



# Request for Proposals

Leland Tourism and Development Authority

Strategic Plan 2025-2030

August 12, 2024

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## 1 Introduction

The Town of Leland is seeking proposals (“Proposal”) from qualified, professional consultants who will assist the Town in creating a tourism development strategic plan for the Town’s Tourism and Development Authority (“Strategic Plan”). The Strategic Plan shall expand upon the updated 2013 strategic plan (“2013 Strategic Plan”) prepared by the Leland Tourism Development Authority (“LTDA”). The successful proposal will provide qualifications for the development of the Strategic Plan, including relevant experience and references, as well as a brief narrative of the firm’s approach to the Strategic Plan’s development. The consultant awarded this contract will have the primary responsibility of developing the document and will work in coordination with the Town of Leland’s Economic and Community Development Director (“Director”) and the LTDA.

All sealed proposals must be received by 5:00 PM on October 7, 2024. Inquiries, amendments, or submissions received after the time and date listed above shall not be considered for evaluation.

Questions, requests for information, and responses to this RFP shall be addressed and delivered to:

Town of Leland Economic Development Department  
Attention: Barnes Sutton, Economic and Community Development Director  
102 Town Hall Drive  
Leland, NC 28451  
[bsutton@townofleland.com](mailto:bsutton@townofleland.com)  
(910) 444-8065

Written questions shall be submitted no later than September 30. Questions should be emailed to [bsutton@townofleland.com](mailto:bsutton@townofleland.com). Only written questions will be considered formal. Any information given verbally or by telephone will be considered informal. Any questions that the Town feels are pertinent to all proposals will be included as an addendum to the RFP.

The Town of Leland reserves the right to reject any and all submissions for any reason or no reason. This RFP does not obligate the Town to pay any cost incurred by respondents in the preparation and submission of a response nor does it obligate the Town to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.

## 2 Town History and Overview

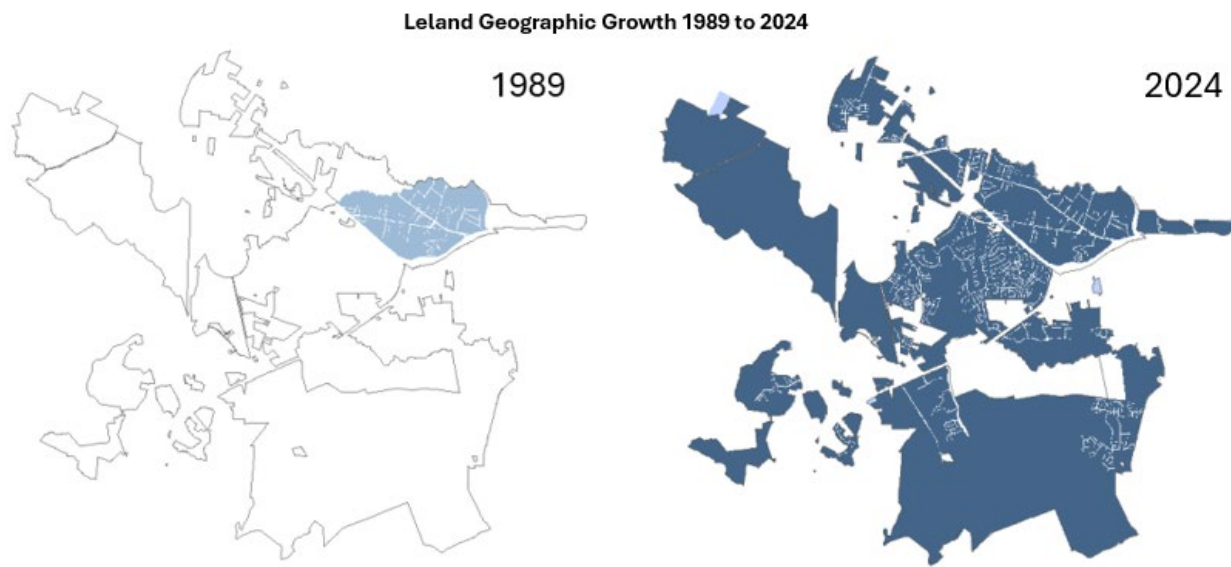
For many years, Leland, a small unnamed settlement situated upon a crossroads, was one of many small, unincorporated communities throughout Brunswick County that served as minor centers of trade throughout the early 20th century.

