



Request for Qualifications

Memorial for the Legacy of 87 Adams in Downtown Memphis, TN

May 2024

Mission: To uncover the story of enslaved people who were bought and sold in the shadows of historic churches in Downtown Memphis. To seek healing by honoring the thousands of lives traded at 87 Adams. To reckon with the legacy of slavery, asking how it shapes our community today and how such a reckoning can guide us to a more just society.

Introduction

The Legacy of 87 Adams Committee will work with professionals to design a memorial to the estimated 3,800 lives sold at 87 Adams St, adjacent to Calvary Episcopal Church in the heart of Downtown Memphis. We seek a permanent memorial design that creates a space for truth-telling, learning, reflection, and healing. We invite applications from teams of designers, artists, landscape architects, and consultants experienced in memorial design, development, and community engagement to complete this task. With a grant from Monument Lab, we are funding a concept and schematic design process to begin making this monument a reality.

The Legacy of 87 Adams Committee was created in 2022 by Calvary Episcopal Church. Located at the corner of Second and Adams, Calvary was built in 1842. It is the oldest public building in continuous use in Memphis. The church has a strong presence in Memphis due to its history, programming, and unique urban location. The lot formerly designated 87 Adams, now Calvary property, and near the present site of Calvary's altar, was the location of slave trader Nathan Bedford Forrest's "Slave Mart" from 1855 - 1862.

