



Visit Elizabeth City Takes a Proactive Approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Tourism Development Authority hires nationally-known DEI consultant, Melissa Majors

Elizabeth City, NC (August 26, 2021) – [Visit Elizabeth City](#), the Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority, has a mission to promote overnight visitation that drives economic impact through destination marketing and enhancement of the visitor experience in Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County. According to Elizabeth City [Visitor Profile research](#) from 2020, 63% of past visitors to the area stated that friends and family are the number one reason for visiting Elizabeth City and that these friends and family members are the most important source of information when planning a trip.

With 36.6% of Pasquotank County residents and 50.5% of Elizabeth City residents identifying as Black or African American according to the [2020 Census](#), it's vital to the success of tourism in the area that this significant demographic feels welcome and heard in their own community so they in turn will feel comfortable inviting their friends and family to visit.

“It is crucial to the advancement of our community that we proactively listen, learn and adapt to the feelings and needs of the residents of the community, and by extension, prospective visitors.” said Visit Elizabeth City Executive Director, Corrina Ruffieux.

Effective August 2021, Visit Elizabeth City has officially begun working with [Melissa Majors Consulting](#) to interview stakeholders, conduct surveys, study best practices and put into action a prioritized plan to facilitate strategic planning discussions that result in innovative solutions in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) space. Melissa and her team specialize in ensuring all voices are heard and considered through collaborative community listening and have partnered with organizations and destinations such as Visit Loudoun, Destinations International, UNICEF, Orthofix, Solver, and many more.

“Although the Elizabeth City community is rumbling with conflicting viewpoints, trauma, and an ambiguous path forward, these challenges are not insurmountable,” said Majors. “The ultimate goal is to uncover the collective voice of all the Elizabeth City stakeholders and use that insight to inform an unbiased, supported, and realistic action plan. I don’t pretend to have clean and easy solutions to these challenges. I do know this; together, there isn’t a problem we can’t solve.”

This consulting contract will help us develop a 3-5 year action plan to help guide the community through a period of enlightenment and diversity that has not been fully-explored in the past. Visit Elizabeth City’s goal through this long-term project is to create a more inclusive destination for both locals and visitors to experience in a positive light.



The findings of this important and exciting will further help facilitate communication and change within the community and by extension, tourism throughout Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County for years to come.

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