



# Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

## An Update from Town Manager Steve Riley 10/7/2020

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update on what's happening around Town:

### **Town Council Meeting Update**

Town Council met on Tuesday and took the following action:

- Passed (first reading) *Our Plan*, which can be viewed online at <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/projects/CompPlanUpdate/>. *Our Plan* is the Town's 2020-2040 Comprehensive Plan. Staff and citizens have spent a considerable amount of time developing this blueprint document that will guide us over the next two decades.
- Adopted the Town's Parks and Recreation Master Plan Part 1. A draft copy of the Master Plan can be viewed online at <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/projects/parksrecreation/>.
- Passed an Emergency Ordinance 2020-30 - requiring individuals to wear face coverings in certain circumstances and locations in the Municipal limits of the Town of Hilton Head Island, and providing for severability and an effective date. This Ordinance is an extension of the Emergency Mask Ordinance that has been in effect since July 1, 2020. Overwhelmingly Council members based their reasons for this extension on information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, S.C. DHEC and local healthcare providers that show individuals need to continue wearing masks to help reduce the spread of the coronavirus. .
- Passed amendments to the Town's FY2021 budget, including providing funds for the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina and the Concours d'Elegance. The finances of these entities, as well as many others on the Island, have been tremendously affected by COVID-19. Town Council's Finance and Administrative Committee will be considering a process by which other organizations may request support to sustain themselves.
- Passed (first reading) an amendment of the proposed ordinance related to the Workforce Housing LMO zoning amendments, considering only the zoning amendments related to commercial conversions, and removing the zoning amendments that speak to bonus density and incentives.



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## **Covered Overlook for Islander's Beach Park**

From time to time, we get great ideas from our citizens such as a recent one to build a covered overlook for Islander's Beach Park. Such a pavilion would make it possible for individuals with disabilities to enjoy the beach if for some reason they are physically unable to get on the beach. A staff team at the Town has met to discuss the citizen idea of installing this covered overlook. A candidate location has been identified adjacent to the current boardwalk, seaward of the primary line of vegetation. A Task Order from our on-call architect has been solicited for survey, design, permitting and the development of construction documents. Professional services are estimated to be in excess of \$20,000 based on the recommended features of the covered overlook. This item is slated to be reviewed by Town Council's Community Services and Public Safety Committee on October 26, 2020.

## **Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) announced that the application period for Flood Mitigation Assistance grants opened on September 30, 2020. This program provides resources to assist efforts to reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. Applications must be for either a repetitive loss or severe repetitive loss structure. Individual property owners must apply for funding through the Town. The Town submits applications to SCDNR/FEMA for review and consideration. The application deadline is November 16, 2020. For more information and an application form, interested property owners may contact Marcy Benson, Senior Grants Administrator for the Town, at 843-341-4689 or [marcyb@hiltonheadislandsc.gov](mailto:marcyb@hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

## **U.S 278 Corridor Project Phase 2**

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) has begun planning for Phase 2 of the U.S. 278 Corridor project. During this phase, aesthetic aspects of the corridor will be essential to the project's success and will include discussions of architectural elements, landscaping, signage, lighting, and other similarly important areas of design. SCDOT has informed us that they are in discussions with Creative Design Resolutions, a Maryland-based company that is a national leader in infrastructure design for highways and transportation projects, to provide project leadership in these important areas. Creative Design Resolutions has worked with more than a third of all DOTs across the country and is known for its seamless collaboration with all parties within a community to achieve context sensitive solutions that are celebrated by all stakeholders.

## **Hilton Head Island is America's No. 1 Island – Again!**

Hilton Head Island has been named the No. 1 Island in the U.S. by the readers of



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*Condé Nast Traveler* for the fourth consecutive year. To read what the editors and readers had to say visit [www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2013-10-15/best-islands-america](http://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2013-10-15/best-islands-america). The beach, restaurants, local shops, bike trails and many other outdoor amenities contribute the reasons visitors like our Island. Thank you to everyone who makes our community warm and welcoming. Congratulations are also in order for the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport, which is listed as the No.1 [Domestic Airport in the U.S.](#) The Inn & Club at Harbour Town, Palmetto Dunes Oceanfront Resort, and Montage Palmetto Bluff were all also named to the [Top Resorts in the South](#).

### **SC Coastal Municipalities and Small Business Chamber Celebrate Seismic Lawsuit Win**

Coastal municipalities, including the Town of Hilton Head Island, scored a major environmental win on Tuesday in the battle to ban offshore drilling in the Atlantic. U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel of South Carolina issued a Rubin Order, or a conditional dismissal, of the federal seismic litigation following a concession from the Federal Defendants that the Incidental Harassment Authorizations (IHAs) allowing seismic blasting in the Atlantic will expire at the end of November and cannot be extended, renewed or reissued, and a concession from the seismic companies that they cannot begin surveying prior to the expiration.

As a result of these admissions, the five companies granted these permissions would have to completely restart the months-long permit application process, including the opportunity for public notice and comment. The decision is a major victory for the 16 coastal municipalities and the South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce that challenged these IHAs that the National Marine Fisheries Service issued to the companies.

These IHAs would have allowed the companies to harass scores of marine life during seismic airgun blasting, a process that involves extremely loud, continuous blasts of acoustic pulses to map oil and gas deposits along the ocean floor.

### **Beaufort County Library Branches Are Open**

We know our local library is a popular spot. It quietly reopened to the public on Monday. Hilton Head Branch Hours effective October 5 are Mondays-Thursdays, 10am-6pm; and Fridays-Saturdays, 10am-5pm. Library staff is committed to a safe reopening and ask that you please help keep and have a healthy the library environment. Visitors and employees are required to wear a mask and practice social distancing. During this phase of library reopening:

- Quick, "Grab and Go" service & browsing is encouraged.
- Buildings will be limited to 50% normal occupancy.
- Limited use of [public computers](#) (30 mins).



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- [Curbside service](#) will continue.
- Library [volunteers](#) can return if they choose.
- [Book donations](#) are again accepted.
- Library events and meeting room reservations remain suspended.

## **Free COVID-19 Tests**

Please remain vigilant about COVID-19, especially as we head into the season when illnesses like cold and flu are more common. If you are out and about in the community, around others, or not able to socially distance or wear a mask, SCDHEC recommends that you get tested at least once a month. Hilton Head Hospital and its sister facility, Coastal Carolina Hospital in Hardeeville, continues to provide free COVID-19 drive-thru testing from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday thru Friday. You do not need an appointment or a physician's order. You can also visit [scdhec.gov/covid19testing](https://www.scdhec.gov/covid19testing) to find other testing clinics or events near you and what the requirements are for testing at those locations.

## **COVID-19 Cases in our Community**

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control releases daily updates to keep the community apprised of the number of coronavirus cases learning of after testing and the number deaths resulting from COVID-19 symptoms. For the latest figures related to COVID-19 on Hilton Head Island, our County and our state, please visit [www.scdhec.gov](https://www.scdhec.gov) or the Town's COVID-19 hub page at [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19](https://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19).