

APRIL 28, 2026

ISLE OF PALMS SOUTH CAROLINA BRANDING ENGAGEMENT PROPOSAL



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Cover Letter

Douglas Kerr
City Administrator
City of Isle of Palms
1207 Palm Boulevard
Post Office Box 508, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451

Dear Mr. Kerr,

Our consulting team at Ground Floor Partners is excited to submit our branding strategy proposal to the City of Isle of Palms. Our lead consultant, Geoff Potter, is an experienced marketing strategist and branding expert, with decades of experience working at global corporations and small firms, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Geoff is supported by his two senior colleagues, Andrew Clarke and Selina Gomez-Beloz, each of whom have extensive backgrounds in strategic consulting, marketing, branding, and project management — complementing Geoff's impressive experience with the extra analytical and facilitation depth that a project of this scope and importance requires. Our team is rounded out by two talented experts: graphic designer Joellen Allah-Mensah and our technical lead David Crabill.

We look forward to the opportunity to bring our expertise and enthusiasm to bear on this strategic branding initiative. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Clarke
Ground Floor Partners

Executive Summary

Ground Floor Partners is ready, willing and able to work with the city of Isle of Palms to create a comprehensive brand strategy that successfully markets and promotes this remarkable barrier island as a unique, family-friendly, beach vacation destination.

Scope of Services

We will provide multiple strategic branding concepts and allow for revisions of the chosen brand identity. The brand identity should effectively represent the Isle of Palms in any context, enhance the perception of its many attractive attributes, and ultimately market the city as a desirable family vacation destination. Upon project completion, we will provide all materials available in editable files for use in websites, publications, etc.

Our focus is to lead the development of a fully completed brand identity including message platform, creative themes and a set of destination marketing materials. Our work will include research, project management, brand creative development, strategic planning, and an implementation plan:

A) Research

Research will be the basis for the development of a brand concept, creative elements and the overall brand initiative. We will review previous background documents and strategies for the brand image and marketing campaign. In addition, we will

1. Identify key attributes of the City of Isle of Palms.
2. Analyze, refine and in some cases develop new creative elements such as taglines, slogans, and creative designs.
3. Propose metrics to determine if the (re)branding effort is successful.

B) Project Management

We will manage and lead all aspects of the project, including conducting meetings with staff, the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), and other stakeholder groups, as well as hosting at least one workshop with the Isle of Palms City Council. Andrew Clarke will act as Project Manager throughout the engagement.

C) Brand, Vision, & Message Development

We will create a comprehensive brand strategy, and develop a robust message platform and visual style guide to effectively communicate the identity of the City. The resulting toolkit will feature key messages, typography, color palette, iconography, and other essential branding elements that can and should be consistently applied across city communications including website, social media, brochures, etc.

We will work with the city to create and refine a vision statement aligning with the branding campaign. The messaging platform and visual design will allow for flexibility so that they may be used by all departments and for all programs and services.

D) Strategic brand implementation and engagement

We will guide the introduction of The City of Isle of Palm's new brand identity and identify ongoing strategies for communicating, maintaining, and enhancing the brand's value as a family-friendly beach vacation destination over the first three years following introduction.

In addition, we will:

1. Identify both short- and long-term strategies and tactics for communicating the new brand, utilizing a variety of communication platforms and tools.
2. Provide guidance for the City team on how to implement and use the new brand toolkit.
3. Assist with creating a roll-out plan including timeline for the brand launch, including community events, digital campaigns, and other promotional activities.

Out of Scope

Campaign management and marketing execution are out of scope of this project. Follow-on guidance or implementation support beyond the estimated four-month engagement time would require a subsequent contract.

Methodology

Our engagement approach is designed to be collaborative, inclusive yet efficient, respecting staff and officials' time and capacity.

Discovery and Data Collection

We will ask the Palms City Council to provide all relevant background information and data, including annual reports, financial statements, marketing materials and outcomes, etc. High-level summaries will suffice in most cases, but in certain cases we will need to explore in greater detail.

Site Visit(s)

It is vital that we gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the history, challenges, resources, stakeholders, and opportunities of Isle of Palms. To this end we plan to visit and spend several days on the island to meet with the City Council, the CVB, and other stakeholders.

Interviews

During the course of this project we expect to complete 15-20 interviews with a variety of stakeholders. Interviews will be a mix of in-person and Zoom, depending on scheduling, availability and other conditions. If and when needed, we may conduct follow-up interviews to resolve inconsistencies or learn more.

