisfying the API and eight VMS requirements.

The report shall provide Save the Dunes and NPS with sufficient information to determine whether, and through what approach, to proceed with pilot planning and deployment. It shall not presume the selection of a particular manufacturer, product, platform, data provider, or communications channel.

At a minimum, the analysis shall address the following:

- **Parking monitoring and vehicle-counting methods.** Compare appropriate methods for estimating parking occupancy and availability and for producing daily vehicle-entry and exit counts. The analysis shall address accuracy, data quality, installation requirements, operating limitations, maintenance requirements, expected service life, and suitability for parking areas with limited power, communications, or conventional entrance and exit configurations. It shall explain how each method would be validated and whether resulting vehicle counts could potentially support NPS visitor-use reporting after validation under the Park's applicable counting instructions.
- **Predictive methods.** Compare methods for forecasting parking availability, including historical-pattern, trend-based, and event-, weather-, holiday-, or real-time-condition-informed approaches. The analysis shall identify the data required by each method, the amount of historical data needed, appropriate forecast horizons, cold-start limitations, treatment of closures or unusual events, methods for expressing confidence or uncertainty, and methods for measuring forecast performance. The report shall recommend forecast horizons and performance measures appropriate for the Phase 1 pilot.
- **Visitor communications.** Evaluate methods for communicating current and forecasted parking conditions through variable-message signs, indoor digital signage, websites, mobile applications, NPS digital products, navigation services, open data feeds, and other appropriate channels. The analysis shall address the relative advantages of displaying estimated space counts versus status categories such as Available, Filling, Full, Closed, and Data Unavailable. It shall also address update frequency, stale-data warnings, manual override, communications outages, accessibility, message consistency, and the risk that inaccurate information could direct additional vehicles toward a full or closed parking area.
- **Site and operating conditions.** Evaluate the effects of limited connectivity, power availability, weather, seasonal operations, vegetation, wildlife, environmental sensitivity, vandalism,

maintenance access, and atypical parking-area configurations. The report shall identify material differences among the Phase 1 locations that could require different technologies or installation approaches.

- **Data and system architecture.** Describe anticipated data flows, hosting arrangements, storage locations, administrative access, interfaces, application programming interfaces, data-feed standards, system dependencies, and integration requirements. The analysis shall address applicable privacy, information-security, records, and accessibility considerations and shall identify any proposed cloud services, third-party data services, or connections to NPS information systems that may require additional review or authorization. For any proposed API, the analysis shall address authentication, update frequency, rate or usage limits, data schema, error/stale-data behavior, versioning, exportability, and availability of machine-readable interface documentation. The Contractor shall not assume that NPS will authorize integration with any NPS system or digital product.
- **Privacy and data minimization.** Evaluate approaches that minimize the collection and retention of information about identifiable individuals or vehicles. Unless separately authorized, the analysis shall not assume the collection of license-plate numbers, facial images, precise mobile-device identifiers, persistent individual identifiers, or trip-level waypoint records. If aggregated origin-destination information is considered, the report shall explain the proposed source, level of aggregation, licensing restrictions, privacy protections, retention period, and operational necessity. Task 3 does not authorize the collection of new personally identifiable or individual trip-level data.
- **Interoperability, ownership, and lifecycle considerations.** Compare open and proprietary approaches, documented interfaces, commonly supported data formats, data and configuration export capabilities, equipment and software ownership, account and credential control, subscriptions, licensing restrictions, warranties, maintenance, replacement cycles, technical support, transition assistance, and vendor-exit options. The report shall include a preliminary five-year total lifecycle cost for each feasible alternative, identifying one-time, recurring, optional, transition, and end-of-contract costs and clearly stating price-year, escalation, quantity, usage, and replacement-cycle assumptions. These estimates will be updated in Task 5 using the results of the pilot.
- **Pilot performance and validation.** Recommend measurable criteria for evaluating a Phase 1 pilot, including parking-status or occupancy accuracy, daily vehicle-count accuracy, forecast performance, data-update latency, service availability, data loss, stale-data handling, false indications of available capacity, manual-override performance, maintenance effort, and operation during communications or power interruptions. The report shall recommend a validation method, sample requirements, and a pilot operating period sufficient to include representative peak-use conditions.

The Contractor shall compare multiple feasible solution approaches using a consistent evaluation framework. Unless fewer reasonable alternatives exist, the analysis shall include at least three distinguishable approaches. The evaluation framework shall identify the criteria used, explain the relative importance or weighting of those criteria, and apply them consistently across alternatives. The Contractor shall identify the source of factual claims and cost assumptions and distinguish independently documented performance from manufacturer or vendor claims.

