



NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

Introduction to North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

North Myrtle Beach (NMB) is a distinctive community at the north end of the Grand Strand and is part of the Myrtle Beach region. A separate municipality from Myrtle Beach established 52 years ago through the merger of four small towns of Cherry Grove Beach, Ocean Drive Beach, Windy Hill Beach, and Crescent Beach. Their shared goal was to create a city that together could provide excellent services to residents and visitors alike. Today, North Myrtle Beach is a destination for millions of visitors, many of whom do not know that they are staying in a community outside the City of Myrtle Beach while many others select North Myrtle Beach as a deliberate choice.

Tourism is the leading industry in North Myrtle Beach and employs 13+ thousand people who contribute significantly to the local tax base. Visitors to our community enjoy the open beaches, family setting, and culinary options. The recreation from the golf courses, water sports, and nature trails are enjoyed throughout the year. The sports complex owned and operated by the city of NMB attracts numerous athletic events and is the site for a holiday celebration of lights. During the peak season (May through September) there are weekly concerts on Main Street. Known as the community where the South Carolina Shag was born, 'Shaggers' visit NMB regularly for festivals and social events and keep the dance alive. Festivals are a vibrant amenity in our community and attract visitors to enjoy the local flavors, sounds, and culture.

The accommodations in NMB are found in beach home rentals managed by realty property management companies, condos with a minimum of 2 bedrooms, condo-tels that include on-site management and property management offered rentals, VRBOs, Airbnb, and of course hotels and motels. Our oceanfront is lined with beach homes, some are still residences, along with condo properties. The dining and commercial amenities are along Main Street, Sea Mountain Highway, and the arterials to the beach with few locations along the beach. State Highway 17 is a bustling corridor with shopping, dining, and a variety of services and is located only a few blocks from the beach. The Intracoastal Waterway runs parallel with Hwy 17 in NMB, where some restaurants and watersport activities are available to residents and visitors. A popular destination within NMB is Barefoot Landing, a retail and entertainment center providing a wide variety of dining options, shopping, and entertainment centers like House of Blues and the Alabama Theatre. Barefoot Landing is located between Highway 17 and the Intracoastal Waterway.

To the south of NMB is an un-incorporated portion of Horry County between North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach corporate city limits. To the north is unincorporated Little River within Horry County and to the west are the sports complex, neighborhoods, and a growing section of Horry County. Only minutes to the north of Horry County is North Carolina where visitors see as part of our community including Calabash and Ocean Isle, with dining and shopping attracting visitors staying here to go there and vis versa.

The destination brand for NMB is the promise of a distinctive community within the Grand Strand where you can connect with the people you are with and *Just Coast*.... Enjoy the sights, sounds, and relaxation of our beach culture, and be a world away from your everyday life. Families have visited our community for years and our way of life has inspired many of them to move here. No longer a small beach town, North Myrtle Beach has grown to more than 16,000 residents living here year-round. With an estimated 19,000 secondary homeowners in NMB our community is literally the home away from home for many families.

The tagline *Just Coast* is nearly 6 years old, and the positioning was expanded to go beyond the beach and encompass the nightlife, culinary offerings, and events. Destination North Myrtle Beach and our partners have done a great job of establishing an identity based upon the use of *Just Coast* to express how our beaches are different from nearby offerings that are often more commercial and more crowded.

Destination North Myrtle Beach is the official destination marketing organization for the city of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Destination NMB leads the tourism industry to work together to generate visitor spending by developing and implementing destination marketing and sales programs. Destination NMB is a self-governing, private not-for-profit 501(c)6 corporation with a Board of Directors who are elected by dues paying investors /partners. A primary channel of marketing the destination is through our website, ExploreNorthMyrtleBeach.com.

Destination North Myrtle Beach (formerly the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce/CVB)

Destination North Myrtle Beach is a dually accredited organization with a 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and is Accredited with Distinction through Destinations International. Our organization is an inclusive, future-focused organization promoting the North Myrtle Beach area as a must visit destination that is a great place to live, work, and play.

Destination North Myrtle Beach is a vital partner of the North Myrtle Beach community. Destination NMB concentrates on programming to fulfill **our mission "To Advance the Prosperity of North Myrtle Beach"**. We are the place where area businesses and residents come together under the common bond of prosperity and responsible development of our community. Our board of directors have adopted three core pillars working in concert to expand our local economy.

Core Pillars

The first pillar is **destination marketing**. Our community is a tourism destination. We share a common customer, visitors, who travel to our area for days, weeks, and even months. We provide programming and opportunities for businesses to cooperate in marketing initiatives. We implement comprehensive and strategic marketing promotions to increase our market share of visitors to the Grand Strand. Our group sales program attracts and provides services for sports tournaments, weddings, family reunions,

and small meetings. We will work inclusively with the business community providing opportunities to access marketing and sales initiatives and participate in cooperative marketing programs. We will continue to convey that a business community that values and understands the investment in tourism results in a thriving local economy and benefits businesses and residents.

