



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN/ LAND MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

ISSUE DATE:
February 1, 2025
DUE Date:
March 20, 2025, at 2:00 PM EST

The Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina is soliciting qualified firms to submit proposal(s) to update the Atlantic Beach 2017 Comprehensive Plan (Task I); and update the 2019 Land Management Ordinance/Zoning Ordinance to be in concert with the newly developed Comprehensive Plan (Task II). A Master Plan of our Commercial Corridor is also requested as a part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan should be developed pursuant to the state enabling legislation, Section 6-29-510 of the South Carolina Code of Laws [also known as the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994]. Sealed proposals will be accepted at procurement@townofatlanticbeachsc.com or delivered to Interim Town Manager, 717 30th Ave S, Atlantic Beach, SC 29582 no later than 2:00 pm, March 20, 2025. No proposals submitted hereafter will be accepted.

Bidder Information

- No proposal may be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the date and time of opening.
- Proposals must contain the name and proper address of the firm and must be signed by a responsible member of the firm.

- Proposals which are incomplete or contain any omissions, and/or irregularities of any kind may be rejected.
- The Town reserves the right to reject all proposals or parts thereof or waive any informality in the proposals received and to accept the proposal, remove parts thereof, which it deems to be most favorable to the best interest of the town.
 - All tasks will be evaluated independently of each other.
- The Town may make reference checks to determine the ability of the proposer to perform the work and the proposer shall furnish the Town all information and data for this purpose as the Town may request. The Town reserves the right to reject any proposer if the evidence submitted by, or investigation fails to satisfy the Town that such proposer is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to complete the work requested therein.
 - Proposers should state the proposed prices as designated in the proposal request.
 - Questions regarding this RFP may be addressed to Linda Moye Cheatham
Interim Town Manager
Email:cheatham@townofatlanticbeachsc.com
Phone: 843-663-2284
All questions must be received by 4:00
pm February 18, 2025
 - The successful proposer shall have in effect for the duration of the contract period, the proper liability insurance and workers compensation written by an insurer authorized to transact insurance in the State of South Carolina.
- All parties shall be duly licensed to offer said services in the State of South Carolina and the Town of Atlantic Beach to be capable of obtaining said license before entering into service.

Background

The Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina, also known as “The Black Pearl”, is a dynamic and growing community with an active beachfront community, a significant historic story to tell, and a picturesque beach. Atlantic Beach, South Carolina is a historic African American coastal community nestled in Horry County. Established in 1934 as a segregated beach community for “colored” workers, Atlantic Beach, with its physical barriers, grew and flourished prior to integration, becoming one of the most popular vacation destinations for African Americans. In 1966 Atlantic Beach became an independent municipality. Despite many racial challenges, physical barriers, infrastructural exclusion, environmental injustices, political omission, social challenges and financial challenges, Atlantic Beach has remained an independent African American owned and governed community for 90 years. According to National Geographic Magazine (Bethel, 2022), Atlantic Beach is now the only African American owned and governed beachfront community in the United States.

On January 22, 2025, the Atlantic Beach Historic District (the entire Town) was officially listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Atlantic Beach infrastructure, including stormwater management, road and sidewalk development, beach access and utility upgrades, is far behind that of the neighboring communities. The outdated infrastructure is becoming an increasingly pressing issue as new homes and buildings are being developed.

Atlantic Beach is a four-street coastal town along the Atlantic Ocean with a total land area of 0.2 square miles, located in Horry County, near North Myrtle Beach, and Myrtle Beach, and is home to 298 residents. The town also is host to the Black Pearl Cultural Heritage and Bike Fest Festival each Memorial Day weekend. This four-day event draws an estimated 300,000 visitors.

Over the past few years, the Town has experienced significant growth in its residential area, but limited growth in the commercial areas of the Town. In November of 2024, our business district revitalization began with the groundbreaking of the first new business in many years.

We seek to align our comprehensive plan with the deed restrictions for our three rows of oceanfront. We seek to make our commercial areas 30th and 31st Ave’s zoning ordinance appealing and like other successful commercial areas. The challenge for the next ten years will be striking a balance between preserving our rich heritage and unique culture while creating a destination that encourages our younger generations to live, work and continue to support economic development and growth. We aim to create work opportunities for our local community, while still preserving our history, unique places, characteristics and commerce. In addition, we seek a vision for our commercial area which proposes a detailed strategic implementation program with prioritized actions.

Finally, the base zoning districts and associated regulations will need to be reassessed and modified, or new zoning districts created that ensure compatible new and infill development.