The Contractor shall disclose any financial, reseller, implementation, licensing, referral, or other material relationship that the Contractor or a proposed subcontractor has with a manufacturer, product, platform, or data provider evaluated in the report. A Contractor-affiliated solution may be considered, but it shall be evaluated under the same criteria as other reasonable alternatives. The report shall not recommend a proprietary restriction that would conflict with the Project Data, Deliverables, and Intellectual Property requirements.

The Contractor shall identify a recommended concept for the Phase 1 pilot and explain the basis for that recommendation, significant tradeoffs, unresolved risks, required approvals, and reasonable alternatives. The recommendation shall include a preliminary system architecture, anticipated equipment and service categories, proposed communications channels, data requirements, ownership and licensing assumptions, preliminary lifecycle cost, and recommended pilot-validation framework. The recommendation is advisory and does not authorize procurement, subscriptions, installation, data collection, or deployment.

The Contractor shall coordinate Task 3 activities through the Save the Dunes Project Manager. The NPS Technical Lead may provide site information and technical input and may coordinate applicable NPS reviews but does not possess contractual authority. Any issue that could affect contract scope, schedule, cost, deliverables, or other terms shall be referred to the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator before the Contractor proceeds.

Task 3 Deliverables

- *Technical working sessions with Save the Dunes, the NPS Technical Lead, and other invited technical advisors.*
- *Draft State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis Report with executive summary and cited sources.*
- *Alternatives Evaluation Matrix in an editable format.*
- *Preliminary system architecture and data flow documentation.*
- *Preliminary five-year lifecycle-cost analysis showing one-time and recurring costs by alternative.*
- *Recommended Phase 1 Pilot Concept and Pilot Performance and Validation Framework.*
- *Accessible presentation and briefing for Save the Dunes and the project team.*
- *Comment-resolution log documenting the disposition of consolidated review comments.*
- *Final State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis Report and all associated Project Materials in the formats required by the contract.*

The Contractor shall submit the final deliverables within ten business days after receiving consolidated comments from the Save the Dunes Project Manager unless the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator authorizes a different schedule in writing. Save the Dunes will determine acceptance after considering technical input provided by NPS. Acceptance of Task 3 does not authorize Task 4 deployment.

Task 4: Phase 1 Pilot Deployment of Parking Lot Monitoring and Communications Systems

Following Save the Dunes' acceptance of Task 3, the Contractor shall develop and implement and evaluate a Phase 1 pilot system for monitoring and communicating current and forecasted parking availability. The goal of this project is to test deployment of industry-standard and emerging technologies in an environmentally sensitive Park context with limited connectivity and atypical parking lot configurations.

The anticipated Phase 1 locations are:

- Kemil Beach;
- Cowles Bog Trail;
- Porter Beach;
- Lake View Beach;
- Dunbar Beach; and
- Central Avenue Beach.

Locations not identified above are outside Task 4 unless added through written authorization from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator. Task 4 pricing shall be itemized by location—with shared or

systemwide costs identified separately—so that a location may be added, removed, or deferred through an authorized contract change without requiring repricing of the entire pilot.

The Phase 1 pilot shall be designed to:

- estimate current parking occupancy and available capacity;
- determine and communicate parking-area status;
- produce daily vehicle-entry and exit counts;
- forecast parking availability for approved time horizons;
- communicate current and forecasted conditions through approved visitor-information channels;
- support authorized manual correction or override of system-generated information; and
- generate the data necessary to evaluate technical performance, operational requirements, lifecycle costs, and suitability for possible sustained production use.

Public-facing information shall distinguish, at a minimum, among Available, Filling, Full, Closed, and Data Unavailable conditions. The system shall not display stale or interrupted data as current. Display of an estimated number of available spaces may be used only if the approved validation results demonstrate that the estimate is sufficiently reliable for public use. The approved Task 4a plan shall establish objective thresholds for each public status category, the update frequency, stale-data threshold, manual-override procedures, fail-safe behavior, and rules governing the use of estimated space counts and status categories.

Task 4 constitutes a pilot and evaluation effort. Completion or acceptance of any Task 4 deliverable does not constitute acceptance of a production system and does not obligate Save the Dunes or NPS to continue, expand, purchase, operate, maintain, or fund any equipment or service after the pilot period.

Task 4a: Deployment, Validation and Adjustment Plan

The Contractor shall develop a comprehensive, site-specific plan for deployment, operation, validation, adjustment, and disposition of the Phase 1 pilot. The plan shall be based on the accepted Task 3 analysis and shall explain any material departure from the Task 3 recommendation.