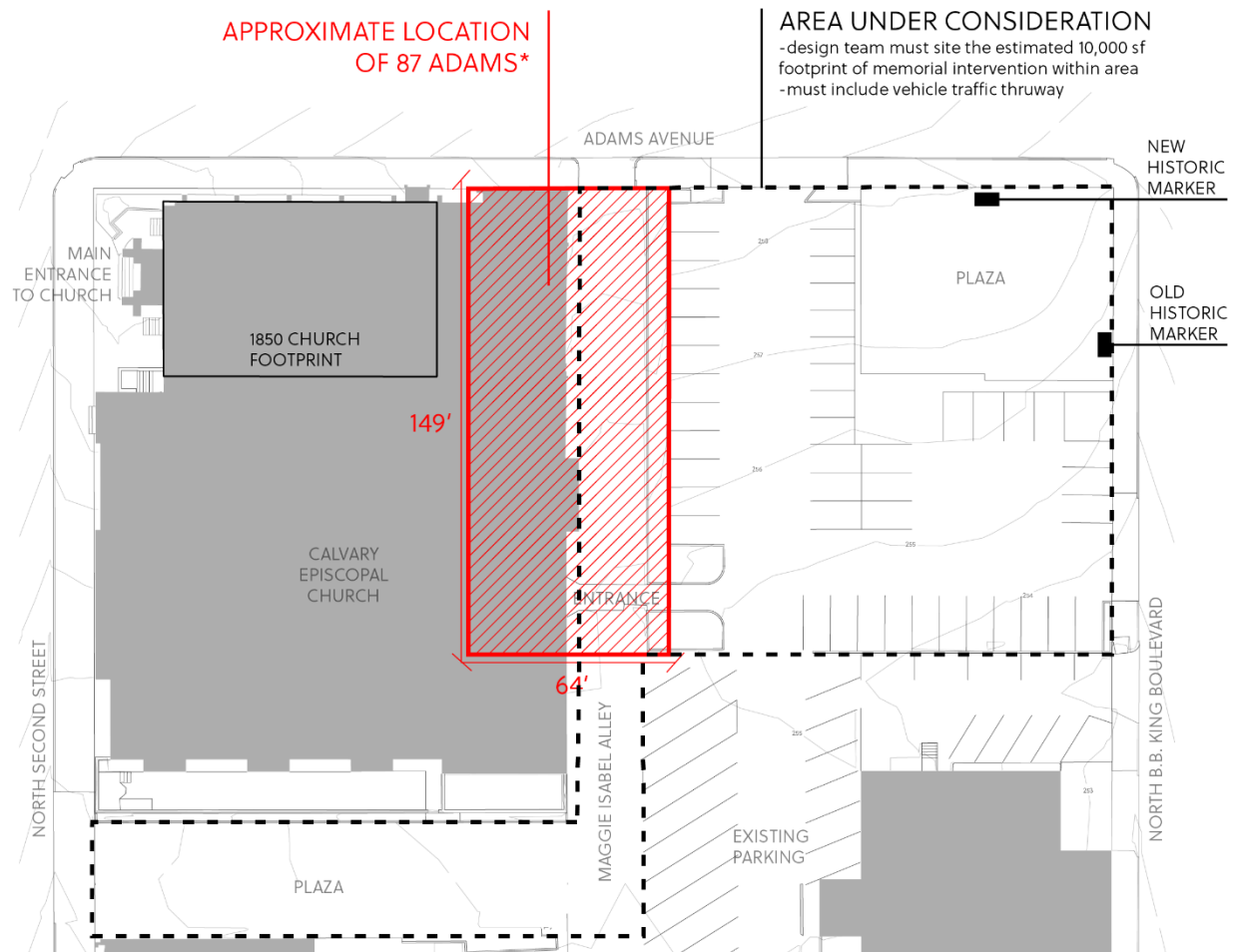
Project Overview

This initiative will illuminate the long-hidden activities that occurred on 87 Adams Avenue during the height of Memphis' role in trading enslaved laborers. This property is directly across the street from the Shelby County Courthouse and near the present site of Calvary's current altar which was an 1880 addition—a startling juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane. Now part of an alley and paved over for church and courthouse parking, this haunting legacy of 87 Adams has not been fully revealed. The Memorial and an accompanying archive will shine a light on the lives of the people sold here and on the people who bought them. Our coalition of local faith leaders, racial justice advocates, scholars of African American and Reconstruction history, and lifelong church members is deeply committed to confronting the past of this place. We seek to surface the site's long-repressed history, to tell the truth about the systemic injustices perpetrated in this sacred space, to create a space for collective remembrance, and to lay the groundwork for City-wide reconciliation and healing.

Our efforts began eight years ago when the Lynching Sites Project of Memphis spotlighted a misleading 1955 Tennessee Historical Commission marker at Forrest's home at 85 Adams. The marker noted that Forrest's "business enterprises made him wealthy," failing to clarify that this enterprise was enslavement and human trafficking. Local Civil War history professor and Calvary member Dr. Tim Huebner engaged his Rhodes College students in researching the names and stories of enslaved people who were sold here. Their research estimates that about 3,800 people were sold at this market. This scholarship expanded the understanding of our city as a regional hub for the trade of enslaved laborers, with this market and multiple others operating along Adams Avenue. In 2018, a coalition of church members, local scholars, and community partners, including representatives from the Lynching Sites Project of Memphis, collaborated to hold a memorial service to remember the lives of those sold and to erect a new marker at this site unearthing this history.

Our Committee envisions a lasting Memorial that will reveal the full story, convey the accurate history, and offer a space of reflection, learning, and dialogue. In Fall 2023, we were awarded one of Monument Lab's ten "Re-Generation" grants that support community-driven public art and history projects across the country to continue this work. We estimate that the final project budget will be approximately \$1,200,000.00.

Site Description



The approximate site for the memorial abuts the east (rear) wall of Calvary Church and extends to the northeast corner of the block, where there is currently a plaza. The existing site includes church parking and an alley that was recently deeded to the church by the city and will be closed off to N/S traffic. The exact footprints of the 64' x 149' market of enslaved people is unknown, but the market existed along the Northern Boundary of the block between the eastern wall of the 1850 church footprints and the Eastern Boundary of the block. We have included the dimensions of Forrest's first property with the area under consideration where we plan to have the memorial spanning this northeastern block. We expect the memorial to have similar dimensions to the historic footprint, though we are not limiting its location within the Church parking lot. We plan on working with the design team to determine the exact location and how it meshes with the existing conditions. See attachments for more context.

Scope of Work

We seek a team of artists, landscape architects, planners, designers – however you define your practice - to work with us for a period of concept design and schematic design with the possibility of continuing through construction pending future fundraising.

We are asking for a permanent memorial design that creates a space for truth-telling, learning, reflection, and healing. A variety of durable materials and styles will be considered, keeping in mind ongoing maintenance needs of the site and long-term usage. We are open to a variety of designs so long as they are responsive to the needs of the community.

