

**AFRICAN AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS IN RHODE ISLAND:  
Statewide Survey  
and  
National Register of Historic Places Nomination**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
October 26, 2022**

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) is seeking a preservation consultant to complete a survey of sites associated with the pre-1900 struggle for African American civil rights in Rhode Island and to prepare a National Register of Historic Places nomination for one property significant for its association with African American civil rights. This project will build off and expand upon the statewide survey of 20th-century African American civil rights sites, completed in 2019 in partnership with the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society.

**1. Authority**

This project is sponsored and will be administered by the RIHPHC, with funds made available by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service (NPS), under a Historic Preservation Fund grant. The RIHPHC will manage the consultant selection process and enter into a contract with the selected consultant. The selected consultant must be approved by the NPS and must meet the [professional qualification standards](#) detailed in 36 CFR Part 61. All work must be performed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*.

**2. Project Funds**

A maximum of \$48,000 in federal grant funds is available for the project. No additional funding is available.

**3. Project Background**

The project is being funded by the [NPS Underrepresented Communities Grant Program](#), a competitive grant program intended to diversify the nominations submitted to the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The RIHPHC recently completed a [statewide historic preservation plan](#) that identifies five broad goals for preservation in Rhode Island, one of which is to “Prioritize equity and representation to ensure that the historic resources we recognize, preserve, protect, and celebrate reflect Rhode Island’s diverse heritage.”

The project is a follow-up to and expansion of the [statewide survey](#) of 20th-century African American civil rights sites, completed in 2019. The survey identified 75 historic properties with significant civil rights associations, 14 of which were evaluated as potentially eligible for individual listing in the National Register. To date, we have received permission from the owners of six of these properties to pursue National Register nominations.

**4. Scope of Work and Work Products**

The Scope of Work includes researching Rhode Island’s pre-1900 African American civil rights history; identifying and surveying sites associated with the struggle for civil rights prior to 1900 and evaluating their National Register

eligibility; preparing a National Register nomination for one property significant for its association with African American civil rights; and participating in a community outreach effort, which will include two in-person public meetings. In addition, the consultant will meet with RIHPHC staff regularly, including at key project milestones, over the course of the project; some of these meetings may be held virtually. The consultant will also be required to submit bimonthly progress reports for the duration of the project.

Work products include RIHPHC Historic Building Data Forms (a.k.a. survey forms) for up to 50 properties, a Survey Report, a National Register Registration Form for one property, and public meeting presentations.

A more detailed discussion of the Scope of Work and associated Work Products follows.

### **Phase One (December 2022-October 2023)**

- The consultant will provide input on a community outreach plan prepared by RIHPHC staff. The plan may include targeted outreach to/consultation with community organizations and contacts through small group meetings and individual interviews (which will inform research) as well as two public meetings (described below).
- The consultant will introduce the project and invite public comment at a public meeting; the meeting will take place after the consultant has begun but not yet completed historical research, allowing time to incorporate information from community members.
- The consultant will research African Americans' fight for equal rights in Rhode Island before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The consultant will review primary and secondary sources to document examples of resistance to enslavement in Rhode Island; efforts to preserve African culture and identity; the gradual emancipation of enslaved people in Rhode Island; and the fight for equality in education, voting, housing, employment, and other spheres. The consultant may also participate in small group meetings and individual interviews to gather information. Research should be conducted with an eye toward identifying sites associated with people, organizations, and events significant to the struggle for African American civil rights prior to 1900.
- The consultant will create a list of extant sites associated with people, organizations, and events significant to the pre-1900 fight for African American civil rights in Rhode Island; RIHPHC staff will confirm which of those sites are already listed in the National Register.
- From this list, the consultant will identify up to 50 extant sites to be surveyed, prioritizing sites that are not already listed in the National Register; the list of properties to be surveyed will be created in consultation with RIHPHC staff.
- The consultant will document each of those 50 sites on an RIHPHC survey form and provide a preliminary evaluation of each property's potential National Register eligibility.
- The consultant will prepare a narrative, illustrated Survey Report that summarizes the historical research findings, survey effort, and National Register recommendations.

Phase One Work Products include:

- A PowerPoint presentation, for delivery at a public meeting, that introduces the project, provides initial research findings, identifies research gaps, and solicits community input.
- Completed RIHPHC Historic Property Data Forms (a.k.a. survey forms), with photograph(s), for up to 50 properties.
- A narrative Survey Report that includes:
  - a methodology statement
  - a context statement that summarizes the research into Rhode Island's pre-1900 African American civil rights history and identifies and analyzes property types that relate to that history
  - a survey summary that includes the full list of extant sites associated with people, organizations, and events significant to the fight for African American civil rights in Rhode Island prior to 1900, along with their current National Register status; and a list of the sites that were surveyed, including preliminary evaluations of National Register eligibility

- map(s) showing the locations of the properties on the full list of extant sites and the surveyed properties
- illustrations, such as photographs (historic and contemporary), that support the narrative
- bibliography, including a list of organizations and people contacted
- *Note: The Survey Report and survey forms should be similar to those produced for the 2019 survey of 20th-century African American civil rights sites in terms of organization, presentation, depth of research, and level of detail.*
- *Note: The Survey Report and survey forms will first be submitted to the RIHPHC in draft form for review and comment. The consultant will address edits/comments before submitting final drafts. Work products should be submitted in electronic form, as Word and pdf files. Photographs should be embedded in the survey forms, but also submitted separately as high-resolution jpg files.*

### **Phase Two (October 2023–July 2024)**

- A public meeting will be held at which the consultant will discuss the survey report findings, including a discussion of properties recommended for the National Register; explain the next phase of the project; and solicit public comment.
- The consultant will work with RIHPHC staff to select one property related to the history of African American civil rights in Rhode Island for individual nomination to the National Register. The property will be selected from those sites identified as potentially eligible in the 2019 Survey Report and the Survey Report produced in Phase One of this project. Selection considerations will include owner consent/interest, relative historical significance, exterior and interior integrity (an evaluation of which may require a site visit[s]), and other factors, and will be subject to preliminary approval by the State Review Board.
- The consultant will prepare one individual National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the selected property. To that end, the consultant will conduct fieldwork; take digital photographs; conduct research; prepare an architectural description and statement of significance; and create maps.

