



The Town of Hilton Head Island
Our Plan Environment Work Group

Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 4:00 PM

The Living Lab at Town Hall

AGENDA

*As a courtesy to others please turn off / silence ALL mobile devices during the meeting.
Thank You.*

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. FOIA Compliance** - Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.
- 3. New Business**
 - a. Review Our Plan Draft: *Section 3.0: Chapter 2, Environment*
- 4. Adjournment**

*Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of their members attend this meeting.
Please note that a quorum of the Planning Commission may result if five (5) or more of their members attend this meeting.*



Town of Hilton Head Island
Our Plan Environment Work Group
Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at 4:00 PM
The Living Lab at Town Hall
MEETING NOTES

Work Group:

Redefining Environmental Sustainability

Present from Work Group: Michael Barbara; Richard Blaine; Jean Fruh; Bryan McIlwee; Mark O'Neil; Ken Quinty; Tony Smithson

Present from Town Staff: Anne Cyran; Taylor Ladd

- The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM.
- Discussed next steps and Our Plan draft document.
- Reviewed potential strategies for the draft goals and determined which points should be strategies and which should be notes.
- At the next meeting in 2020, we will review the draft chapter.
- The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Submitted by: Anne Cyran



Section 3.0: Our Core Values

DRAFT

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Section 3.0: Our Core Values

3.1 Introduction

The chapters in this section, and in *Sections 4.0 and 5.0*, present the goals, strategies, and tactics that will guide the future planning and policy decisions for the Town of Hilton Head Island into 2040. The definitions for this content in Our Plan were carefully curated to ensure the community has a clear understanding of their meaning and purpose:

Goals, Strategies, and Tactics

- Goal: an aspiration; a desired outcome
- Strategy: a plan of action
- Tactic: a tool or action item

These aspirations and strategies are the result of many hours of community input, staff review, and public comment. Throughout the Our Plan process, the Town has strived to ensure our citizens and stakeholders had the opportunity to lend their expertise, insight, and innovative thinking to inform the content. Organized around the Core Values, each chapter contains an introduction about its meaning for the Town and Island community, key ideas from the community shaping the development of the goals, and a table for cross-referencing the relationship of the goals and strategies to the comprehensive plan elements (*tables not included in this version of Section 3.0*). Town staff coordinated with the Work Group members to ensure the strategies and tactics in Our Plan fall within the Town government's operational scope and responsibility.

Throughout Our Plan, given the nature of inter-related ideas around common topics or areas of concern, such as workforce housing, there is overlap in key ideas or scope of the goals. *Section 6.2, Our Plan Index*, contains an index listing the related goals, strategies, and tactics by the topic areas found to be prevalent throughout the Our Plan process. These references will also be keyed throughout the text where applicable. The Work Groups did explore similar topics, but their goals

and ideas were developed through the lens of the group’s specific Core Value, *Figure 3.1, The Core Value Lens*. For example, the theme of workforce housing was discussed by several of the Work Groups. The *Economy* group reviewed workforce housing in terms of applicable economic support needs on the Island, and the *Inclusive* group reviewed workforce housing in terms of social need and accessibility. The Our Plan Development Team was also instrumental in helping to ensure these overlaps are consistent and meaningful throughout.

Figure 3.1, The Core Value Lens

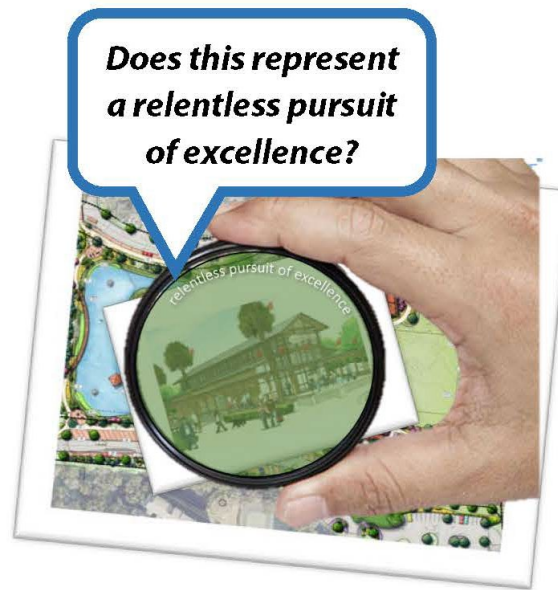


Figure 3.2, Our Core Values

Plan 2020-2040



Figure 1.4, Defining Sustainability

(Included here from *Section 1.0 Our Purpose and Process* for reference during Work Group review)

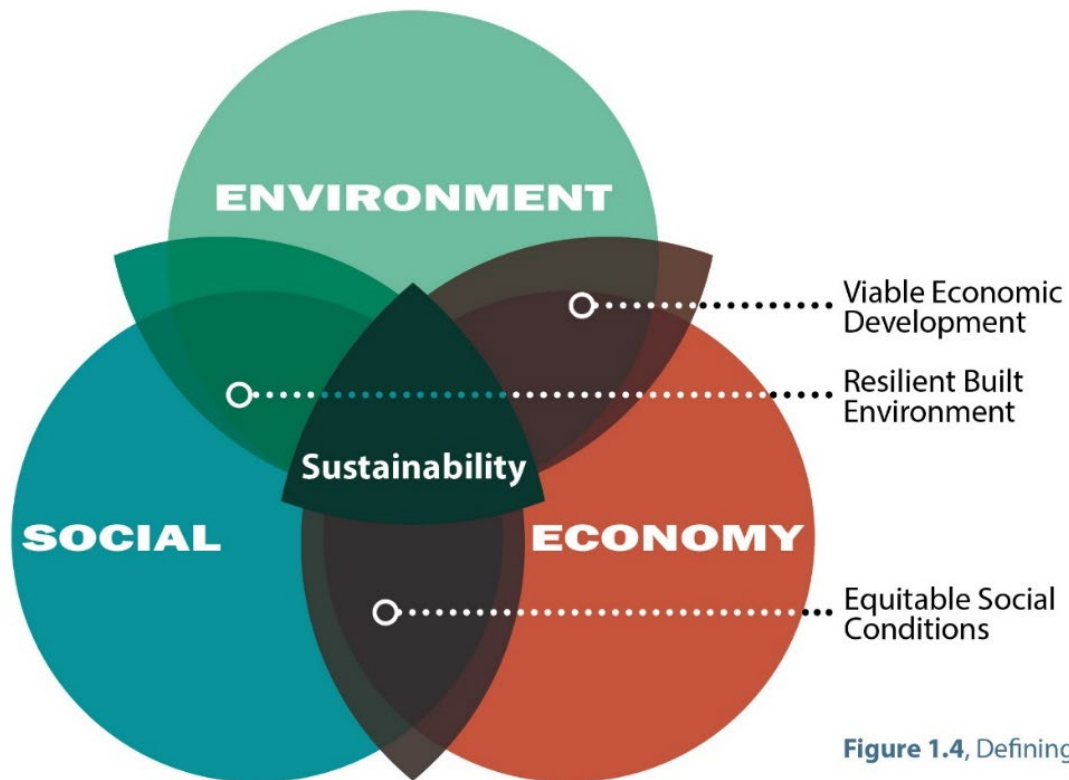


Figure 1.4, Defining Sustainability

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3.2 Core Value Chapters

Chapter 1: Excellence

Introduction

During the Our Future community engagement process, a large cross-section of people expressed an overarching desire for Hilton Head Island to be best-in-class. This passion was very apparent, and defining for the *Relentless Pursuit of Excellence*. It has carried forward into the Our Plan process, as well as other Town initiatives. For the year 2020, Town Council identified three Strategic Outcomes they envision for the Island.

The Town Council 2020 three Strategic Outcomes include:

- Exceptional Quality of Life,
- Prosperity and Innovation, and
- Best-in-Class Services and Facilities.

These three Strategic Outcomes speak to the awareness and interest the Island's elected officials have for how *Excellence* can and should be a framework for decision making and planning on the Island. They recognize being best-in-class requires pushing boundaries with innovative thinking, and through thoughtful planning and investment, while remaining true to the Core Values. Key ideas discussed by Town Council in their development of these three Strategic Outcomes were civic pride, access to the natural environment, providing excellent services and facilities for the community, housing, response to community needs, partnerships, economic development and inclusiveness— all ideas genuinely relevant to and aligned with the policy direction specifically presented in this chapter, and generally throughout this document.

According to the community, Hilton Head Island is a unique and beautiful place that is worth protecting. It is evident the Town and the community seek and expect excellence.

Key Ideas Shaping Excellence

Hilton Head Island has the opportunity to become an epicenter for Excellence. A first step is to expand or reimagine the things the Town and the community have been doing well: its history of

leading innovative and sustainable development, care for the environment, great recreation facilities and pathways, historic and cultural preservation, tourism, volunteerism, and fiscal stewardship.

Excellence is the pursuit of:

- Resiliency,
- Transparency,
- Best practices,
- An environment of innovation,
- Leadership,
- Encouragement,
- Celebration,
- Creativity,
- A positive attitude towards new ideas, and
- A mindset to continuously work towards exceeding expectations.

More so than the other Core Values, the *Relentless Pursuit of Excellence* bridges the Town government directly to the community. The Town, with other organizations on the Island and partners in the region, can ask the question— do our actions lead to *Excellence*?

The Town has long sought to apply high standards in the areas of customer service, and in the planning and construction of Town projects. There is a desire, however, to expand this approach where possible into other areas, such as education, culture, and the arts.

While the other Core Values retain a focus on the Town's scope of work for the community, *Excellence* needs the greater community in order to succeed. The emphasis should be on a people-focused community that embraces and celebrates its history, culture, and natural resources. During the Our Plan process, the *Excellence* Work Group, similarly to Town Council's own discussion, identified education, transportation, community, housing and employment as areas where there are opportunities for improvement.

Opportunities for Excellence are:

- Opportunity to build an Island brand based on the Core Values;
- Broad interest in building an Island community not defined by small communities operating independently, or by a single economic focus;

- Bringing back the presentation of Hilton Head Island as a “residential-resort” community, with intentional investment and an emphasis on residents that is in balance with the tourism economy;
- Fostering “residential” as inclusive of full-time residents, as well as second home owners;
- Garnering input from the community about their expectations and ideas; and
- Continuing to tap our resources in human intellectual capital to leverage the opportunities presented by the unique population of the Island.

Our Ideals of Excellence

Excellence for Hilton Head Island needs defining. This was discussed extensively during the Our Plan process and accomplished through establishing *Our Ideals of Excellence*. The *Ideals* lay the groundwork for the Island’s brand, in concert with the Core Values, and serve to define *Excellence* for the Town and the Island community. The *Ideals* provide accountability to ensure a high quality of life for all residents and visitors is available and achievable into the future.

The resulting one goal for this chapter is “To pursue and adopt *Our Ideals of Excellence*,” which is categorized into three areas: Our Place, Our People, and Our Planning and Process. The respective strategies and tactics provide further specifics pertaining to implementation of the *Ideals* using these categories.

Our Ideals of Excellence are to be a community that:

For Our Place,

1. Is welcoming, inclusive, safe and people-focused;
2. Is recognized as an excellent place to live;
3. Preserves, values and recognizes its history;
4. Attracts businesses and visitors who identify with and appreciate the Hilton Head Island community’s Core Values; and
5. Protects the natural environment as a unique quality of our identity.

For Our People,

6. Prioritizes the greater good of everyone;
7. Attracts and maintains a diverse and multi-dimensional residential population, providing a competitive live-work option; and
8. Recognizes the benefit and value of arts, culture, recreation, and education for the community.

For Our Planning and Process,

9. Fosters a collaborative, transparent, and inclusive environment when resolving concerns or planning for the future;
10. Considers sustainability as foundational to the Island's environment, economic, and social development and redevelopment;
11. Fosters a spirit of inspiration and leads by example;
12. Uses innovation and learning to continually develop and apply best practices and standards for processes and projects; and
13. Continually adapts the Core Values and comprehensive plan to meet the needs of the present and the future.

