



# TOWN OF ATLANTIC BEACH

## Causeway Small Area Plan



**Request for Proposals**  
2.15.21

**Responses Due**  
5:00 pm 3.15.21

Questions about this RFP may  
be posed in writing to:  
Michelle Eitner, Planning Director  
[planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com](mailto:planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com)

## PROJECT PURPOSE

The Town of Atlantic Beach is seeking proposals from qualified consultants or teams of consultants who can assist the Town with developing a small area plan for the “Causeway.” The project area includes the land in the Town’s Commercial Corridor (COR) zoning district including the narrow strip of land lining the causeway that connects Atlantic Beach to the mainland. The Town is considering targeted extension of wastewater treatment service to lots along the Causeway, and is seeking a small area plan to help guide the anticipated development and redevelopment resulting from the provision of centralized wastewater service in the area.

The small area plan will provide a policy framework to address the following issues:

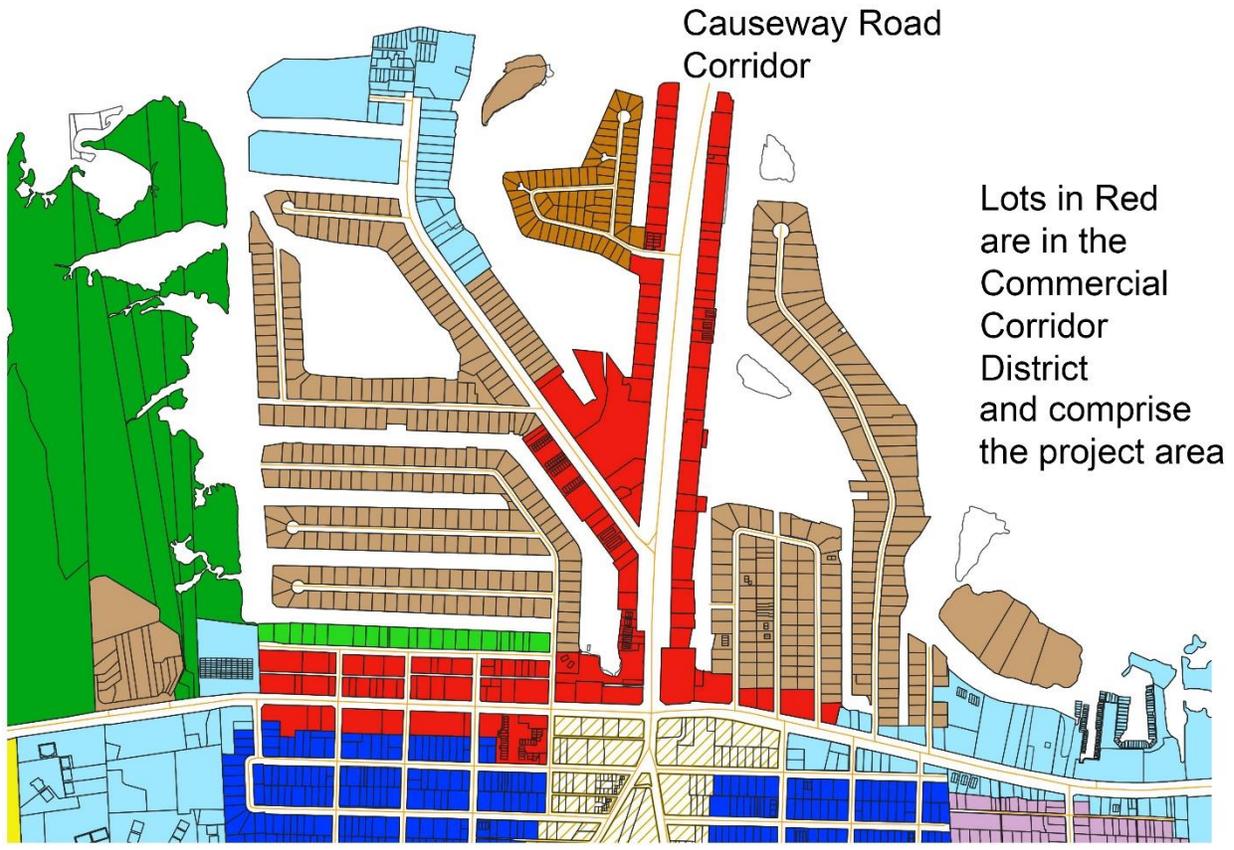
1. Community character and design of development / redevelopment on private land along the Causeway corridor;
2. The range of desired uses and the mix of requirements and incentives for establishing such uses;
3. Economic development considerations including support for “local” businesses and the provision of goods and services necessary to support more year-round Town residents;
4. The configuration of transportation systems within the Causeway right-of-way (as already identified in the Town’s Causeway Corridor Conceptual Master Plan adopted in 2019);
5. A system for assisting the Town in making optimal decisions about the timing and location of development along the Causeway (based in part upon available wastewater treatment capacity);
6. A new zoning district (or overlay district) to be added to the Town’s UDO that will implement the small area plan, including the requirement for execution of a development agreement in order to receive wastewater service.