#### Phase Two Work Products include:

- A PowerPoint presentation, for delivery at a public meeting, that summarizes the information in the Survey Report, introduces the next phase of the project, and solicits community input.
- A completed National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for one property significant to Rhode Island’s African American civil rights history, to include:
  - Narrative Description
  - Narrative Statement of Significance
  - Bibliography
  - Geographical Data, including maps
  - Additional Documentation, as required (e.g., historic images)
  - Photographs
- *Note: The National Register of Historic Places Registration Form will first be submitted to the RIHPHC in draft form for review and comment. The consultant will address edits/comments before submitting the final draft. Work products should be submitted in electronic form, as Word and pdf files. Photographs should be submitted as high-resolution jpg files.*

## **5. Project Schedule**

The *African American Civil Rights in Rhode Island: Statewide Survey and National Register of Historic Places Nomination* project is being funded through a grant from the National Park Service and must be completed by December 31, 2024.

Tasks in italics will be completed by RIHPHC staff and are not the consultant’s responsibility.

| <b>Phase One</b>   |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
|  |                               |
| <i>Request for Proposals issued</i>  | <i>October 26, 2022</i>       |
| Proposals due  | November 18, 2022             |
| <i>Consultant hired</i>  | <i>December 9, 2022</i>       |
| Project kick-off meeting   | December 16, 2022             |
| Outreach/consultation with community organizations, conducted in partnership with RIHPHC staff   | December 2022 – February 2023 |
| Research and identification of extant sites  | December 2022 – May 2023      |
| Public meeting   | May 2023                      |
| Survey of extant sites and evaluation of potential National Register eligibility   | May – July 2023               |
| Draft work products submitted to RIHPHC  | August 2023                   |
| <i>Draft work products returned to consultant, with comments</i>   | <i>September 2023</i>         |
| Final work products submitted to RIHPHC  | October 2023                  |
| <b>Phase Two</b>   |                               |
|  |                               |
| Public Meeting   | October 2023                  |
| Selection of one property to be individually nominated to the National Register  | November 2023                 |
| <i>Presentation of selected property to the State Review Board, for preliminary approval</i>   | <i>December 2023</i>          |
| Preparation of National Register nomination  | December 2023 – April 2024    |
| Draft work products submitted to RIHPHC  | May 2024                      |
| <i>Draft work products returned to consultant, with comments</i>   | <i>June 2024</i>              |
| Final work products submitted to RIHPHC  | July 2024                     |
| <i>Presentation of National Register nomination to State Review Board, for final approval and to RI Historical Preservation &amp; Heritage Commission, for endorsement</i> | <i>October 2024</i>           |
| <i>Submission of NR nomination to NPS</i>  | <i>November 2024</i>          |
| <i>Final Grant Report submitted to NPS</i>   | <i>December 2024</i>          |
| <b>Project Completion</b>  | <b>December 31, 2024</b>      |

**Note:** In addition to the benchmark deadlines listed above, there will be regular meetings between RIHPHC staff and the preservation consultant over the course of the project, including at key project milestones. Some of these meetings may be held virtually.

**Note:** The consultant will be required to submit bimonthly progress reports for the duration of the project.

## 6. Qualifications

The preservation consultant will submit a statement of their qualifications to perform the above services, sufficient to meet the requirements of “Professional Qualification Standards” of 36 CFR 61. The RIHPHC welcomes proposals from consultant firms as well as partnerships among consultants. Proposals should include:

- A narrative statement describing the consultant’s approach to and understanding of the project, including proposed changes to the project schedule or sequencing, if any
- A narrative statement of qualifications, including examples of recent, similar projects
  - Consultants with experience researching and documenting sites associated with the history of underrepresented communities are preferred
- Resumes for key project personnel and an explanation of roles on the project
- A minimum of three references with contact information
- A project schedule, including public meetings and project meetings with RIHPHC staff
- A cost proposal, broken down by task and correlated to the project schedule

**Note:** The cost proposal must show hourly rates of all project personnel. Hourly rates may not exceed \$101.38 (120% of a Federal Civil Service GS-15, step 10 salary per project location).

**Note:** The total fee may not exceed \$48,000

The consultant will be selected based on related work experience, ability to produce the required work products according to the project schedule and within the project budget, and references.

## 7. Submission Deadline

Proposals are due on **November 18, 2022**. Proposals may be mailed or delivered electronically (preferred) to the address listed below:

Joanna Doherty  
Principal Architectural Historian  
RI Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission  
150 Benefit Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
[joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov](mailto:joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov)

## 8. Rejection of Proposals

The RIHPHC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

## 9. Questions

Questions related to this RFP may be submitted via email to Joanna Doherty at the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission: [joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov](mailto:joanna.doherty@preservation.ri.gov).