The current schedule anticipates evaluation of proposals from April 2025 through May 2025. A decision regarding a recommendation to award will be made by Town Council resolution at a regularly scheduled Council Meeting in June 2025. The successful firm will be notified after the Town Council Meeting, and a contract can be executed.

Project Scope and Deliverables

Task I -Comprehensive Plan

The selected consultant with direction from the Town Manager and the Planning Commission will engage the community in a participatory process; facilitate public meetings; prepare the proposed plan for review by the Town; and based on this collective information and input, finalize the updated Comprehensive Plan. The Plan will be coordinated and reviewed by the Planning /commission. Once finalized, it will be submitted to the Town Council for adoption.

The selected consultant will be responsible for the Comprehensive Plan process and scope of work included but not limited to the following items:

1. Inventory of existing conditions.
2. A statement of needs and goals.
3. Significant public input will be required throughout the process. A number of property owners reside out of town. The Town desires an aggressive, creative, and far-reaching public input strategy which includes residents and property owners. The strategy should include but not be limited to stakeholder meetings, social media, website, surveys, and other creative input mechanisms. Public participation is essential to this planning effort and must include an outreach and public participation process designed to engage the public and stakeholders to envision the future of the Town. We anticipate progress reports as the plan develops, comments on specific ideas or concepts and that problems or barriers as identified are acknowledged and strategies to overcome are developed.
4. Prepare for and conduct workshops and visioning sessions with residents, business owners, and Town staff, and present formally to the Town Planning commission and Council for public input, plan consideration and final adoption.
5. Hold regular meetings and updates with Town Manager, provide updates on progress.

6. Research and analyze existing land use patterns, traffic patterns, and projects, environmental constraints, and regulatory codes to establish existing conditions as well as identify major issues and opportunities. Data should also be used to prepare estimates, projections, and forecasts.
7. Formulate and recommend objectives and policies using the goals set forth by Town Council and results of the participatory process, data inventory and analysis.
8. Develop implementation strategies with timeframes, provide a detailed plan for execution and estimate costs for implementation
9. The Comprehensive Plan should be developed pursuant to state enabling legislation, Section 6-29-510 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. the plan must include, but not be limited to the following planning elements:
 - Population element
 - Economic development - characteristics of available workforce, where workers live and other aspects of local economy
 - Natural resources element
 - Cultural resources element - historic buildings and sites, historic designation
 - Community facilities
 - Housing element
 - Land use element
 - Transportation element
 - Priority investment element
 - Resiliency element - added in 2020, considered the impacts of flooding, high water and natural hazards on communities

We are also requesting that the Comprehensive plan include a section on a Master Plan for our Commercial areas, primarily 30th and 31st Ave S. These streets have been designated as our commercial corridor. 30th Ave S. consists of mostly vacant lots. We experienced our first groundbreaking in 25 years for a new structure in November 2024. The next street, 31st Ave S has more structures, but there are also several vacant lots suitable for in-fill recommendations.

We are interested in obtaining a vision with a strategic implementation plan which addresses long and short-term priorities and objectives. This plan will be used as a guide by the Atlantic Beach Historic District and other stakeholders to promote redevelopment, invigorate a retail corridor, increase business opportunities, improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety. We also want to ensure that consistency in development and design standards creates a commercial corridor that is unique and enhances our Historic District status.

Task II- Land Management Ordinance/Zoning Revision

The Town is requesting proposals with updating its Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance was last updated in 2019. Since adoption of the 2019 Zoning Ordinance, the Town has identified issues because of discrepancies between Land Management Ordinance and the Comprehensive plan, and deed restrictions. The Town would like to update the Zoning Ordinance to come into alignment with the Comprehensive Plan (including the Commercial Corridor Master Plan included therein). In addition, the current ordinance has been amended numerous times with piecemeal fixes to address some of the inconsistencies and conflicts. As a result, it does not reflect best practices. It is anticipated that the Town's placement in January 2025 on the National Register of Historic Places has also required a review of our ordinances. The preservation of characteristics that made us Historic must be utilized and translated into complimentary policies, procedures and regulations.

