



PRESERVATION MARYLAND

SUBJECT: Revisions and Q&A

DATE ISSUED: February 10, 2026

RFP: Williams Schoolhouse Interpretation: Exhibit Planning & Design

DATE OF RFP RELEASE: January 7, 2026

REVISIONS

Revisions are indicated either by a ~~strike through~~ for deletions or underline for insertions.

RFP Reference, Page 2, Section 2.2

- **Prepare for future implementation:** Deliver archival findings and artifact/furnishing recommendations, ~~final design documents and specifications~~ production-ready graphic files and detailed design control drawings for fabrication and installation in a separate, subsequent project phase.

RFP Reference, Pages 3-4, Section 3

Services	Deliverables
<p>Research historical site documentation and archival resources to inform exhibit content and design. Perform descendant and community outreach to obtain oral histories, archival documents, and potential artifacts. Please note: <u>Consultant may assume that oral history engagement with descendants will take the form of informal, conversational interviews; there is no expectation to meet a fixed number of interviews or follow formal archival oral history protocols.</u></p> <p>Note: See Attachment A for existing documentation and historical research.</p>	<p>Provide a bibliography of all sources used in the creation of exhibit content. Please note: <u>A comprehensive list of works cited/consulted is sufficient. Annotations are not required, though brief contextual notes may be included if they help clarify how key sources informed interpretation or design decisions.</u></p> <p><u>Oral histories: At minimum, Consultants should produce written summaries or notes sufficient to support interpretive development. Where interviews are recorded (to be pursued on a case-by-case basis), deliverables may include audio or audiovisual files and transcripts suitable for reference or potential exhibit use. Consultants will be expected to adhere to all applicable requirements related to consent, permissions, and use of recorded content.</u></p>
<p>Identify and locate a limited selection of period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings (such as a stove, teacher’s desk, student desk(s), and/or chairs) for potential future acquisition.</p>	<p>Develop a concise list of recommended period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings, as well as an accompanying cost estimates for acquisition. Note: Acquisition is not included in the scope of work for the Consultant. <u>While finalized artifact label copy is not expected as part of this project, due to the exclusion of</u></p>

<p>Note: Consult with DNR and descendant representatives to determine whether any suitable artifacts already in-hand may be incorporated into the exhibit. While exhibit space remains the priority, a small number of furnishings is desired to help convey the historic character of the schoolhouse.</p>	<p><u>acquisition, the Consultant will be expected to provide short, accessible descriptions of recommended materials within the list.</u></p> <p>Alternative: If efforts to locate period-appropriate furnishings are unsuccessful, the Consultant will need to develop cost estimates for the development of replica furnishings.</p>
<p>Pursue interpretive planning, determining exhibit's target audience/visitors, concept, and interpretive themes <u>while considering accessibility and inclusion of potential visitors.</u></p>	<p>Produce exhibit concept and interpretive themes, grounded in the study of visitor demographics, motivations, and learning styles, with careful attention to accessibility and inclusivity. Exhibit concept should define such elements as typography, color scheme, envisioned fabrication materials, etc.</p>
<p>Develop and provide Client with comprehensive exhibit content and design package, including conceptual renderings, exhibit designs with specifications, and production-ready design files.</p>	<p>This package should encompass conceptual renderings; exhibit designs with text (headings, narrative, captions, labels, etc.), images, artifact recommendations and accompanying cases; production-ready design files for future fabrication and installation; and suggestions for programmatic and digital engagement opportunities. <u>production-ready graphic files for simple exhibit components—primarily finalized exhibit panels with interpretive text and imagery; and detailed design control drawings for more complex exhibit components, including period-appropriate furnishings, recommended artifacts requiring mounts or cases, and any interactive elements. These drawings may include schematic-level floor plans and elevations that clearly communicate spatial organization, interpretive flow, and the relationship between exhibit components—allowing enough information for a qualified fabricator to develop cost estimates and prepare a fabrication proposal in a separate, future project phase. The package should also include a concise list of suggested programmatic and digital engagement opportunities.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design must comply with applicable ADA accessibility requirements. • Upon Client approval, the Consultant shall secure high-resolution image files, as well as rights and permissions for any images not in the public domain <u>unable to be accessed through park and state collections, the descendant community, or within the public domain.</u> All associated usage fees are the responsibility of the Consultant. • Any image files/artifacts obtained should be credited as requested by the providing entity. • <u>Highly detailed shop drawings, mounting hardware specifications, or object cradle fabrication details are not required as part of this scope.</u>

