

Request for Proposal

The Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina issues this Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain the following services from qualified and capable vendors:

- 1) Digitize the historic relics held by members of the Atlantic Beach community
- 2) Organize the historical relics and determine a location for future digital storage; and
- 3) Create conceptual and schematic plans for historical exhibits that will tell the story of the 89 years of this African American beach front community.

As the only African American beach front community which has remained in the hands of African Americans since its inception, the majority of the history of this community is in oral form and in the hands of community residents. To begin the museum development and planning process, the relics – photographs, newspapers, images, legal documents, and many other historical articles, must be digitized and properly stored.

These historical relics will be the basis for the Atlantic Beach exhibits. While the exhibits may be a combination of exterior and interior, the firm chosen for this project will be responsible for exhibit content development, planning the interpretive framework for the exhibition, creating the exhibit’s physical layout/design and location recommendation.

In 2022, with a grant for the National Trust for Historic Preservation Telling the Full Story Project, the Atlantic Beach Historical Team began the journey of collecting, reviewing and organizing oral history sessions to determine the historical thematic direction. These oral history interviews and the thematic work serves as a foundation for the Amplifying the Black Pearl Project.

Introduction and Information about the Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina

In the early 1930’s George Tyson, an astute African American entrepreneur, was approached by RV Wade, one of his few white business connections, about purchasing 47 acres of land along the ocean front to provide residences for the “colored workers” who served the white establishments along the Grand Strand. In October 1939, Mr. Tyson purchased the 47 acres from Mr. Wade to develop a beach community for the African American workers who provided service to the Grand Strand visitors.

Mr. Tyson formed the Black Hawk Night Club on the ocean front and Atlantic Beach became a popular entertainment venue for African Americans in the area prohibited from going to white venues. The visitors and residents grew and Atlantic Beach became a vibrant ocean front community. This storied journey includes the booming days of the 1940’s-50’s when African Americans came from all over to enjoy “The Pearl”, including many prominent R&B singers of the time. These African American men and women developed a new community – created businesses, built homes, organized governance and invited others to visit them. Atlantic Beach, a fully segregated beach community with physical barriers on the north and south ends, grew and flourished becoming one of the most popular vacation destinations for African Americans.

Challenges to these glory days posed new obstacles. In 1954 Hurricane Hazel destroyed many of the wood structures along the ocean front. In the 1960s desegregation destroyed the identity with the “Black Pearl” as African Americans left Atlantic Beach for other destinations they were not allowed to visit earlier. This loss of visitors led to disinvestment in Atlantic Beach. In 1969 surrounding beaches decided to join under the umbrella of North Myrtle Beach. Atlantic Beach residents, with much opposition from the neighbors, decided to incorporate itself as an independent city under the title Town of Atlantic Beach with its own governance. Even with continued physical barriers between the communities, economic challenges and independent governing bodies, Atlantic Beach has been sustained as a historic African American owned and governed community for over 89 years.

According to *National Geographic Magazine*, Atlantic Beach is the only historically Black Beach “to have remained in the hands of African Americans since its founding in the 1930s.”

Project Background and Context

The project will broaden the narrative by exposing more people to the story of a beach town created and run by African Americans surviving and thriving against odds. First, digitalizing history preserves it through time. Then organizing and presenting it both virtually and in live display gives more exposure to this rich history. The Atlantic Beach story of resiliency inspires and moves people forward knowing tomorrow is a brighter day.

Project Goals:

- 1) Digitalization of historical materials collected by historical society and residents
- 2) Organization of the historical relics
- 3) Develop plans for live – indoor/outdoor, and virtual exhibitions
- 4) Identify locations in the Town that may be suitable to house the displays
- 5) Provide cost estimates for renovation/construction .

Project Vision

Content Preservation

Many physical elements of the Black Pearl’s history reside in the homes of citizens and in public storage areas.

Phase 1: The first stage of the project will review available documents, photos and ephemera and recommend preservation strategies, digitization or other strategies.

Phase 2: Organize the historic artifacts in a manner that will properly preserve them for future displays or other use.

Phase 3 - Create conceptual and schematic plans for historical exhibits that will tell the story of the 89 years of this African American beach front community.

Content Development Vision. Once the historical data has been reviewed and preserved, the successful vendor will use that data to develop a historical exhibit conceptual design to inform and inspire.

