

# **ATLANTIC AVENUE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL**

**Submitted by: The Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA)**

**To: Honorable Mayor, Members of City Council, and  
City Manager**

**Purpose: Response to the Findings of the Atlantic  
Avenue Task Force**

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Atlantic Avenue Association respectfully submits this proposal as an alternative framework for implementation of the Atlantic Avenue Infrastructure Improvements. This response is provided in direct alignment with City Council's unanimously adopted **Atlantic Avenue Infrastructure Improvements Resolution**, and calls for:

1. Enhanced cultural, artistic, and place-making identity
2. More parking
3. Improved parking convenience
4. Infrastructure and public space investments that materially improve economic vitality
5. ROI on \$35M investment

While the Task Force's work is appreciated and many aspects of their findings are very positive, its recommended approach **does not fully address Council's stated intent**, provides **insufficient parking supply**, limits activation impact, and suggests an activation zone with street bump-outs that is largely experimental and could actually be detrimental or competitive to nearby businesses.

AAA proposes a **balanced, practical, cost-effective, revenue-positive, and corridor-wide approach within budget** that restores access, strengthens activation, increases confidence, supports commerce, and generates measurable return on investment.





**AAA and the Task Force: Considering two proposals is better than just one.**

## II. PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

Atlantic Avenue is a 2.5-mile, mixed-use coastal corridor serving visitors, residents, small businesses, and cultural institutions. The street suffers from:

- A **900-space parking deficit** following the Atlantic Park redevelopment
- Declining retail tenancy and seasonal business
- Fragmented place-making and underperforming public realm
- Perceptions of inconvenience and access difficulty

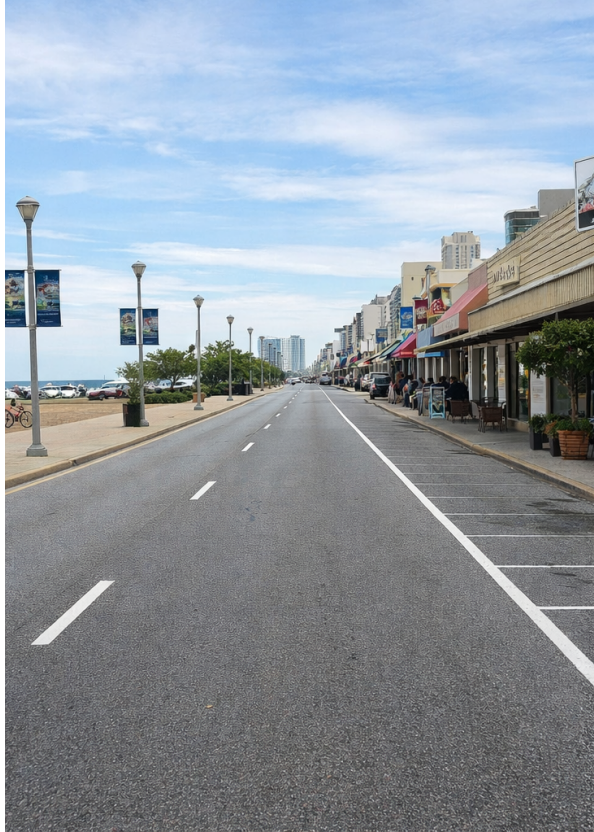
City Council has allocated **\$35 million** to address these challenges. The **Task Force's recommendations are to:**

- Add **70–75 parking spaces (w/meters in season)**
- **Expand AAFIG Grant Program**
- **Installment of full-mill overlay, new sidewalks, crosswalks**
- **Installment of way-finding, lighting and local art/place-making**

### **Deficiencies:**

- Provides no Atlantic Avenue on-street parking north of 16th Street
- Establishes a 7-block activation zone (17<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> St) that is admittedly experimental and does not reflect the corridor's economic, operational, economic realities and cultural needs
- Establishes micro-commerce bump outs that are not practical

AAA's proposal addresses these deficiencies and puts Council's Resolution into action.



**On-street parking matters! Check out Tautog's in the photo above!**

**III. SCOPE OF WORK (Proposed Solution)** – a three part, corridor-wide implementation strategy:

**1. Parking & Access Enhancement**

**Reaffirms Year-Round On-Street Parking South of 17th Street (not 16<sup>th</sup> St per Task Force recommendations) and adds Year-Round On-Street Parking North of 23rd Street**

- In-season metered parking
- Off-season non-metered parking corridor-wide (except for the 2100 block)
- Supports businesses and short-distance visitation
- Aligns with existing traffic patterns and pedestrian volume
- Adds ~**125–130** new in-season metered spaces
- Produces ~**200 total spaces** corridor-wide
- Restores ~20% of the parking lost with Atlantic Park
- Creates the critical mass needed for retail viability
- **Public Safety Compatibility:** Emergency response remains protected via **Pacific & Arctic Avenues** as primary north-south corridors with east-west access maintained; curbside parking and safe emergency access routinely coexist in destination corridors.

**Outcome:** Nearly tripling the Task Force’s proposed parking supply, significantly improving convenience and economic output.