Goals

1. IDEALS OF EXCELLENCE: Adopt and Pursue Our Ideals of Excellence for Hilton Head Island.

Strategies and Tactics

1. Strategies for Our Place

- 1.1 Adopt *Our Ideals of Excellence* in order to initiate progress for these strategies and provide a foundation for the Town as outlined in this chapter.
- 1.2 Deploy *Our Ideals of Excellence* through the Town's community engagement, communication standards and execution of projects and policy.
 - 1.2.1 Develop a sense of place that clearly communicates our community values and *Our Ideals of Excellence*, for example, through promotion or other visual standards.
- 1.3 Ensure *Our Ideals of Excellence* are reflected in how the Island is promoted and marketed.
- 1.4 Apply for and promote awards of recognition for the Town of Hilton Head Island, such as the League of American Bicyclists Bicycle Friendly Community designation.
- 1.5 Foster the preservation and promotion of the rich cultural heritage and historical resources of Hilton Head Island. *See Inclusive Strategy 2.5*
- 1.6 Evaluate, develop and maintain standards that preserve and enhance the natural and physical environments that reflect the character of the Island.
 - 1.6.1 Set an example for the community by developing and maintaining Town projects and properties in a manner that preserves and enhances Island character.

2. Strategies for Our People

- 2.1 Develop a communication plan that relays *Our Ideals of Excellence*, the adoption of them, and these implementation strategies. *See Connected Goal 1*
- 2.2 Encourage increased knowledge and awareness of the local Island and Gullah-Geechee history. *See Inclusive Tactic 2.4.1*
- 2.3 Pursue awards and recognition that promote the qualities of our residential community.
- 2.4 Continue to host Town special events and meetings that are in compliance with adopted standards for accessibility, and evaluate adopting a policy for accessibility that meets or exceeds the standards. *See Connected Strategy 4.2, Inclusive Strategy 5.2*
- 2.5 Continue to acquire and maintain the most current and accurate demographic data for Hilton Head Island for use by staff and the community. Collaborate with regional resources as needed to acquire data. *See Economy Strategy 3.2*
- 2.6 Continue to provide excellent law enforcement, Fire Rescue, Emergency Management and disaster recovery services to the Island residents and visitors. *See Infrastructure Strategy 5.3*
- 2.7 Continue to provide the staff and requisite facilities needed to maintain the excellent administration of all Town government functions, including customer service. *See Infrastructure Strategies 5.1 and 5.2*
- 2.8 Continue to engage the community through excellent arts and culture education with outreach opportunities and events. *See Inclusive Strategy 8.4*
- 2.9 Recognize the importance of parks and recreation for the Island community through the development, maintenance, improvement, and enhancement of recreation facilities and programs. *See Inclusive Strategy 8.5, Our Plan Section 4.0 Parks + Recreation*
- 2.10 Work with partners and anchor institutions to promote opportunities that will diversify the residential population.
 - 2.10.1 Encourage development and opportunities that help Hilton Head Island be a competitive place to live and work. *See Economy Strategy 5.2*
- 2.11 Leverage the deep experience and skills of the retirement community and their volunteerism to publicize the human capital on the Island. *See Economy Strategy 5.5*

3. Strategies for Our Planning and Process

- 3.1 Evaluate the Town's comprehensive plan on a regular basis as required by the state for consistency and applicability to existing conditions, policies, and projects.
 - 3.1.1 Maintain a list of goals, strategies and tactics that are specifically being addressed or accomplished so the Island community can follow progress and stay involved with the comprehensive plan.
- 3.2 Create our Town government to be a Center for Excellence.
 - 3.2.1 Encourage the Town government, boards, commissions, and staff to monitor and evaluate their work and projects for compliance with the Core Values and *Our Ideals of Excellence*.

- 3.2.2 Develop and deploy a survey or measurement tool to obtain the Island community's outlook on Our Ideals of Excellence, interests, input, or concerns as applicable for Town projects, processes, or policies.
- 3.3 Continue to provide an appropriate range of land uses that accommodate the needs of the community.
 - 3.3.1. Provide appropriate modifications to the zoning designations and land use regulations to meet market demands while maintaining Island character. *See Connected Strategy 2.3*
- 3.4 Ensure new design and development standards consider *Our Ideals of Excellence*.
- 3.5 Continue to engage the community, above and beyond what is minimally required, for the planning and policy process.
 - 3.5.1 Instill a strong sense of civic pride by encouraging involvement in Town boards and commissions, in public decision-making, and through community engagement. *See Connected Strategy 1.3*
 - 3.5.2 Evaluate and incorporate the application of online tools, applications or services in planning and engagement processes. *See Connected Tactic 1.1.3*
- 3.6 Pursue awards and recognition for the Town's planning and design efforts.
- 3.7 Evaluate and utilize public and/or private partnerships and cooperation in Town projects or beautification efforts.
- 3.8 In the development of best practices and standards for processes, policies and projects, use innovation and learning, to continually build and improve upon past experiences.
 - 3.8.1. Identify and apply standards and best practices for processes and projects.
 - 3.8.2. Ensure the planning process is dynamic and transparent.
 - 3.8.3. Use lessons learned and innovation to continually improve upon *Our Ideals of Excellence* and applicable strategies and tactics.

Chapter 2: Environment

Introduction

The environment and sustainability are foundational values of the Hilton Head Island community. While the over-arching Vision of this plan is *Reinventing Sustainability... Again!* the environment arm of sustainability, as per *Figure 1.4, Defining Sustainability*, resonates strongly with the Island community. When people speak about the Island, describe, or market it, their discussion always includes the natural environment. One is hard pressed to find any publication about the Island that fails to speak of the beaches, live oaks, marshes, wildlife, or waterways.

In the 1950's and 1960's, Charles Fraser challenged the planning industry's way of thinking by developing the Sea Pines community in concert with the environment. His Seven Basic Principles for this type of development have remained an integral part of the island's identity and development patterns. Since then the world advanced in the realms of research, technology, and practical applications. The definition of sustainability has expanded into many other facets of human life. The environment is now on equal footing with social equity, quality of life, the economy, and human impact. In 2020, the Island has new challenges to face that were not relevant 60 years ago, and the impacts of development, industry, and the economy are felt beyond the boundaries of the Town.

Who is Charles Fraser?

- Charles Fraser was an innovative planner in the 1950's- 1960's who envisioned unconventional principles for his developments on the Island, beginning with Sea Pines. This became the foundation for subsequent community development and environmental stewardship on the Island through today.
- Fraser's Seven Basic Principles are embedded in many of the Island's subsequent development patterns and way of life:
 1. Do not impose development on the environment.
 2. Create green space for privacy.
 3. Keep density as low as profitably possible.
 4. Create roads for beauty and efficiency not just transit.
 5. Build no structure higher than the tallest tree.
 6. Cut only those trees that are absolutely necessary.
 7. Think always of enhancing the quality of life for those who would be residents of the Island.

The community is supportive of environmental sustainability, and the Town has taken strides towards greater participation in efforts to support it. Through participation in the Tree City USA® and Audubon International Sustainable Communities programs, education about environmental sustainability for the public has been more available. There is also a strong sense of environmental stewardship. Local community efforts, such as the Turtle Trackers and Coastal Discovery Museum, educate and offer opportunities for residents and visitors to learn about the natural environment. Beach goers are educated every time they see Turtle Trackers on patrol or signage about lights out for turtles. There are also opportunities for one to learn about the history of the Island inhabitant's dependence on the environment through cultural experiences, like The Gullah Museum.

As concerns grow over current or future conditions and impacts, there is a perception the Town is not at the forefront of environmental sustainability. In order to stay on pace with efforts by our regional partners, the state, or nation, dedicated consideration towards a more resilient approach in policy and planning is important. A balance of environmental action should be maintained within all facets of sustainability: environment, economy, and society. This chapter is focused on *Redefining Environmental Sustainability* for Hilton Head Island in light of the Vision for 2040.

The Town of Hilton Head Island's Environmental Programs:

- Tree City USA® is a program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. The Town of Hilton Head Island has held the Tree City USA designation since 2000.
- In 2010 The Town of Hilton Head Island began participating in the *Audubon International Sustainable Communities Program*, and received the "Green Community" designation in 2011. Further, the Town received the "Sustainable Planning" award in 2015 and the certification as a "Sustainable Community" in 2017. This program assists communities with assessing natural resources and environmental concerns, and identifies steps which can be taken to move closer to community sustainability.
- The **Town of Hilton Island Green Blueprint** was adopted by Town Council on April 21, 2015. This document presents action items and responsible parties for implementing the fourteen categories of the Audubon International Sustainable Communities Program.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Environment

Current measures the Town has in place to support a thriving natural environment will be important for the future. The Town cannot know what the Island's conditions in 2040 will be, but a starting point is recognizing the crucial environmental resources of today and ensuring they endure. The Hilton Head Island of the 1960's has not been forgotten, and the community has worked to adapt it to be relevant today. There is opportunity to do more, however, to stay on track with contemporary advancements in sustainability and modern thinking. Throughout the Our Plan process, key ideas and plans of action emerged to inform a new definition for environmental sustainability.

Environmental sustainability for Hilton Head Island looks like:

- Reducing waste and increasing recycling and composting;
- A new green brand for the Island;
- Being an epicenter for environmental research and education;
- Preserving and restoring water quality;
- Protecting potable water resources;
- Monitoring the environment;
- Strengthened environmental regulations;
- Wetland, beach and forest preservation planning;
- Energy conservation;
- Reduced dependence on fossil fuels;
- Preparing for and mitigating the effects of sea level rise, and climate change; and
- Improved air quality.

There were many specific topics the community determined to be of significant concern for the Island's natural environment during this process. Strengths of the Island include the unique wildlife and related ecosystem environments, thirteen miles of beach, vibrant marsh environment, natural resource ordinances, extensive tree canopy, recognition and awards, and community support for environmental protection. To balance these strengths with the need to advance towards better environmental sustainability, opportunities for the Town and the community were identified. These in turn have been the foundation for the goals, strategies, and tactics presented in this chapter.

Opportunities for Our Environment are to:

- Form partnerships to strengthen the Town’s position as a coastal community;
- Build on eco-tourism as an opportunity to educate the community;
- Find new ways to use vacant commercial space instead of green field development;
- Improve in energy, waste, and water use with new technologies;
- Preserve the Island’s natural environment, trees, and wetlands as much as possible;
- Anticipate the future climate or environment that could impact the human footprint and presence on the Island; and
- Have a plan for adaptation and resilience to future environmental concerns.

Goals

1. WASTE: To work towards a Town-wide zero waste model.
2. SUSTAINABILITY: To become recognized leaders in environmental protection and sustainability.
3. WATER: To monitor our water resource so that it is clean, abundant and available.
4. ENVIRONMENT: To protect and restore the natural environment of Hilton Head Island.
5. ENERGY: To maximize the efficiency of energy usage and expand the use of renewable energy.
6. RESILIENCE: To prepare a plan for and to mitigate the effects of climate change.
7. AIR QUALITY: To improve air quality by reducing/minimizing emissions.

Strategies and Tactics

1. WASTE: To work towards a Town-wide zero waste model. *See Regional Strategy 4.4*

- 1.1 Examine waste collection options that take into account the unique aspects of the Island.
- 1.2 Explore methods to improve recycling and composting rates.
- 1.3 Encourage Beaufort County to create an off-Island materials processing center and work with them to identify long term waste disposal and recycling capabilities.

- 1.4 Pursue promotional and educational efforts to foster recycling, composting, and litter control.
 - 1.4.1 Facilitate composting models at highly visible sites, such as schools and Town facilities.
 - 1.4.2 Pursue new ways to disseminate information on waste and recycling on the Town's website to residents and visitors.
 - 1.4.3 Promote Beaufort County's recycling and litter control programs.
 - 1.4.4 Incorporate initiatives to reuse and upcycle trash for art programs or local artists.