The Leland area officially got its name in 1897, when Joseph W. Gay and other area citizens petitioned what was then the U.S. Post Office Department in Washington, D.C. for a local post office. Included in the petition was a list of three potential names for the settlement. From those names, Leland – the name of Mr. Gay’s nephew, Leland Adams – was chosen. The new Leland Post Office, with Mr. Gay serving as Postmaster, opened on February 10, 1898, in a corner of Gay’s General Store.

The Town of Leland was officially incorporated on September 12, 1989. On this historic date, at the urging of the Leland Civic Association, Leland residents voted in a special election, 427 to 42 from a

group of about 640 eligible voters, to incorporate an area bounded by the Brunswick River, Sturgeon Creek, and U.S. Highway 74/76, after voting down attempts to incorporate 10 years earlier.

Since then, Leland has benefited from a continued pattern of significant growth with a population of 28,126 during the 2022 U.S. Census. Leland, which is the largest municipality in Brunswick County, has the fastest growth rate of any municipality in North Carolina and ranks 12<sup>th</sup> in the Nation by fastest growth rate.



The Town is less than 20 miles from the coast, offering a diverse landscape of forests, wetlands, and farmland, and access to recreational activities such as boating, fishing, and golf. Culturally, non-profit organizations, such as the North Carolina Rice Festival, have had success in creating reoccurring cultural and social events celebrating the unique history of the Gullah-Geechee people in southeastern North Carolina. Private businesses have been successful in creating social festivals such as Brunswick Beer and Cider's Applearchy Cider Festival. The Town itself administers the "Leland and Lights" holiday light display every winter season.

### 3 Background

In 2023, the Town of Leland adopted the 2023-2027 Economic Development Strategic Plan in which citizens described the Town as a "growing, thriving community" and as having a "small-town quality of life with access to city amenities." That economic development strategic plan set out a vision for how Leland can continue to have the best of both worlds, growing and thriving while retaining its character.

In 2021, the Town of Leland adopted the Leland 2045 – Planning for Generations Comprehensive Plan ("Leland 2045") to serve as the principal guiding document when addressing long-term goals, growth, and development issues. Leland 2045 is a planning document that outlines goals, policies, and implementation strategies including strengthening tourism, diversify the local tax base with job-creating uses including the tourism and hospitality supply chain, and promoting outdoor recreational tourism.

In 2013, the Town of Leland adopted the Gateway Infill Plan with the primary goal of developing a Leland with a distinct identity of its own with a town center and walkable, family-friendly neighborhoods that combine opportunities for residential living, shopping, entertainment and other daily pursuits. The Gateway District is defined as the area west of the Village Road interchange with US 74/76 that includes much of the historic origins of Leland. This area has been referred to as the gateway to Leland and forms the nucleus of the community's vision of a town center and a discernible "downtown."

## 4 Related Documents

- Town of Leland 2023-2027 Economic Development Strategic Plan  
<https://www.townofleland.com/sites/default/files/uploads/page-menu-files/leland-strategic-plan-final.pdf>
- Leland 2045 Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
<https://www.townofleland.com/planning-inspections/planning-zoning/leland-2045>
- Town of Leland Gateway Infill Plan  
[https://www.townofleland.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Planning%20and%20Inspections/master%20plans/lelandreport\\_final-gateway.pdf](https://www.townofleland.com/sites/default/files/uploads/Planning%20and%20Inspections/master%20plans/lelandreport_final-gateway.pdf)

## 5 Scope of Services

The selected firm/consultant will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following tasks:

1. Conducting a comprehensive assessment of the current tourism infrastructure, attractions, and visitor demographics.
2. Analyzing market trends, competitive analysis, and identifying target markets for tourism promotion.
3. Proposing initiatives to enhance visitor experiences, including recommendations for infrastructure development, transportation, accommodation, and recreational facilities.
4. Formulating a sustainable tourism strategy that includes environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and community engagement.
5. Facilitating stakeholder consultations and workshops to gather input and ensure buy-in from key stakeholders.
6. Drafting a detailed Tourism Strategic Plan document outlining actionable steps, timelines, responsible parties, and budget estimates over a five-year planning horizon.

### Strategies to Consider

- Develop improvement plan around Founders Park, as it hosts seasonal tourist attractions such as the NC Rice Festival, Summer Concert Series, and Leland in Lights.
- Include the Leland Cultural Arts Center when evaluating the current tourism infrastructure, specifically as it relates to the performance art markets.
- Identify branding efforts to promote the Gateway District and Leland Innovation Park.
- Revise the funding structure and grant categories of the LTDA Grant Policy to include new opportunities such as Public Art.

