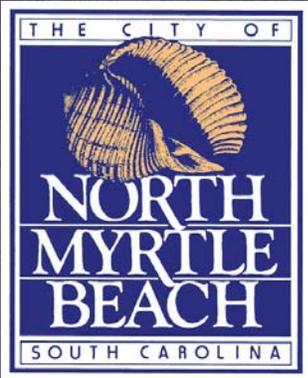




The City of North Myrtle Beach
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | 2018



Summer 2018



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was prepared for:**

City of North Myrtle Beach

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Table of Contents Photo Credit

Jason Barnette | Southeastern Traveler



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Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die.

- Daniel H. Burnham



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1

THE PATH FORWARD



***North Myrtle Beach – come to
recreate, relax, and rejuvenate.***

Each of us has a vision of what the City of North Myrtle Beach should be like in the future. Although our visions are different, they share common qualities and reference points. We hope to create a safe, attractive city for ourselves, our children, and for future generations. We envision a city where the natural environment is protected, where excellent services are provided, and where citizens are true partners in their city government. We aspire to create a city that is economically healthy and a good place to do business. We envision a city that has balanced mobility options and connections to city-wide and regional networks. We see our community as a great place to live now and in the future.

Vision Structure

This comprehensive plan was developed over a series of public engagement and city design efforts. It was created by condensing all of the information gathered into the following structure.



Vision Statement:

In North Myrtle Beach, the ocean is our playground and our connection to the world. As an oceanfront community, it is our responsibility to care for our natural environment and our beaches while continuing to enhance our city as a place for people. Our neighborhoods are full of families and diverse residents who value our laid-back lifestyle for a vacation or a lifetime. Our beach is beautiful and clean, our network of parks and recreation facilities including our golf courses is world class, and our shopping areas are vibrant.

PUBLIC PRIORITIES

The community engagement process was conducted in two phases; the first was led by Seamon Whiteside and Urban Edge Studio, and the second phase was led by Stantec. The first phase occurred in May, 2015 and focused on interactive stakeholder meetings. Stantec held stakeholder meetings in May, 2016, but also focused on collaborative design work.

The specific issues addressed during the public involvement process were as follows:



Main Street and Other Town Centers

Signature pedestrian-centric commercial, entertainment, and dining opportunities along these streets could become the heart of each community in North Myrtle Beach. For this to occur, the city may need to address mixed-use development, heights, setbacks, parking, and architectural character in specific and intentional ways to achieve the desired results.



Land Use Issues

An appropriate mix of residential, commercial, civic, and industrial uses needs to be explored to ensure the community maintains balance. The city should explore mixed-use development, infill, and redevelopment potential, as well as, possible overlay districts that achieve the vision of a more family-friendly, attractive city that is welcoming to visitors.



Redevelopment Strategies

Some structures in the city are older, in disrepair, and may have outlived their time of useful service. Many of these are automobile-centric, with numerous curb cuts and surface parking areas between the street and the building. The comprehensive plan should address redevelopment strategies that target land use, parking, setbacks, access management, and character in an effort to encourage more walkable, pedestrian-oriented development.



Annexation

Several geographic areas are surrounded on all sides by the City of North Myrtle Beach and are also in Horry County. These areas, commonly referred to as “doughnut holes,” fall under different guidelines and requirements than the surrounding properties within the city’s municipal boundaries. The city should develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing these properties in order to ensure cohesive development and character between properties in the city and those that are not, but are perceived as being in the city.



Residential Development

During the various public engagement sessions in this planning process, stakeholders and citizens voiced opinions about the type, quality, and character of residential development in the city. A small minority advocated for less density while the majority of citizens saw the advantages of more dense residential and mixed-use development, as well as, the unsustainable costs and impacts of sprawl. North Myrtle Beach should provide housing choices that accommodate different income levels and reflect multi-generational values.

Complete Streets

Although the city was one of the first in the region to create a complete streets policy, there is still much work to be done to implement it. The comprehensive plan should address access management, thoroughfare standards, utilities, stormwater, landscaping, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes/paths. Specifically, there should be a strategy for retrofitting existing streets to be “complete” with the addition of sidewalks, bike lanes, street trees, etc. Additional factors should be addressed that are outside the public right-of-way, but help create the public realm including setbacks, heights, signage, and parking.



Architectural Character

Participants in this planning process also commented on the importance of architectural style, character, and quality in North Myrtle Beach. Design guidelines can help to standardize the quality of materials and architectural style, contributing to a more cohesive and attractive place. Several comments were recorded from citizens that perceived the existing architecture to be “tacky” or seeming to be temporary, rather than of high quality and importance.



Economic Development

Economic development is crucial to the ongoing success of a community. Citizens raised questions as to the types of economic development that were most appropriate for North Myrtle Beach: Tourism? Manufacturing? High Tech? Sports and recreation? A balanced and comprehensive economic development strategy is needed with cooperation and input from the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce and Horry County.



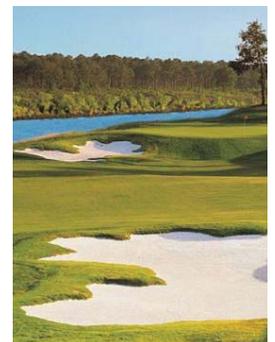
Parks and Open Space

Open space preservation and conservation, beach and wetland protection, and more greenways and bicycle facilities are very important components of any responsible comprehensive plan or land use strategy. This was an issue that was raised often by the citizens as being a high priority. Depending on the scale, preserved open space provides multiple benefits, such as enhanced water and air quality, improved wildlife habitat, and decreased stormwater runoff. The health and beauty of natural areas, like scenic vistas or corridors, is a valuable asset to current residents and one that can attract new residents, visitors, and businesses to North Myrtle Beach.