2. SUSTAINABILITY: To become recognized leaders in environmental protection and sustainability. *See Regional strategy 4.5*

- 2.1 Investigate ways to foster environmental ecosystem and environmental sustainability research.
 - 2.1.1 Sponsor an environmentally-focused event of regional or national significance.
 - 2.1.2 Develop and implement a Sustainable Practices Plan for Town Hall.
- 2.2 Encourage and offer options for sustainable development of structures and sites.
 - 2.2.1 Investigate implementation of environmentally sustainable standards, such as Sustainable Sites Initiative, LEED or Earthcraft, for all development projects.
 - 2.2.2 Integrate a Low Impact Development (LID) menu of optional design techniques in the LMO. Provide an incentive for each LID technique.
- 2.3 Create a green standard for all Town facilities and Capital Improvement Projects.
 - 2.3.1 Continue to pursue green certifications, such as Sustainable Sites Initiative, or LEED, for new and redeveloped Town facilities and infrastructure.
- 2.4 Explore ways to expand environmental education efforts and programs, such as using new formats (videos) and promoting social media posts.
 - 2.4.1 Continue to implement effective environmental education efforts and projects, such as installing interpretive signs on Town property.
 - 2.4.2 Strengthen existing and form new local, regional, and national partnerships with environmental organizations, governments, businesses, religious groups, civic groups, neighborhoods, POAs, schools and universities, etc, for environmental education purposes.
- 2.5 When evaluating property for land acquisition, identify opportunities to provide localized benefits such as reduction of stormwater runoff, increased shading of impervious surfaces, and overall reduction of impervious surfaces.

- 2.6 Continue to maintain or strengthen existing environmental protections for buffers, trees, wetlands, dunes and special habitat areas.

3. WATER: To monitor our water resource so that it is clean, abundant and available.

- 3.1 Preserve healthy watersheds and restore impaired watersheds.
 - 3.1.1 Continue to publish water quality data in an annual report.
 - 3.1.2 Continue to monitor water quality at stormwater discharge points and use the data to guide future infrastructure improvements.
 - 3.1.3 Explore incentives for applicants to use watershed friendly, low-impact planning strategies during plan review.
 - 3.1.4 Look for ways to reduce impervious surfaces Island-wide through the use of pervious materials and other methods, and using the Town impervious surfaces map to address the watersheds with high impervious percentages.
 - 3.1.5 Explore innovative methods to take development pressure off environmentally sensitive headwater regions.
 - 3.1.6 Continue to implement the recommendations of the **Broad Creek Management Plan** and evaluate the need to update the plan to address changing conditions.
 - 3.1.7 Consider incentivizing alternative stormwater management techniques, to include LID techniques such as bioretention, treatment trains, permeable pavement, and infiltration.
- 3.2 Foster the reduction of the amount of treated water used for irrigation and increase the amount of reclaimed water used for irrigation. *See Infrastructure Strategy 4.2*
 - 3.2.1 Continue to encourage the use of drought-tolerant native plantings with high wildlife value (food and habitat).
 - 3.2.2 Educate the community about the benefits of limiting turf grass, which requires more irrigation and fertilization than native, drought-tolerant species.
 - 3.2.3 Limit the amount of turf grass and species requiring irrigation planted for Town projects and properties.
 - 3.2.4 Encourage infrastructure improvements needed to store and use reclaimed water.
 - 3.2.5 Utilize projects and development on Town-owned land to demonstrate rainwater recycling techniques.
- 3.3 Continue efforts to educate the public on preventing water pollution and increasing water conservation.
 - 3.3.1 Promote sites like the Xeriscape Garden at Town Hall, and build demonstration sites and structures, such as green roofs and rainwater harvest technologies.

- 3.3.2 Highlight resources for alternative stormwater management and designs for both single family and non-single family developments on the Town's website.
- 3.4 Ensure the beach environment stays protected by continuing to prevent surface runoff and/or discharge from stormwater and pools.

4. ENVIRONMENT: To protect and restore the natural environment of Hilton Head Island.

- 4.1 Establish goals and clear metrics for: water (salt and fresh) quality and quantity; tree coverage; wildlife, and beach erosion.
 - 4.1.1 Monitor the effectiveness of the Coastal Protection Area Overlay (CPA-O) and Transition Area Overlay (TA-O) districts. *See LMO Sections 16-3-106.L and 16-3-106.M*
 - 4.1.2 Continue to maintain and protect the beach ecosystem for wildlife (e.g. sea turtle nesting, island glass lizard habitat, piping plover critical habitat).
 - 4.1.3 Continue to preserve and maintain open space, including the improvement and enhancement of existing open space.
- 4.2 Find ways to use Town property to showcase environmental preservation.
 - 4.2.1 Where applicable, establish greenways between Town properties and other areas of open space.
 - 4.2.3 Where applicable, establish blueways to link Town-owned properties.
- 4.3 Encourage utility companies to maintain easements in a controlled state.
- 4.4 Create a forest preservation program to preserve and enhance the Island's forested areas.
- 4.5 Maintain and adapt the wetland management program to preserve and enhance our wetland system.
 - 4.5.1 Enhance, create, and maintain vegetated riparian wetland buffers with viewing corridors and windows.
 - 4.5.2 Maintain and protect wetland buffers on Town property by utilizing native plants and pervious surfaces.
 - 4.5.3 Continue to evaluate and adopt regulations to ensure wetland buffers are protected.
- 4.6 Educate residents and visitors on natural resource ordinances.

5. ENERGY: To maximize the efficiency of energy usage and expand the use of renewable energy.

- 5.1 Incentivize the use of energy-efficient building techniques, such as Sustainable Sites Initiative, LEED, Earthcraft, green materials and appliances for residential and non-residential developments.
- 5.2 Use Town facilities as examples of efficient energy use and renewable energy systems.
 - 5.2.1 Continue to pursue Sustainable Sites Initiative, LEED or similar certifications for Town buildings, project sites and facilities.
 - 5.2.2 Continue to install new and replacement (as needed) energy-efficient appliances, lighting, HVAC systems, etc. in Town buildings and facilities.
 - 5.2.3 Consider installing renewable energy systems, such as solar panels, on Town buildings/property to demonstrate the benefits of renewable energy sources.
 - 5.2.4 Reduce energy consumption of Town buildings where possible.
- 5.3 Encourage the use of renewable energy systems, such as solar panels.
- 5.4 Promote Palmetto Electric's energy efficiency and renewable energy programs in Town facilities and to residents and visitors.

6. RESILIENCE: To prepare a plan for and to mitigate the effects of climate change. See Infrastructure Goal 3

- 6.1 Develop and implement a resiliency or adaptation plan to address coastal flooding, sea level rise and other issues the Island could face due to climate change. *See Infrastructure Strategy 3.1*
 - 6.1.1 Use the latest technology to better understand the long-term implications of sea level rise and climate change on the Island's natural resources.
 - 6.1.2 Consider committing to a new zero carbon footprint for Town facilities.
 - 6.1.3 Continue to document sea level rise impacts on the Island.
- 6.2 Adjust Town codes as appropriate to minimize the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on private property.
 - 6.2.1 Examine the benefits and costs of requiring new structures to be elevated above the minimum requirements.
 - 6.2.2 Consider eliminating or reducing exemptions when permitting the redevelopment of nonconforming structures.
 - 6.2.3 Anticipate the effects of new FEMA Flood Maps.
- 6.3 Maintain all programs required to support and continue the beach renourishment program.

- 6.4 Continue to acquire wetlands and other low-lying and flood-prone pieces of land in order to decrease development in flood-prone areas.
- 6.5 Educate residents and visitors about climate change and how it will affect the Island.

7. AIR QUALITY: To improve air quality by reducing/minimizing emissions.

- 7.1 Explore opportunities for the further development and use of public transit (prioritizing vehicles that use renewable energy) and other innovative transportation strategies. *See Infrastructure Strategy 1.8*
- 7.2 Promote the use of low impact alternative electric transportation where appropriate. *See Infrastructure Strategies 1.8 and 1.9*
- 7.3 Preserve and plant trees for reduction of the urban heat island effect.
- 7.4 Continue to purchase property to decrease the total available density and the number of peak hour trips on Island roads.
- 7.5 Educate residents and visitors about air quality and its impact on human and environmental health.

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Chapter 3: Economy

Introduction

Destination tourism and retirement are two of the biggest drivers for the Hilton Head Island economy. The Island location, and access to the natural environment with resort style planned communities, is appealing for visitors and residents alike. Historically, the Island has maintained a small town feeling, while hosting a large service, hospitality, and retail industry in support of these economic drivers. New trends and changes in the region are, however, starting to affect the Island economy. The new influences include population and job growth in the region, housing, and trends in younger generational preferences for living and working.

Increasingly, there are jobs and places to live in other areas of Beaufort County, offering many of the same amenities as the Island's planned communities. Hilton Head Island is no longer the only place to find work, and housing prices on the Island are not always affordable. Many young professionals and families are also settling or working in Bluffton, Hardeeville, Savannah, and everywhere in between. Recently, the Island has seen a decrease in its available workforce and many service jobs go unfilled. The workforce is finding places to live off Island, jobs closer to their homes, and are tiring of a long commute.

In terms of today's visitor to the Island, numerous studies and nation-wide research show younger generations, while still interested in destination tourism, are looking for different experiences. The trends in tourism are shifting. While golf and tennis are still prevalent attractions, modern travelers want to have adventures.

There are many who still commute daily to the Island and play golf when they visit, but changing patterns have started to affect many aspects of the Island and its economy. The trends are setting a course for the Island to experience change. For some time, the perception has been that Hilton Head Island is a place to visit—a resort community for the affluent. Now, there is a renewed drive to build on the current strengths in the economy, and show that Hilton Head Island is a place for people of all ages, cultures and economies to visit, or live and work.

New dimensions in the economy are taking shape. The Town has been working on a workforce housing initiative locally and with regional partners. The investment community has started to

think creatively about how to address the vacant commercial areas on the Island and workforce challenges. With growing interest in experience-based tourism, many companies have expanded their offerings into the realm of outdoor adventure and cultural tourism. Using this momentum, the Town can continue to help *Revitalize and Modernize the Economy*.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Economy

With 2.5 to 3 million visitors per year, and home sales trending up, Hilton Head Island is not moving away from the current economy, nor should it. In order to expand the Island economy to meet the needs of the tourism base and grow towards new opportunities, there are several key factors to consider.

Factors affecting the Island's Economy include:

- The natural environment;
- Partnerships with regional organizations;
- The unique history and culture;
- Sensitive regulations that work to preserve Island character;
- Global recognition;
- Destination tourism and the hospitality industry;
- Access: land, water and air;
- Virtual access and technology; and
- The full range of generational populations.

Taking into account these factors, opportunities have been identified that encourage the modernization and revitalization needed to support the Island through changing external factors and evolving local conditions.

Opportunities for Our Economy are to:

- Strengthen regional partnerships;
- Shift from reliance on seasonal tourism;
- Leverage ways to attract young professionals and families so more people live and work on the Island;
- Focus on ways to foster leading edge redevelopment and modernization practices;
- Modernize and revitalize vacant spaces without expanding existing footprints;
- Continue to leverage local intellectual capital and volunteerism;

- Grow in the health sector and in technologies to support an aging population;
- Invest in venue spaces;
- Improve transit and housing to meet workforce needs;
- Educate entrepreneurs about and streamline the process for starting a business;
- Diversify the tourism economy and soften shoulder seasons with more eco-tourism, culture and heritage, outdoor recreation and education, service, and culinary based opportunities; and
- Continue to monitor technology infrastructure on the Island is keeping up with community needs.

This chapter presents goals, strategies, and tactics for how the Town can address economic challenges and opportunities facing the future. The overarching attitude is the strong economic drivers that brought the Island in the modern era ought to be supported. Further, they should be revitalized and modernized to adapt to new ideas and trends.

Goals

1. **TRANSPORTATION:** To continue to improve access to and around Hilton Head Island.
2. **BUSINESS:** To attract more diverse businesses, specifically those with high intellectual capacity and a small footprint.
3. **BRAND:** To manage evolving economic growth while maintaining Hilton Head Island's unique aesthetic.
4. **TOURISM:** To explore, understand, prepare for, and adapt to the future of tourism.
5. **POPULATION:** To attract a diverse/dynamic local population.
6. **WORKFORCE:** To have a high quality, sustainable workforce.