At a minimum, the Task 4a plan shall include:

- **Site conditions and jurisdiction.** A site inventory identifying parking capacity, ownership, road jurisdiction, installation authority, existing infrastructure, power, communications, environmental constraints, maintenance access, and other conditions relevant to each location.
- **Basis of design.** The proposed monitoring, counting, forecasting, data-management, and communications approach; the reasons for selecting it; and any site-specific variation in equipment or services.
- **Equipment and services.** The number, type, function, and proposed location of all sensors; all eight VMS; communications equipment; signs and displays; network components; software; cloud services; data services; and related infrastructure.
- **Installation plans.** Site plans, mounting and installation details, power and communications connections, utility requirements, traffic-control measures, worker- and visitor-safety measures, protection of Park resources, and procedures for avoiding or repairing damage to property.
- **API architecture and data flows.** Diagrams and documentation showing how data will be collected, processed, transmitted, stored, analyzed, displayed, exported, and retained; all hosting and third-party services; administrative access; interfaces and application programming interfaces; and any proposed connection to NPS or third-party systems. API documentation shall include the data schema, authentication method, update cadence, stale/error behavior, versioning approach, usage limits, and a machine-readable interface specification where technically applicable.
- **Predictive methodology.** The proposed forecasting method, data inputs, forecast horizons, historical-data requirements, treatment of weather, holidays, closures, unusual events, and

missing data, and the method for measuring and communicating forecast confidence and performance.

- **Visitor communications.** Proposed status categories, message content, update frequency, stale-data warnings, manual-override procedures, and proposed use of variable-message signs, indoor displays, websites, mobile applications, NPS digital products, navigation services, or open data feeds. The plan shall identify the approvals required for each channel. The Contractor shall not assume that any specific NPS or third-party channel will be available.
- **Signage and roadway coordination.** Proposed sign locations, messages, operating rules, road-owner coordination, permitting, accessibility, and compliance with applicable traffic-control and roadway requirements.
- **Privacy and data minimization.** The types of data collected, operational purpose, level of aggregation, retention period, access controls, approved uses, and deletion or disposition procedures. Unless separately approved in writing, the pilot shall not collect license-plate numbers, facial images, precise mobile-device identifiers, persistent individual identifiers, or trip-level waypoint records.
- **Information security and incident response.** Applicable security requirements, access controls, account management, encryption, system logging, software updates, vulnerability management, backup and recovery, communications-outage procedures, and reporting and response procedures for unauthorized access, data loss, or other incidents. The plan shall define incident severity levels, notification contacts, containment and recovery procedures, and required reporting timeframes, including the 24-hour notification requirement for a material unauthorized access, use, or disclosure unless a shorter period applies.
- **Pilot operations and maintenance.** Staffing, system monitoring, preventive and corrective maintenance, spare equipment, technical support, escalation procedures, response times, system downtime, public-information correction, and coordination with Save the Dunes and the NPS Technical Lead.
- **Performance and validation.** Proposed minimum performance thresholds and test methods for parking-status or occupancy accuracy, daily vehicle-count accuracy, forecast performance by time horizon, data-update latency, service availability, data completeness, stale-data handling, false indications of available capacity, manual override, and operation during power or communications interruptions. The plan shall identify the ground-truth data, sample sizes, observation periods, responsible personnel, and documentation necessary to validate results independently and reproduce reported performance calculations.
- **Adjustment and retesting.** Procedures for documenting deficiencies, making authorized adjustments, controlling system changes, and retesting affected functions against the approved performance criteria.
- **Ownership and lifecycle costs.** Identification of each item as purchased, leased, rented, licensed, or subscription-based; proposed ownership and control of equipment, software, accounts, credentials, data, and configurations; warranty and support terms; one-time and recurring costs; and an updated five-year lifecycle-cost estimate.
- **Transition and disposition.** Procedures for transferring data, configurations, documentation, accounts, credentials, and operational knowledge; continuing or terminating subscriptions; removing equipment; restoring sites; and transitioning to another provider or to sustained operations if separately authorized.
- **Schedule and risk management.** A site-specific schedule, dependencies, critical path, approval milestones, installation sequence, pilot operating period, risk register, contingencies, and proposed decision points.

Task 4a Deliverables:

- *Working meetings (virtual)*
- *Draft Plan*

- *Comment-resolution log*
- *Final Plan*

Task 4b: Deploy Equipment and Services

Task 4b shall be separately priced and separately authorized. The Contractor shall not procure equipment, incur noncancelable subscription charges, install equipment, or commence deployment unless and until: (1) Save the Dunes has accepted Tasks 3 and 4a; and (2) the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator has issued written authorization to proceed.