Our second pillar is **destination development** extending beyond the marketing and sales functions to encompass stewardship, sustainability, infrastructure, attractions and events, and the visitor experience. Made feasible in part through our NMB Chamber Foundation; we remain dedicated to support the advancement of the general welfare and prosperity of the greater North Myrtle Beach area for its citizens and community to prosper, thus lessening the burden on local and state government. Through Momentum, a NMB Chamber Foundation initiative, the focus on economic development through year-round tourism facilities and amenities, a sustainable destination master plan, and the research critical to aligning destination development opportunities aligned with resident needs and quality of life will be paramount.

The third pillar is **community awareness and advocacy**. Working internally is not an option. This pillar requires our board of directors, committees, and professional staff to work collaboratively with community organizations, public and elected officials, and residents. Opportunities to participate are inclusive with a variety of intersections for business and community members to work in concert for the advancement of our community. This pillar includes our role as the voice of business and as a voice for the visitor and the program area that concentrates on cultivating strategic partnerships within the community to enable solid communications, understanding, and where possible a shared community vision.

Programs and Networking

Our organization coordinates programs and networking opportunities for our investors/partners as well as educational workshops. The educational topics, programs, and initiatives will be inclusive and address the needs of our community across all three pillars. Opportunities for businesses to gain visibility for business to business as well as promotion to the community and visitors will be provided throughout the year.

Strategic Goals

The board of directors adopted a strategic plan based upon the input through the use of a destination assessment tool DestinationNEXT. The strategic goals for the multi-year plan are:

Destination Promotion

The staff will implement an on-going, aggressive, research-based tourism marketing program with annual Key Performance Indicators to track ROI.

Visitor Experience and Economic Development

On-going consumer research will identify destination opportunities for improvement and development to keep our travel economy growing.

Advocacy & Community Relations

Close partnership with the city of North Myrtle Beach and other public entities to advocate for a positive business environment and the continued improvement of North Myrtle Beach economy and its resident's quality of life.

Diversifying Funding Sources

Growth in programs and tourism promotion will come from securing sustainable long-term funding. Fundraising for specific initiatives and restricted funding for tourism promotion will be established.

Workforce Development

Destination North Myrtle Beach will provide plans and programs to support a stable, high-quality workforce that is essential to economic growth.

Destination Master Plan

A destination master plan will provide the roadmap to sustain the destination through planning and development for residents and visitors.

Destination Master Plan

Scope of Work

Our definition of a destination master plan:

A strategic and actionable long-term planning document that provides a conceptual layout to guide future growth and development in North Myrtle Beach. As important as the final document is the planning process that integrates the research and analysis, inclusive community engagement, shared vision for destination development, and identification of defined roles and processes for destination management moving forward.

During the board retreat this spring our board agreed that a master plan for North Myrtle Beach needs to address the following:

- Align with the comprehensive plan for the city of North Myrtle Beach
- Address sustainability
- Include suggestions for processes as well as program and recommend defined roles for our organization in economic development, stewardship, etc.
- Research necessary to develop the plan and an understanding of metrics for the implementation of the plan and what tools/research to be used during the implementation of initiatives.

The following outline is what how we have prepared for the request for qualifications and we would like the responses to include how you would complete the development of a master plan for our community.

Phase 1: Research, Investigation, Exploration, and Listening

- Work with Destination NMB to determine the appropriate local, regional, and state organizations for collaboration on a destination master plan.
- Review and analyze existing data to identify gaps and what research and study needs to be undertaken.
- Review of recent and current planning initiatives undertaken by the city of North Myrtle Beach, Horry County, and South Carolina impacting growth and development.

- Define and complete new research and survey work per the proposal and final scope of work.
- Convene stakeholder and public input sessions.
- Provide a communications tool to keep the stakeholders apprised of the progress, milestones, and how they may participate.

Phase 2: Evaluation, Analysis, and Plan Development

- Consolidate information learned from Phase 1.
- Provide comprehensive evaluation of North Myrtle Beach including competitive and comparative destination analysis, destination assets, and potential barriers to implementation of the destination master plan.
- Create a vision and scope of work for the destination master plan that may be adopted by Destination NMB and its stakeholders.
- Define the priorities and actionable strategic initiatives for the destination master plan.
- Deliver a completed destination master plan with all relevant analyses, recommendations, and implementation readiness.

Potential Phase 3: Implementation and Working the Plan

- There may be a phase 3 that could entail implementation support that may be defined during phase 2.
- There may be a need for implementation support to assist in ‘working the plan’ at the local level.
- This phase may be contracted by other organizations not yet identified.