Strategies and Tactics

1. TRANSPORTATION: To continue to improve access to and around Hilton Head Island.

- 1.1 Encourage transit and technology providers to design and build consistent infrastructure coverage to/from and throughout the island to stay cost competitive and provide a prosperous economy.
- 1.2 Consider diverse transportation options for alternate means of access to the Island. *See Infrastructure Strategy 1.8*

- 1.2.1 Continue to work with Beaufort County to modernize and revitalize the Hilton Head Airport.
- 1.2.2 Work with transportation partners to increase options for public transportation throughout the region to attract workforce and visitors, and provide options for residents. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.9*
- 1.2.3 Complement public transit operations such as those of Palmetto Breeze (LRTA) by connecting transit stops with employment destinations and tourist destinations. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.4*
- 1.2.4 Continue to promote and improve the Island multi-use pathway system as a viable alternative to auto-oriented transportations.
- 1.2.5 Evaluate options to integrate marine-based transportation when cost effective and where feasible. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.5*

2. BUSINESS: To attract more diverse businesses, specifically those with high intellectual capacity and a small footprint.

- 2.1 Consider incentives for businesses that promote telecommuting or working from home.
- 2.2 Collaborate and coordinate with existing organizations to market and expand upon Hilton Head Island’s diverse economic opportunities.
- 2.3 Foster and encourage new business start-ups.

3. BRAND: To manage evolving economic growth while maintaining Hilton Head Island’s unique aesthetic.

- 3.1 Support sustainable redevelopment that preserves the environment, modernizes infrastructure, and creates economic benefit to the greatest extent possible.
- 3.2 Monitor demographics and economic trends to manage emerging growth and changes. *See Excellence Strategy 2.5*
 - 3.2.1 Maintain information to track the Island’s actual daytime and seasonal populations, including the impacts of the commuting workforce and the seasonal visitor population on the Island’s infrastructure and infrastructure planning and maintenance.
 - 3.2.2 Monitor trends in housing development to provide housing options that meet market demands.
 - 3.2.3 Provide data as needed or requested to support other agencies or organizations.

3.3 Monitor areas that have high concentrations of aging structures to target for potential redevelopment.

3.3.1 Research opportunities to encourage property owners of dilapidated structures to rehabilitate and convert the buildings to workforce housing as a means to provide both redevelopment and additional housing.

3.4 Continue to encourage repurposing or revitalization of existing commercial spaces/structures or buildings through flexibility or incentives for redevelopment.

3.5 Explore innovative methods to guide development.

3.6 Encourage a variety of housing types to meet the needs of the population.

3.7 Consider adopting appearance standards to optimize the character of the Island.

4. TOURISM: To explore, understand, prepare for, and adapt to the future of tourism.

4.1 Work with the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Visitor and Convention Bureau to prepare for and adapt to the future of tourism.

4.1.1 Promote the Island as a best-in-class, well-maintained, coastal Island residential and resort community with high speed telecommunication capability, road, sea and air access, where it is possible to operate with remote capability (telecommuting) and also enjoy a rich Island lifestyle. *See Our Ideals of Excellence*

4.1.2 Encourage opportunities for culture and heritage based tourism. *See Inclusive Goal 6*

4.2 Strive for a balance between tourism and resident economies.

4.3 Collaborate with organizations to market globally a clear brand of Hilton Head Island and what makes the Island unique.

4.3.1 Continue to encourage the Hilton Head Island Ambassador Program offered by the University of South Carolina Beaufort.

4.4 Encourage the tourism industry on the Island to offer visitors a chance to mitigate their travel carbon footprint.

4.5 Continue to support special events such as the Heritage Golf Tournament, Concours d'Elegance, etc.

4.6 Continue to support existing arts, culture, and history organizations through appropriate and creative funding. *See Inclusive Strategy 8.3*

5. POPULATION: To attract a diverse/dynamic local population. *See inclusive Goal 5*

- 5.1 Build relevance to young professionals that represent the “new economy” by embracing technology and offering live/work options.
- 5.2 Continue to foster the use of technology that will allow opportunities to work remotely or from home. *See Excellence Tactic 2.10.1*
- 5.3 Foster an economy that includes support for a healthy aging population and allows for aging in place.
 - 5.3.1 Work with appropriate organizations that can help the Town to best utilize and support its older population.
 - 5.3.2 Encourage housing options that provide opportunities for residents to age in place.
- 5.4 Create an environment for prosperity and innovation to allow the private sector health care providers to access adequate, cost effective health care services for the Island’s aging population as well as residents and visitors. *See Inclusive Strategy 7.3*
- 5.5 Leverage the deep experience and skills of retirees and their volunteerism to publicize the human capital on the Island. *See Excellence Strategy 2.11*

6. WORKFORCE: To have a high quality, sustainable workforce.

- 6.1 Encourage the development of workforce housing through effective incentives. *See Connected Tactic 4.1.1, Inclusive Strategy 3.3, Infrastructure Strategy 6.1, Regional Goal 2*
 - 6.1.1 Continue to pursue the recommendations from the **Workforce Housing Strategic Plan**.
 - 6.1.2 Identify methods to support construction of new moderate income housing by 2024.
 - 6.1.3 Support programs aimed at increasing home ownership, for example, Habitat for Humanity.
 - 6.1.4 Consider the use of Town-owned properties, where appropriate, for future development projects or land swaps for workforce housing.
 - 6.1.5 Review the land acquisition program to determine if a workforce housing component would be an appropriate modification going forward.
 - 6.1.6 Monitor changing demographics and trends in housing development to allow for housing options to meet market demands.
 - 6.1.7 Continue to educate the public on the potential impact on their daily quality of life that is directly affected by the supply or lack of workforce housing.

6.2 Coordinate with educational institutions/agencies to meet the educational and training needs of the Island's population and workforce.

6.2.1 Collaborate with local industry to determine education needs for now and in future.

6.2.2 Encourage diverse educational opportunities that will prepare students for a career, including two-year trade schools.

6.3 Evaluate results of Town staff wage and benefit analyses.

6.4 Evaluate transportation options for the workforce.

6.4.1 Support enhancements to the public transportation network, such as continued integration of bike racks on buses and linking pathways to transit stops, to providing a link to off-island users.

6.4.2 Support the coordination of existing regional public transit providers to enhance the service to the mainland and the Island for the commuting workforce. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.9*

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Chapter 4: Inclusive

Introduction

The three-pronged definition of sustainability represented by *Figure 1.4, Defining Sustainability*, describes the cross-section of Economy and Society as “Equitable Social Conditions.” Fully grasping the Vision for Our Plan entails addressing socio-economic trends of present day Hilton Head Island that could be more sustainable and equitable. In the era of modern development, the Island has been dependent on a commuter workforce, attracted an aging retiree population, witnessed an increase in the desire to preserve the Gullah culture and land, seen investment in historic neighborhoods, and seen an increase in potential live and work investment from younger families and professionals.

In the last several years, the Town has begun to address many of these themes. The on-going workforce housing initiative is developing policy that may provide more obtainable housing and access for commuters is available. Town initiatives, such as the Gullah-Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Task Force, the **Gullah Geechee Cultural Preservation Project Report**, and a Historic Neighborhoods Preservation Administrator on Town staff, are aiding cultural preservation. The Island-wide sewer master plan, a partnership with the Hilton Head Public Service District (PSD) supported financially by the Town, has been completed. Neighborhoods also have benefited from the continuation of Project SAFE (Sewer Access for Everyone), a joint program of the Hilton Head PSD and Community Foundation of the Lowcountry that provides grants for low- and moderate-income homeowners to connect to the public sewer system.

The *Fostering an Inclusive and Multi-dimensional Community* Core Value entails taking a close look at socio-economic challenges. It encourages the Island’s progression into the future with a mixed, equitable, and diverse society. This is a society that is mindful of the Island’s historic and current cultures, welcoming to a range of ages and income levels to live and work, and maintaining the unique environmental qualities that define Hilton Head Island. This Core Value also considers education, health, quality of life, the arts, and recreation, which are important to any active and thriving community.

Inclusive Definitions

- “Equity” or “equitable” are used in this chapter to imply balance, fairness, and equality.
- Multi-dimensional is inclusive of all levels of income, culture, age ranges, abilities, life stages and interests.

Parks + Recreation and Inclusive

- For the Our Future Vision, Parks + Recreation was not included specifically as a Core Value. It does, however, serve an important role towards contributing to a higher quality of life within an inclusive and diverse community. It is represented by the Recreation element in past versions of the Town’s comprehensive plans.
- In the Our Plan process, the Parks + Recreation Task Group was housed as a sub-group of Inclusive. The Task Group’s role was to ensure the Town’s Parks + Recreation Master Plan, adopted on DATE by Town Council, is incorporated into Our Plan. See *Section 4.0 Parks + Recreation*.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Inclusive Community

Hilton Head Island is a unique destination, but it is also a unique place to live and work. While there is no call to abandon the community planning and economic models that have carried the Island into the 21st century, there is an opportunity to revisit and expand them to be more inclusive of today’s trends, demographics, and community interests. The Spanish, Hispanic, and Latinx population on the Island now outpaces the African American and Native Islander population in size, and is higher than the median population for the state of South Carolina. Considering the age demographic, with a median age of 65, the under 55 group is still underrepresented. Most residential developments are exclusive and priced for higher income earners, investors, and retirees. In order to become a sustainable place to live and work, it is important to consider equity in education, community development, the economy, and housing options for all areas of the Island.

An inclusive and multi-dimensional community fosters:

- Obtainable housing and access;
- The arts;
- Recreation and active living;
- Education;
- Healthcare;
- Cultural preservation and celebration;
- A viable economy; and
- Equitable development standards.

Keeping in mind these key factors, the Town, community members, and the private sector can bring inclusion to the forefront. The goals, strategies, and tactics in this chapter address these opportunities and actions the Town can take towards an inclusive future:

Opportunities for Our Inclusive Community include:

- Fostering a high quality of life for all Island residents and visitors;
- Fostering high standards for education;
- Imagining new venues for the arts and entertainment;
- Preserving historic sites;
- Evaluating community development standards;
- Evaluating the needs for the Island workforce;
- Protecting natural and cultural resources;
- Fostering a multi-dimensional and diverse population;
- Expanding tourism into cultural and environmental sectors; and
- Access to healthcare.

Goals

1. **EDUCATION:** To create an environment that fosters equitable, high quality education options, where Hilton Head Island is recognized as an epicenter of life-long learning.
2. **HISTORIC SITES; VENUES:** To reimagine our venues and historic places so that they are inviting and accessible.
3. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** To foster sustainable, inclusive, equitable, and innovative community development on the Island.
4. **NATURAL RESOURCES; CULTURAL RESOURCES:** To create awareness and respect for our core community and environmental values, ensuring inclusiveness and equality for all residents and guests.
5. **DIVERSITY:** To promote multi-dimensional diversity on the Island, now and into the future.
6. **CULTURAL TOURISM:** To promote equitable cultural tourism to improve the quality of life for all stakeholders.
7. **HEALTHCARE:** To foster healthcare and health education that are available, accessible, affordable, innovative, and benefits all.
8. **ARTS; RECREATION; CULTURE:** To build diversity and provide exceptional quality of life offerings in arts and recreation.

Strategies and Tactics

1. EDUCATION: To create an environment that fosters equitable, high quality education options, where Hilton Head Island is recognized as an epicenter of life-long learning.

- 1.1. Cooperate with the public school district, private schools, Island non-profit organizations, and concerned citizens to assess the Island's daycare facilities.
- 1.2. Encourage Beaufort County to continue their efforts to provide resources and funding for the Hilton Head library.
- 1.3. Continue to coordinate with the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) and other continuing education programs to partner with primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in establishing continuing education.
- 1.4. Cooperate with the public school district to assess the needs of the Beaufort County School District Hilton Head Island Cluster.