The Scope of Work for this phase will include:

1. Community Engagement
 - Work with the Legacy of 87 Adams Committee to engage with community partners to facilitate virtual and in-person conversations, events, gatherings, interviews, focus groups, and other engagement as needed with congregation, community members, and other stakeholders.
 - Incorporate visions from the community-engagement process into design deliverables. Build on existing work of the steering committee to identify further memorial goals gleaned from stakeholders.
2. Design Concept
 - Produce presentation for steering committee and other stakeholders of options for the design concept and narrative of the site. Share design and receive feedback from our coalition of community partners, historians, and church members during the presentation and throughout design process.
3. Schematic Design
 - Work with the community to produce a public-facing schematic design presentation, 3-4 renderings, and a schematic design plan.

Deliverables will include:

1. Community engagement assessment of what community partners, future visitors, faith partners, and other Memphians want most out of this space, considering the visions of Calvary Church members and the broader Memphis community.
2. Completed Concept Design with community-facing presentation, narrative, concept plan, and other accompanying graphics.
3. Schematic Design with public-facing design presentation, schematic design plan, cost estimate, and other accompanying graphics.
4. At least three renderings, including 1 bird's eye perspective view of the site.

Team Selection Criteria

The selection process will prioritize:

- Diverse makeup of design team, particularly visions from artists of color.
- Inclusive and justice-based team practices.

- Preference for teams with members who are Midsouth-based, affiliated or otherwise have roots in the area.
- Experience in inclusive, community-engaged design practices.
- Previous experience in community-based work that is responsive to the needs of the community.

Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by the Legacy of 87 Adams Committee members. Teams will be contacted in late June to early July if they are selected for an interview. After interviewing, if multiple teams RFQ's align with the project vision, semifinalists will be invited to present a conceptual prototype. Semi-finalists will be reimbursed \$2,000 for their design idea.

Due Date

Qualifications must be received no later than June 28, 2024. Proposals received after this date will not be considered.

Schedule

EVENT	TIMING
Request for qualifications	Due by 6/28
Interviews	Mid July
Committee selects Design Team	End of July

Submission Requirements

Please email us at 87adams@calvarymemphis.org with the following attachments as 1 PDF under 15MB:

1. Letter of Interest (max 1,000 words). Please answer the following questions:
 - a. What interests you and/or your team about this project?
 - b. How is your team particularly qualified for this project?
 - c. Describe team's experience leading and/or working with large-scale community engagement and public art programs.
 - d. Describe team's approach to developing a community engagement strategy for this project.
2. Team Bios:
 - a. Provide a biography and mission statements of organizations.
 - b. Please include a roster of all team members, their affiliations, and their unique roles for this project.
3. Work Samples:
 - a. Provide one to ten (1-10) images of completed projects by the team or the team's principals, with an emphasis on public art, memorialization, and community-based projects.

Include the title, year completed, location (if site-specific), timeline, and client or commissioning entity for each image. Describe the context of each image and the community engagement approach used.

Where applicable, include media, dimensions, project budget, and stakeholders or partners.

b. Additional support materials in the form of web site links or other documentation may be submitted as well but are not required.

4. References:

a. Please provide two professional references from organizations or companies for which a team principal has led community engagement and public art and infrastructure programs. Include reference's name, company or organizational affiliation, title and contact information.

b. Provide a description of the project and the consulting services you provided for both references given.

