

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: August 15, 2023
 SUBJECT: Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center:
 Exterior/Deconstruction/Stabilization of Deer Tongue Building
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget & Procurement Analyst

Summarized below is the application from the Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of the "Exterior/Deconstruction/Stabilization" of the Deer Tongue Building.

Requested Amount: \$350,000

Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (approx. 42% of event budget)
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	\$831,573*	\$350,000
Total	\$831,573*	\$350,000

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events:

Total Budget: \$831,573*

*Revised Budget submitted after application deadline; new cost is based on bids received for the project.

Project costs were prepared by Shoreline Construction and contemplate funding a portion of the exterior construction, including the deconstruction and stabilization of the Deer Tongue Building; Pearce Scott is the architect of record. Re: Purpose Savannah will lead the deconstruction and cataloging of all salvageable materials, which will then be repurposed and used to rebuild the Center.

Tourism Draw %: Not yet measurable as construction not yet complete.

Benefit to Tourism: Once complete, this newest addition along the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor will serve to educate, preserve and celebrate our region's rich Gullah history and culture. At minimum, the Center projects to draw 100,000 visitors to the new facility in year one; this figure is comprised of 15% of the total annual visitors to Bluffton (roughly 75,000) and attracting another 25,000 who have come to the Center specifically.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 42% of the total project budget; Other projected revenue sources include grants, membership/events, and donations.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Tourist Facilities (15)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$350,000	13	4	5	4	6	32	

Previous Funding Amounts - Bluffton Gullah Cultural Heritage Center

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2022	\$60,000	50.8%	-	\$60,000	\$0	No reimbursement requests received to date.

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$350,000 for facilities for civic and cultural events expenses.