



Request for Proposal
Black Heritage Trail
20 January 2023

Summary

The Dakota County Historical Society (DCHS) and Building Remembrance for Reconciliation (BR4R) seeks a qualified consultant / consulting firm to engage in a Concept Plan for a Black Heritage Trail in the City of Hastings, Minnesota. The consultant will be expected to complete the required work from June 1, 2023 to May 1, 2024. The project may be completed earlier, with approved work schedule. This document will specify the project is with DCHS, as the lead on the project, with input from BR4R as acting partner.

Submitting a proposal does not commit DCHS to pay for the costs incurred to prepare the proposal. DCHS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal received and to extend the deadline, if needed. The request for proposal does not commit DCHS to award a contract.

The project is dependent upon grant funding provided by the Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants program.

Organizational Backgrounds

The Dakota County Historical Society was founded in 1939 and operates three historic sites throughout Dakota County. The Lawshe Memorial Museum in South St. Paul is the headquarters for the organization and houses its research library and collection. The LeDuc Historic Estate is an 1866 Gothic Revival Mansion in Hastings and provides guided tours from May to October. The Sibley Historic Site in Mendota contains the home of Minnesota's first governor and explores the history of the Fur Trade through guided tours from Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day Weekend.

Building Remembrance for Reconciliation was founded in 2018 under the name Building Bridges. After changing their name to BR4R in 2019, the group began with a few descendants of Hastings early Black community (1857-1954) and continued to grow from there. The group is active in the arts community and is dedicated to using history and the arts to remember, reconcile, and heal. BR4R has hosted presentations, conducted historical research, created commemorative art projects, a graphic novella, documentary, and much more all predicated on telling the stories of Hastings Black community from 1857-1954 through art and culture.

Timeline

Questions related to the RFP should be submitted to Matt Carter (matthew.carter@co.dakota.mn.us) by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 10, 2023.

Answers will be provided by Monday, February 13, 2023.

Final proposals must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 24, 2023.

The consultant / consulting firm will be interviewed and selected between February 27 – March 3, 2023. An offer will be made by Monday, March 6, 2023.

Upon successful grant funding award, the consultant will be expected to work from June 1, 2023 and conclude no later than May 1, 2024.

The project is conditional upon receipt of grant funding

Project Background

The Dakota County Historical Society and Building Remembrance for Reconciliation have partnered on numerous projects to preserve Dakota County's, and Minnesota's, African American history over the past few years. Some of these projects include an exhibit at the Lawshe Memorial Museum (South St. Paul) and co-hosted a Kinara event, which brought organizations and individuals working to preserve Minnesota's African American history together in a single room to discuss the work being completed and expand partnerships throughout the Twin Cities Metro.

After the success of these projects, our organizations are planning to create a Concept Plan for a Black Heritage Trail throughout the city of Hastings. BR4R was originally founded to help the city of Hastings reconcile with their own history involving the racial incidents that occurred throughout the community's history. The culmination of these incidents was in 1910 when arsonists poured gasoline throughout Brown's Chapel, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, that was located at the corner of 5th and Sibley in Hastings. No one was ever caught or charged in the fire. Over the next couple of decades, the Black residents began to move out, which coincided with the rise of activity by the Ku Klux Klan in the community.

This project will be to create a Black Heritage Trail throughout the community to include locations of these incidents, such as Brown's Chapel, as well as highlighting the residents and businesses of the community's Black residents. The goal for this project is to create a trail that visitors can explore throughout the community as a way to learn Dakota County's, and Minnesota's, Black history. The Concept Plan will be for a trail within the City of Hastings, though there is opportunity for this to expand beyond the city limits to other parts of the County, into neighboring communities in Wisconsin, or other nearby counties.

The consultant / consulting firm will be required to host a minimum of two Stakeholder Groups with the public to gather input for a proposed Black Heritage Trail, create a final Concept Plan deliverable, as well as assist with additional milestone reporting required by the Minnesota Historical Society's grant requirements.

Scope of Work

Please note that the following scope of work will be completed on a schedule negotiated with the consultant upon contract award. The timeline can end earlier with approved plan.

1. Work with DCHS assigned staff to obtain all research materials available on the Hastings' Black pioneering families within our collection and various other repositories
2. Work with DCHS assigned staff to complete additional research as needed to get a better understanding of Hastings' Black pioneering families. This may include visiting the Hastings Pioneer Room, Minnesota History Center, and / or speaking with local historians.

3. Identify future research needs that will be needed to complete subsequent phases of the Black Heritage Trail
4. Host two Stakeholder Groups with identified key members of the community and general public to get feedback on what they envision for a community-wide Black Heritage Trail
5. Assist with completing all milestone reports required by MNHS, as needed, throughout the project.
6. Attend meetings with DCHS staff throughout the project to update on progress, as well as MNHS as required throughout the project's funding.
7. Complete a Concept Plan for the Black Heritage Trail through Hastings, Minnesota, which can include possible sites to be included, routes, etc.
8. Assist DCHS staff with final report to MNHS grants office

Required Written Deliverables

1. Summary of Stakeholder Groups
2. Consolidation of research gathered, if includes outside repositories
3. Concept Plan for future Black Heritage Trail
4. Final report to be submitted to MNHS at conclusion of grant summarizing project and process

Please note, with an awarded grant, deliverables may change as required by the granting organization's requirement(s).

Project Budget

Please provide a detailed budget and fee schedule to complete the project as outlined in the RFP.

Required Qualifications

- A minimum of five years of experience as a museum professional
- Demonstrated knowledge of Minnesota history
- B.A. degree in History, Museum Studies, Public History, or related field
- Experience working in the museum setting

Desired Qualifications

- At least three years of experience as manager of a historic site, visitor relations, or exhibit design and implementation
- Knowledge of exhibit design principals and / or previous experience with heritage trails
- Understanding of Dakota County history and its place in Minnesota history
- M.A. degree in History, Museum Studies, Public History, or related field

To Apply

Please submit the following to Matt Carter, executive director, DCHS, via email at matthew.carter@co.dakota.mn.us with the subject line stating, “Black Heritage Trail RFP,” or send a hard copy to:

Dakota County Historical Society
ATTN: Matt Carter
130 3rd Avenue N
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Proposal Document: Address capacity and qualifications to complete the job successfully within the timeline provided. Maximum of two (2) pages.

Resume: Maximum of three (3) pages.

References: Provide a minimum of three (3) references or a current client list with contact information included.

Sample Provide a sample (a) Concept Plan you created for a previous trail, or (b) relevant exhibit that shows your qualifications to complete a trail project

Position open until filled, but primary consideration will be given to proposals received by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 24, 2023. Interviews with finalists can be expected to be conducted between February 27 – March 3, 2023. An offer is expected to be made by Monday, March 6, 2023.