Q&A

1. *Is content development, exhibit script, and label copy writing included in the project scope?*

Content development and exhibit scripting are included in the project scope, as they will directly contribute to the design of exhibit panels. Because artifact acquisition timing may vary, finalized artifact label copy is not expected as part of this project. However, the Consultant is expected to provide short, accessible descriptions to accompany a concise list of recommended period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings, as outlined in Section 3 of the RFP.

2. *Does this project include exhibit fabrication, installation, or acquisition of artifacts and furnishings?*

No. This project does not include services related to supervising or managing exhibit fabrication or installation, which will be procured under a separate future contract. The Consultant is also not expected to acquire furnishings or artifacts as part of this project; rather, the Consultant's role is limited to identifying and recommending period-appropriate furnishings and artifacts and providing sufficient supporting documentation (e.g., potential sources and cost estimates) to inform future sourcing and fabrication decisions.

3. *Are any services optional or lower priority?*

No services identified in the project scope are optional. However, there is flexibility in the depth of certain deliverables. For example:

- While the Consultant is expected to develop exhibit concepts and interpretive themes, the incorporation of in-depth visitor demographic analysis is not a priority; a broader focus on accessible, inclusive interpretation is sufficient.
- Additionally, while the Consultant is expected to produce an exhibit content and design package, it is not a priority for the Consultant to provide in-depth suggestions for programmatic and digital engagement opportunities; a concise list of suggestions will be sufficient.
- Similarly, the list of period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings should be detailed enough to inform sourcing and approximate cost, rather than provide exhaustive specifications.

4. *Are there any existing materials that the Consultant can reference regarding Fort Frederick State Park visitor demographics and motivations?*

No formal visitor studies or demographic research specific to Fort Frederick State Park have been completed to date; high-level visitation numbers and general insights are available from the park. As stated in the response to Question #3, the incorporation of in-depth visitor demographic analysis is no longer a priority element within the exhibit concept and interpretive themes deliverable. Rather, a broader focus on producing accessible, inclusive interpretation will be sufficient.

5. *How does this project relate to future exhibit fabrication/installation in terms of schedule and budget?*

This project is limited to interpretive planning and exhibit design and is anticipated to occur over an approximately seven-month period following contract execution; while this represents the intended project timeline, we recognize that unforeseen complexities can arise and prioritize the delivery of thoughtful, high-quality work.

A separate RFP for exhibit fabrication and installation is anticipated once interior restoration work at the Williams Schoolhouse is nearing completion, currently expected by the end of 2026. The maximum budget for this phase is \$50,000 and applies solely to interpretive planning and exhibit design. The fabrication and installation budget will be determined at a later date and under a separate contract.

Decisions regarding the scale, materials, and complexity of the exhibit within the approximately 486-square-foot schoolhouse will be refined during early coordination with DNR and informed in part by anticipated fabrication costs identified through this planning and design effort.

6. *Of the available exhibit space, is there an expected percentage to be devoted to period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings?*

As noted in the response to Question #5, the scale, materials, and complexity of the exhibit will be refined during early coordination with DNR. Per the RFP, a smaller segment of the interpretive space is anticipated to be allocated to period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings; at this time, DNR envisions the space housing period materials as a “classroom display.”

7. *Other than what is referenced in Attachment A, what content repositories, archives, or subject matter experts are available?*

Fort Frederick State Park staff will be available to help identify and provide access to existing sources of historical documentation, including materials that informed existing park educational resources, such as walking tour guides included in Attachment A. The selected Consultant will also be expected to engage with the Williams family descendant community for oral histories, any additional family-held archival documents, and potential artifacts. Preservation Maryland and DNR staff will assist with coordination.