The goals and objectives for the small area plan are further identified in the Town’s draft CAMA Land Use Plan which is anticipated to be adopted and certified in early 2021.



*The “Causeway” area includes the lots on both sides of the causeway corridor (shown above).*

The map below is a portion of the Town’s official zoning map. The lots in red depict the Commercial Corridor COR zoning district, which is the intended boundary of the Causeway Small Area Plan.



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Atlantic Beach is coastal barrier island community of 1,540 permanent residents on the Bogue Banks in Carteret County, North Carolina. It occupies a little over two square miles of land area and contains over 4,800 housing units. While the Town's peak population can be as high as 29,000 people on any given evening, it remains a "small beach town" with a low-density beachfront and very few multi-story commercial buildings.

During the recent CAMA Land Use Plan update process Town residents expressed their strong desire to remain a small, family-friendly beach community while at the same time promoting local business owners, and striving to provide more services and activities for year-round residents.

The Causeway plays a central role in the Town's economy and tourism strategy. It serves as the gateway into Town from Morehead City and is the route used by many visitors to Fort Macon, a state historic site just to the east of Atlantic Beach. In 2018, the Causeway had an AADT count of 36,000 vehicles, and Fort Macon receives 1.3 million visitors per year (it is the second most-visited state park in North Carolina).

### Community Vision Statement

The Town of Atlantic Beach is a small, family-friendly beach community. Our Town is safe, clean, and well-maintained, served by a responsive and careful local government. We pride ourselves on our welcoming attitude toward visitors and partial-year residents. We strive to fairly meet the needs of both visitors and residents in our budgeting, development, and public spending decisions.

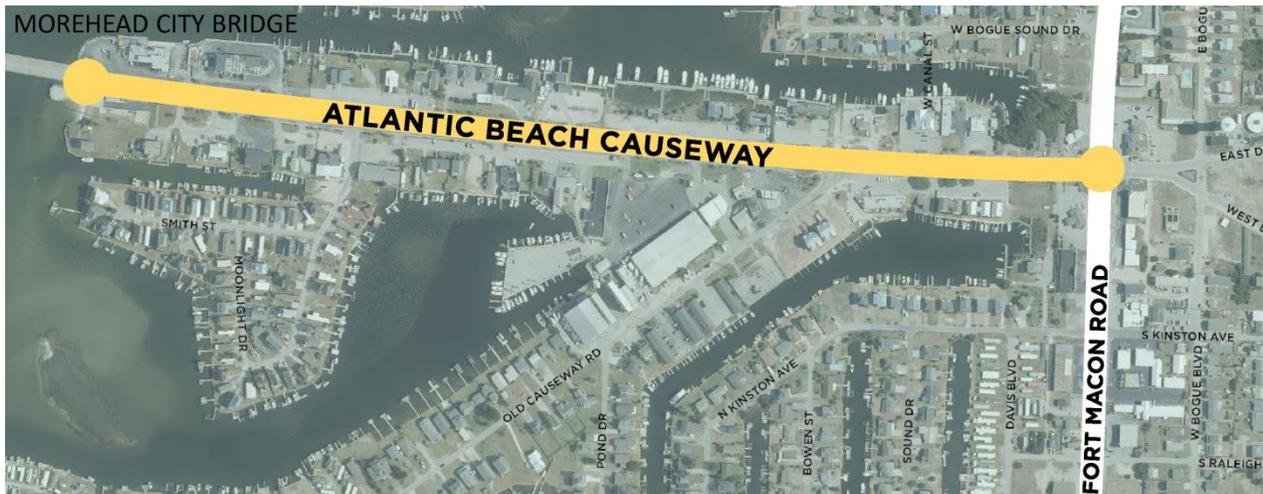
In addition to abundant and well-maintained public beach accesses, residents and visitors to our Town also have access to waterfront areas, quality parks, trails, and sidewalks in support of family-oriented recreation and leisure activities. We actively support the establishment and operation of locally-owned businesses that meet people's everyday needs.