Group Meetings

We will help organize and conduct several working sessions with City Council members. These will also be a mix of in-person and Zoom, depending on scheduling, availability and other conditions.

Brand, Vision & Message Development

Once we have gathered most data, completed initial interviews and facilitated at least one group meeting, we will analyze the results and begin developing preliminary branding materials and concepts.

Prepare Draft Reports and Solicit Comments

First, we will prepare brief, draft reports featuring our findings and recommendations. We will present our initial findings and recommendations to the Isle of Palms City Council, in order to solicit comments and gather feedback.

Finalize Reports and Branding Materials

We will then refine the reports, finalize the brand toolkit materials and submit final versions.

Deliverables

At a minimum, our deliverables will include:

- a) An executive summary report with findings.
- b) Editable files, templates and detailed specifications for appropriate logo usage (such as placement, margins, font type, size, color, etc.) for common needs, such as signage, brochures, webpage layout, PowerPoint presentations, social media, report covers, letterheads, business cards, email signatures, etc.
- c) Branding guidelines to ensure consistency in all communications and promotional efforts. As described in the RFP, inconsistent usage of the logo, messaging and other branding elements has weakened the Isle of Palms brand over the past few years, so this will be a major focus of our guidelines and implementation plan.

Project Fee and Timeline

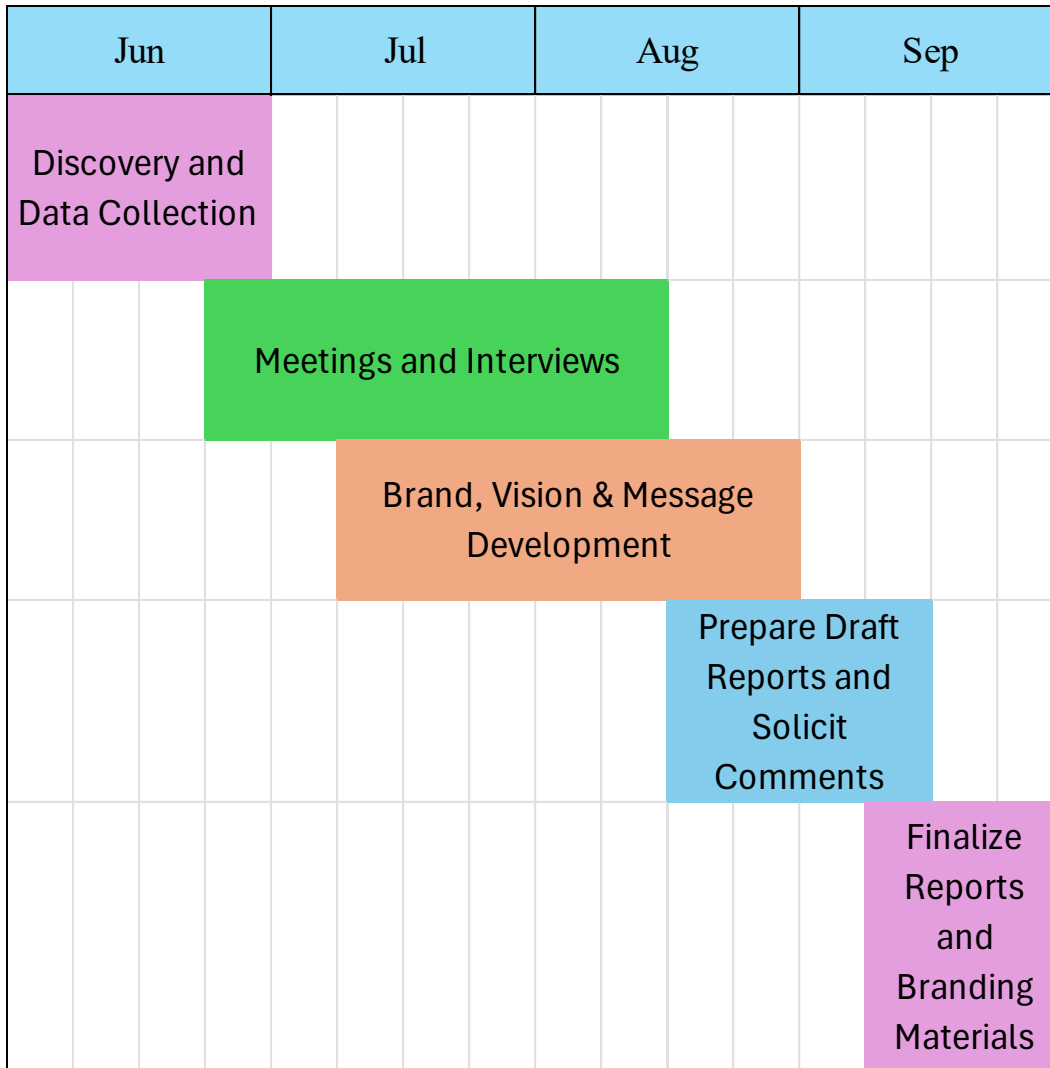
The estimated breakdown of billable hours and costs is shown in the following table.