Consultants should anticipate conducting additional independent research and budget accordingly. Potential repositories include, but are not limited to:

- Maryland Historical Trust Library & Archives
- Maryland State Archives
- University of Maryland Libraries & Special Collections
- Doleman Black Heritage Museum Collection
- Washington County Free Library, Alice Virginia & David W. Fletcher Branch | John Clinton Frye Western Maryland Room
- WHILBR (Western Maryland Historical Library)
- Washington County Historical Society
- Local newspapers and published historical sources

Additional materials not included in Attachment A but available for consultation include:

- DNR “Nathan Williams: African American Heritage” walking tour resource | <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Documents/WilliamsWalking-Tour-FFSP.pdf>
- Preservation Maryland blog post on the Williams family at Fort Frederick | <https://preservationmaryland.org/the-history-and-future-of-fort-frederick-school-for-african-american-education/>
- *The Daily Mail* (Hagerstown, MD), April 26, 1975 article | [The Daily Mail 1975 04 26 Page 6.pdf](#)
- Select newspaper clippings (1888–1899) | [Newspaper Clippings \(1888-1899\)](#)
- Select historical book excerpts (1867, 1893) | [Various Historical Sources \(1867,1893\)](#)

8. *How many historical image assets are currently available for the site? Based on this information, how should Consultants budget for image acquisition and usage rights within the proposal?*

Based on information currently available from park staff, approximately 25–50 historical images associated with the Williams family period have already been identified, along with several recently shared family documents and images. While additional materials may emerge through expanded Consultant research, park staff do not anticipate a substantial increase in available image assets at this time. Accordingly, Consultants are encouraged to include a small, contingency-level budget allowance for image acquisition and usage rights, should additional acquisition be required.

Please note: Consultants should also anticipate tracking proposed exhibit images in a spreadsheet noting source, permissions, anticipated costs (if any), terms of use, and crediting requirements.

9. *For the required bibliography, do you prefer an annotated bibliography or a comprehensive list of works cited/consulted?*

A comprehensive list of works cited and consulted is sufficient. Annotations are not required, though brief contextual notes may be included at the Consultant's discretion if they help clarify how key sources informed interpretation or design decisions.

10. *Will the Consultant have access to state collections management systems for the purpose of identifying potential Maryland-held objects for use in the exhibit?*

System access will be determined upon project initiation, but there is potential to utilize Maryland-held objects for exhibit purposes. For example, the collection within the Fort Frederick State Park visitor center and the Maryland Archaeological Conservation (MAC) Laboratory at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum are potential sources for such objects.

11. *What stakeholder and descendant engagement is anticipated for this project, and what coordination support will be provided?*

Preservation Maryland and DNR will provide the selected Consultant with an initial list of known stakeholders and will assist with introductions and coordination as needed—please note that DNR has existing relationships and preliminary contacts within the Williams family descendant community.

The Consultant is expected to conduct approximately three to four virtual stakeholder meetings at project initiation, followed by one virtual or hybrid collective meeting to review the draft exhibit design. Given the geographic distribution of many descendants, virtual engagement is anticipated to be the primary and most accessible format; however, the Consultant should remain open to limited in-person engagement following initial meetings, particularly where local participants prefer or would benefit from face-to-face discussion. Stakeholder engagement activities should be conducted in a respectful, structured manner and are intended to meaningfully inform interpretive content and design development.

12. *What are the intended goals of descendant engagement for this project?*

The primary goals of descendant engagement are expanded relationship-building and consultation on interpretive content and design development, ensuring that descendant perspectives meaningfully inform the narrative and design approach. While long-term stewardship or partnerships may emerge organically, they are not required outcomes of this project.

13. *For the collection of oral histories with the descendant community, is there a preferred interview format (audio or video), and what level of formality and deliverables are expected?*

Consultants may assume that oral history engagement with descendants will take the form of informal, conversational interviews intended to gather historical context, personal perspectives, and insights to inform interpretive planning and exhibit design. These discussions are not expected to follow formal archival oral history protocols.