## Scope of Work: Parking & Access Enhancement

- Year-Round On-Street Parking
- In-Season Meters
- Generate Meter Revenue



**Meter revenue supports ongoing enhancement and beautification of Atlantic Avenue.**

## **2. Activation Zone (17th to 23rd Street): Establish a Smaller 6 Block “Art & Activation Zone” without Curb Bump Outs**

- Consistent with Task Force’s and Council’s intent to activate the area
- Anchored by the ViBe District and 23rd Street Live! On Atlantic programming
- Walkable, dense, culturally expressive
- Focused enough to provide return on investment
- Off-season free parking Oct1- April 1 (excludes 2100 block)
- The experimental nature of proposed street parklets and micro-commerce curb bump-outs gives the Atlantic Avenue Association Board significant pause, particularly where the City already provides clear, proven activation opportunities through existing Café Guidelines.

**\*New alternative: Allow merchants to obtain a permit, where appropriate, and only if said merchants abide by all codes and ordinances, to utilize limited sidewalk space adjacent to their business for merchandise display. This offers a policy-aligned alternative that addresses current and long standing issues with code enforcement and compliance.**

### **Place-making Components, many included in the Task Force’s recommendations:**

- Sculptural lighting
- Public art installations (“CHAT”: Culture–History–Art–Talent)
- Way-finding, such as directing bicyclists to the Boardwalk bike path
- Small-scale stages
- Weekend programmed activations
- Flowering planters, enhanced paving, and other aspects recommended by the Task Force

### **Outcome:**

A right-sized, accessible, consistently activated district that fulfills Council’s commitment to cultural representation and place-making excellence that is more economical to maintain and easier to manage.



**Consider allowing merchants to display merchandise adjacent to their business, but only if they abide by all codes and ordinances. Yes, we know that little café needs a railing!**

### **3. Off-Season Access Strategy**

#### **Corridor-Wide, Off-Season Free 3 Hour Parking along Atlantic Avenue:**

- Extends operating months for local businesses
- Stabilizes seasonal tenancy
- Improves community access and repeat visitation
- Reinforces Atlantic Avenue as a year-round local destination

#### **Outcome:**

Improved economic health, stronger investor confidence, and expanded year-round use.





**It's Ok to dream! Convenient, off-season parking access brings the holidays to the street. Consider a holiday marketplace and lights along Central Atlantic Avenue between 17th-23<sup>rd</sup> St with on-street parking north and south. Sometimes dreams do come true!**

# IV. ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Estimates based on established coastal and destination retail economics:

Metric	Value
Revenue per high-performing parking space (yearly)	\$30,000–\$40,000
Meter revenue per space per season	~ \$3000-\$5000
Proposed new parking spaces	~ 200
In-season economic impact	~ \$6-8 million annually
Annual meter revenue	~ \$600,000 - \$1M
Capital cost	Minimal relative to infrastructure budget
Maintenance cost	Low

**Activation Zone Sustainability:**  
**Smaller, properly supported zones generate higher attendance, stronger place-making identity, improved PR opportunities, and are less expensive to develop, maintain, and manage.**



**This proposal delivers ongoing ROI for the community on a \$35M public investment.**

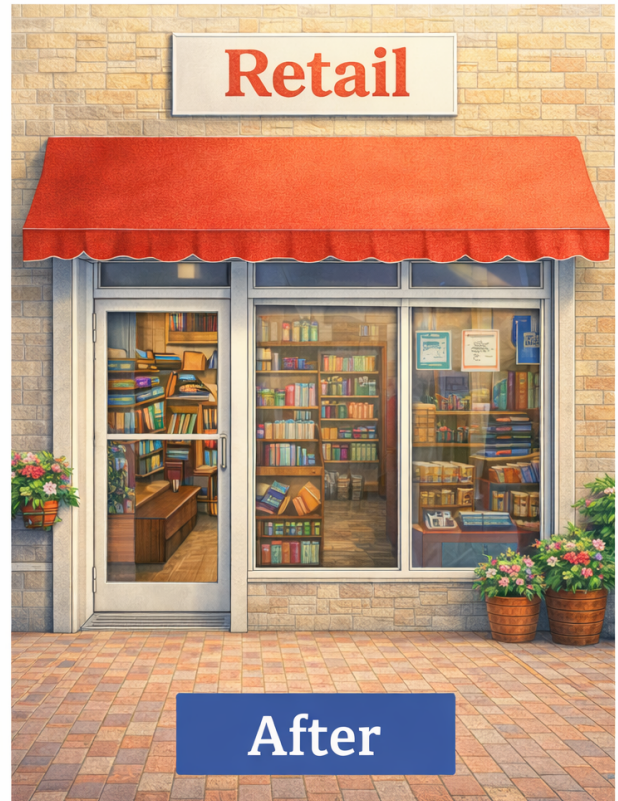
## V. ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL'S DIRECTIVES

AAA's proposal directly satisfies Council's Resolution for Atlantic Avenue Infrastructure Improvements: **"implement a customer-friendly parking plan,"** and **"develop a Revitalization Program for Atlantic Avenue infrastructure improvements that reflect the art, history and culture of Virginia Beach."**