In all actions, our Town gives the highest consideration to environmental preservation, recognizing that our coastal environment, including the water, air, and plant and animal life, are our greatest resources and must be protected.

Future development will complete, rather than compete with, the historically small-scale development of our Town. Development will be of a high quality that can withstand natural disasters while adding beauty to our picturesque community.

*- Draft CAMA Land Use Plan*

The project area includes the lots lining the causeway and lots lining Fort Macon Road proximate to the intersection with the causeway roadway. The causeway roadway itself stretches for almost a mile from the terminus of the bridge over Bogue Sound southward to its intersection with East Fort Macon Road (see image below). The roadway is a 200-foot-wide right-of-way owned and maintained by NCDOT. For most of its length, it is five lanes wide – two travel lanes in each direction plus a middle turn lane. The road widens to six lanes as it approaches the intersection with East Fort Macon Road.



source: Causeway Corridor Conceptual Master Plan

Buildings and signage are set back from the travel lanes, while land adjacent to roadway is used for parking and vehicular storage. The right-of-way also serves as the primary location for electrical transmission lines, which dominate views along the corridor. Much of the corridor is served by curb, gutter, and four-foot-wide sidewalks (along both sides of the street), and there are numerous curb cuts and vehicular access points.

Current land uses along the Causeway include a blend of single-family detached dwellings, multi-family dwellings, retail and personal service establishments, marinas, and vacant land. Much of the land along the Causeway has a CAMA urban waterfront designation that may allow for reduced shoreline setbacks in some cases. Most development along the Causeway is served by on-site wastewater systems, many of which may not be further expanded due to lot sizes.

The lots along Fort Macon Road include approximately six lots along East Fort Macon Road and the lots lining West Fort Macon Road for approximately four blocks, including the Town Hall, several surf shops, and other retail uses.

Analysis and discussions undertaken as part of the Town's recent CAMA Land Use Plan update process illustrate the following issues at play along the corridor, and the need for the proposed Causeway small area plan:

- Atlantic Beach is a popular destination for day visitors, vacationers, and seasonal residents;

- Town residents want to protect the Town’s “small beach town” character and opportunities for family-friendly recreation;
- Town residents desire more goods, services, and recreational activities, particularly the kinds that serve year-round residents;
- The Town is largely built out (only 5% of the buildable land area in Town is vacant);
- Land along the Causeway is proximate to the mainland, has good visibility, has the highest traffic counts in the community, and could benefit from decreased shoreline setbacks in some cases;
- Additional development along the Causeway is constrained by wastewater treatment conditions;
- The Town could take action to promote development and redevelopment along the Causeway by extending centralized wastewater service;
- Town residents are concerned that centralized wastewater service will result in incompatible development that is contrary to the Town’s low-rise community character;
- Neither the market potential for new development nor the potential wastewater treatment capacity is infinite;
- The Town needs a plan to incentivize beneficial redevelopment of the Causeway with desired uses that are consistent with established community character while at the same time optimizing the benefits of centralized wastewater extension.

The proposed small area plan will result in a policy framework and mechanisms that will help the Town achieve its goals for Causeway redevelopment while protecting the Town’s established community character.

Additional details about Atlantic Beach, the Causeway, and the relevant policy guidance are available in the following locations:

**Atlantic Beach Draft CAMA Land Use Plan**

<http://atlanticbeach-nc.com/lup-update/>

**Causeway Corridor Conceptual Master Plan**

<http://atlanticbeach-nc.com/causeway-corridor-master-plan/>

**Atlantic Beach Unified Development Ordinance**

[https://library.municode.com/nc/atlantic\\_beach/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](https://library.municode.com/nc/atlantic_beach/codes/code_of_ordinances)

# SCOPE OF WORK

The following tasks are anticipated as part of the preparation for a small area plan for the Causeway. Responses should include a detailed approach and work plan that describes how the responder will address each of the required elements. Responders should feel free to include optional scope of work elements, as appropriate. Any additional and/or optional tasks described in the response must include detailed information regarding the anticipated price and impact to the project schedule.