## 6 Proposal Requirements

The Proposal shall be submitted as a single electronic document. A table of contents with corresponding page numbers shall be included for easy reference to the material contained within. Firms are not required to submit hard copies of the proposal, however if a firm chooses to provide hard copies, no more than three (3) should be provided. The following information must be included in the Proposal:

- A. Introductory Letter: Include a letter from a firm principal stating the firm's name, contact information (i.e., phone, e-mail, etc.), primary contact person for preparing the Strategic Plan and his/her contact information, brief history of the firm, a general statement of interest in providing the Services to the Town and any other information which may be relevant about the firm and its qualifications.
- B. Project Team: Provide an organizational chart specifying key personnel who will provide the Services, including brief resumes and statements of responsibilities and roles.
- C. Understanding of Scope of Work Statement: Firms should include a general outline of the specific methodologies and approaches to providing the services. Indicate any work or resources that are to be subcontracted or assumed to be provided by the Town.
- D. Qualifications: Demonstrate general qualifications and areas of expertise by providing two (2), but no more than five (5), relevant examples of similar tourism development strategic plans in which the proposer was either lead or played a significant role. North Carolina experience is preferred.
- E. Project Schedule: Provide an anticipated schedule for completion of the Strategic Plan and what methods your firm uses to ensure the schedule is met. If a contract is awarded, the selected firm must be able to begin work immediately and move promptly toward completing the Services. Describe the firm's capacity to complete the Services in a timely manner and note current workload, backlog, and anticipated work within the next six (6) months.
- F. Fees: The Proposal must include a not-to-exceed cost on a time and materials basis for providing the Services. Also, include a schedule of eligible reimbursable expenses, if any, such as, mileage, printing costs, courier, etc.
- G. Why your firm? Provide any additional information to explain why your firm is best suited to provide the Services to the Town of Leland.
- H. *Include a separate add alternate fee to prepare a grant policy as an option.*
- I. *Include a separate add alternate fee to develop a marketing and branding strategy to attract domestic and international tourists.*

## 7 Selection Process/Evaluations Criteria

Consultant selection will be based upon a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the proposals submitted. During the review process, staff and a selection committee from the Town of Leland may request additional clarifying information from any consultant that submits a proposal. Staff and the selection committee will evaluate the responses to this RFP, may interview the top-rated consultants, and will make a recommendation to the Leland Tourism Development Authority as to the selection of the consultant determined to be the most qualified for the project. It is anticipated that the Town of Leland and the selected consultant will enter into a professional services contract for the period beginning in approximately October 2024 through project completion.

## 8 Consultant Interviews and Awards

- Prior to making an award determination, the Town of Leland may conduct consultant interviews. Interviews may be conducted virtually.
- The chosen firm shall be responsible for obtaining and maintaining adequate liability insurance to fully protect the Town of Leland. The consultant shall furnish proof of this liability insurance to be attached to the executed copies of the contract. The chosen firm shall provide the following minimum limits of insurance coverage:

### Worker's Compensation

Limits for:

Coverage A - Statutory State of NC

Coverage B - Employers Liability

\$500,000 each accident and policy limit and disease each employee

Commercial General Liability: \$1,000,000 Each Occurrence, \$2,000,000 Aggregate

Automobile Liability: \$1,000,000

Umbrella: \$1,000,000

- The selected firm and its subcontractors comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes consistent with state law requirements for municipal contracts.
- A negotiation of the final contract price will be between the Town and the chosen firm. (NOTE: Consultants shall bear all costs incurred by their firm for interviews and the RFP response preparation and shall not include such costs within the RFP response).

## 9 Submittal Format and Deadline

Interested firms shall submit one electronic copy (PDF) of the complete proposal to the Town of Leland Economic and Community Development Director:

Town of Leland Economic and Community Development Department  
Attention: Barnes Sutton, Economic and Community Development Director  
102 Town Hall Drive  
Leland, NC 28451  
bsutton@townofleland.com

Complete submittals must be received no later than 5:00 PM on October 7, 2024. Submissions received after this deadline may not be considered for further review.

It is the sincere intention of the Town to make every effort to be fair and equitable in its dealings with all candidates for selection. If, however, the Town should determine that none of the respondents submitting are advantageous to the Town of Leland, the Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses with or without cause. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Town of Leland to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for related services or supplies.





Town of  
**Leland**

Growing our future. Nourishing our roots.