The Contractor shall:

- confirm that required site-access and installation approvals remain in effect before beginning work at each location;
- coordinate installation activities through the Save the Dunes Project Manager and NPS Technical Lead;
- comply with approved site plans, safety requirements, traffic-control requirements, resource-protection measures, and permitted work periods;
- provide all labor, supervision, equipment, transportation, temporary protection, installation materials, software, services, licenses, subscriptions, and subcontractor support included in the accepted price;
- configure monitoring, vehicle-counting, forecasting, data-management, communications, manual-override, and stale-data functions;
- conduct installation inspections, component testing, connectivity testing, data-flow testing, security testing, and end-to-end functional testing;
- correct installation deficiencies and damage caused by the Contractor;
- provide training to personnel designated by Save the Dunes and NPS;
- securely transfer required administrative accounts, credentials, configuration information, and documentation; and

The Contractor shall not materially substitute equipment, software, services, data sources, hosting arrangements, installation methods, or communications channels without prior written authorization from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator. Technical discussions with NPS personnel do not authorize substitutions or additional work.

For each item, the approved price schedule shall identify whether the item is purchased, leased, rented, licensed, or subscription-based; the legal owner during and after the pilot; the included service period; renewal costs; warranty; support terms; and end-of-pilot disposition. No subscription or service shall renew automatically or incur a post-pilot charge without separate written authorization. Title to equipment purchased with contract funds shall vest in Save the Dunes upon payment unless the contract expressly provides otherwise. Placement of equipment on NPS-administered property does not transfer title to NPS or create any obligation for NPS to operate, maintain, purchase, or accept the equipment.

Task 4b Deliverables:

- *Installed and configured Phase 1 pilot equipment and services, including the backend/API and eight portable VMS.*
- *Equipment inventory identifying manufacturer, model, serial number, location, ownership, warranty, and disposition.*
- *As-built site plans and installation drawings.*
- *Final system-architecture, data-flow, interface, and configuration documentation.*
- *Software, service, license, subscription, and support inventory.*
- *Administrative-account and credential-transfer record.*
- *Operations, maintenance, troubleshooting, and incident-response manuals.*

- *Training materials and completed training.*
- *Commissioning Report identifying completed tests, deficiencies, corrective actions, any remaining open items, and readiness for pilot operations against the accepted commissioning criteria.*

Task 4c: Pilot Operations, Validation, Adjustment, and Reporting

Following commissioning approval, the Contractor shall operate, monitor, maintain, validate, and adjust the Phase 1 pilot for at least 60 consecutive calendar days during a period that includes representative peak-use conditions, unless the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator authorizes a different period in writing.

During the pilot, the Contractor shall:

- maintain the system and approved visitor-information channels in operational condition;
- monitor system health, data flows, outages, errors, public-facing messages, and manual overrides;
- collect and preserve the data required by the accepted Pilot Performance and Validation Plan;
- perform documented ground-truth observations and compare them with system-generated results;
- evaluate parking-status or occupancy accuracy, daily vehicle-count accuracy, forecast performance by time horizon, data-update latency, service availability, data completeness, stale-data handling, false indications of available capacity, manual overrides, and performance during power or communications interruptions;
- document maintenance effort, component failures, software or service interruptions, and staff time required to operate the system;
- promptly report material system failures, inaccurate public information, security or privacy incidents, and conditions that could affect visitor safety or traffic operations in accordance with the accepted incident-response and escalation procedures;
- make adjustments authorized under the accepted plan and document the configuration, reason, date, effect, and validation of each adjustment; and
- retest affected functions after material adjustments.

Task 4c Deliverables:

- Operation and maintenance of the Phase 1 pilot during the approved pilot period.
- Weekly pilot status summaries and system-health reports.
- Incident, outage, maintenance, manual-override, adjustment, and change logs.
- Raw and processed validation data, metadata, and calculations.
- Draft Pilot Performance and Evaluation Report.
- Accessible presentation and briefing for Save the Dunes and the project team.
- Comment-resolution log.
- Final Pilot Performance and Evaluation Report and all associated Project Materials.
- Final export of project data and system configurations in the formats required by the contract.

Save the Dunes will determine acceptance of Task 4c after considering technical input provided by NPS. Acceptance of Task 4c confirms completion of the pilot and required deliverables only. It does not constitute NPS acceptance of a production system or obligate Save the Dunes or NPS to continue subscriptions, retain equipment at a site, expand the system, or assume responsibility for future operation or maintenance.

At the conclusion of the pilot, the Contractor shall maintain, transfer, deactivate, or remove equipment and services only as directed in writing by the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator and as permitted by the applicable property owner. If removal is directed, the Contractor shall protect project data, terminate

access as instructed, remove equipment, and restore affected sites in accordance with the accepted disposition and site-restoration plan.