	Estimated Billable Hours	Estimated Cost
Discovery and Data Collection	60	\$ 7,500
Meetings and Interviews	50	\$8,000
Brand, Vision and Message Development	130	\$12,500
Prepare Draft Reports and Solicit Comments	50	\$6,500
Finalize Reports and Branding Materials	40	\$ 5,000
Total	330	\$39,500

Our fee of **\$39,500** (not-to-exceed, provided there are no major scope changes) covers all anticipated expenses including research reports, travel, food and lodging, conference calls, toolkit development, printing and mailing expenses, and administrative support.

We will invoice the City of Isle of Palms for progress payments as the project unfolds. All invoices are payable upon receipt; invoices may be paid by credit card or check.

We expect to complete our work for this project within approximately **4 months**. Our anticipated project timeline, assuming a start date in early June, is illustrated here:



Consultant Qualifications and Experience

We value the opportunity to support the City of Isle of Palms in this branding engagement.

Ground Floor Partners, a privately held corporation founded in Chicago in 2003, serves government agencies, nonprofit organizations and privately held businesses across the United States. Our team of three senior consultants has over 90 years of experience in strategy, market research, marketing, operations, fundraising and other areas.

Geoff Potter has led brand identity and strategic communications campaigns for clients and employers including AT&T, Boeing, Health Care Service Corporation, Johnson & Johnson, Leo Burnett USA and the Illinois Department of Central Management Services.

As President and founder of Ground Floor Partners, **Andrew Clarke** has worked with private businesses, universities, associations, counties, municipalities and nonprofits and has advised hundreds of organizations on strategy, marketing, operations, financing and other issues.

Known for her expertise in nonprofit governance, organizational strategy, and strategic planning, and success in working with government agencies, **Selina Gomez-Beloz** provides executive leadership coaching and consulting services tailored to nonprofits and small businesses.

Geoff Potter, Lead Consultant

An expert brand communicator, Geoff has collaborated with executives, entrepreneurs and government officials throughout his career to engage, inform, and stir stakeholders to action. He has guided thought-leadership initiatives and brand identity campaigns for enterprises ranging from global firms such as Ameritech (now AT&T), Boeing, Health Care Service Corporation (Blue Cross Blue Shield Association), Johnson & Johnson, Lumen Technologies and Takeda to government agencies like the Illinois Department of Central Management Services to professional services firms including Jenner & Block LLP, recently named Law Firm of the Year by *American Lawyer*, and Leo Burnett USA, where he was Vice President of Corporate Affairs,

Geoff has more than three decades of experience leading brand identity initiatives. Among the highlights, he:

- Was voted Brand Voice Champion at Ameritech (now AT&T) and earned a Corporate Communications award for leading the strategic development, creation, design and production of the well-received company history brochure, 'A Tradition of Innovation';
- Crafted a Brand Identity Toolkit featuring key message platform and logo treatment guidelines for communicators across Johnson & Johnson's global supply chain organization;
- Refreshed Equis Corporation's brand identity and led the creation of all strategic communications materials, including devising an integrated marketing campaign featuring updated website, integrated services brochure and broker outreach that together raised annual revenues by 16%.

When Geoff was hired to take charge of thought leadership for Leo Burnett USA, one of the biggest challenges he faced was to establish a brand presence for the Chicago-based ad agency at the first-ever Advertising Week in New York City. Working closely with the firm's archivist, he wrote all the copy and orchestrated the team effort to create the 2004 "Legendary Agency, Legendary Brands" exhibit at the Museum of Television & Radio (now the Paley Center for Media). The visually dynamic exhibit not only met the rigorous standards of the Museum, agency leaders and clients, it produced a powerful statement for Burnett on Madison Avenue and drew thousands of reporters, industry analysts and consumers over its extended, 7-week run.