Audio or audiovisual recording may be pursued on a case-by-case basis—only where appropriate, mutually agreeable, and of potential interpretive value—and any decision to do so will be made in consultation with the Consultant, DNR, Preservation Maryland, and the participating descendant(s). At a minimum, Consultants should plan to produce written summaries or notes sufficient to support interpretive development. Where interviews are recorded, deliverables may include audio/audiovisual files and transcripts suitable for reference or potential exhibit use; however, extensive archival processing or a fixed number of interviews is not required. Consultants will be expected to adhere to all applicable requirements related to consent, permissions, and use of recorded content.

14. What degree of digital media is envisioned for the exhibit design?

Preservation Maryland and DNR are open to the thoughtful incorporation of digital media as part of the exhibit design and welcome concept-level suggestions from the design team where digital elements meaningfully support interpretation and accessibility. Consultants should note, however, that decisions regarding the extent and complexity of digital media will be informed by anticipated production, fabrication, and long-term maintenance costs.

15. What is meant by “production-ready design files,” and what level of exhibit drawings and schematics are expected?

For simple exhibit components, such as exhibit panels, the Consultant is expected to provide production-ready graphic files that support a clear and efficient transition to fabrication, as the content for these elements is anticipated to be finalized.

For more complex exhibit components — including period-appropriate furnishings, artifacts requiring mounts or cases, or interactive elements — detailed design control drawings are sufficient, provided they include enough information for a qualified fabricator to develop cost estimates and prepare a fabrication proposal. These materials may include schematic-level floor plans and elevations that clearly communicate spatial organization, interpretive flow, and the relationship between exhibit components. Highly detailed shop drawings, mounting hardware specifications, or object cradle fabrication details are not required as part of this scope.

16. Will the schoolhouse be accessible without a docent? And, dependent upon that, should room barriers or roped-off displays be considered to protect period-appropriate material?

There will be occasional “open house” opportunities for future visitors to the schoolhouse, but it will likely not be open daily. Given these events and the likelihood of school-age children interacting with the interpretive space, it is recommended that low-cost, easily movable barriers be incorporated to help protect period-appropriate materials when staffing is limited.

17. Are project meetings expected to be virtual or in person?

Project meetings with key Preservation Maryland/DNR team members — including kick-off, progress updates, design reviews, and closing — may be held virtually. In-person meetings may include Consultant-requested site visits to the Williams Schoolhouse or Fort Frederick State Park to support planning and design work —AND— stakeholder engagement.

18. Who is on the Preservation Maryland project team and what are their roles?

Colleen Poulton, Redevelopment Project Lead, will serve as Preservation Maryland’s primary point of contact for the project, coordinating with DNR staff, overseeing schedule adherence, supporting initial stakeholder engagement, and receiving Consultant deliverables and invoices. Laura Houston, Director of Revitalization Initiatives, may serve in a peripheral support role as needed. DNR staff will also be present at most meetings and can be available for consultation.

19. Is Preservation Maryland planning to conduct interviews as part of the selection process?

No, Preservation Maryland is not planning to conduct interviews as part of the selection process. The evaluation criteria within Section 6 of the RFP will be the basis for which a Preservation Maryland reviewer will score each submittal received.



PRESERVATION MARYLAND

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Williams Schoolhouse Interpretation: Exhibit Planning & Design

Preservation Maryland, a nonprofit organization headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, is soliciting competitive proposals from qualified firms for interpretive planning and design of an interior exhibit for the Williams Schoolhouse, located at 11347 Big Pool Road, Big Pool, MD 21711, within the boundaries of Fort Frederick State Park.

To be considered as eligible, Respondents must meet one or more of the Professional Qualification Standards—or their equivalent—as set forth by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines. They must also demonstrate prior experience of successful exhibit planning and design for museums, cultural institutions, and/or heritage sites. Preservation Maryland requests that interested parties respond to the solicitation by **4:30 P.M. ET on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.**

1. CLIENT

Preservation Maryland is a statewide non-profit working to protect Maryland’s unique and irreplaceable heritage while creating a more equitable and sustainable future. The organization harnesses the power of historic places to revitalize and reinvest in communities, advocate and build the historic trades workforce for the benefit of all Marylanders. To learn more, visit www.preservationmaryland.org.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1 Background

Owned by the State of Maryland and managed by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Maryland Park Service (DNR), the Williams Schoolhouse tells a nuanced story of Maryland’s free Black community both before and after the Civil War. The Williams family and the schoolhouse are important aspects of the rich history of Fort Frederick State Park. As such, Preservation Maryland is partnering with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to accurately restore the schoolhouse in such a manner as to retain as much historic fabric as possible and prepare the site for expanded interpretation and exhibits for public benefit. This interpretive project will build upon previous construction efforts completed in the fall of 2022—which resulted in the reroofing and exterior restoration of windows, doors, and batten board siding—and set the stage for interior restoration efforts.