All work plans should describe the specific actions and activities to be undertaken by the consultant, sub-consultant(s), and which portions of the project will be the responsibility of Town staff. The work plan should be supplemented with an anticipated project schedule, organized by project task.

## **1. INITIAL MEETING/ COORDINATION PLAN**

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Regular, timely, and on-going communication is vital to the success of the project. Successful work programs will identify how on-going communication with Town staff, elected officials, and the public will be initiated and maintained throughout the project. At a minimum, the consultant is expected to conduct bi-monthly status updates with Town staff and advisors throughout the project. The work plan should set expectations for the timing and content of an initial project meeting with Town staff and Town officials, including what additional pieces of information will be needed by the consultant to commence work on the project.

## **2. ANALYSIS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS**

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In addition to a review of relevant Town regulations and adopted policy guidance, the work plan should incorporate a thorough exploration of existing conditions along the Causeway as well as an understanding of other relevant information such as market conditions, public sentiment, regulatory opportunities and obstacles, local community character, and any relevant technical considerations. The current conditions information should be assembled as a stand-alone project deliverable that can be integrated with other small area plan components. At a minimum, the analysis should provide the substantive background necessary for consideration of each initial recommendation.

## **3. INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Based on the analysis of current conditions, the successful candidate will prepare a series of initial recommendations and illustrations on at least the following topics: preferred land uses, architectural and design parameters, desired site configuration elements (including parking, on-site circulation, signage, etc.), regulatory approach(es), and a system for guiding decisions about the timing and location of wastewater system connections throughout the causeway area. Initial recommendations will be presented to Town staff and Town officials for discussion.

## **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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The consulting team will be responsible for conducting a thorough but expeditious community engagement effort focused on collecting feedback from Town residents and landowners on the suite of initial recommendations. The consultant will explain initial recommendations, their rationale, and viable options or alternatives. Successful engagement programs will offer a variety of options for attendance and the provision of feedback in an efficient way, and will include a detailed report of participation and how the initial recommendations are anticipated to evolve based on the feedback collected. Results from community engagement activities should be assembled as a stand-alone project deliverable that can be integrated with other small area plan components.

## **5. SMALL AREA PLAN DRAFTING AND REVISION**

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Following completion of the community engagement portion of the project, the consultant shall prepare and revise the draft Causeway small area plan in accordance with community direction. The plan is intended as a brief, forward-looking policy framework for development and redevelopment in the Causeway area along with the implementation elements necessary to achieve the plan's objectives. At a minimum, it should provide the following elements:

- The small area plan document that articulates the desired future for the area;
- Revisions to the Town's unified development ordinance to implement the small area plan;
- A policy framework or allocation system designed to optimize wastewater connection decisions;
- The range of preferred, allowed, and prohibited principal and accessory uses;
- Incentives and other mechanisms for the promotion of local businesses;
- The range of architectural and design requirements and options for new development and redevelopment (including site features and site configuration); and
- The procedure for establishing the proposed zoning district, including requirements for development agreements associated with wastewater service extension.

## **6. ADOPTION AND DELIVERY**

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The consultant will assist the Town with the review and adoption of the small area plan and associated regulatory tools, including public meetings with the Planning Board and public hearings with the Town Council. Following adoption, the consultant will provide digital, editable, fully functional copies of all final documents, including maps, illustrations, and UDO amendment text.

This scope of work may be supplemented with any additional or optional tasks as desired. Responses that include additional tasks or work plan elements must include detail on the associated costs for each additional or optional element, along with an estimate of the amount of time necessary to provide such elements. The Town reserves the right to include or reject any optional elements.

# **SCHEDULE**

The Town anticipates the project will take approximately six months to complete, but in no instance should the period of time between contract execution and the conduct of the first adoption public meeting with the Planning Board require more than eight months. The successful candidate should be able to begin work on the plan in April, 2021.