His state government service is highly relevant to the Isle of Palms project. In 2006, Geoff led the creation of a new umbrella entity for the Department of Central Management Services (CMS), to help Illinois agencies purchase over \$10 billion of products and services annually. The innovative “Sell2Illinois” initiative integrated both the Small Business Set-Aside and Business Enterprise programs into a single, streamlined procurement process to enable small and diverse suppliers to better compete for state contracts. As Deputy Director of Strategic Communications, Geoff created an innovative campaign featuring a streamlined application process and website, statewide news coverage, and a roadshow to business and community groups. A huge success, the initiative doubled the number of registered suppliers and the value of contracts won by small/minority firms leapt by 306 percent. Today, 20 years and three governors later, [Sell2Illinois](#) is still going strong.

At Boeing, Geoff supported virtually every corner of Human Resources including corporate citizenship, leadership development, manager support, performance management and employee training. As a Board Member of the Boeing Employees Community Fund for 10 years, he helped award grants to area nonprofits totaling more than \$1.0 million.

In 2023-24 Geoff led fund-raising strategy, event planning and communications that enabled a citizen’s group to open the Wild Onion Market, a co-op grocery store in Chicago.

Geoff earned a bachelor’s degree in English at the University of Chicago (with honors) and earned a master’s degree at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism. He also studied improvisational comedy at Second City, where he met his future wife.

Andrew Clarke, Senior Consultant and Project Manager

As President and founder of Ground Floor Partners, Andrew has advised hundreds of organizations on business strategy, marketing, operations, financing and other issues. He has worked in a wide variety of industry verticals, including restaurants, food production, retail and distribution, education, medical devices, healthcare, technology, manufacturing, residential and commercial real estate, construction, and finance. He has also worked with universities, associations, counties, municipalities and nonprofits.

Andrew worked with President Kelly Feiler of Selinsgrove Recreational Center on a feasibility study which helped her secure a \$2 million grant from the state of Pennsylvania.

He also conducted an intensive organizational assessment of Home of the Sparrow, a 40-year-old nonprofit organization in northern Illinois that provides transitional housing and counseling services to homeless women and children. The nonprofit has six departments and seven program areas operating under one Executive Director and Board of Directors.

Before starting Ground Floor Partners, he led technology planning and operations at Equis, a privately held commercial real estate firm with over 30 offices worldwide. While there he worked closely with the CEO on a business plan for a new online brokerage service.

Over the past 20 years, Andrew has served on multiple advisory and governance boards in the Chicagoland area. In the summer of 2024 Andrew became a certified mentor/volunteer

with SCORE—a national mentoring organization operating under the umbrella of the United States Small Business Administration. During his tenure at SCORE he has advised, guided and counseled more than 60 small business and nonprofit clients.

Andrew also has extensive experience as an entrepreneur. In 1997, he founded an online real estate listing and advertising service — for which he managed all aspects of the business including strategy, operations, marketing, sales, and web site development.

From 1995 to 1998, Andrew worked as Vice President of Analytics and then Vice President of Product Development at Hedge Financial Products, a privately held boutique derivatives firm in Chicago. He led the risk management and quantitative analysis efforts for the Chicago office, designed several complex proprietary crop reinsurance risk models, and supervised a team in all aspects of model development from inception to completion.

Andrew holds advanced degrees in engineering and science from the University of Rochester, the University of California at San Diego, and the University of Wisconsin.

Selina Gomez-Beloz, Senior Consultant

Selina brings nearly 30 years of public and nonprofit service throughout the US and provides executive leadership coaching and consulting services tailored to nonprofits and small businesses. Known for her expertise in nonprofit governance, organizational strategy, and strategic planning, and success with local governments, she serves as a trusted advisor for nonprofit leaders. Her recent work includes volunteer consulting roles with the Executive Service Corps as a coach and consultant, serving on the Lake County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, co-Chair of the Hispanic Chamber of Lake County, and as an advisor with the local Small Business Development Center.

Previously, Selina held a significant government role as Senior Program Manager at the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), overseeing the American Rescue Plan grants for 131 libraries nationwide. Her leadership experience includes serving as Executive Director of Waukegan Public Library, where she led a team of 70, managed a \$4.4M budget, and spearheaded successful grant-funded initiatives for the 2020 Census. Selina's extensive time in leading libraries was focused on community literacy, policy improvement, and team development, intergovernmental and community partnerships. Selina has served very small rural communities to large urban cities and is well acquainted with the challenges they face. Her experience also includes consulting with the state of Delaware to complete a key job classification study and the City of Waukegan's 360 evaluation process and analysis.

