



CITY OF ITHACA
108 East Green Street Ithaca, New York 14850-5690

MAYOR'S OFFICE

SVANTE L. MYRICK, MAYOR

Telephone: 607-274-6501
Email: mayor@cityofithaca.org
Fax: 607-274-6526

December 3, 2014

Ms. Lisa Kiefel
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CECW-CE)
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Ms. Keifel:

I write to propose a feasibility study for inclusion in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Annual Report. The City of Ithaca seeks to act as the sponsor of a project to dredge the Cayuga Inlet. Dredging this waterway is necessary to restore impaired navigational use and flood protection. Ithaca seeks USACE assistance in solving our city's sediment management problem and its associated costs beyond our initial work with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The Cayuga Inlet has not been dredged since the late 1990's. The USACE estimates that approximately 700,000 cubic yards of sediment have accumulated in the Cayuga Inlet's flood and navigation channel due to deferred maintenance. This lack of dredging poses a significant flooding threat to Ithaca. The USACE catalogued these risks in its May 2011 Hydraulic Analysis and Impacts of Long Term Shoaling for Flood Risk Management Project, Cayuga Inlet, Ithaca, New York report. In August 2011, the USACE determined that Cayuga Inlet no longer met requirements as a functioning flood control channel.

Ithaca has launched into a project with the Department of Environmental Conservation to dredge the Cayuga Inlet, and received \$13 million in funding from the State of New York to support these efforts. The Syracuse engineering firm O'Brien and Gere, subcontracted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, places the total cost of dredging as high as \$100 million. The purpose of the project is to prevent future flooding in Ithaca. Anticipated benefits include the protection of human life and property.

The project will also improve navigation and recreational opportunities, and positively affect the local economy. Ithaca is a boating destination. Boaters are able to sail to and from Ithaca through the Erie Canal to the Atlantic Ocean via the Saint Lawrence Seaway or to the Gulf of Mexico via

Lake Erie and the Mississippi River. Dredging will improve the local economy in three primary ways: through flood protection, property tax revenues and tourism spending.

The transportation of dredged spoils represents the bulk of the proposed dredging costs. Ithaca does not have the land area to dewater and landfill this volume of dredged material, nor does it have the financial resources to dispose of the dredged material in upland locations. An alternative that the feasibility study should examine is in-lake disposal. The USACE has proposed in-lake disposal of dredged material for similar projects, including the recent Cleveland Harbor project.

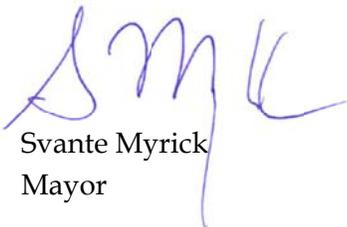
Dredging of the Cayuga Inlet enjoys strong local, regional, state and federal support. The City has hosted many public meetings and events to gather stakeholder input on dredging alternatives for Cayuga Inlet. Tompkins County is a partner in Ithaca's efforts to seek resources to support flood protection efforts at Cayuga Inlet. The State of New York is providing \$13 million to support the initial design and construction phases of Cayuga Inlet dredging. In addition, Ithaca's congressional delegation backs the City's efforts to secure USACE assistance to dredge Cayuga Inlet.

Ithaca is prepared to provide the required cost share for the recommended USACE feasibility study. Dredging Cayuga Inlet is a City priority, and Ithaca is prepared to dedicate local funds, as well as state resources, to match USACE dollars.

Ithaca requests that its Cayuga Inlet dredging project be included as a new feasibility study in the USACE Annual Report. The City seeks USACE assistance to develop short- and long-term sediment management strategies that address the disposal of dredged material in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner. The project fulfills the USACE's mission, has strong local, regional and state backing, and requires further federal support.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (607) 274-6501 or mayormyrick@cityofithaca.org.

Sincerely,



Svante Myrick
Mayor