## PRICING

The Town has encumbered funding for the project, and anticipates a not-to-exceed price for the project within the range of **\$20,000 to \$30,000**. Successful candidates will provide a detailed budget, by task in addition to hourly rates of team members and any anticipated expenses. Proposals that fail to include a not-to-exceed total price for the entire project (including any proposed options or additions) will not be considered. Any costs associated with responding to this request for proposals, conducting interviews, or other activities necessary to execute a contract with the Town for this project are not reimbursable.

## SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Complete proposals must be received by the submittal deadline in order to be considered. The Town reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from a proposer, and may allow a proposer to correct errors or omissions in cases where the Town believes such corrections are necessary to provide a fair and equitable review of proposals. Submittal requirements are as follows:

### **Consultant (Team) Overview**

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A description of the firm(s) with emphasis on work related to small area planning, regulatory drafting, and land use planning in coastal environments. The overview should identify the project manager and describe their familiarity with issues of concern related to this project.

### **Project Understanding**

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A summary of the proposer's understanding of the project as described in this RFP. Successful respondents will anticipate issues of concern and pose questions about areas in need of further investigation.

### **Qualifications**

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The names, resumes, and roles of all professionals involved with the project, including the project manager. The identification of up to five similar projects completed in the last ten years that describe the proposer's knowledge and experience with similar circumstances. Successful respondents will describe, in detail, how the listed projects contribute to the proposer's ability to complete this project. The inclusion of project lists or project descriptions that fail to discuss their relevancy are not advised. Links to identified projects are desirable.

### **References**

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No fewer than three project references (name, title, telephone number, and email address) for projects completed by the proposer within the last ten years.

#### **Proposed Work Program and Schedule**

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A proposed approach or work program that addresses all elements of the scope of work identified in this request for proposals, along with an anticipated schedule for completion, by task.

#### **Cost Proposal**

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A not-to-exceed total budget for the project, including any optional elements or tasks. Proposals that fail to provide a cost proposal will not be considered. Contingency funds may be identified and excluded from the total not-to-exceed budget provided they do not exceed 10% of the proposed total not-to-exceed budget. The use of contingency funds requires prior written approval from the Town, and are only authorized in cases where project funds cannot be transferred from other project tasks.

#### **Town Responsibilities**

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A description of the anticipated responsibilities of Town staff, by task, for the completion of the project.

## SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Interested firms shall submit one digital copy of the complete proposal (in pdf or similar format) to Michelle Eitner, Atlantic Beach Planning Director, at [planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com](mailto:planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com).

**Complete proposals shall be received by the Town no later than 5:00 pm on March 15, 2021.** Submissions received after this time may not be considered for review.

There is no page limit on responses though successful applicants will limit the size of their response to only the information requested and information relevant to the Town's deliberations. Proposals that include extraneous information may be considered non-responsive.

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Town staff will begin the review process following the submission deadline and determine if interviews are necessary in order to finalize a selected candidate. Upon selection, the top candidate shall provide a contract, scope of work, project schedule, and compensation schedule. Final approval of the contract may only be given by the Town Council.

Interviews, if necessary, shall be conducted in mid-March and shall be completed virtually.

The top candidate shall be selected based upon submission of a full and complete proposal, a demonstrated track record of successful completion of comparable projects, and a proposer's commitment to the creation of high quality work products. Consideration will be based on a realistic and pragmatic work plan that is likely to result in desired work products that are completed on time and on budget. Consideration will also be given for innovative approaches or methods that will assist in the pursuit of the Town's goals for the Causeway area.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Responses to the RFP will become public records and, therefore, will be subject to public disclosure.

The Town of Atlantic Beach does not discriminate in administering any of its programs and activities. The consultant awarded the contract for work will be required to insure that no person shall be denied employment, fair treatment or be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, or handicap.

Any contract developed for work shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina.

The Town expects to select a consulting firm from the proposals submitted, but reserves the right to reject any or all responses, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any response deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.

The Town will reserve the right to dismiss any part of a team or request that a proposer consider adding additional staffing resources or expertise when doing so is in the best interest of the project, as determined by the Town.

Questions regarding this request for proposals may be submitted in writing to Michelle Eitner, Planning Director for the Town of Atlantic Beach, at [planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com](mailto:planner2@atlanticbeach-nc.com).