Task 5: Recommendations and Best Practices for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability

Following completion of the Phase 1 pilot and Save the Dunes' acceptance of Task 4c, the Contractor shall prepare a Recommendations and Best Practices for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability Report.

The report shall synthesize the Task 3 alternatives analysis and the measured results, costs, operational experience, and lessons learned from Task 4. It shall provide Save the Dunes and NPS with a decision-ready assessment of whether the tested system, specified components, or an alternative approach should be continued, modified, expanded, replaced, or discontinued.

The report shall not assume that the Phase 1 pilot will transition to sustained production use or that Save the Dunes, NPS, or any other entity will accept ownership, funding, operational, maintenance, or staffing responsibilities. Any recommendation requiring future funding, procurement, subscriptions, NPS system integration, continued installation on NPS-administered property, or the assumption of responsibilities by NPS shall identify those requirements as conditions requiring separate authorization.

At a minimum, the report shall address the following:

- **Pilot findings and production suitability.** Summarize the measured performance, reliability, forecast accuracy, data quality, maintenance effort, staffing requirements, visitor-communications performance, costs, unresolved deficiencies, and site-specific findings from the Phase 1 pilot. Identify which components or functions are suitable for sustained production use, which require modification or additional testing, and which should not be continued.
- **Recommended course of action.** Recommend and compare reasonable alternatives, including: continuing the tested system substantially as deployed; continuing selected components after modification; conducting additional testing; transitioning to another technology or provider; expanding to additional sites; or discontinuing the system. The report shall explain the benefits, costs, risks, dependencies, and required approvals associated with each alternative.
- **Operating and governance models.** Evaluate reasonable options for allocating operational responsibilities among Save the Dunes, NPS, a system vendor, a third-party service provider, or other project partners. The analysis shall address responsibility for system monitoring, public messages, manual overrides, data quality, maintenance, repairs, cybersecurity, privacy, records, subscriptions, incident response, technical support, performance monitoring, and coordination with road or property owners. The report shall include a responsibility matrix but shall not assign any responsibility to NPS unless NPS independently agrees to assume it through an appropriate process.
- **Ownership and control.** Identify the recommended ownership and control of equipment, software, administrative accounts, credentials, data, system configurations, interfaces, documentation, warranties, licenses, and subscriptions. The report shall identify any rights or access that must be transferred, retained, renewed, or terminated under each recommended alternative.
- **Lifecycle costs.** Reconcile estimated Task 3 and Task 4a costs with actual Task 4 costs. Provide total lifecycle-cost estimates for one-, three-, and five-year operating periods. Costs shall be itemized by location and shall distinguish equipment acquisition or lease, installation, power, communications, hosting, software, data services, licenses, subscriptions, maintenance, repairs, replacement, technical support, cybersecurity, training, staffing, administration, transition, equipment removal, and site restoration. The analysis shall identify cost escalation assumptions,

equipment replacement cycles, contingencies, and any costs that are uncertain or dependent on future approvals.

- **Maintenance and support.** Recommend preventive and corrective maintenance requirements, inspection frequency, staffing qualifications, spare equipment, response times, service levels, warranty administration, software updates, security patches, vendor support, outage response, and performance monitoring. Identify the operational consequences and costs if recommended maintenance or support is not provided.
- **Predictive-system management.** Address the continuing data and operational requirements for parking forecasts, including historical-data needs, seasonal recalibration, treatment of weather, holidays, closures, or special events, detection of model drift, ongoing validation, confidence thresholds, and procedures for suspending or qualifying forecasts when performance is unreliable.
- **Data governance.** Recommend long-term policies for data collection, access, use, quality control, validation, retention, disclosure, archival, sharing, and destruction. Address applicable privacy, information-security, accessibility, federal-records, incident-response, and visitor-information requirements. Identify which data could potentially support NPS visitor-use reporting and the additional validation or approval required before such use.
- **Interoperability and open interfaces.** Assess whether the tested system provides documented interfaces, application programming interfaces, commonly supported data formats, complete export of data and configurations, and practical interoperability with other systems. Identify any technical, contractual, licensing, or cost barriers to connecting another communications channel, adding another site, changing service providers, or operating portions of the system independently.
- **Data portability and vendor exit.** Confirm the procedures and formats for exporting Project Materials, operational data, historical data, metadata, system configurations, interface documentation, user and administrative account information, and other materials needed for transition. Identify the time, cost, assistance, and technical requirements for transferring operations to another provider without unreasonable loss of data, interruption of service, or dependence on the incumbent Contractor.
- **Scalability and additional locations.** Evaluate the technical, operational, financial, environmental, jurisdictional, and communications implications of expanding the system to the optional Phase 2 and Phase 3 locations or other future locations. Provide a recommended prioritization method, site-readiness criteria, estimated marginal cost by location, required approvals, infrastructure needs, staffing impacts, and circumstances under which a different technology or communications approach should be used at a particular site.
- **Transition to sustained operations.** If continued operation is recommended, provide a phased transition plan identifying required decisions, responsible parties, approvals, procurement actions, agreements, funding, staffing, training, data and credential transfers, subscription actions, performance requirements, and implementation milestones. The plan shall distinguish actions necessary to preserve current pilot operations from actions necessary to establish a production system.
- **Risk and decision framework.** Identify significant technical, operational, financial, privacy, security, legal, procurement, staffing, environmental, and public-information risks associated with each alternative. Provide a decision matrix showing the criteria, tradeoffs, prerequisites, and consequences of each available course of action.