2. HISTORIC SITES; VENUES: To reimagine our venues and historic places so that they are inviting and accessible.

- 2.1 Consider developing a historic landmarks protection or similar program per recommendations about historic and culturally significant sites from the **Gullah Geechee Preservation Project Report**.
- 2.2 Continue to encourage planned communities and other private landowners to provide access to cultural and historic sites for family members, friends, and historians for the purpose of education and maintenance.
- 2.3 Continue to support establishing wayfinding signs and historic markers to identify Island historic sites, historic neighborhoods, important people, and important historic events.
 - 2.3.1 Continue to support the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) in efforts to establish wayfinding signs for unique historic areas.
- 2.4 Continue to foster establishing educational programs that help residents and visitors of all ages to understand the long, unique history and rich cultural traditions on Hilton Head Island.
 - 2.4.1 Establish a program to educate Town officials, area school teachers, and others on Gullah culture so they can better understand the culture and more effectively interact with the Island's Gullah citizens per the **Gullah Geechee Preservation Project Report**. *See Excellence Strategy 2.2*
- 2.5 Continue to support efforts towards the preservation of historic island culture, including that of the Gullah Geechee culture. *See Excellence Strategy 1.5*

- 2.6 Continue to work with local communities and organizations and investigate land acquisition towards the preservation of historic and cultural sites for future generations to enjoy.
- 2.7 Continue to support arts, culture, and history opportunities that contribute to the unique character of the Island.
 - 2.7.1 Support the development of Historic Mitchelville Freedom Park.
 - 2.7.2 Support the planned expansion of the Coastal Discovery Museum.

3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: To foster sustainable, inclusive, equitable, and innovative community development on the Island.

- 3.1 Foster events, organizations, and gathering spaces that encourage involvement from the Island's entire population. *See Connected Strategy 3.1*
- 3.2 Continue to identify the many different organizations and groups that currently are involved in community building efforts inside and outside the Island's gated communities. *See Connected Strategy 3.4*
- 3.3 Implement the recommendations from the **Workforce Housing Strategic Plan**. *See Connected Tactic 4.1.1, Economy Strategy 6.1, Infrastructure Strategy 6.1, Regional Goal 2*
- 3.4 Consider creating opportunities for diversity in housing costs and transportation modes by creating incentives for redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized spaces. *See Connected Strategy 2.4*
- 3.5 Encourage employer assisted housing programs to encourage more employees of various professions (teachers, police officers, firemen, etc) to live within Town limits. *See Regional Strategy 2.3*
- 3.6 Encourage collaboration and interaction between residential communities. *See Connected Strategy 3.4*
- 3.7 Address housing issues by using a systemic approach that integrates economic development, transportation, and land use.
- 3.8 Integrate public policy recommendations from the **Gullah Geechee Project Report**.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES; CULTURAL RESOURCES: To create awareness and respect for our core community and environmental values, ensuring inclusiveness and equality for all residents and guests.

- 4.1 Encourage programs and education that include residents and visitors in the culture to maintain Island cleanliness, preservation, and protection of natural and cultural preservation areas.
- 4.2 Continue to provide access for Island residents and visitors to enjoy the natural Island environment, so that there is equitable availability via fishing docks, boat ramps, boat launches, ADA infrastructure, parks and open space, trails and pathways, and conserved natural areas for either recreational or personal enjoyment.

5. DIVERSITY: To promote multi-dimensional diversity on the Island, now and into the future.

See Economy Goal 5

- 5.1 Continue to recognize the basic needs and assets for Island communities.
- 5.2 Ensure that local businesses and other public spaces accommodate the ease of mobility for citizens with physical disabilities by complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
See Connected Strategy 4.2, Excellence Strategy 2.4
- 5.3 Foster innovative ways to bridge residential communities inside and outside of the gates with respect to age, income, culture, and education. *See Connected Strategy 2.2*
- 5.4 Identify and address the needs of the different demographics on the Island that include, but are not limited to, the elderly, youth, disabled, Native Island, and Hispanic populations.

6. CULTURAL TOURISM: To promote equitable cultural tourism to improve the quality of life for all stakeholders. *See Economy Tactic 4.1.2*

- 6.1 Continue to support and improve media coverage on the Town’s website, social media, and newsletter for local arts and cultural events.
- 6.2 Continue to recognize the economic value of Hilton Head Island’s art and cultural resources in tourism.
 - 6.2.1 Integrate cultural preservation recommendations from the **Gullah Geechee Project Report**.

7. HEALTHCARE: To foster healthcare and health education that are available, accessible, affordable, innovative, and benefits all.

- 7.1 Coordinate with organizations, such as Volunteers in Medicine, to assess healthcare needs for the diverse Island population.
- 7.2 Consider encouraging diverse offerings to access healthcare, such as Mobile Units.
- 7.3 Foster an environment that will promote innovation and private sector investment in the healthcare industry. *See Economy Strategy 5.4*

8. ARTS; RECREATION; CULTURE: To build diversity and provide exceptional quality of life offerings in arts and recreation. *See Excellence Ideal #8*

- 8.1 Continue to create venues to accommodate special events.
 - 8.1.1 Implement the plan for a community arts campus outlined in the **Venue Committee Report**.
 - 8.1.2 Continue to support and facilitate the use of community parks for festivals and events.
- 8.2 Continue to provide space for the public display of art in parks and within buildings for artists to display their work and add character to the space where it is located. *See Connected Strategy 2.1*
- 8.3 Continue to support arts through funding sources, such as ATAX. *See Economy Strategy 4.6*
- 8.4 Continue to support the Office of Cultural Affairs and the promotion of cultural events, such as festivals, art exhibits, and performances for all cultures represented on the Island. *See Excellence Strategy 2.8*
- 8.5 Implement recommendations from the **Parks + Recreation Master Plan**. *See Excellence Strategy 2.9*

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Chapter 5: Connected

Introduction

Chapter 4 discusses the social arm of sustainability. Similarly, *Building a Connected and Collaborative Community Fabric* is another Core Value that relates strongly to social principles. Both the *Inclusive* and *Connected* Core Values share similar concerns for the Island community; however, achieving a high status of connectivity for Hilton Head Island entails investigation into the many facets that create communities. This includes aspects of all the Core Values from physical connectivity provided by the built environment, to the human connection with the natural environment, or through recreational and cultural experiences. In this way, the *Connected* Core Value is foundational to many of the goals and strategies throughout this document, and encompasses all three facets of sustainability: environment, social, and economy.

What is Community Fabric?

- Connectivity is the fabric that binds community together.

Connected and Excellence: Being a truly connected and collaborative community requires standards of excellence in communication, planning, and the deployment of resources used to build physical and virtual community on the Island. It also requires the Town's mission and values, defined by *Our Future* and *Our Ideals of Excellence*, are clearly communicated to residents and visitors.

Connected and Environment: The human connection to the natural environment on Hilton Head Island is very strong and solicits passion, excitement, and expectation from residents and visitors. It serves as a basis for festivals, events, activities, and art that brings members of the community together.

Connected and Economy: The unique environment and community of Hilton Head Island has built a strong economy around retirement and destination tourism. The connectivity capabilities offered by technology are an important factor in growing the Island's economy into new arenas.

Connected and Inclusive: A community that is not inclusive cannot achieve a high level of connectivity. Efforts towards more inclusion and equity throughout the Island will build connections that foster trust and strengthen community.

Connected and Regional: Hilton Head Island does not exist in a vacuum. The Town is dependent upon relationships and partnerships with other municipalities, organizations, and businesses in the region. Collaborating and ensuring strong lines of communication with these external entities helps to strengthen the Town government and its services.

Connected and Infrastructure: Communities are physically connected by transit infrastructure and virtually connected by technology. These connections are strengthened by best-in-class infrastructure and facilities that can support continued collaboration across property lines and within social, work, virtual, or neighborhood environments.

Connected and Parks + Recreation: The Island park system is extensive. Including the thirteen miles of beach and 65 miles of pathways, the Island’s park system serves a great purpose towards connecting communities to the natural environment, as well as to opportunities for adventure and recreation experiences.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Connected Community

Throughout the Our Future and Our Plan processes, community members expressed an interest in decreasing the feeling of separation that exists on the Island—physical, socio-economic, and virtual. Hilton Head Island’s unique development pattern and social fabric exists as “communities within communities.” Seventy percent of the Island’s land areas belongs to ten planned unit developments. There is no “downtown” in a traditional sense. Instead, multiple nodes of activity are spread out between developed commercial centers, such as the Coligny area, Shelter Cove, and Main Street; however, each provides unique experiences and offerings. The existing pattern of development and activity, instead of presenting a barrier, provides opportunity for the Island community. Finding new ways to build connections in a meaningful way should be considered, and should include societal values and changing interests.

The key factors of building a more connected community fabric entail:

- Building trust;
- Tapping the network of influence and intellectual capital;
- Tapping into the spirit of volunteerism and giving; and
- Defining new spaces and connecting existing ones to provide a sense of cohesion.

A resilient, connected community is one that unites together around and commits to a plan for change, growth, and maintenance. Connectivity is a foundational piece to building a modern community. The opportunity to connect exists when we find ways to bring people together across real and perceived boundaries, and by creating meaningful physical spaces and collaborative platforms. The goals, strategies, and tactics in this chapter address ways the Town can grow connectivity for Hilton Head Island.

Opportunities for Our Connected Community include:

- Collaborative planning and partnership;
- Technology that serves the community;
- Connecting the built environment;
- Investing in quality of life initiatives; and
- A willingness to evolve and take an innovative approach to bridge spatial and societal separations.

Goals

1. **PLANNING:** To ensure the planning process is inclusive, collaborative and on-going, responsive to changing circumstances and stakeholder priorities.
2. **BUILT ENVIRONMENT:** To promote designs for the built environment that capitalize on our natural beauty and community strengths, reinforcing our unique sense of place.
3. **COLLABORATION:** To enable residents and visitors to collaborate around common values and celebrate the realization of shared objectives.
4. **QUALITY OF LIFE:** To foster an exceptional quality of life for residents, outstanding experiences for visitors, and economic opportunity for our workforce.

Strategies and Tactics

1. PLANNING: To ensure the planning process is inclusive, collaborative and on-going, responsive to changing circumstances and stakeholder priorities. See Excellence Strategy 2.1

- 1.1 Apply tools, applications and services to facilitate sharing information supporting community connections and collaborative efforts.
 - 1.1.1 Plan for technology infrastructure to facilitate best-in-class government services.
 - 1.1.2 Maintain a strong presence on social media and keep up with ever-changing and new social media platforms to reinforce the Core Values for the Town.
 - 1.1.3 Evaluate the development and use of technology such as online tools, applications, and services to facilitate connectivity, enhance transparency and increase outreach and public involvement. *See Excellence Tactic 3.5.2*
 - 1.1.4 Solicit input from stakeholders when testing new tools for communication.
 - 1.1.5 Maintain a best-in-class website that is informative, modern and easy to navigate.
 - 1.1.6 Continue the use of multiple forms of communication that are non-digital or technology based. Evaluate these methods periodically to ensure they are the best options available for communication to meet the needs of the community.
- 1.2 Ensure optimal opportunities are provided for citizen and stakeholder participation in the planning and policy development process.
 - 1.2.1 Continue to consider citizen participation when setting meeting times.
 - 1.2.2 Continue to solicit input and participation from stakeholders in Town projects and programs.
 - 1.2.3 Continue to engage experts and taskforces where needed to participate in the planning process.
- 1.3 Work towards a balanced composition of Town boards that reflects the diversity of the Island's population. *See Excellence Tactic 3.5.1*
- 1.4 Engage in cooperative planning efforts with officials from Jasper County, Lowcountry Council of Governments (LCOG), the Town of Bluffton, Beaufort County and other regional localities/counties.
- 1.5 Identify similar areas in the state/region for cross training or opportunities to learn from other municipalities.

2. BUILT ENVIRONMENT: To promote designs for the built environment that capitalize on our natural beauty and community strengths, reinforcing our unique sense of place.