Between the 19th and 20th centuries, Fort Frederick and the surrounding property were owned and stewarded by the Williams family. Nathan Williams and his wife, Ammy, purchased the site in 1850 for use as a farm—constructing a house and barn on the property and using the nearby Fort Frederick walls to enclose an orchard, vineyard, and vegetable gardens. Nathan and his family were also very involved in education and politics within the Black community, so much so that, after the Civil War, he established a school on his property for Black children. Upon his death in 1884, the land passed to Nathan’s children, who continued to operate the farm and school. In 1899, the Williams family sold this tract to Washington County for the purpose of constructing a new public schoolhouse, which still stands today and is the site and canvas for this project. The State of Maryland purchased the property in 1973 and recently renewed efforts to preserve and interpret the site to highlight the history of the Williams family and their contributions to Maryland’s storied past.

2.2 Description

Serving as project manager on behalf of DNR, Preservation Maryland is seeking consultant services for interpretive planning and design of an exhibit for the Williams Schoolhouse. Sited at 11347 Big Pool Road, Big Pool, MD 21711

(parcel 0073, tax map 0045), the 486 square foot frame structure is a late 19th century, single-story, gable-roofed, board and batten, one-room schoolhouse.

The goal of this project is to plan and design an interpretive exhibit on the rich history of the Williams family and Williams Schoolhouse. It is preferred that the exhibit will also connect these stories to other interpretive themes explored at Fort Frederick State Park. This interpretive work will inform plans for interior restoration of the schoolhouse (ex. exhibit lighting, electrical, climate, etc. needs will inform building's restoration design and construction), which, in combination, will prepare the structure to open to the public as a well-rounded, educational space for visitors. **Please note:** Exhibit fabrication and installation will be bid out separately after final design is completed and approved.

Objectives include, but are not limited to:

- **Plan and design an engaging exhibit:** Produce a conceptual and final exhibit design that transforms the one-room schoolhouse into an educational space for diverse audiences, including school groups and general visitors.
- **Support historic integrity:** Ensure that exhibit design complements and respects the historic character of the schoolhouse; be vigilant in avoiding adverse effects on the historic structure.
- **Integrate select period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings to support interpretation:** Research and recommend a limited selection of period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings (e.g., school-related objects, a stove, teacher's desk, or student desks) that help convey the historic character of the schoolhouse while maintaining priority space for exhibit installation. Provide a proposed acquisition plan and budget for authentic or high-quality reproduction pieces as appropriate.
- **Foster visitor connection:** Incorporate interactive and accessible elements that encourage personal connections to local history and provide multiple entry points for different learning styles.
- **Prepare for future implementation:** Deliver archival findings and artifact/furnishing recommendations, production-ready graphic files and detailed design control drawings for fabrication and installation in a separate, subsequent project phase.

This project is being executed in partnership with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. As such, both Preservation Maryland and DNR staff will be involved throughout the entire project. Preservation Maryland will serve as the main point of contact, contract signatory, invoice recipient, and liaison between the hired project professionals and relevant government agencies, which will include coordination of document submittal. It is anticipated that DNR will be involved in the kick-off and status meetings, project documentation review, and site visits and will serve as final authority on decisions.