Task 5 Deliverables

- *Working meetings (virtual)*
- *Accessible PowerPoint presentation and briefing for Save the Dunes and the Project Team.*
- *Draft Recommendations and Best Practices for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability*

- *Comment-resolution log*
- *Final Recommendations and Best Practices for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability, with Executive Summary, in editable and accessible formats*

The Contractor shall submit the final Task 5 deliverables within ten business days after receiving consolidated comments from the Save the Dunes Project Manager unless the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator authorizes a different schedule in writing. Save the Dunes will determine acceptance after considering technical input provided by NPS. Acceptance of Task 5 confirms completion of the required analysis and deliverables only and does not obligate Save the Dunes or NPS to implement any recommendation.

OPTIONAL TASKS: EXPANSION TO ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

The locations identified below are optional expansion locations. Each location shall be proposed and priced as a separate contract option. Inclusion of a location in this section does not authorize work at that location and does not obligate Save the Dunes to exercise any option.

Phase 2 Optional Locations

- Mount Baldy Parking Area;
- Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk Parking Areas; and
- Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education Parking Area.

Phase 3 Optional Locations

- Calumet Dunes Trail Parking Area;
- West Beach Parking Area;
- Great Marsh Trail South Parking Area; and
- Calumet Bike Trail Trailhead Parking Area.

Save the Dunes may exercise an option for one or more locations without exercising every location within a phase. Save the Dunes is not required to exercise Phase 2 before exercising a Phase 3 location if project needs, funding, site readiness, or technical considerations support a different sequence.

Only the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator may exercise an option. Exercise of an option must be in writing and must identify:

- the location or locations included;
- the authorized planning, deployment, operation, validation, reporting, or other activities;
- the accepted option price;
- the period of performance and required milestones;
- the applicable pilot or validation period;
- any approved site-specific variation from Task 4; and
- the required end-of-option equipment and service disposition.

Technical discussions, recommendations, or site approvals by NPS do not exercise an option or authorize the Contractor to incur costs.

Optional—Location Pricing

The Contractor shall provide separate pricing for each optional location. Option pricing shall identify all assumptions, dependencies, exclusions, quantities, unit prices, and price-validity periods. No automatic renewal, undisclosed recurring charge, or proprietary limitation may be imposed through the exercise of an option.

Optional—Location Planning and Approval

Before deployment at an optional location, the Contractor shall prepare a site-specific addendum to the accepted Task 4a Deployment, Operations, Validation, and Adjustment Plan. The addendum shall apply the requirements of Task 4a.

The Contractor shall explain any proposed departure from the accepted Phase 1 approach. Site conditions may support use of a different technology or communications method, but no departure may be implemented without written authorization from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator.

Acceptance of an optional-location plan addendum does not authorize procurement, installation, paid subscriptions, data collection, or deployment. Those activities require separate written authorization from the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator after applicable site and system reviews have been completed.

Optional—Location Deployment and Validation

When authorized, the Contractor shall perform the applicable Task 4b and Task 4c activities at the optional location. Unless expressly modified in the written option authorization, all Task 4 requirements governing procurement, installation, ownership, commissioning, system operation, privacy, security, maintenance, validation, adjustments, reporting, data delivery, transition, and site restoration apply to each optional location.

The Contractor shall validate performance at each optional location under representative operating conditions.

The validation period and performance thresholds shall be stated in the accepted site-specific plan addendum and written option authorization.

Optional—Location Deliverables

For each option exercised, the Contractor shall provide all applicable location-specific deliverables identified in Task 4, as modified by the written authorization.