Timetable:

Action	Responsible Party	Due Dates
Issue RFQ	Staff	July 1, 2021
Pre-Proposal Conference	Staff	July 20, 2021
Deadline to submit Questions	Potential Offerors	July 21, 2021
Response to Written Questions	Staff	July 26, 2021
<i>Submission RFQ Responses</i>	<i>Potential Offerors</i>	<i>August 12, 2021</i>
Proposal Evaluation	Evaluation Committee	August 18, 2021
Selection of Finalists	Evaluation Committee	August 19, 2021
Individual Appointments via Zoom with Finalists	Staff	As Scheduled with finalist by August 31, 2021
Oral Presentations	Finalist Offerors	September 16, 2021
Finalize Contractual Agreements	Staff and Agency	October 10, 2021

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Responses to the RFQ must include the following sections and all information listed. Proposals that are non-responsive to the requirements of this RFQ shall not be included for evaluation by the selection committee.

1. Agency Overview and Qualifications

- Office location where the account will be managed
- Capitalized billings in the most recent fiscal year
- Number of employees and contractors
- Team diversity and inclusion philosophy and approach
- Current clients and length of service for those clients
- 3-5 current or former destination marketing organizations for which work has been completed and the plans are being implemented
- Is there any pending litigation against the agency, and would such litigation hinder your ability to perform to our expectations?
- Demonstrated ability to work with destination marketing organization, chamber of commerce, and city governments in a small community.

2. Account Team

- Provide biographical information for the agency employees who would be assigned to our account, including those in positions other than account services. Include resumes and overall experience on destination development, sustainable development/management, destination management, economic development, tourism, hospitality, planning.
- Include the length of time each team member has been with the agency and length of time in any previous related positions.
- Tell us about your team, such as multi-generational, ethnicity, backgrounds, and other means of characterizing diversity.
- Describe the depth of your team and how a transition of personnel would be managed due to illness, family leave, vacations, promotions, terminations, reassignments, and other similar circumstances.
- Will you be using any contractors or subcontractors for this project? If so, provide biographical information and resumes for anyone else that will be part of the team along with relevant experience.
- Describe recent prior experience (1-3 years) in the travel and tourism category, particularly with destination marketing organizations including experience by individual employees while working at other agencies.
- Provide the billable hourly rates for team members levels on the account.

3. Work Plan/Flow and Schedule

Provide an outline of how your team works with communities to develop a destination master plan and provide a summary of the process with a timeline.

4. Relevant Sample Work
Provide three case studies of previous destination management plan work that resulted in a community achieving defined milestones and was transformative in how they manage their destination. Identify KPIs, scope, budget, and timeline. Identify the position of your team members planned for our project in their contribution to the account examples.
5. Submit three references that have worked with the current team at the agency, provide contact information.

SELECTION PROCESS AND EVALUATION

Selection Criteria

The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate responses to this RFQ:

- 35% Process for developing the destination master plan.
- 30% Case studies that demonstrate capabilities to achieve the scope of work we are seeking.
- 15% Research components recommended and included.
- 15% Budget/Expenses
- 5% References

The selection process involves multiple steps outlined here:

1. All interested agencies must submit written responses addressing all requirements presented in the RFQ by **August 12, 2021**.
2. A review committee will identify the finalists by **August 19, 2021**.
3. The finalist submitters will be notified and a maximum of a one-hour conversation with the Destination North Myrtle Beach leadership will be scheduled by **August 31th** to address any questions or clarification that the submitters may have before finalizing their 2021 marketing pitch.
4. The finalists will be scheduled for in-person presentations before the review committee on **September 16th**.
5. The full board will vote to determine who the contract will be awarded to.
6. Contract details will be coordinated between the Destination NMB and the selected agency and to determine the time frame by October 10th.

Additional Information

- **All questions must be submitted in writing except during the pre-proposal conference.**
- All costs incurred by submitters prior to the execution of a contract are the responsibility of the submitters, including travel and personnel costs.
- All work completed on behalf of Destination North Myrtle Beach shall be owned by Destination NMB.
- Destination North Myrtle Beach reserves the right to reject any proposals that do not address all the requirements of the RFQ. Further, Destination NMB may reject any and all proposals at any time if it is determined it is not in their best interest to award the contract to anyone from among the submitted proposals.
- If the schedule, criteria, or any part of this RFQ changes prior to the deadline all prospective submitters who received the initial RFQ will be notified.

- Prior to contracting the final submitter must provide proof of insurance and appropriate business license demonstrating their eligibility to work in the state of South Carolina.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals must be submitted in writing to:

Cheryl Y. Kilday, CDME
President & CEO
1521 Hwy 17 S
North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582
ckilday@DestinationNMB.com

Please provide 5 originals and 10 copies of each proposal in a sealed package by 5 pm on August 12th. Finalists will need to submit additional originals for the in-person presentation to the board of directors.

Include primary contact information: name, title, email, phone, and mobile phone numbers.