2.3 Timeline

Work is expected to begin immediately upon execution of the contract and conclude as expeditiously as possible, allowing for a final project completion date no later than seven months from contract execution. Respondents should account for periods of review (on both general project materials, such as meeting agendas and presentations, and deliverables) and at least two revisions to incorporate Preservation Maryland and/or DNR.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The precise scope of work is subject to feedback from the selected Respondent(s) and budget limitations. However, anticipated work to be undertaken by the selected consultant(s) may include, but is not limited to, the following project services and deliverables:

Services	Deliverables
<p>Conduct project meetings with DNR and Preservation Maryland staff, both virtually and in-person as appropriate. This includes at least one (1) kick-off meeting, one (1) meeting to review the interpretive plan, one (1) meeting to review draft exhibit design, one (1) closing meeting, regular progress update meetings, and site visits as needed. Communicate project updates regularly.</p> <p>Note: While DNR has indicated that exhibit space should take priority in the 486 sq. ft. schoolhouse, a small segment should be allocated to period-appropriate furnishings. Consultant will need to confirm with DNR in an early stage meeting the precise exhibit size.</p>	<p>Provide agendas prior to, allowing time for revision, and meeting notes following.</p> <p>Submit quarterly progress memos (as applicable within the project period) summarizing project progress, challenges, and next steps.</p> <p>Upon project closeout, submit project completion memo, including a record of what was accomplished, lessons learned, and any recommendations/follow-up items for Client to address moving forward.</p>
<p>Refine stakeholders with DNR and Preservation Maryland and pursue stakeholder engagement (virtually/in-person) to enrich project deliverables.</p>	<p>Conduct formal stakeholder meetings (approx. 3-4 virtual meetings at project initiation and one collective virtual or hybrid meeting to review draft exhibit design), providing agendas prior to and meeting notes after. Follow-up with stakeholders as necessary to acquire additional information.</p>
<p>Research historical site documentation and archival resources to inform exhibit content and design. Perform descendant and community outreach to obtain oral histories, archival documents, and potential artifacts.</p> <p>Please note: Consultant may assume that oral history engagement with descendants will take the form of informal, conversational interviews; there is no expectation to meet a fixed number of interviews or follow formal archival oral history protocols.</p> <p>Note: See Attachment A for existing documentation and historical research.</p>	<p>Provide a bibliography of all sources used in the creation of exhibit content. Please note: A comprehensive list of works cited/consulted is sufficient. Annotations are not required, though brief contextual notes may be included if they help clarify how key sources informed interpretation or design decisions.</p> <p>Oral histories: At minimum, Consultants should produce written summaries or notes sufficient to support interpretive development. Where interviews are recorded (to be pursued on a case-by-case basis), deliverables may include audio or audiovisual files and transcripts suitable for reference or potential exhibit use. Consultants will be expected to adhere to all applicable requirements related to consent, permissions, and use of recorded content.</p>
<p>Identify and locate a limited selection of period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings (such as a stove, teacher’s desk, student desk(s), and/or chairs) for potential future acquisition.</p> <p>Note: Consult with DNR and descendant representatives to determine whether any suitable artifacts already in-hand may be incorporated into the exhibit. While exhibit space remains the priority, a small number of furnishings is desired to help convey the historic character of the schoolhouse.</p>	<p>Develop a concise list of recommended period-appropriate artifacts and furnishings, as well as accompanying cost estimates for acquisition. Note: Acquisition is not included in the scope of work for the Consultant. While finalized artifact label copy is not expected as part of this project, due to the exclusion of acquisition, the Consultant will be expected to provide short, accessible descriptions of recommended materials within the list.</p> <p><u>Alternative:</u> If efforts to locate period-appropriate furnishings are unsuccessful, the Consultant will need to</p>

	develop cost estimates for the development of replica furnishings.
Pursue interpretive planning, determining exhibit concept and interpretive themes while considering accessibility and inclusion of potential visitors.	Produce exhibit concept and interpretive themes, with careful attention to accessibility and inclusivity. Exhibit concept should define such elements as typography, color scheme, envisioned fabrication materials, etc.
Develop and provide Client with comprehensive exhibit content and design package.	<p>This package should encompass conceptual renderings; production-ready graphic files for simple exhibit components—primarily finalized exhibit panels with interpretive text and imagery; and detailed design control drawings for more complex exhibit components, including period-appropriate furnishings, recommended artifacts requiring mounts or cases, and any interactive elements. These drawings may include schematic-level floor plans and elevations that clearly communicate spatial organization, interpretive flow, and the relationship between exhibit components—allowing enough information for a qualified fabricator to develop cost estimates and prepare a fabrication proposal in a separate, future project phase. The package should also include a concise list of suggested programmatic and digital engagement opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design must comply with applicable ADA accessibility requirements. • Upon Client approval, the Consultant shall secure high-resolution image files, as well as rights and permissions for any images unable to be accessed through park and state collections, the descendant community, or within the public domain. All associated usage fees are the responsibility of the Consultant. • Any image files and artifacts obtained should be credited as requested by the providing entity. • Highly detailed shop drawings, mounting hardware specifications, or object cradle fabrication details are not required as part of this scope.