If an optional location is implemented before completion of Task 5, its results shall be incorporated into the Task 5 report. If it is implemented after Task 5, the Contractor shall provide a Task 5 addendum addressing the effect of that location on long-term operations, ownership, lifecycle costs, interoperability, transition, and scalability.

Save the Dunes will determine acceptance of each optional task after considering technical input provided by NPS. Acceptance confirms completion of the specifically authorized option only. It does not obligate Save the Dunes or NPS to exercise another option, continue subscriptions, retain equipment, expand the system, or assume future operation or maintenance responsibilities.

DRAFT SCHEDULE

The dates below represent Save the Dunes' anticipated solicitation, selection, and project-performance schedule. Save the Dunes may revise the pre-award schedule by written addendum. Following contract execution, only the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator may authorize changes to contractual milestones.

All times are Central Time (CT), the prevailing local time in northwest Indiana. Proposers shall submit a detailed project schedule consistent with these milestones and identify any anticipated equipment lead times, approval dependencies, seasonal constraints, or other conditions that could affect the schedule.

Solicitation and Selection Schedule

Milestone	Anticipated Date
RFP issued	Friday, August 28, 2026
Deadline for written questions	Monday, September 21, 2026
Save the Dunes issues responses and any RFP addendum	Monday, September 28, 2026
Proposals due	Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. CT
Initial review and evaluation	October 14–November 6, 2026
Deadline to RSVP for Site Visit (shortlisted proposers)	<i>To be determined</i>
Site Visit (shortlisted proposers), with interviews, demonstrations, or written clarifications, as requested	<i>To be determined</i>
Anticipated selection of preferred proposer	Friday, November 20, 2026
Reference checks and contract finalization	November 23–December 18, 2026
Anticipated contract execution	Friday, December 18, 2026
Anticipated notice to proceed	Monday, January 4, 2027

Save the Dunes may request clarifications, interviews, demonstrations, revised technical approaches, or revised pricing during the evaluation process. Selection of a preferred proposer does not constitute contract award or authorization to begin work.

Anticipated Contract Performance Period

The anticipated notice to proceed is January 4, 2027, with the base project performance period continuing through January 31, 2028. Substantive project work is expected to be completed by January 7, 2028, with the remainder of January reserved for final acceptance, invoicing, data transfer, and administrative closeout.

Project Milestone	Anticipated Date or Period
Notice to proceed	January 4, 2027
Task 1 kickoff meeting	No later than January 14, 2027
Task 2 project management and status reporting	January 4, 2027–January 31, 2028
Task 3 draft State-of-the-Industry and Alternatives Analysis	February 12, 2027
Consolidated comments on Task 3 draft	March 8, 2027
Task 3 deliverables	March 22, 2027
Anticipated Task 3 acceptance	March 26, 2027
Task 4a draft Deployment, Operations, Validation, and Adjustment Plan	April 16, 2027
Consolidated comments on Task 4a draft	May 7, 2027
Task 4a deliverables	May 21, 2027
Completion of required site, resource, IT, privacy, security, roadway, and other reviews needed for deployment	No later than May 28, 2027
Task 4b deployment go/no-go decision and anticipated written authorization	May 28, 2027
Task 4b procurement, installation, configuration, and commissioning	May 31–June 25, 2027
Task 4b deliverables	June 25, 2027
Commissioning review and anticipated authorization to begin pilot operations	June 28, 2027

Task 4c Phase 1 pilot operating and validation period	June 28–August 27, 2027
Task 4c draft Pilot Performance and Evaluation Report	September 24, 2027
Consolidated comments on Task 4c draft	October 18, 2027
Task 4c deliverables	November 1, 2027
Anticipated Task 4c acceptance	November 5, 2027
Task 5 draft Recommendations and Best Practices for Long-Term Operations, Ownership, Transition, and Scalability Report	November 19, 2027
Consolidated comments on Task 5 draft	December 13, 2027
Task 5 deliverables	December 28, 2027
Anticipated Task 5 acceptance	January 7, 2028
Final data, account, credential, equipment-disposition, and administrative closeout	January 10–31, 2028
End of base performance period	January 31, 2028

Applicable NPS and third-party review coordination shall begin as early as practicable and proceed concurrently with Tasks 3 and 4a. The schedule does not authorize installation, system integration, data collection, or deployment before the approvals and written authorizations required by Task 4 have been completed.

If required approvals, equipment availability, site conditions, or other material dependency prevent commissioning by Monday, June 28, 2027, the Contractor shall promptly provide the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator with the schedule impact and reasonable alternatives. The pilot operating period shall not be shortened below the required minimum merely to preserve a later report date unless the Save the Dunes Contract Administrator expressly authorizes the change in writing.