The exhibit's focus will show how Atlantic Beach, South Carolina has sustained for the last 89 years. Visitors should leave the exhibit understanding how Atlantic Beach, survived and changed the landscape of America over the past decades, and the exhibit should connect this history to today.

We aim to present an authentic story that will engage visitors with our legacy by deepening their understanding of our rich history and encouraging their curiosity about how we carry on that legacy today. The exhibit will celebrate our greatest achievements and grapple with our unvarnished history through stories across generations. Visitors will encounter stories of hope and ingenuity that may provide surprising perspectives on stories they think they already know.

We do not see our story told chronologically, but rather through themes developed as a part of the Telling the Full History Project which was funded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The themes are:

THEME 1 - George Tyson's Vision for an African American Beach and Municipality

- Identifies Tyson and his background
- Provides story of Tyson's purchase and plans for Atlantic Beach
- Introduces the meaning(s) of the Black Pearl
- Provides history of the leaders and committee efforts to become a self-governing municipality over the years
 - Include key initiatives that enhanced the town's development

THEME 2 - Atlantic Beach: A Community Haven

- Provides insight into daily life of community's residents (20th century), building of homes, economic life (fishing), and maintaining community.
- Emphasizes pride in the community, motivations/desires of homeowners and business owners, and goals for the community.

THEME 3 - The Black Pearl: An African American Destination and Enclave

- Includes description that provides geographic position in relation to Myrtle Beach and the necessity of an enclave due to Jim Crow, segregation, racial policies concerning use of beach and swimming for blacks/whites.
- Discusses why travelers came to the beach from May to September, where they traveled from (including the reasons why locals visited during the week, worked all week long for respite and entertainment)
- Provides a summary of the various attractions (hotels, restaurants and amusements) that were present at the beach.
- Describes the entertainment scene and the crowds that gathered at the beach, popular entertainers to the beginnings of Black Bike Week.

THEME 4 - Change and Resilience Through the Years

- Provides a summary on how integration, migration, and other issues have impacted the beach's community and infrastructure. (*Hurricane)
- Identifies the town's resilient efforts to reinvigorate and revitalize the beach.
- **Could include its heritage and preservation projects under this theme.

THEME 5 - Embracing Heritage – Preserving the History of Atlantic Beach

- Discusses the town's efforts to preserve the unique history and ensure Atlantic Beach's legacy.

Visual & Experiential Vision. The visual impact of this exhibit should be outside-the-box bold.

We want to preserve the historical data which is now available in homes of Atlantic Beach residents in preparation for a museum exhibit.

We want to exhibit to multifaceted to reach a broad audience – indoor museum, outdoor/beach side displays and digital presentation.

We want the exhibit to be museum-quality and state-of-art with multimedia displays and presentations along with interactive opportunities that bring history to life—engaging visitors from the moment they enter the spaces, compelling them to walk with the entire exhibit (s).

We envision an exhibit that invites visitors to become part of the history and the storytelling, perhaps through opportunities to leave a comment or record a video sharing their personal mission story.

The exhibit will have permanent core exhibits as well as flexible display areas to feature temporary or rotating exhibits. Exhibits can be in both indoor and outdoor spaces on Atlantic Beach.

Audience

While we see this exhibit as a destination for beachgoers and African American history lovers, it is our hope that it will become a destination for many more as we broaden horizons for visitors, including those who may be visiting the State of South Carolina, the Gullah Geechee Trail and the East Coast Greenway. Ultimately, it is our hope that visitors who care about the entire U.S. history and its stories of resilience, independence and freedom will also care about learning how the citizens of Atlantic Beach survived to pass on this precious *Black Pearl* to the next generations and ultimately transforming the landscape of our country.

Specifically, we see the following groups as examples of audiences for this exhibit—

- Atlantic Beach Family and Friends;
- South Carolina visitors and beach lovers;
- Visitors to historic locations;
 - South Carolina Historic Sites
 - National Registry for Historic Places
- Local organizations within driving distance;

- Schools and churches;
- Related nonprofit organizations; and
- Neighboring businesses.