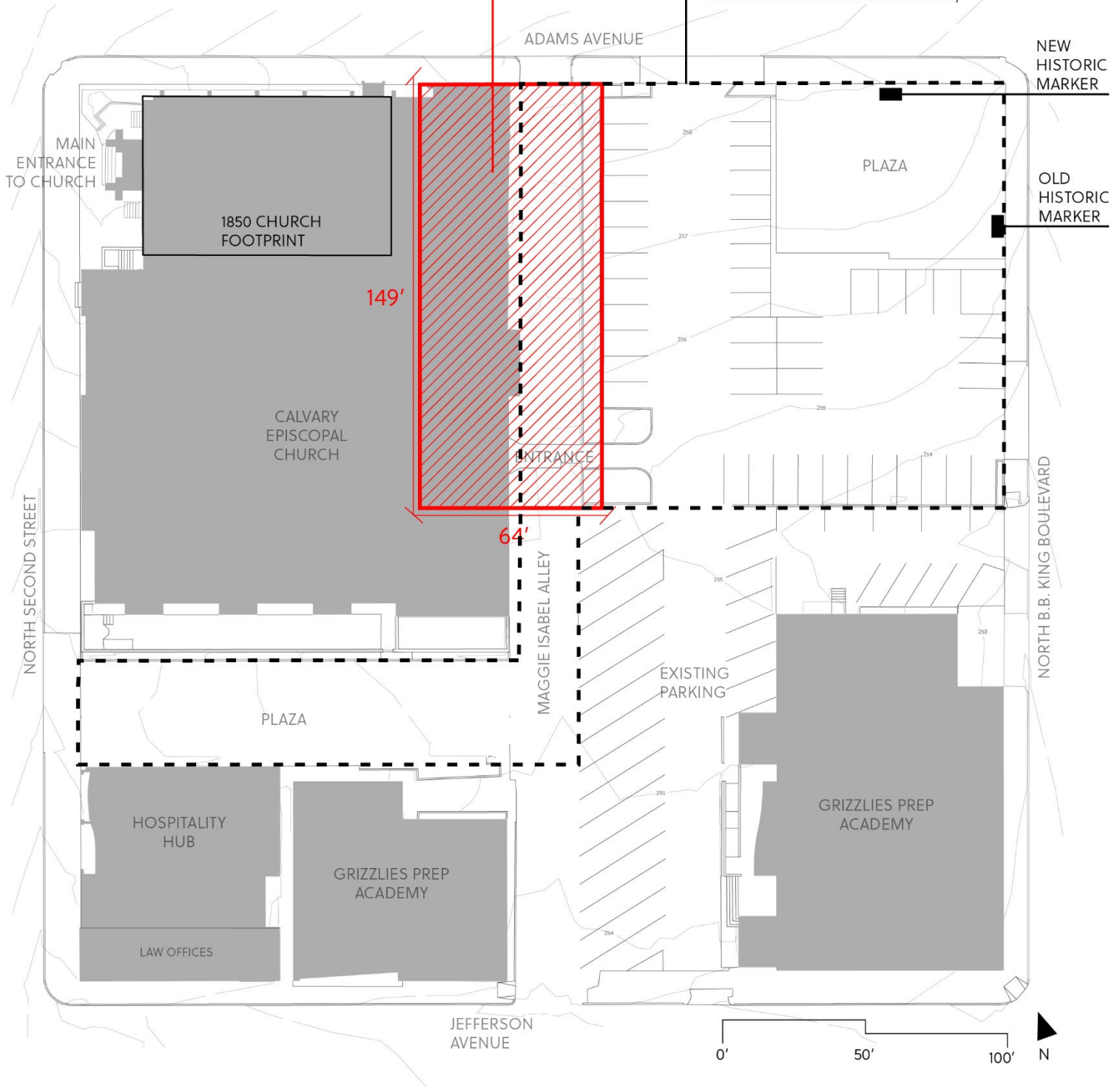
Questions?

Contact: 87adams@calvarymemphis.org

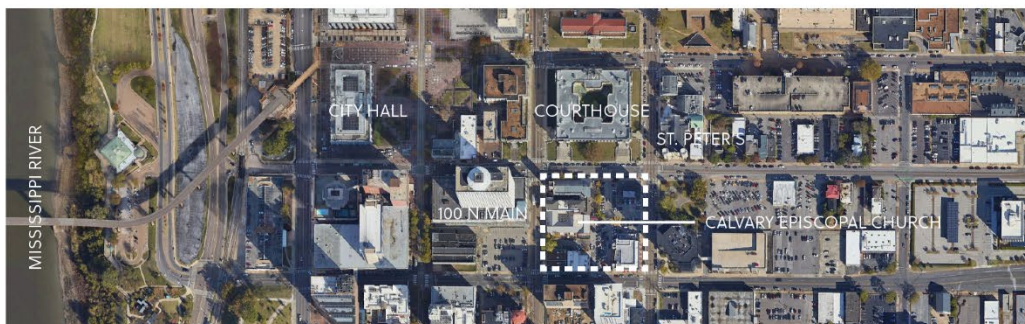
APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF 87 ADAMS*

AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

- design team must site the estimated 10,000 sf footprint of memorial intervention within area
- must include vehicle traffic thruway



CONTEXT



*Exact site of 87 Adams is unknown based on historic land use maps, but it is within the boundaries of the approximate memorial area, on the Northern boundary of the block, adjacent to the church.

AREA UNDER CONSIDERATION

- design team must site the estimated 10,000 sf footprint of memorial intervention within area
- must include vehicle traffic thruway