- 2.1 Foster the development of public spaces and streetscape designs that encourage community connections through:
 - See Infrastructure Strategy 1.3, Inclusive Strategy 8.2*
 - a. Vibrant public spaces that provide rich social opportunities;
 - b. Well maintained and attractive spaces;
 - c. Pedestrian scale design;
 - d. Public art; and
 - e. Access to technology that accommodates connectivity.
- 2.2 Foster community connectivity in the location and design of neighborhoods. *See Inclusive Strategy 5.3*
 - 2.2.1 Foster the creation of community nodes with multiple modes of transport connectivity.
 - 2.2.2 Encourage neighborhood designs that provide gathering spaces and connectivity to the pathway network.
 - 2.2.3 Encourage interconnection between developments to promote the establishment of neighborhoods and to provide safe and convenient access to neighborhood level public facilities, such as parks and schools. *See Infrastructure Tactics 1.10.3 and 6.2.1*
- 2.3 Find ways to ensure exceptional “quality of life” ideals are considered when reviewing proposed residential developments. *See Excellence Tactic 3.3.1*
- 2.4 Consider creating incentives for redevelopment with goals of diversity in housing types and cost and types of transportation modes. *See Inclusive 3.4*

3. COLLABORATION: To enable residents and visitors to collaborate around common values and celebrate the realization of shared objectives.

- 3.1 Foster events, organizations, and communication infrastructure that encourage involvement from the Island’s entire population. *See Inclusive Strategy 3.1*
- 3.2 Share data and planning requests to help nonprofit organizations, through the provision of public information, more effectively meet community needs.
- 3.3 Encourage creation of a single source for community information, both online and in print, and participate by providing information on Town programs and events.
- 3.4 Continue to identify the many different organizations and groups that are involved in community building efforts inside and outside the Island’s gated communities. *See Inclusive Strategies 3.2 and 3.6*

- 3.5 Evaluate the creation of workshops and education series on various topics. Consider partnering with universities or other communities.
- 3.6 Continue to maintain and evaluate the Town's communication plan to meet the needs of the community. *See Exclusive 2.1*

4. QUALITY OF LIFE: To foster an exceptional quality of life for residents, outstanding experiences for visitors, and economic opportunity for our workforce.

- 4.1 Foster a healthy, self-sustaining community that encourages economic, cultural, and demographic diversity by understanding the needs and assets of each of the Island's many different communities.
 - 4.1.1 Continue to implement the recommendations from the **Workforce Housing Strategic Plan**. *See Economy Strategy 6.1, Inclusive Strategy 3.3, Infrastructure Strategy 6.1, Regional Goal 2*
 - 4.1.2 Continue to implement the recommendations from the **Gullah Geechee Land and Cultural Preservation Taskforce**, and the **Gullah Geechee Preservation Project Report**.
- 4.2 In support of aging in place efforts, encourage site and building designs that provide high quality experiences associated with ADA requirements, rather than just meeting the minimum standards. Consider a policy that requires the retrofitting of nonconforming sites. *See Excellence Strategy 2.4, Inclusive Strategy 5.2*
- 4.3 Maintain effective and open relationships with education institutions and organizations to ensure there is a vibrant scholastic environment on the Island.
- 4.4 Reinforce Hilton Head Island's unique sense of place and quality of life through environmental education, protection and access to nature and wildlife.
- 4.5 Celebrate and promote the Island's rich arts, culture, history, environment, and recreation opportunities.

Chapter 6: Regional

Introduction

Hilton Head Island is a barrier island, which means it has defined physical boundaries. While the Island's shape and size control available space for development and land-based growth, environmental, social, and economic influences extend beyond the physical controls.

This became relevant with the construction of the Byrnes Bridge in 1956, which aided in economic support for the Island's first grocery store and the Hilton Head Inn that opened that same year. This land-based transportation network was strengthened as the Cross Island Parkway was constructed in 1998, closing the US 278 loop, and connecting the north and south ends of the Island quickly to the mainland. With the advent of convenient vehicular transit to the Island, as well as the development of the Hilton Head Island Airport, investment and development on the Island was made more possible. This helped build the thriving economy and social structures seen today.

Consequently, Hilton Head Island is now an award-winning destination known for its beautiful natural environment, recreation amenities, planned residential communities, cultural heritage, and resorts. In 2020, while home to a modestly sized residential population just under 40,000, the Island will host upwards of 2.6 to 3 million visitors from all over the world. See *Section 2.0, Our Community: Population and Economic Development Elements* for more details about the Island's population, demographics, and tourism.

The systems in place to support this progress require a strong connection to the mainland. Issues the Island faces as it looks forward to 204, require a regional perspective with regional solutions. The Town recognizes this and has been an active participant in regional partnerships, such as Southern Lowcountry Regional Board (SoLoCo), Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS), Lowcountry Council of Governments (LCOG), Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation (BCEDC), and the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance. Town Council and staff remain active and vigilant in participation with these networks, understanding these partnerships are key to ensuring Hilton Head Island remains vibrant, connected, relevant, collaborative, and growing towards the preferred future.

With the growth of the job and tourism market in neighboring communities, Hilton Head Island is no longer the only point of interest in the Lowcountry between Savannah and Charleston. Communities like Bluffton have become vibrant places to live, work, and visit. The regional economy and population expand beyond the boundaries of the Island, bringing in more people, investment, and resources. Also, the Island is downstream of this growth and will be supported by strong regional planning for environmental protections. Looking towards a holistic regional approach to reinventing sustainability, this chapter takes a closer look at how the Town can address opportunities affecting the Island and the region.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Regional Approach

With this discussion about growth in the region, apparent issues facing it involve transportation and the workforce. In 2020, the Island's workforce laborshed extends out to Interstate 95 and into Georgia. As discussed in earlier chapters, many workers choose to live on the mainland and commute to work on the Island, or have had to find affordable places to live elsewhere. The daily influx of commuters and visitors onto the Island has increased drastically in recent years with the growing popularity of the Island as a destination. A regional approach is being taken by the Town and should continue in order to address the impact of work related commuting, regional resident travel, and visitors across the bridge will be required. The same thinking applies to obtainable housing. Answers to these challenges are not solely within the confines of the Island's boundaries.

Other areas to consider are the need for regional planning to address alternative transit infrastructure, such as pathways and bike lanes, emergency response and resilience, and environmental protection. The Island's healthcare system is also reliant on regional partners. The Town's role in healthcare is addressed in *Chapter 4, Inclusive, Goal 7*.

The key factors to consider for our *Regional* approach are:

- Viewing the region as a partner, not a competitor;
- Understanding the pursuit of sustainability extends beyond political and physical boundaries;
- Transportation;
- Transit and housing for the Island's workforce;
- Resiliency planning and emergency response coordination;
- Continued collaboration and involvement in regional initiatives;

- Commitment from other regional governments and partners; and
- Being uniquely situated to bring ideas and lessons learned to the table.

The Town, by taking these factors into account as it moves into the next twenty years of planning and directing policy for the Island, will be able to build on new opportunities and stay a strong regional partner.

Expanding the Town's regional approach could foster:

- Economic diversity for new industries, business sectors and investment;
- A strong connection to Bluffton to collaborate on shorter term solutions;
- Regional thinking as part of everyday decision making;
- Transportation improvements for residents, workers, and visitors;
- The conservation of environmental assets crucial to the destination economy of the region;
- Partnerships across state lines or political boundaries;
- Tapping into the Savannah "arc of innovation" to expand and diversify the Island economy;
- Continued and strengthened regional initiatives; and
- Collaboration and innovative problem solving for issues affecting the region, such as housing and transit for the workforce.

What is the "Arc of Innovation"?

- Hilton Head Island is within range of influence with Savannah, a center for innovation in goods, services, vitality, diversity of social networks, and attraction for young professionals and entrepreneurs. By taking advantage of proximity to and tapping into Savannah's arc, the Island can find creative problem solving resources for issues that can benefit from the innovation and advancements of a larger city.

The following goals, strategies, and tactics provide direction for the Town to move towards *Expanding to Embrace an Integrated Regional Focus* within the areas of planning, housing, transportation, environmental protection, and tourism.

Goals

1. **PLANNING:** To enable innovation and excellence in regional planning and coordination for the Town of Hilton Head Island as a built-in part of the everyday process.
2. **WORKFORCE HOUSING:** To increase supply of workforce housing on Hilton Head Island and in the region within an acceptable commute.
3. **TRANSPORTATION:** To increase access between Hilton Head Island and the region through a viable multimodal transportation system.
4. **ENVIRONMENT:** To lead the region in environmental protection and eco-friendly practices.
5. **TOURISM:** To expand tourism focus in order to promote diverse offerings across the region.

Strategies and Tactics

1. PLANNING: To enable innovation and excellence in regional planning and coordination for the Town of Hilton Head Island as a built-in part of the everyday process.

- 1.1 Collaborate with nearby jurisdictions on regional efforts to increase communication and participation between Hilton Head Island and regional municipal, county, and state governments.
 - 1.1.1 Increase advocacy efforts related to legislative issues that affect the region.
 - 1.1.2 Encourage attendance at annual workshops and/or retreats of other government agencies.
- 1.2 Participate and share in the leadership of the development of strong partnerships within Beaufort County and the region.
 - 1.2.1 Coordinate with regional partners on emergency planning, response, evacuation, and communication.
 - 1.2.2 Continue to participate in meetings and serve as a member on the Southern Lowcountry Regional Board (SOLOCO).
- 1.3 Build and strengthen existing relationships with regional and private sector economic development partners.
 - 1.3.1 Begin building links to innovative research institutions and industry groups in the Savannah Region.
- 1.4 Develop programs and policies to encourage the private sector to become involved in addressing issues such as housing, climate change, environmental protection, and education.

2. WORKFORCE HOUSING: To increase supply of workforce housing on Hilton Head Island and in the region within an acceptable commute. *See Connected Tactic 4.1.1, Economy Strategy 6.1, Inclusive Strategy 3.3, Infrastructure Strategy 6.1*

- 2.1 Pursue regional cooperation of public, private and nonprofit agencies in meeting area housing needs.
- 2.2 Work toward regional solutions to workforce housing issues that result in the construction of quality workforce housing.
- 2.3 Encourage employer assisted housing programs to allow more employees of various professions (teachers, police officers, firemen, etc.) to live within the Town limits or within Beaufort County. *See Inclusive Strategy 3.5*
- 2.4 Evaluate and consider participation in a Regional Housing Trust Fund.

3. TRANSPORTATION: To increase access between Hilton Head Island and the region through a viable multimodal transportation system.

- 3.1 Improve/expand transportation infrastructure to connect the Island's multimodal system to the rest of the region. *See Infrastructure Strategy 1.8*
 - 3.1.1 Coordinate with the State and County to seek funding for safety improvements to provide for a safe, efficient and well-maintained regional transportation network and to protect the capital investment in the transportation system through adequate maintenance of facilities and roadways. *See Infrastructure Tactics 1.4.2 and 1.5.1*
 - 3.1.2 Coordinate with Beaufort County to enhance the Island's pathway network by providing a link from the Town's multi-use pathways to pathway systems on the mainland. *See Infrastructure Tactic 1.9.5*
 - 3.1.3 Coordinate traffic modeling with regional partners for use in future critical, regional transportation projects to develop a regional transportation vision that identifies emerging needs.
 - 3.1.4 Complement public transit operations such as those of Palmetto Breeze (LRTA), by connecting transit stops with employment and tourist destinations. *See Economy Tactic 1.2.3*
 - 3.1.5 Encourage coordination of regional partners to assess potential marine-based transportation to serve Hilton Head Island, Beaufort and Savannah when feasible. *See Economy Strategy 1.2.5*
 - 3.1.6 Coordinate and work with appropriate agencies to plan for, evaluate, and implement evacuation routes away from the coast of South Carolina and Georgia for safety, efficiency, and capacity.