The selected consultant will be responsible for the zoning ordinance revision process. The scope of work would include but not be limited to the following stages:

- 1. Public Input:** Public input meetings will be conducted to get details relative to potential improvements to the regulations. Public input may also include other methods and/or creative alternatives. This stage may also include meetings with The Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Town Council, residents, property owners and stakeholders.
- 2. Implementation Plan:** The consultant will provide a working summary of current deficiencies, discrepancies and opportunities for improvement in the current Zoning Regulations and/or Zoning Map Atlas
- 3.. Community Assessment and Issues Identification:** Review the current Zoning Ordinance and identify relevant sections that should remain, be revised, or be removed. This review should include recognition of deficiencies of the current ordinance, reflect changes in conditions and demographics and identification of elements that should be incorporated into the new Ordinance. Assessment of community issues, problems to resolve, needs to be addressed, and opportunities to be pursued shall be identified.
- 4. A successful zoning ordinance update will provide solutions for the following issues:**
The new zoning ordinance should address appropriate uses in appropriate districts and encourage mixed uses in commercial zones such as coffee shops, cafes, restaurants, small retail, and housing.
- 5. Align Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance:** Bring the Zoning Ordinance into alignment with the intent of the Comprehensive Master Plan, specifically regarding density, height restrictions and deed restrictions

6. The Consultant shall be responsible for:

- a. Writing the new zoning code
 - b. Providing guidance on best practices, trends and checking assumptions
 - c. Meet/conference call regularly with Town Staff for project review and status updates
 - d. Evaluate the level of community resources and administrative capacity of the Town regarding zoning and land use enforcement and develop regulations respective of same.
7. Be familiar with creative solutions to zoning and land use challenges, such as overlay districts (steep slope, environmental, historic overlays), and recommend them to the Town as appropriate. Evaluate the use of sustainable infrastructure options.
 8. Assist Town staff in distributing information to the community about the project and/or final product as the need arises (i.e., graphic representations of timelines, permitted use changes, new building size/setback requirements).
 9. Eliminate contradictions and redundancy; identify areas in the existing ordinance that lack clarity and create new zoning codes that are straightforward and avoid confusion.
 10. Identify existing uses that may be phased out in the new zoning ordinance and develop appropriate processes for how the Town handles the transfer and permitting of these uses for future occupants
 11. Bring into alignment with new Town Comprehensive Plan.
 12. Preparation of the draft Zoning Ordinance: Initial focus on reorganization to create a more user-friendly document. Followed by a focus on modifications to actual rules and/or Zoning Map.
 13. Draft Zoning Regulations preparation to Planning Commission. Public hearing will be held to present the draft regulations to the public. Revise as necessary based on Planning Commission recommendations.
 14. The consultant will be available after the Planning Commission adopts and makes a recommendation to the Town Council.

Proposal Format

The proposal should consist of the following major sections in the order shown:

1. Transmittal Letter

- a. Name of firm responding, including mailing address, e-mail address, telephone number and names of contact persons
- b. Name of person authorized to make representations, binding the firm or lead firm to contract

2. Approach and Methodology

- a. Provide an overall description of the firm's approach to completing the project with specific detailed examples of the strategy and methods to be employed.
- b. Timeline for the completion of the Plan with clear deadlines and specific action items identified for each phase of the project including critical path and milestones
- c. Provide information regarding different approaches for providing effective stakeholder engagement and public participation. These alternatives should represent different levels of involvement, complexity and costs
- d. a statement regarding how the firm ensures that all members of the community are involved in the process and how do you reach underrepresented members.

3. Qualifications

- a. Brief description of the firm
- b. Provide a description of the project team to include resumes of all key personnel and all outside consultants and/or sub-contractors including longevity with the firm.
- c. Name and relevant experience of the principal in charge
- d. Provide a list of similar projects that the firm has completed in the past five years.
- e. Billing rates for everyone assigned to work
- f. Project examples of successful plans completed by the firm within the past five years

4. Fee Proposal

- a. Standard hourly rate for each team member
- b. Schedule of proposed hours to complete the task
 - i. Comprehensive Plan
 - ii. Master Plan option
 - iii. Zoning Ordinance Update

TOTAL COSTS FOR:

1.COMPREHENSIVE PLAN _____

2. ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE_____

EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS	DESCRIPTION
Project Understanding and Work Plan	25 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate project understanding, and how you will accomplish the Town’s goals. • Enumerate organizational tools available for use during the project.
Project Structure and Work Plan	10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how planned tasks will accomplish the project.
Proposed Stakeholder engagement and public involvement strategy	20 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate strategies and tools use for Stakeholder engagement • Include any previous relevant work and coordination with stakeholders

Project Schedule and Timeline	20 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate the overall project timeline and validate why the specific project length is warranted. • Indicate the time required to complete individual tasks. • Note relationships between tasks, including any dependencies. • Describe key events, as well as associated items to deliver. • Set input points from the selected steering committees and stakeholders
Project Management	10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide firm and project management team's experience with similar projects
References	10 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide up to three (3) references from individuals or organizations that can attest to your organization's ability to accomplish this project; include name, address, and email addresses
Cost	10 points	
TOTAL	100 points	

