



## **CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL TO LA PORTE INDUSTRY**

### **A Two-Way Partnership: How Industry & the City of La Porte Support One Another**

This meeting's topic focused on the two-way partnership between industry and the City of La Porte, and how we support one another. Haley Bowers, City of La Porte Economic Development Manager, discussed how industry supports the city through tax revenue, its impact on essential services such as infrastructure, emergency response, and schools, as well as the number of local jobs supported and the overall economic footprint within the community. Dr. Michelle Baker, La Porte ISD Career and Technical (CTE) Coordinator, shared how industry and the district work together to support students and help develop the future workforce. In addition, plant representatives were asked to complete a survey highlighting how their facilities support community programs, scholarships, nonprofit initiatives, and local emergency response efforts.

### **City of La Porte Economic Development**

Haley Bowers from the City of La Porte's Economic Development Office provided an overview of how industry supports the city and how those contributions are reinvested back into the community. The office, now part of the City Manager's Office, focuses on fostering growth and strengthening partnerships with local industry.

Industry supports the City of La Porte in four primary ways: tax revenue, local job opportunities, capital investment, and daily spending. Property taxes, driven largely by industrial presence, make up a significant portion of the city's revenue, along with sales taxes and other fees. The city's adopted budget is supported heavily by these sources, with approximately 67% of total revenue coming from property taxes.

These revenues directly fund a wide range of city services and projects. Capital improvement projects include roadway upgrades, sidewalk improvements, drainage work, and facility enhancements across the city. Funding also supports emergency response services by providing personnel, equipment, training, and upgraded facilities to ensure readiness and public safety.

Sales tax revenue is another critical funding source and is distributed across several dedicated funds, including the general fund, the La Porte Development Corporation, the Emergency Services District, and street maintenance fund. These funds help support infrastructure, economic development initiatives, and quality-of-life improvements such as park upgrades, recreational amenities, and public spaces.

The city also uses these revenues to help offset costs for residents. For example, subsidized services include low-cost recreation programs and affordable utility rates, ensuring that La Porte remains an attractive and affordable place to live.

Industry also contributes to the local economy through capital investments in facilities and ongoing operations. Each plant expansion or improvement adds value to the city. Additionally, the daily spending of employees, through local businesses, restaurants, and services, further supports the local economy and generates additional sales tax revenue.

Bowers highlighted the broader economic impact of industry, noting that thousands of jobs in the region are directly and indirectly supported by industrial activity. Beyond plant employees, industry supports a wide network of local businesses and services that contribute to the overall economic health of the community.

Finally, Bowers emphasized the importance of the City of La Porte's long-term partnership with industry. Through continued collaboration, infrastructure improvements, and investments in public safety and quality of life, the City of La Porte remains committed to supporting industry while ensuring a strong, vibrant community for its residents.

## **La Porte ISD Career and Technical Education**

Dr. Michelle Baker, La Porte ISD Career and Technical (CTE) Coordinator, presentation provided an overview of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in La Porte ISD and highlighted the strong partnerships between the school district and local industry.

CTE programs begin as early as seventh grade and continue through high school, offering students a structured pathway to gain both academic knowledge and hands-on technical skills. The goal of the program is to prepare students with practical, real-world experience and equip them with the skills needed to be successful in the workforce or in further education. Currently, about 70% of high school students in La Porte ISD are enrolled in a CTE program, with a goal of increasing that participation to 100% in the future.

The school district offers 15 programs of study aligned with high-wage, high-demand careers in the region. These include areas such as health science, welding and manufacturing, maritime studies in partnership with San Jacinto College, automotive and collision repair, engineering, and education. Each program is designed as a multi-year pathway that culminates in a practicum or capstone experience, such as an internship, job shadowing, or lab-based

application. Students also graduate with at least one industry-based certification, providing them with a competitive advantage when entering the workforce.

Program offerings are continuously evaluated to ensure they align with industry needs in the area, certification value, and student accessibility. Input from stakeholders, including students, parents, educators, and industry partners, is gathered through advisory committee meetings to guide program improvements and expansion.

Strong partnerships with local businesses and organizations play a critical role in the success of CTE programs. For example, culinary students participate in hands-on training through restaurant partnerships, while health science students gain experience in local clinics. Students in welding, engineering, and automotive programs participate in industry tours, competitions, and training opportunities. The district also partners with San Jacinto College to offer maritime training and is expanding into dual credit welding and future process technology programs, allowing students to earn college-level credentials while still in high school.

Additional opportunities for students include participation in career and technical student organizations such as Skills USA, DECA, FFA and FBLA, where they can develop leadership skills and compete at regional, state, and national levels.

Looking ahead, the school district aims to expand CTE awareness and engagement at earlier grade levels, introduce initiatives such as a CTE signing day, and continue strengthening partnerships with local industry. Businesses are encouraged to get involved by offering guest speaking opportunities, hosting field trips, providing internships or job shadowing experiences, and participating in advisory committees.

Overall, the CTE program in La Porte ISD is focused on preparing students to be workforce-ready while building strong, collaborative relationships with industry partners to support future economic growth.

The CAC is a forum for candid and constructive dialogue between those who live or work in La Porte, Morgan's Point, and Shoreacres and the managers of 41 chemical plants in La Porte. The CAC welcomes visitors. It meets again on Tuesday, May 5 at 6:00 p.m. for an overview and tour of San Jacinto College LyondellBasell Center for Petrochemical, Energy, & Technology. Contact [info@laportecac.org](mailto:info@laportecac.org) if you wish to attend. The CAC shares information about its meetings and presentations at [www.laportecac.org](http://www.laportecac.org).