- 3.1.7 Work with appropriate agencies, including SCDOT, Town of Bluffton and Beaufort County, to provide input on roadway improvements along the US 278 corridor and projects such as the widening of I-95 and I-16, as well as the secondary road system in southern Beaufort County.
- 3.1.8 Promote regional transportation and land use planning for all of southern Beaufort County by working with the Town of Bluffton, Hardeeville, and Beaufort County.
- 3.1.9 Encourage the coordination of regional public transit to serve the mainland and the Island for workers and visitors, including the potential for public transit to and from the Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport and the Hilton Head Island Airport. *See Economy Tactics 1.2.2 and 6.4.2*
- 3.1.10 Coordinate with appropriate agencies for the protection and routine maintenance of the bridges and causeways that provide the only ground transportation link from the Island to the mainland.

4. ENVIRONMENT: To lead the region in environmental protection and eco-friendly practices.

- 4.1 Develop regional approaches to promote resiliency to climate change and sea level rise.
- 4.2 Partner regionally on environmental education by initiating and maintaining partnerships with other municipalities, county, state, and federal agencies for environmental education purposes.
 - 4.2.1 Host workshops and seminars in Beaufort County for the general public's information on environmental issues and regulations.
- 4.3 Partner on land acquisition to preserve open space or serve the needs of the region for parks and recreation.
 - 4.3.1 Coordinate with various agencies including Beaufort County Rural & Critical Lands Board and property owners to identify and purchase undeveloped property for parks and recreation or preservation as needed.
 - 4.3.2 Coordinate conservation of regional environmental assets and plans for natural resource and habitat preservation by acquiring conservation and park land to preserve natural and cultural resources for education, interpretive, and passive recreation uses.
- 4.4 Cooperate with Beaufort County and appropriate agencies to seek funding sources to increase the capacity and level of service for recycling and waste management on the Island. *See Environment Goal 1*
- 4.5 Promote environmental protection through regulation and eco-friendly practices during the development and redevelopment processes in the region. *See Environment Goal 2*

5. TOURISM: To expand tourism focus in order to promote diverse offerings across the region.

- 5.1 Partner across the region to identify and market our collective strengths, unique qualities, and cultural/heritage tourism in order to identify, develop and leverage the region's competitive advantages.
- 5.2 Attract businesses that can appropriately diversify the region's tourism industry, such as technology and sustainability.
- 5.3 Identify and encourage the conservation of regional assets that bring people to the area/region.

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Chapter 7: Infrastructure

Introduction

The world-wide recognition and increasing popularity of Hilton Head Island in recent years has generated increased demands on the Island's infrastructure. New and improved private sector amenities, an expanding tourism season, and residential growth all contribute. However, many once thriving commercial centers on the Island host high vacancies or are in need of renovation and reimagining. Environmental factors, such as storms and growing concern for sea-level rise, are increasingly important. For the Island, developing sustainable solutions to address and adapt to future infrastructure needs will require taking a holistic look at the economic, environmental, and social arms of sustainability.

What is Infrastructure?

- For the purposes of Our Plan, Infrastructure includes housing, transportation, public amenities and services, community facilities, utilities, and resilience and recovery planning.

Currently, the Town has strong control measures and initiatives that help ensure our infrastructure is meeting community needs. These include the Land Management Ordinance and zoning regulations, Capital Improvement Plan covered in *Section 5.0, Priority Investment*, and programs like the completed overhead powerline burial and public sewer installation. Current initiatives include the Gullah Geechee Preservation Project and **Workforce Housing Strategic Plan**. Looking forward to 2040 should include not only these types of initiatives for the community, but also a plan to adapt to and respond to changes in the economy, societal demands, and the environment that will affect the Island's infrastructure.

For this Core Value, the call is for the Town to respond with an *Innovative Approach to Create 'Right-Sized' Infrastructure*. 'Right-sized' infrastructure anticipates future or trending changes in community needs or interests, level of service capabilities, capacity demands, or methods for delivery of services. The response to these changes should be measured and appropriate for Hilton Head Island's unique characteristics. This ensures careful consideration is given by the Town to develop policy for the Island's infrastructure that is relevant and sustainable.

What is 'Right-Sized'?

- 'Right-sized' infrastructure anticipates future or trending changes in community needs or interests, level of service capabilities, capacity demands, or methods for delivery of services. The response to these changes should be measured and appropriate for Hilton Head Island's fluctuating population, stakeholders, development standards, and environmental constraints.

Key Ideas Shaping Our Infrastructure

In the next two decades, it will be important to anticipate the impact advancements in technology will have. Emerging trends, such as 5G telecommunication, are already affecting the Island. There are other technologies with potential to impact the Island's community planning and infrastructure:

- Autonomous vehicles (AV) and autonomous electric vehicles (AEV) will operate on smart systems, and potentially affect traffic patterns, and roadway and parking standards.
- Online shopping has brought a decline to brick and mortar retail. Several commercial centers on the Island have already been impacted and are vacant or have low occupancy. A decline in use can bring degradation to the development and surrounding areas.
- Renewable energy advancements could change energy delivery systems and storage, which will impact existing and new utility conduits. Private communities may want to adapt covenants to allow for new systems, such as solar panels.

The goals in this chapter are organized around seven key categories for the Island's infrastructure: land transportation, air transportation, resilience and disaster recovery, utilities, public services, community facilities, and housing.

Defining Housing:

- In terms of this Core Value, housing entails the network of infrastructure supporting neighborhoods and community nodes. This network includes the roads, services, parks and open space or places to gather, schools, obtainable food resources, and utilities. Residential communities should have access to equitable standards of living and high quality of life offerings.

The following are specific implications for each topic area addressed by this chapter's goals, strategies and tactics.

Transportation (Land):

- Projected future development on the mainland and Island will continue to increase traffic.
- The Island’s ground transportation network should be evaluated holistically to ensure capacity demands are met.
- Expanding the multi-use pathway network, providing safe intersection facilities, and improving transit services should be done when feasible or practical.

Transportation (Air):

- The Hilton Head Island Airport serves an important role in the Island’s transportation network and economy.
- Though the Town does not own or manage the airport, it should continue to be involved with future planning to ensure consideration for Island residents’ concerns.

Resilience and Disaster Recovery:

- As a barrier island, Hilton Head Island is particularly sensitive to the effects of sea level rise, tropical storms, hurricanes, drought, and other environmental threats.
- The Town should ensure existing and future infrastructure is resilient and accommodates anticipated changes to the environment. *See Environment Goal 6*

Utilities:

- As a limited services government that does not directly manage utilities, the Town has built strong partnerships with the utility service providers.
- The Town should continue to work with service providers to ensure the Island has an effective and efficient utility system that minimizes interruption in services and is resilient from environmental and security threats.
- Efficient use of our utilities will assist in the preservation of natural resources. *See Environment Goals 3 and 4*

Public Services and Community Facilities:

- Public services are defined as safety, emergency, planning, and administrative services provided to the public by the Town.
- Changes to the economy and technology, pressure from the increasing population on the mainland, and the impacts of climate change will create new, complex challenges for public service providers.
- The Town should continue to provide best-in-class service by continually assessing and adapting its operations to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

Housing:

- The need for workforce housing is currently a top issue, and the need for more diverse housing options is also important.
- The Town should continue to assess development standards and building codes to foster private sector development of needed and diverse housing.
- New and redeveloped housing should maintain the character of the Island.

To summarize, the following are key ideas and opportunities shaping the Town's approach to infrastructure.

Key ideas for our *Infrastructure* include:

- Health, safety, and welfare are Town priorities;
- Advances in technology will affect the Island's infrastructure systems and controls;
- Technology could affect the Island's social structures;
- Traffic congestion affects quality of life;
- The need for Island-wide, multi-modal transportation will increase with time;
- Population growth and tourism place high demands on the Island's infrastructure;
- Natural resources, such as potable water, are to be protected;
- Sea-level rise and storms will affect Island infrastructure;
- Town services and facilities should be best-in-class; and
- There is a need for more, as well as diverse, housing offerings.

The Town has the opportunity to take an innovative approach to *Infrastructure* by:

- Development, redevelopment, or adaptive reuse of Town facilities to ensure best-in-class service for the community;
- Continuing connections Island-wide between work and residential nodes through calculated expansion of the pathway network;
- Monitoring the community need for Island-wide transit systems;
- Considering the impact of AV's or AEV's on the road network and traffic patterns;
- Thinking strategically and creatively to address traffic congestion;
- Continuing to work with Beaufort County on planning for the Hilton Head Island Airport;
- Continuing to foster private sector investment in state of the art technology infrastructure; and
- Continuing progress in developing policy to address the Island's housing challenges.

Taking these factors into consideration, with current measures and projects the Town has in place, provides opportunities for innovation in creating 'right-sized' infrastructure. Alignment with past planning efforts and lessons learned will also be important to supporting the evolution of the

Island into the future. The following goals, strategies, and tactics take a closer look at aspirations and plans of action the Town can use to address the Island's infrastructure needs.

Goals

1. **TRANSPORTATION (LAND):** To establish a dedicated, Island-specific transportation system.
2. **TRANSPORTATION (AIR):** To 'Right-Size' the airport's capabilities and operations.
3. **RESILIENCE:** To plan for physical, social, and economic resilience from climate and environmental challenges.
4. **UTILITIES:** To foster safe, effective and resilient utility systems for the Island.
5. **PUBLIC SERVICES:** To promote efficient and secure public services to meet current and future needs.
6. **HOUSING:** To promote housing options to meet the needs of all current and future populations on the Island.
7. **TECHNOLOGY:** To anticipate policy implications and resource investments needed to embrace emerging technologies.

Strategies and Tactics

1. TRANSPORTATION (LAND): To establish a dedicated, Island-specific transportation system-

- 1.1 Maintain and improve the road network to provide safe and convenient access and interconnections to all areas of the Island.
 - 1.1.1 Develop and implement a transportation plan for Hilton Head Island including specific action items to address resident, worker and visitor transportation, transit, multi-modal and multi-use pathway related goals and strategies in the comprehensive plan.
 - 1.1.2 Coordinate with SCDOT and Beaufort County to maintain the Island's capacity needs of William Hilton Parkway and other arterial streets.
 - 1.1.3 Continue to consider plans for alternative road systems to remove some of the traffic burden from William Hilton Parkway.
 - 1.1.4 Future road projects within the Town should be carefully planned to minimize impact to neighborhoods.
 - 1.1.5 Consider acquisition of land for future transportation improvements.
 - 1.1.6 Maintain specific traffic analysis standards in the Land Management Ordinance to guide development in accordance with the existing and future needs of the Town.

- 1.2 Promote the installation of infrastructure that supports emerging alternatives to traditional automobile travel.
 - 1.2.1 Ensure policies effectively regulate and infrastructure reasonably accommodates emerging modes of transportation, such as Autonomous Vehicles (AVs), micro transit, and Mobility as a Service (MaaS).

MaaS Definition:

 - MaaS is a concept describing a shift away from the ownership of personal vehicles for transportation to the use of public and private services offered through a unified structure to meet the specified needs of travelers.
 - 1.2.2 Continue to implement concepts, such as Complete Streets, where appropriate that integrate multiple forms of transportation modes and promote connectivity.
- 1.3 Evaluate and install streetscape methods to establish Island character for redevelopment areas, roadways, recreation or activity centers, pedestrian oriented areas, and gateways. These methods should include safety standards for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as use of coordinated landscaping, lighting, street furniture, and other public amenities. *See Connected Strategy 2.1*
- 1.4 Maintain all roads on Hilton Head Island to ensure safety and improve access for all users.
 - 1.4.1 Continue to encourage and facilitate the paving of dirt roads throughout the Island.
 - 1.4.2 Continue to work with and encourage Beaufort County, SCDOT, and private road owners to protect investment in the transportation system through adequate maintenance of facilities, roadways and associated drainage facilities. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.1*
 - 1.4.3 Continue to offer maintenance services and support litter-control efforts on and off-Island.
- 1.5 Ensure the Town receives sufficient and equitable funding for transportation projects.
 - 1.5.1 Continue to seek funding for safety improvements to Island roads by coordinating with SCDOT, the Beaufort County Transportation Committee (CTC), and other entities to secure funds. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.1*
 - 1.5.2 Consider updating the transportation impact fees program for both the Town and the County with new developments paying for capacity enhancing modifications based on their impact to the transportation system.
- 1.6 Continue to collect and maintain data on traffic volume for the road network throughout the year to assess existing and potential deficiencies in the road network and to provide a basis for making future transportation and land use decisions.
 - 1.6.1 Continue to prepare Traffic Monitoring and Evaluation Reports on an annual basis.

