



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP 16-0081

Strategic Planning for

Cape Fear Museum of History & Science

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Development of a Strategic Plan for Cape Fear Museum of History & Science

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is soliciting written proposals from professionally qualified service contractors to develop a strategic plan for Cape Fear Museum of History & Science (CFM), a department of New Hanover County. All proposals should clearly define how the contractor will work with the Museum to lead a comprehensive planning process, emphasizing a strong public participation component and key stakeholders. The implementation period of the developed plan shall be ten years, including short (3 year), intermediate (5 year) and long-term strategies and objectives.

Issue Date: Monday, August 3, 2015

Closing Date and Time: Friday, August 28, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

BACKGROUND

Mission

Cape Fear Museum collects, preserves, and interprets objects relating to the history, science, and cultures of the Lower Cape Fear. The Museum makes those objects and their interpretation available to the public through educational exhibitions and programs.

History

Cape Fear Museum of History and Science is the one of the oldest history museum in North Carolina. In March of 1898, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) first opened the Museum in one room on the second floor of the Wilmington Light Infantry's (WLI) building. Since its founding, the Museum has moved around the city. It was housed in two rooms in the County courthouse annex in the late 1920s, and then on the third floor of the Police Station building in the 1960s. Since 1970, it has been located at 814 Market Street, in what was a National Guard Armory building. In the late 1980s, local residents supported a bond issue for Museum improvements. In 1992, the Museum opened with new exhibits in a renovated and expanded space.

The Museum has also been run by four different organizations over the course of its history. After the UDC steered the Museum through its first two decades, they lost their room at the WLI during World War I. The Museum's artifact collection went to Raleigh at that time. After the war, it took a decade for Wilmington – through the work of the New Hanover County Historical Commission and the UDC – to reclaim the objects. When the collection returned and the Museum reopened, a different women's organization, North Carolina Sorosis, took over operations. They ran the Museum from 1930 until the early 1960s. Then, the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County jointly administered the Museum. In 1977, New Hanover County took sole administrative control and ownership.

Just as the building and management has changed over time, so too has the scope of the Museum's collection and its mission. Originally, the institution was founded to preserve Confederate memories and objects of the Civil War. After the reopening in the 1930s, many new objects were added and the collection grew to represent regional, national, and international art, history, and science. In the late 1970s, Cape Fear Museum's mission re-focused on the region's history, science and cultures.

Today, the Museum is an accredited American Alliance Museum, serving the region through its engaging exhibits and programming. The Museum draws on a collection of more than 52,000 items to explore a wide range of topics and to tell balanced and inclusive local stories. As the premier STEM informal learning center in southeastern North Carolina, the Museum provides a vital link to important science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts for students and families. Exhibits and programs focus on connecting visitors of all ages to the relationship between the history, science and cultures of the people and places in the Lower Cape Fear region.

PROJECT PROCESS & SCOPE

New Hanover County has decided to engage in a strategic planning process to outline the future vision, objectives and goals for long-term sustainability of the Cape Fear Museum. Proposals should include a strong emphasis on creative, strategic approaches and a strong public participation component. Cape Fear Museum is looking to define the strategic

steps needed to position itself as a vibrant and essential presence in New Hanover County going forward into the future. A deliverable for this project will include a visual representation of the plan and strategic steps in a simple, visual format. This strategic planning process is intended to address the following:

Community

- What does the Museum have to do to “delight and engage” community members?
- How do our primary and secondary stakeholders define success for the Museum? How will they measure it? What are their expectations?
- Is the Museum seen as an asset to the community and its quality of life? If not, why not?
- What are the obstacles the Museum faces within the community?

Audience Building

- Who are the Museum’s present customers? How are they similar / dissimilar?
- Based on population and market trends, who/what groups should we be targeting?
- How many people should the Museum expect to serve now and into the future?
- Do our admission policies affect our ability to attract visitors?
- What are strategies for attracting, increasing and sustaining visitation?
- What are the opportunities to expand collaborative partnerships as a strategy for growing audience and community support?
- Who/what does the Museum/its program compete with?
- What do the museum’s visitors think the museum does best?

Mission

- Does the Museum’s mission and/or vision need to change in order to better serve the community?
- Should the mission encompass science and history? What are the costs to encompass both? What are the opportunities? As a follow-up, how is the Museum currently doing in addressing both topics?

Collections, Exhibits, Programs, & Facilities

- How can the Museum leverage the content it creates (exhibits & programs)...
 - a) To increase participation by target groups?
 - b) To reimagine and repackage itself to reach a broader audience, build its reputation and maximize the visitor experience?
- How can the Museum leverage its collection to increase community participation?
- Does our current location impact our ability to reach our potential? If yes, what are the solutions?
- How should the current facilities be utilized to maximize service to the community? What are the Museum’s future space needs?

Staffing

- What do we have to be good at, to be successful?