Optional-location work is not included in the base schedule. The schedule for each exercised option shall be established in the written option authorization based on the location, authorized activities, required approvals, season, and validation period.

SITE VISIT & CAPABILITIES CONVERSATIONS

A Site Visit will be scheduled for shortlisted proposers at a date and location to be determined following the initial review and evaluation of proposals. Save the Dunes intends to provide substantially equivalent site-access and project information to each shortlisted proposer participating in the visit.

The morning session will consist of an introduction and presentation by Save the Dunes and NPS officials on the project concept, an open question-and-answer session (8:00 a.m.–9:30 a.m.), and a tour of relevant locations (9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.). Attendees must provide their own transportation to and among the site locations. An independent lunch break will be held from 12:30 p.m.–1:30 p.m.

Following lunch (1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.), Save the Dunes and NPS officials may hold previously scheduled 20 to 30-minute private breakout sessions with shortlisted proposers to discuss project concepts and proposer questions. These discussions do not constitute negotiations or authorization to modify the RFP. Any substantive clarification or information arising from a private session that materially affects the solicitation will be provided, as appropriate, to all affected proposers through a written clarification or addendum.

RESPONDING TO THE RFP

Save the Dunes invites responses from interested parties with relevant, demonstrated experience in one or more areas required by this RFP, including the design, implementation, operation, validation, and maintenance of real-time data systems. Proposal narratives are limited to no more than 20 pages*.

**The page limit excludes the cover page, table of contents, personnel resumes, pricing schedules, and appendices, unless otherwise stated in an addendum.*

Please submit* responses electronically in a single searchable, accessible PDF file** to the Save the Dunes Project Manager Daniel King at daniel@savedunes.org **no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Time (CT) on Tuesday, October 13, 2026.**

**Subject line: Proposal for Indiana Dunes Smart Parking Initiative—[Your Firm's Name].*

***Suggested file name: INDU_Smart_Parking_Proposal_[FirmName].pdf*

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include the following components:

1. **Project Understanding, Executive Summary, and Team Qualifications** (summarize the proposer's understanding of the project, overall approach, key personnel, organizational structure, and why the team is suited to the work; include resumes for key personnel as an excluded appendix).
2. **Technical Approach and Methodology** (address Tasks 1–5; proposed monitoring, counting, forecasting, communications, validation, and maintenance approaches; anticipated architecture and data flows; site and connectivity constraints; approval dependencies; implementation schedule; key risks; and proposed minimum performance measures).
3. **Relevant Experience and Past Performance** (provide up to three recent, relevant project examples, preferably involving comparable real-time systems and multi-agency or public-sector collaboration, and at least three client references with current contact information).
4. **Detailed Budget and Fee Structure** (provide pricing by task and deliverable; identify labor categories/rates, estimated hours, travel, equipment, software, hosting, data services, licenses/subscriptions, maintenance/support, contingencies, taxes, if applicable, and other anticipated expenses; distinguish one-time and recurring costs; and state pricing assumptions and price-validity periods).
5. **Staffing, Subcontractors, and Conflicts/Relationships** (if applicable, identify proposed subcontractors and roles, key staff availability, material vendor/service-provider relationships, and anticipated key-person or subcontractor substitutions).

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation may consider the following factors, as applicable:

- understanding of the project and quality, feasibility, and completeness of the technical approach;
- relevant experience, qualifications, staffing capacity, and performance on comparable projects;
- quality of the proposed deployment, validation, operations, maintenance, schedule, and risk-management approach under the Park's site and connectivity conditions;
- data architecture, interoperability, API documentation, ownership/portability, privacy, cybersecurity, accessibility, and vendor-exit approach;
- lifecycle costs, transparency of assumptions, price reasonableness, and distinctions between one-time and recurring costs; and
- references, clarifications, interviews, demonstrations, site-visit findings, and other information reasonably used to verify proposal claims.

Subject to applicable grant, legal, and contractual requirements, Save the Dunes may request clarifications, interviews, demonstrations, revised technical approaches, or revised pricing; reject any or all proposals; waive minor informalities; or cancel or reissue the solicitation. Proposers are responsible for all costs of preparing proposals and participating in the procurement process. No proposer is authorized to begin work until a contract is executed and Save the Dunes issues written notice to proceed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Any questions* or comments regarding this RFP should be submitted via email to the Save the Dunes Project Manager Daniel King at daniel@savedunes.org.

****Questions must be submitted by Monday, September 21, 2026. Save the Dunes intends to issue responses by Monday, September 28, 2026. Only an addendum issued by Save the Dunes may modify this RFP; oral statements, site-visit discussions, interviews, or other informal communications do not modify the solicitation.***