Project Milestone Schedule

- Issue RFP **August 25, 2023**;
- Questions on RFP due by 2:00 pm, **September 1, 2023** emailed to Benjamin. Quattlebaum@aol.com;
- Responses prepared and returned by **September 5, 2023**
- Proposals due **September 15, 2023 by 2:00 pm EDT.**
- Proposals may be **emailed** to Benjamin. Quattlebaum @aol.com or **mailed** to PO Box 5285, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29597 – ATTN: Amplifying the Black Pearl RFP
- Evaluation and selection of successful proposer **September 25th, 2023**;
- Contract award **October 2, 2023**
- Final Report **December 15, 2023**

Interim project milestones will be determined in collaboration with successful proposer upon award of contract.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposers shall submit Proposals in accordance with the content and format set forth in this RFP. Proposals should be clearly organized and structured in a manner that allows material to be located easily. The Town reserves the right at its discretion to determine whether any aspect of the Proposal meets the requirements as set forth. The Town reserves the right to reject any Proposal , which in its judgment, does not comply with these submission requirements.

Submission: Submit one (1) original signed and dated proposal in PDF format electronically to Benjamin.Quattlebaum@aol.com or mail to PO Box 5285, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29597. **All proposals must be received by 2:00 pm EDT**

Cover Letter. Company or corporation name, street and mailing addresses, the responsible officer(s) of the firm, including founding date, principals, locations Identify contact persons and provide telephone, fax and email address for each person listed. Letter should be signed by person authorized to obligate the firm.

Capabilities and Methodology. Identify the firm's areas of strength. Describe the firm's experience and qualifications, and explain why the firm is interested in this project as well as the firm's capacity to take on a project of this scale.

Describe the firm's approach to digitalization of artifacts and ephemera as well as experience with projects of this nature. Describe experience in developing a visitor experience along with overall experience in museum, heritage and/or themed attraction design. Describe experience is organizing a themed exhibit, of a historical nature. Discuss experience in proposing museum locations .

Staffing. Provide a list of team members who will be assigned to the project and describe the qualifications, experience, and skills of each individual along with the role each will play in the project. Indicate if you plan to use subcontractors.

Project Management. Explain the project management philosophy of the firm and the methods that will be used to communicate and collaborate with the Town of Atlantic Beach and its Project Task Force, management and staff in addition to how you will communicate with the Town of Atlantic Beach project manager to ensure project stays on schedule.

References. Include minimum of three (3) references for similar services provided over the past five years including the entity name; contact names(s); email address, telephone number and a brief description of the work performed. Describe project outcome (i.e., completed on time, on budget, and successful fulfillment of performance measures).

Budget. Include budget for completion of scope of services

Certificate of Insurance. Provide sample Certificate of insurance

Insurance Requirements

Upon award, the successful Proposer must obtain at their own expense, a Certificate of Insurance(COI). Proof of insurance must be provided to the Town prior to the start of any services. The COI must be issued by an insurance company of generally recognized responsibility and licensed to do business in South Carolina. These policies must insure the Town against all liability for property damage, environmental liability, personal injury(including death) rising or alleged to arise out of any activity or failure to act on the part of the successful offeror, its employees and agents related to the performance under the contract. The combined single limit of liability shall not be less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Worker's compensation shall include a minimum limit of \$100,000 per accident and comprehensive general liability coverage shall provide minimum limits of liability of \$1,000,000 per occurrence Combined Single Limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage. This shall include coverage for premises/operations, products/completed operations, contractual liability, errors and omissions(professional liability), independent contractors and vehicles used in premises/operations. Insurance shall indemnify Town against any and all claims arising under or as a result of the performance of the contract. Professional Liability insurance shall be provided with minimum liability limits of \$1,000,000 per occurrence (in addition to Commercial General Liability insurance) by professional services such as accountant, attorney, architect, design, engineering and most consultants that involve errors and omissions exposure protection. A combination of Umbrella/Excess and primary limit may be used to provide for the commercial general liability amounts required. The Town shall be named as an additional insured on all liability policies. The Town must be provided with notice prior to cancellation, modification or reduction in limits of any stipulated insurance.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria and weights will be utilized to determine a successful proposer.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Overall Capabilities	35
Qualifications of Key Personnel	10
Previous Related Experience	25
Innovation, understanding of Project	10
Methodology, Milestone Completion	10
Budget	10

After the initial evaluation of the RFP's, the evaluation team will meet to select the most qualified firm based upon the information submitted.