4. BUDGET

The target budget is within the range of \$40,000 - \$50,000 and will include all research, planning, and design fees, plus any additional costs incurred in connection with the work outlined herein. However, competitiveness of the budget will be considered as part of the proposal review process. **Please note:** Exhibit fabrication and installation will be bid out separately after final design is completed and approved.

As this project is supported by grant funding, the final budget will be subject to discussion and approval by Preservation Maryland and DNR. This may result in necessary modification(s) to the scope of work, which Preservation Maryland and DNR staff will discuss with the selected Respondent as necessary. In no event shall the selected Consultant be entitled to receive more than the amount specified in the project agreement—which will be executed after the selected Consultant has been notified and accepts the project—unless authorized in advance and in writing by Preservation Maryland.

5. INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

5.1 Where to Deliver Proposal

All proposals must be submitted as a single PDF attached to an email delivered to Colleen Poulton at cpoulton@presmd.org.

5.2 Proposal Due Date

Proposals are due by **4:30 P.M. ET on Wednesday, February 18, 2026**.

5.3 Preparation of Proposal

Respondents must submit the following:

- Qualifications for the project, including names, titles, and demonstrated experience of key personnel in exhibit research, planning, and design;
- Description and visual examples of recent interpretive planning and exhibit design experience on projects similar in scope and scale (see Section 5.5);
- Project proposal outlining approach and methodology, adequately addressing project goals and objectives;
- Project timeline that indicates durations for key tasks and the overall project;
- Itemized project budget for exhibit research, planning, and design;
- Resume(s) of proposed personnel who will be directly involved in the execution of the project showing recent project experience—completed within the last five (5) years—that demonstrates historical and cultural expertise in at least one (1) of the following:
 - a. Black history in the United States – especially free Black communities in the 19th century, Reconstruction era, and education history
 - b. Maryland state history expertise – demonstrated knowledge of Maryland’s 19th and early 20th century history
 - c. Descendant/community engagement – experience conducting outreach with descendant communities and incorporating oral histories or community narratives into interpretation
- Three (3) client references, including the full name, phone number, and email address for the primary point of contact and a one-to-two sentence description of the nature of the project worked upon.
Note: Please include at least one reference in relation to project personnel’s historical and cultural expertise.

Respondents shall submit one (1) digital copy of the submittal package as an attachment to an email and are encouraged to include as much pertinent data and information within reason to ensure proper evaluation. To reduce page count, it is encouraged to include hyperlinks to project examples.

5.4 Subcontracts

Respondents must identify all portions of the work intended to be performed through subcontractors. Acceptance of the proposal does not constitute approval of the subcontractors identified therein.

5.5 Minimum Qualifications

Respondents must meet one or more of the Professional Qualification Standards—or their equivalent—as set forth by the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines. They must also demonstrate prior experience of successful exhibit planning, design and fabrication for museums, cultural institutions, and/or heritage sites.

- For purposes of this solicitation, “similar project” shall be understood to include multiple of the following elements:
 - 1) interpretive planning – ability to translate research into compelling storylines and themes that resonate with diverse audiences;
 - 2) exhibit design – including layout planning for small historic spaces, integration of text, graphics, artifacts, and digital/interactive elements;
 - 3) audience engagement and education – experience designing for school groups, family visitors, and lifelong learners with varied learning styles;
 - 4) accessibility and inclusion – knowledge of ADA standards, Universal Design and best practices for making interpretation accessible across age, ability, and background;
 - 5) historic preservation sensitivity – experience designing exhibits for historic structures where protecting historic fabric is critical;
 - 6) research and acquisition of artifacts and period furnishings and/or coordinated recreation of period furnishings; and/or
 - 7) architectural coordination – ability to thoroughly communicate exhibit needs (lighting, electrical, climate, etc.) so they align with building restoration.