Council Directive	Task Force Result	AAA Proposal
More parking	+70–75 spaces	~200 spaces
Improved convenience	No northern parking	Full-corridor access
Cultural reflection	Limited clarity	"CHAT" Zone (17th–23rd)
Return on investment	Uncertain	Revenue-positive (\$6-8M+ economic lift)
Activation strength	7 blocks w bump-outs	6 stronger, more manageable blocks

**AAA's proposal delivers on Council's stated objectives, AND it addresses long-standing and continuing code issues by existing retail.**





**Move the needle to improve retail by increasing FIG grants and incentivizing code compliance.**

## **VI. PROJECT BENEFITS**

- Restores community and business confidence
- Addresses long standing code enforcement issues
- Attracts higher-quality retail and investment
- Strengthens year-round economic performance
- Is almost immediately actionable (6 months-2 years)
- Is revenue-positive for the local economy
- Increases ongoing parking meter revenue for self-sustaining beautification for the district
- Increases access, which drives seasonal commerce and stabilizes year-round tenancy
- Lowers operating risk than bump-outs with unclear outcomes
- Supports the Art and Activation Zone (CHAT)
- Supports numerous community events and festivals
- Enhances walkability and place-making
- Reinforces cultural identity/Virginia Beach's uniqueness
- Delivers measurable outcomes quickly
- Delivers on the Council's Resolution for Atlantic Avenue Infrastructure Improvements

**All big wins for Virginia Beach!**

**TOUCHDOWN!**

**\$35M PUBLIC INVESTMENT** →  
**ONGOING, MEASURABLE RETURNS**

Up to ~**\$1.0M/season**  
in parking meter revenue

 **Improved access  
drives private  
investment**

 **Better guest  
experiences =  
repeat visitation**

**Revenue supports self-sustaining beautification**  
Economic activity and secondary tax benefits increase as access, activation, and year-round visitation improve.

The AAA proposal, along with many of the Task Force's recommendations, maximizes project benefits.

## **VII. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE AND REQUEST FOR APPROVAL**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Council approval	30–45 days
Design & engineering	3–6 months
Parking instatement	5-6 months
Activation zone installation	6–18 months
Full corridor impact	Year 1–2

**AAA respectfully requests that City Council:**

- 1. Adopt the proposed corridor-wide parking and revitalization strategy.**
- 2. Approve the 17th–23rd Art & Activation Zone (CHAT).**
- 3. Direct staff to incorporate AAA’s plan into the Task Force’s proposal and the overall Atlantic Avenue Infrastructure Implementation Strategy.**

By doing so, Council ensures that the remaining **\$35 million investment** creates real value, improves public access, strengthens the business ecosystem, encourages code compliance, and delivers the vibrant, culturally resonant destination envisioned in the 2020 Council Resolution.

Additionally, this on-street parking plan not only supports local businesses, but ensures convenient access to/success of the Art and Activation Zone, Park Stage performances, special events, and community festivals.

**THANK YOU!**

Respectfully submitted,  
**Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA)**



**Task Force + AAA + Council =  
Community-Driven Success**



**Let's work together. United we stand!**

# WHO WE ARE:

## THE ATLANTIC AVENUE ASSOCIATION

**AAA's Mission & Representation:** The Atlantic Avenue Association is a **community welfare organization**, not a trade association. **We live in every corner of Virginia Beach. Our diverse Board overwhelmingly supports this proposal and represents:**

- Residents/civic associations
- Small businesses (foodservice, retail, amusement, hotel, events, parking)
- Oceanfront stakeholders
- Non- profits and performing arts
- Publishing and marketing

*D Nachnani – AAA President, Coastal Edge Surf Shops and Harygul's Halloween Stores (retail)*

*Mike Mauch – AAA Vice President, PMC Parking lots and Co-owner Karma (parking, retail)*

*Chris Neikirk – AAA Secretary, Smartmouth Brewing (foodservice)*

*Tim Ritter – AAA Treasurer, Family Fun Xperience Theatre (performing arts and nonprofit)*

*George Kotarides – AAA Founder/Past President, Dough Boy's (foodservice)*

*Debbie Lou Hague – Ocean Eddies (foodservice)*

*Stephan Gorden – S. L. Nusbaum Realty Co*

*Paul Brannock – Vista Media, Inc (publisher)*

*Deepak Patel – Beach business person (Oceanfront stakeholder)*

*Bill Dillon – Abbey Road and Lucy's Sky Bar (foodservice)*

*Bill Gambrell – Tautog's and Doc Taylor's (foodservice)*

*DeWayne Furlough – Flipper McCoy's (amusement)*

*Jaketa Clark Thompson – Omnia Unlimited (marketing)*

*Stephan Michaels – Powerbilt Steel Buildings, Inc (manufacturing, Oceanfront stakeholder)*

*Lynn Hightower – Executive Director Virginia Wildfowl Heritage Museum (nonprofit)*

*Chris Kyriakides – Atlantic Point and Sweet Frog locations (foodservice)*

*Jerry Frostick – J&A Racing, Inc (special events contractor)*

*Andy Vakos – Oceanfront Inn (hotelier, Beach Parking)*