

Here is a **formal proposal** to present to the City Council of Alexandria, Tennessee, requesting support for the 48-month restoration of **Seay Chapel**, focused on the cleanup and structural restoration—specifically the **roof truss repair**.

Proposal for the Restoration of Seay Chapel in Alexandria, Tennessee

Submitted to: Alexandria City Council

Submitted by: Friends of Alexandria Cemeteries Historic District

Date: [Insert Date]

Executive Summary

We respectfully submit this proposal to the City Council of Alexandria, Tennessee, to request formal support and recognition for a community-led effort to restore the historic Seay Chapel. This restoration focuses on two immediate priorities: cleaning up the overgrown and deteriorating property and repairing the structurally compromised roof truss system.

Seay Chapel stands as a significant piece of Alexandria's cultural and architectural heritage. Restoring it is an opportunity not only to preserve a landmark, but to revitalize a space that has deep historical ties to the community. The projected timeline for the restoration is 48 months, with work executed in phases based on fundraising progress, engineering assessments, and volunteer contributions.

Background

Seay Chapel is one of the few remaining physical connections to the post-Civil War and early 20th-century African American heritage in this region. Though no longer in active use, the building's historical value remains undiminished. Unfortunately, years of weather exposure and neglect have left the structure vulnerable, with the roof truss system being one of the most urgent concerns. Unchecked, the damage may lead to collapse and permanent loss of this irreplaceable landmark. Once the restoration work has occurred, it may be feasible to use the chapel as a Museum for Alexandria.

Project Goals

The restoration effort centers on four primary goals:

1. **Secure and stabilize the structure** to prevent further deterioration.

2. **Repair the damaged roof truss system**, ensuring long-term structural safety.
 3. **Clean up and maintain the surrounding site** to make it accessible and presentable.
 4. **Reintroduce the building as a point of community pride and heritage preservation.**
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48-Month Restoration Timeline

The project will unfold over four years in six distinct phases:

1. **Assessment & Planning (Months 1–6):** Structural engineering reports, cleanup of overgrowth, and initial community engagement.
 2. **Emergency Stabilization (Months 7–12):** Temporary weatherproofing, removal of immediate hazards, site security.
 3. **Engineering & Permits (Months 13–18):** Final roof truss repair plan, contractor bids, and fundraising acceleration.
 4. **Structural Repairs (Months 19–30):** Rebuild/repair roof trusses, roofing system replacement.
 5. **Interior Work & Utilities (Months 31–40):** Wall and floor repair, minimal utility installation (lighting, security).
 6. **Final Touches & Rededication (Months 41–48):** Finishing details, landscaping, historical signage, and a public reopening event.
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Funding Plan

This initiative will rely on a combination of:

- **Local fundraising** (community events, private donors)
- **Corporate sponsorships and in-kind donations**
- **State and national grants** related to historical preservation
- **Volunteer labor** for non-technical cleanup and restoration tasks

We request the City’s endorsement and, if possible, assistance in the form of in-kind support (equipment use, promotional help, cleanup day coordination) and access to any relevant grant-writing assistance programs.

Request to City Council

We are seeking:

- **Formal endorsement of the Seay Chapel Restoration Project** as a community heritage initiative

- **Permission to access city resources** for cleanup and restoration efforts when available
- **Support in applying for preservation grants** and recognition at the county and state level
- **Assistance in publicizing the project** through City communication channels

Your support will provide legitimacy and momentum to the effort, signaling to grant bodies and donors that Seay Chapel matters to Alexandria.

Conclusion

Seay Chapel is more than a building—it is a legacy. With your partnership, we can bring it back to life and honor its place in our community's story. We thank you for your consideration and welcome the opportunity to present this proposal in person.

Respectfully submitted,

Friends of the Alexandria Cemeteries Historic District

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