Selina has a Master's in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, and a Master's in Nonprofit Management from DePaul University.

With her husband, she created and managed All Together Farming to grow nutritious and culturally meaningful food in rural communities where fresh produce was not the primary crop in the surrounding area and grocery prices were higher. They grew food in partnership with private farms and properties to donate to local food banks (over 500 pounds the first

year), working with local school to provide education and experience to elementary school children and Scout troops and develop a community gardening space in their community.

Selina's work with diverse teams includes crafting and implementing comprehensive policies and procedures aligning with organizational goals, creating and delivering effective community programming, guiding emerging and young nonprofits, providing board governance and development training, and ensuring consistency and clarity in nonprofit operations.

Joellen Allah-Mensah, Graphic Designer

Joellen is an extremely talented graphic designer with a Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design and Computer Science. She has worked in hospitality, state and federal government agencies, publishing, and academia. She has designed multi-channel visual content including slide decks, annual reports (PDF and web), conference programs, one-pager infographic shareables, registration materials, and water-themed logos. She is equally skilled at digital and print design, and has significant experience with Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Figma, Canva, Branding, Logo Design, Layout Design, Print & Infographic Design, Social Media Graphics, Motion Graphics, UX/UI Design, Visual Communication.

(Sample work available upon request)

Dave Crabill, Website Design & Technical Support Specialist

David Crabill is the Founder and Managing Director of Green Line Web, a premier website development agency based in Chicago. Clients include Fortune 500 firms General Electric, Procter & Gamble, and McDonald's. Green Line Web has delivered more than 400 premium websites for businesses in a wide range of verticals, as well as multiple non-profits and municipalities.

David earned a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Management with a specialization in Marketing, and has earned many certifications in website development, search engine optimization and digital marketing.

As an Expert-Vetted and Top-Rated consultant on Upwork, David has served as the lead consultant on many enterprise website projects and has earned over 50 5-star reviews.

(Sample work available upon request)

References

CONFIDENTIAL

All references (except Leasha Johnson in Mingo County) should be treated as confidential

Geoff Potter:

Paul Campbell, Director at Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern
847-308-4586 | Paul.campbell@kellogg.northwestern.edu *and*
Maureen O'Donnell, Interim HR Vice President, Erie Family Health Centers
Mr. Campbell was Director of CMS and Ms. O'Donnell later served as Acting
Director when I was Deputy Director of Strategic Communications.

Ms. Ilana Pergam, Director of Academic Program at The Chapin School
pergam@chapin.edu
Ms. Pergam served as Archivist of Leo Burnett USA when I led the creation of the
Burnett exhibit at the Museum of Television & Radio.

Mr. Derrell Carter, Chief of Staff, Illinois Central College
derrellcarter@outlook.com
Mr. Carter served as my supervisor in Employee Communications at The Boeing
Company.

Additional references available upon request.

Selina Gomez-Beloz:

Cyndee Landrum, PhD, Allen Smith Visiting Scholar/Associate Professor
Cynthia.Landrum@simmoms.edu / 602-350-0425 (cell)
Ms. Landrum and I have worked closely, most recently at a federal agency, IMLS,
where she was my Deputy Director. She can speak to my experience managing large
projects and my record of streamlining processes for the ARPA grant program.

Darryl E. Allen, MPM, PSM-I, PMI-RMP
Partner & Chief Education Officer, Mentorship Institute - Chicagoland
Collaborating w/: "C.A.R.E.S. Learning Partnership (CA)"
darryl@careslp.org / 708-571-6059
I collaborated with Dr. Allen, Project Manager for the IMLS ARPA grant program, on
process improvement, data management, and federal grant training.

Andrew Clarke:

Matt KostECKI | Executive Director of Home of the Sparrow
815-575-0700 | mkostECKI@hosparrow.org
This was an organizational assessment and restructuring project.

Leasha Johnson | (Former) Executive Director of Mingo County Redevelopment Authority
304-235-0042 | Ljohnson.mcra@suddenlinkmail.com
linkedin.com/in/leasha-johnson-9a77b971

This complex feasibility study is one of few Ground Floor Partners projects whose final report is not covered by an NDA. A copy of the report is available upon request.

Conclusion

Our team of consultants looks forward to applying their creativity, branding experience, and project management skills to create a comprehensive brand strategy that markets the City as a family-friendly, beach vacation destination like no other.

Thank you in advance for considering our proposal. We look forward to your response.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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