- 1.6.2 Perform traffic modeling through the regional traffic model at least once every 10 years, or more often as needs and concerns dictate, to identify locations for roadway improvements and define capital improvement projects.
 - 1.6.3 Consider preparing Traffic Monitoring and Evaluation Reports on an annual basis for the Island's traffic circles.
- 1.7 Continue to educate and involve the public regarding transportation safety issues.
- 1.7.1 Research best practices from other communities to ensure education and communication efforts are using emerging forms of technology and new trends in communication.
 - 1.7.2 Coordinate with State and local law enforcement officials to enforce transportation-related laws and other regulations that improve safety.
 - 1.7.3 Coordinate with appropriate agencies to plan for and implement safe and efficient evacuation routes off of the Island.
- 1.8 Expand the public transportation system serving the Island in a fiscally responsible manner to provide transportation options to the greatest number of residents, workers, and visitors. *See Economy Strategy 1.2, Regional Strategy 3.1, Environment Strategies 7.1 and 7.2*
- 1.8.1 Research alternative ways to provide needed services, such as programs that subsidize ride share services for specific destinations, and explore ways to support last-mile transportation options.
 - 1.8.2 Promote public transportation by evaluating the incorporation of transit infrastructure for suitable developments.
 - 1.8.3 Explore opportunities for Park-n-Ride lots for commuters and/or public or private bus services for commuters.
 - 1.8.4 Support coordination between public transportation providers, major employers, large communities and special needs providers to increase the utility of public transportation and connect public and private transit systems.
 - 1.8.5 Plan for the needs of AVs used for public transportation.
- 1.9 Expand the multi-use pathway network to provide a comprehensive, Island-wide network that provides for recreational opportunities as well as an alternative means of transportation to/from and on the Island. *See Environment Strategy 7.2*
- 1.9.1 Continue to assess the viability of constructing multi-use pathways and supporting infrastructure in conjunction with each Town road improvement or drainage project.
 - 1.9.2 Investigate creating a signature, multi-use greenway connecting commercial, civic, historic, recreation and cultural sites.
 - 1.9.3 Ensure the multi-use pathway network complements public transit services such as Palmetto Breeze by connecting transit stops with employment, commercial, and recreational destinations.

- 1.9.4 Examine requiring connections between developments and nearby sidewalks and multi-use pathways to improve safety and accessibility.
 - 1.9.5 Coordinate with SCDOT and Beaufort County to establish a safe multi-use pathway connection between the Island and the mainland. *See Regional Tactic 3.1.2*
 - 1.9.6 Continue to seek funding for safety improvements to Island multi-use pathways by coordinating with SCDOT, the Beaufort County Transportation Committee (CTC), and other entities.
- 1.10 Continue to improve safety of the multi-use pathway system by identifying conflicts and improvement opportunities.
- 1.10.1 Inventory and maintain areas for safety issues, such as low-hanging vegetation, inadequate signage, lines of sight, and irregular asphalt.
 - 1.10.2 Use accident data to determine and plan pedestrian and bicyclist needs at intersections, including crossings and warning alerts.
 - 1.10.3 Investigate opportunities to implement safety programs such as “Safe Routes to Schools” for the benefit of the community. *See Connected Tactic 2.2.3*

2. TRANSPORTATION (AIR): To ‘Right-Size’ the airport’s capabilities and operations.

- 2.1 Continue to collaborate with federal, state, and county authorities and general aviation interests to enhance visitor, business and resident accessibility to aviation services.
- 2.2 Ensure that development surrounding the airport is designed and constructed to minimize the negative impacts of being located near the airport.
 - 2.2.1 Continue to review development proposals within the Airport Overlay (A-O) District to ensure the site is designed with the maximum safety possible for the occupants of the site. *See LMO Section 16-3-106.E*
- 2.3 Encourage Beaufort County to evaluate the interests of nearby residents and property owners when considering changes to the airport facilities.
 - 2.3.1 Assist Beaufort County with pre-planning for airport modifications.
 - 2.3.2 Participate in updates to the **Hilton Head Island Airport Master Plan**.
- 2.4 Coordinate with Beaufort County for potential use of the airport as a staging ground during disaster recovery.

3. RESILIENCE: To plan for physical, social, and economic resilience from climate and environmental challenges. See *Environment Goal 6*

- 3.1 Establish an integrated program for resistance to and resilience from the effects of rising sea levels and tropical storms. *See Environment Strategy 6.1*
 - 3.1.1 The Town should consider assessing environmental resistance and resilience when considering private and public development projects.
 - 3.1.2 Evaluate changes to zoning and building codes to minimize vulnerabilities.
 - 3.1.3 Continue to maintain and replenish Town disaster relief funds.
 - 3.1.4 Consider developing and implementing a sea-level rise adaptation plan for the Town.
- 3.2 Identify and fund proactive investments in public actions which enhance resistance to and recovery from environmental challenges.

4. UTILITIES: To foster safe, effective and resilient utility systems for the Island.

- 4.1 Promote utility infrastructure policies and investments that promote efficiency, improve safety and environmental quality, and embrace emerging technologies.
 - 4.1.1 Encourage collaborative projects and programs among the Public Service Districts that benefit long-term water resource stewardship and protection.
 - 4.1.2 Consider the challenges and impact storms and sea-level rise have on the Island's stormwater infrastructure.
- 4.2 Enforce community standards for discretionary water use. *See Environment Strategy 3.2*
 - 4.2.1 Support programs and education to help reduce the use of potable water for residential irrigation.
 - 4.2.2 Explore methods to increase compliance with the existing residential irrigation code.
 - 4.2.3 Use reclaimed water when maintaining Town projects where financially feasible.
 - 4.2.4 Develop a program to educate the public on water conservation and water reuse.
- 4.3 Investigate development and operation of alternative energy and water sources.
 - 4.3.1 Encourage PSD investigations into alternative sources of potable water.
- 4.4 Encourage sewer service connections made possible through partnership with the Hilton Head PSD.
- 4.5 Continue to work with the three Public Service Districts to develop programs that ensure fire hydrants are installed in needed locations to minimize the risk of fire hazards.

- 4.6 Ensure the Town’s Stormwater Utility is adequately funded, supported and staffed to meet existing and anticipated needs of the Island’s stormwater policies, programs and infrastructure.
- 4.6.1 Continue to ensure stormwater infrastructure is well-maintained, resilient and effective.
 - 4.6.2 Continue to work with Beaufort County in coordination of updating and implementing the **Beaufort County Stormwater Master Plan** as applicable.
 - 4.6.3 Evaluate the need for the Town’s Stormwater Utility to develop, adopt and implement a “Town of Hilton Head Island Stormwater Master Plan and Policy Guide” to be reviewed and updated every five years. This could address any outdated aspects of the **1995 Island Wide Drainage Study**.
 - 4.6.4 Consider updating the **1995 Island Wide Drainage Study** to address current conditions and needs, or incorporate into a new plan per Strategy 4.6.3 above.
 - 4.6.5 Ensure that the **NPDES Stormwater Management Plan** is annually updated and implemented for compliance with the 1972 Clean Water Act and the Town’s state NPDES permit.

5. PUBLIC SERVICES: To promote efficient and secure public services to meet current and future needs.

Public Services Definition:

- Public services include safety, emergency, planning, and administrative services provided by the Town for the public.

- 5.1 Ensure the Town government and staff are structured to meet the challenges of increased population, regulatory complexity, technical development, and public expectations. *See Excellence Strategy 2.7*
- 5.1.1 Evaluate and address staffing levels of existing and potential new departments as needed, and consider the facility needs of the Town staff for the next twenty years.
 - 5.1.2 Evaluate existing Town facilities and identify opportunities for redevelopment or new construction to provide best in class facilities across the Town government. *See*
 - 5.1.3 Identify the redevelopment of Town and Fire Rescue facilities in a manner that provides for resiliency during disaster situations, to include the Emergency Operations Center, E911 Communications Center, Fire Rescue Headquarters/Fleet Maintenance, and other facilities.
- 5.2 Ensure the Town continues to provide best-in-class services and facilities that meet or exceed the expectations of its residents and visitors. *See Excellence Strategy 2.7*
- 5.2.1 Continue to research the availability of new funding sources that will help to diversify the Town’s revenue sources and assist in funding any new services that may be provided by the Town.

- 5.3 Ensure the safety of Town residents and visitors through excellent law enforcement, Fire Rescue, Emergency Management and Disaster Recovery Services. *See Excellence Strategy 2.6*
 - 5.3.1 Continue to assess all public services regularly and adjust services as necessary.
 - 5.3.2 Support and utilize recognized accreditation processes to assure the public of the quality and integrity of Town services and that demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.
 - 5.3.3 Implement the recommendations of the **Fire Rescue Strategic Plan**.
 - 5.3.4 Support the evaluation of the Fire Rescue Standard of Cover Document to ensure the emergencies experienced by the public are addressed with a timely response model that provides adequate resources and staffing.
- 5.4 Continue to implement the Town's Land Acquisition Program.
 - 5.4.1 Continue to preserve and protect the Island's character through land acquisition.
 - 5.4.2 Evaluate the use of Town-owned land for construction of public facilities and/or the establishment of active and passive parks.
 - 5.4.3 Evaluate the funding and policies of the Land Acquisition Program to determine if any changes are required to better address the needs of the community.
- 5.5 Encourage public service providers to ensure continuity of essential services for all Island residents and businesses.
- 5.6 Continue the Mitigation Actions in the **Beaufort County Hazard Mitigation Plan** and participate in future updates.
- 5.7 Continue the implementation of the **Disaster Recovery Plan**.
- 5.8 Continue the review and implementation of the Town's **Emergency Operations Plan** to prepare for a response to events impacting the Island community.
- 5.9 Continue the development and implementation of the Town's **Ten-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP)**.
 - 5.9.1 Coordinate the CIP with any and all agencies that provide public facilities to the Town, including PSDs, Beaufort County, etc.
 - 5.9.2 Prepare and update a 10-year CIP on an annual basis that includes funding options.
 - 5.9.3 Evaluate public facility demands for new or redevelopment on a project-by-project basis to assure capital facilities are provided concurrent with development.
- 5.10 Plan and coordinate future transportation investments.
 - 5.10.1 Continue to update and maintain a ten-year CIP in accordance with all state laws. This program should consider road and multi-use pathway improvements, park and town facilities, and drainage projects, at a minimum.

- 5.10.2 Coordinate improvements to the Town's **1995 Island Wide Drainage Study** and other Capital Improvement Projects in conjunction with transportation improvements.
- 5.10.3 Coordinate transportation improvements with the Town's **1995 Island Wide Drainage Study** and any other drainage, water or sewer improvement project.

6. HOUSING: To promote housing options to meet the needs of all current and future populations on the Island.

- 6.1 Adopt policies to support the recommendations per the **Workforce Housing Strategic Plan**. See *Connected Tactic 4.1.1, Economy Strategy 6.1, Inclusive Strategy 3.3, Regional Goal 2*
- 6.2 Continually assess development standards and building codes to ensure they encourage the development of needed housing.
 - 6.2.1 Consider regulations to require interconnection between developments, which promotes the establishment of neighborhoods and to provide safe and convenient access to neighborhood level public facilities, particularly schools and parks. See *Connected Tactic 2.2.3*
- 6.3 Evaluate proposed changes to residential density to ensure they are appropriate for the character of the area and the neighboring properties.

7. TECHNOLOGY: To anticipate policy implications and resource investments needed to embrace emerging technologies.

- 7.1 Adopt policies to accommodate emerging technologies while continuing to adapt for future needs or trends, for example, fiber optic service for the entire Island, 5G, information management, and cellular satellite.
- 7.2 Continue to implement technology improvements and provide quality information technology at Town facilities.
 - 7.2.1 Update the **Hilton Head Island Technology Action Plan** regularly to ensure it addresses changes in existing and emerging technology.