- Is the Museum and its staff capable of reaching its vision? If not, why not? What do we need or need to do differently?
- What is the capacity of the current staff and resources and how would staffing and resources change to accommodate a recommended strategic plan?

The contractor shall, at minimum, accomplish the following in performance of this contract. Working with Cape Fear Museum staff, the contractor will:

1. Design and establish a comprehensive strategic planning process,
2. Develop a 10 year strategic plan, including short (3 year), intermediate (5 year) and long-term strategies and objectives,
3. Provide acceptable recommendations and implementation strategies for this plan, including a visual representation of the plan and strategic steps in a simple, visual format (balanced scorecard-based strategy map).

EVALUATION, SELECTION, & SCHEDULE

The submitted proposals will be reviewed based on the evaluation factors noted below:

- Past Performance
- Project understanding and issues
- Demonstrated ability to engage the public in the process
- Project approach
- Ability of professional personnel
- Willingness to meet time and budget requirements

A strategic planning committee comprised of County/Museum staff and CFM advisory board members will review the proposals. Proposals that do not respond to the stated requirements of the RFP will be rejected. A short list of contractors may be asked to make a presentation to the selection committee. Contractors selected to give presentations will be expected to bear travel costs to and from Wilmington, North Carolina.

Responding consultants are fully responsible for costs incurred in the preparation and delivery of their proposal.

CFM reserves the right to ask for clarification in the proposal if the need arises. Cape Fear Museum (CFM) reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP. CFM reserves the right to cancel the award of contract any time before the execution of the contract by both parties.

RFP Schedule	
Advertisement	Monday, August 3, 2015
Deadline for Questions	Thursday, August 13, 2015 at 12:30 p.m. Sheryl Mays, Cape Fear Museum Director smays@nhcgov.com
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals	Friday, August 28, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. New Hanover County Cape Fear Museum Attn: Sheryl Mays, Cape Fear Museum Director 814 Market Street Wilmington, NC 28401-4731
Proposed Date of Award	Week of September 28, 2015

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

To be considered, the following minimum requirements must be included in the proposal:

1. A cover letter indicating your firm's understanding of the project and the requirements necessary to complete the proposal in a detailed narrative. This letter should include the primary person authorized to make decisions about the proposal and all legal contact information for the company.
2. An acknowledgement and acceptance of all conditions set forth by this RFP, and any requested exceptions to the outlined conditions.
3. A listing of, and information regarding, the specialized expertise of proposed key individuals who will be involved in the project. For each such individual included, provide his/her name and role/position on this project, resumes for project personnel and sub-consultants. Note: Any changes (additions or deletions) in key project personnel shall require prior approval by Cape Fear Museum.
4. A schedule of completion for the project, including major and minor tasks to be accomplished. The schedule should detail task duration, including internal review periods and community review periods. The project should not exceed 9 months from start to completion. The basic framework and philosophy of time schedule should include the basis of approach for handling each component individually and collectively to maintain momentum. There should be a clear delineation of contractor's and Cape Fear Museum's tasks and responsibilities.
5. The total not-to-exceed fee (including all direct and indirect costs) for which your firm will provide the services described in this RFP. Profit and overhead should be

incorporated into the fee, which will also include, without limitation, all supplies, equipment, printing, copying, telephone, computer, plotting, travel, mileage, lodging, per diem, drafting and other charges. No separate or additional costs of any kind will be allowed. Should sub-consultants be utilized to perform any part of the proposal, those fees may be included as a separate item and shown as part of the total costs for the proposal. Costs should include a minimum of six (6) bound paper copies and two (2) CD/DVD copies of the final plan with full copying rights of all materials contained within the document.

6. A minimum of three references and contact information for which the contractor (and subcontractor where applicable) has provided comparable contractual services to those specified in the RFP. Provide two examples of work produced under similar contracts (examples produced utilizing key project personnel identified for this proposal are preferred).

PROPOSAL SUBMITTALS

All proposals should be sent to:
Sheryl Kingery Mays, Director
Cape Fear Museum of History & Science
814 Market Street
Wilmington, NC 28401
smays@nhcgov.com

Submissions will not be returned. Please submit one (1) electronic copy of the proposal and mail two (2) paper copies of the proposal.

Proposals received after the deadline of Friday, August 28, 2015 at 5:30 pm will not be accepted.

Contact & Inquiries:

After the bid issue date, all communications between the County and prospective Bidders regarding this bid request shall be in writing. Any inquires, requests for interpretation, technical questions, clarification, or additional information shall be directed to Sheryl Kingery Mays, CFM Director, smays@nhcgov.com. Please put the words "CONFIDENTIAL-RFP 16-0081 Strategic Planning Inquiry" in the subject line. All questions concerning this proposal shall reference the section number and page. Questions and responses affecting the specifications of the bid will be provided by issuance of an Addendum. **All questions shall be received no later than Thursday, August 13, 2015 at 12:30 p.m.** Telephone inquiries will not be addressed.