5.6 Small Business Enterprise (SBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and/or Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE)

Respondents are not required to be or have subcontractors who are certified SBE, MBE, and/or WBE companies. However, use of SBE, MBE, and/or WBE companies is encouraged and may be weighted as an element of the evaluation process.

5.7 Inquiries

Every request for a written interpretation or correction must be received at least ten (10) business days prior to the RFP due date—no later than **4:30 P.M. on Wednesday, February 4, 2026**—in order to be considered. Requests may be submitted by e-mail to cpoulton@presmd.org. Interpretations, corrections and supplemental instructions will be communicated by written addenda to this solicitation to all prospective Respondents no later than **4:30 P.M. on Wednesday, February 11, 2026**.

Submission of a proposal constitutes acknowledgment of receipt of all addenda. Proposals will be construed as though all addenda had been received. Failure of the Respondent to receive any addenda does not relieve Respondents from any and all obligations under the proposal, as submitted.

5.8 Rejection of Proposal

Proposals must be delivered to the specified location (emailed as an attachment to cpoulton@presmd.org) and received by the proposal due date (**4:30 P.M. ET on Wednesday, February 18, 2026**) to be eligible for evaluation. Proposals will be considered irregular and may be rejected if they show material omissions, additions not called for, conditions, limitations, unauthorized alternate proposals or other material irregularities. Preservation Maryland may consider incomplete any proposal not prepared and submitted in accordance with the provisions specified herein and reserves the right to waive any minor deviations or irregularities in an otherwise valid proposal.

5.9 Withdrawal of Proposal

Respondents may withdraw their proposal prior to the designated due date if they submit such a written request to Preservation Maryland. Respondents may be permitted to withdraw their proposal up to 48 hours after the due date for good cause, as determined by Preservation Maryland in its sole judgment and discretion.

Combined Single Limit	\$1,000,000, - Includes Owned, Non-Owned & Hired Autos
Workers Comp	
Each Accident	\$1,000,000
Professional Liability	
Limit Per Claim	\$1,000,000
Umbrella Liability	
Each Occurrence	\$2,000,000
Aggregate	\$2,000,000

- If ACH payment preferred: Name and email address of individual to whom a secured form can be sent to obtain necessary information

Submittal of a proposal binds the successful Respondent to perform the work upon acceptance of the proposal and Preservation Maryland's execution of the project agreement. Acceptance of the successful Respondent's proposal does not create a contractual relationship between Preservation Maryland and the successful Respondent.

Preservation Maryland reserves the right to cancel award of the agreement without liability at any time before the agreement has been fully executed by all parties. Failure upon the part of the successful Respondent to execute the agreement or timely submit the required documentation will be just cause, if Preservation Maryland so elects, for award of the agreement to be rescinded.

Preservation Maryland further reserves the right to award the contract to the next available Respondent in the event the successful Respondent fails to execute the contract or the contract with said Respondent is terminated within 30 days of the effective date.

Attachment A:
Existing Documentation

Existing documentation includes but is not limited to the following. If there is any trouble accessing, please email Colleen Poulton at cpoulton@presmd.org.

1. [MIHP File \(WA-V-206\): Hornbaker Property](#)
2. [MIHP File \(WA-V-203\): Fort Frederick State Park, CCC Improvements](#)
3. [Self-Guided Walk | Fort Frederick State Park, African American History, The Williams Family](#)
4. [Walking Tour | Fort Frederick State Park, Nathan Williams, African American Heritage](#)
5. ["Hidden in Plain Sight: The Fort Frederick Colored School," Peter Morrill | Maryland Historical Trust Blog](#)
6. [DNR Exterior Restoration Plans \(2022\) for Schoolhouse](#)
*These were used in the already-executed exterior restoration project (2022).
7. [Schoolhouse Interior Elevations](#)
8. [Modern Photos: Outside/Inside the Williams Schoolhouse](#)
9. [Aerial map \(via MD Dept. of Planning GIS\) of the structure within circle indicating the MIHP record WA-V-206](#)