Additional Requirements

- a. Indicate and list any pending legal actions.
 - b. Outsourcing Statement: If your organization must outsource or subcontract any work to meet the requirements contained herein, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Costs should be clearly described for any outsourced or subcontracted work.
1. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to review by the Town of Atlantic Beach. This request does not commit the Town to the award of a contract, or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request. The Town of Atlantic Beach reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any bid submitted which, in the judgment of the Town of Atlantic Beach, would not be in its best interest. The Town also reserves the right to waive minor deficiencies, technicalities, or reject any or all proposals.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS OF THE SELECTED FIRM

1. If contract is awarded, the winning firm must be prepared to provide and agree to the following, at his or her own expense, prior to beginning work and at all times during performance of services:
 - a. COMMERCIAL AND GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE on an occurrence basis in an amount equal to \$1,000,000 for each occurrence and must include the following coverages: (i) completed operations coverage, (ii) blanket contractual coverage, including both oral and written contracts, (iii) personal injury coverage.
 - b. WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE to the statutory limits required by South Carolina state law.
 - c. Compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances and regulations.
 - d. CONFLICT OF INTEREST. The successful firm shall not knowingly employ, during the period of a contract, or any extensions to it, any professional personnel who are also in the employ of the Town and who are providing services involving this request or services similar in nature to the scope of this request to the Town. Furthermore, the firm shall not knowingly employ, during the period of a contract or any extensions to it, any Town of Atlantic Beach employee who has participated in the making of a contract until at least two years after his/her termination of

employment with the Town.

- e. PROHIBITION OF GRATUITIES. Neither the firm, nor any person, firm or corporation employed by the firm in the performance of this request, shall offer or give any gift, money or anything of value or any promise for future reward or compensation to any Town employee at any time.
- f. INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS. The successful firm shall agree to protect, defend, indemnify, and forever hold harmless, the Town, its agents, officers, and employees, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, costs, actions, proceedings, of any nature whatsoever, however alleged or termed, or in any lawsuits, arising in any manner out of any action or failure to act, by the firm, its officers, agents, and employees, or relating to or arising out of the performance or failure to perform, by the firm, its officers, agents, and employees, any obligations arising under its agreement with the Town, or any other type claim/lawsuit whatsoever, however alleged or termed, which may arise at any time as a result of or related to the provision of service(s) for the Town by the successful firm, without regard to the source, nature, or validity of the claim/lawsuit. Losses, liabilities, expenses and claims for damages shall include, but not be limited to, civil and criminal fines and penalties, loss of use and/or services, claims for injury, damage, disability, property damage, or death, injury to real or personal property, and attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses incurred by the Town or any of its agents, officers, and employees.
- g. The Town shall not be precluded from receiving the benefits of any insurance the firm may carry which provides for indemnification for any loss or damage to property in the firm's custody and control, where such loss or destruction is to Town property. The firm shall do nothing to prejudice the Town's right to recover against third parties for any loss, destruction or damage to Town property.
- h. DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE. During the performance of this request, the firm agrees to provide a drug-free workplace for its employees; post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the workplace and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; and state in all

solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the firm that the firm maintains a drug-free workplace. For the purposes of this section, “drug-free workplace” means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific contract awarded to a contractor/firm in accordance with this chapter, the employees of whom are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of the request.

- i. S.C. LAW CLAUSE. Upon award of a contract under this request the person, partnership, association or corporation to whom the award is made must comply with the laws of South Carolina which require such person or entity to be authorized and/or licensed to do business with this State. Notwithstanding the fact that applicable statutes may exempt or exclude the successful firm from requirements that it be authorized and/or licensed to do business in this State, by submission of this signed proposal, the firm agrees to subject himself to the jurisdiction and process of the courts of the State of South Carolina as to all matters and disputes arising or to arise under the contract and the performance thereof, including any questions as to the liability for taxes, licenses, or fees levied by the State.
- j. Town BUSINESS LICENSE. If work is performed within the jurisdiction of the Town, maintenance of local licenses necessary to operate a business in the Town of Atlantic Beach will be required. These costs are not to be paid in whole or in part by the Town.
- k. SC SALES TAX. The Town is not tax exempt; therefore, all applicable taxes must be paid on all applicable purchases.
- l. The bidder selected will engage in a contractual agreement based on this proposal prior to any work being performed. The contract shall be based on a fixed fee with a Contract maximum.
- m. Any modifications to the contract shall be in writing and signed by both parties.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES.

It is the policy of the Town that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) and other small businesses shall have the opportunity to compete fairly in contracts financed in whole or in part with public funds. Consistent with this policy, the Town will not allow any person or business to be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise is discriminated against in connection with the award and performance of any contract because of sex, race, religion, or national origin.