Sports and Recreation

The city has done a great job recently with providing more opportunities for recreational activities across all age groups and skill levels. Similar to the importance of parks and open space, recreational venues have the potential to increase year-round visitation. Such facilities can attract tournaments and other events whose attendees fill hotel rooms and patronize local restaurants and other businesses. It is recommended that capitalizing on opportunities for land acquisition and development of recreational facilities keep pace with growth and development in the area, and that recreation as an economic development tool be explored in detail.



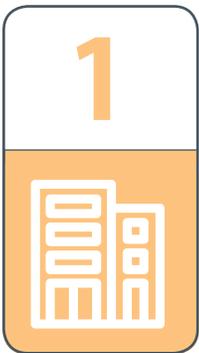
For more information on the community engagement process please see Appendix A.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

North Myrtle Beach’s ‘Guiding Principles’ reflect the values of community residents expressed through the comprehensive plan public participation and outreach process combined with sound planning practices.

When planning for future growth within the city, the guiding principles will be used to develop the plan’s goals, objectives, and policies. Additionally, the guiding principles can be carried beyond the plan to provide guidance to decision-makers in implementing the plan. The city’s vision and guiding principles provide an anchor or reference point to consider in adoption of future goals, objectives, and policies in the comprehensive plan.

To achieve this vision, the following principles have been established to guide the decision making process:



Promote Discernible Village Centers

Strengthen and encourage the development of activity/village centers within walking distance of residential neighborhoods, so that people have options for places to live, work, shop, and participate in civic life. The presence of activity centers should further the economic vitality and sustainability of the city while promoting social interaction and community building.



Build City Character & Identity

Incorporate design features such as architectural styles, landscaping, connectivity, diverse transportation options, and recreational amenities to new development and redevelopment that create a sense of place for residents and visitors of North Myrtle Beach. Connect retail and employment centers, while providing quality public places and community gathering spaces throughout the city.



Emphasize Housing Choice & Diversity

Provide housing choices to accommodate a diverse population of residents at every stage of life, including young adults, families, empty nesters, retirees, and seniors, all at varying income levels. Housing opportunities may include small lots, multi-family housing, senior housing, and live-work units, in addition to traditional single-family homes on large lots. A choice-based housing strategy will promote housing diversity and a more livable community.

Grow the Economy

Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment by investing in efficient infrastructure, providing economic incentives, reducing barriers to investment, and building a community that is attractive to employers and employees alike. Continue to promote the City of North Myrtle Beach to a broad base in order to attract high quality companies, entrepreneurs, and knowledge-based businesses to the area. Investment and recruitment initiatives should provide benefits for city residents by seeking to improve the tax base, promoting economic vitality for local businesses, and increasing access to employment opportunities within the city.

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Promote Transportation Choice & Mobility

Provide a safe, reliable, and integrated transportation system that balances all modes of transportation including walking, biking, transit, and motor vehicles. Consider land use and infrastructure together by promoting complete streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the thoroughfare and the private realm. Emphasize both destination-based and recreational trips with special attention given to the mobility of children, seniors, and low-income residents. Capital improvements and investment in the transportation system should favor multi-modal mobility solutions, especially in the focus areas identified in this plan, around schools, between neighborhoods, and along the gateway corridors and in all of the activity centers.

5



Feature All Things Green & Healthy

Encourage land use decisions that avoid or minimize negative health impacts and improve opportunities for North Myrtle Beach residents to lead healthy and active lives. Promote and expand opportunities for people to experience North Myrtle Beach's natural settings. Emphasize proximity to multiple recreational opportunities, access to local foods, and a safe and healthy lifestyle. Safeguard the city's natural resources including lakes, wetlands, aquifers, trails, and the services they provide. Strive to create interconnected green spaces that conserve these areas and provide recreational linkages, as well as, protect wildlife habitat, floodplains, and water quality. These features are the centerpiece of the city's identity and sense of place.

6



Protect and Enhance the Waterfront Experience

Whether along the ocean, the Intracoastal Waterway, or in our canals, we must remain vigilant in ensuring that these natural and recreational resources are clean, safe, accessible, and well-managed. In order to do so, we must promote active recreational and commercial uses, protect against erosion and storm-related damage, provide adequate parking and public access pathways, and maintain the cleanliness of these resources.

7



CHAPTER SUMMARIES

The guiding principles influence every aspect of the comprehensive plan, including the overall document organization. It is laid out into the following ten chapters; each one emphasizes and elaborates on the community priorities and the city's core principles. We move through the document, beginning with the large-scale, overarching themes in the current chapter, The Path Forward, ending with the fine details of goal and strategy implementation with the final chapter, The Way We Implement.



The Path Forward

The first chapter outlines the plan's layout and the overarching themes influencing the goals and strategies. We incorporated the community's top ten priorities, along with the city's best practices, to create the six guiding principles. Next come the chapter outlines, followed by the top six goals and strategies pulled from various chapters. Lastly, we explain why the focus areas were chosen and how they represent all aspects of the plan.



How We Function (Community Facilities Element)

Chapter two explains the inner workings of North Myrtle Beach's public facilities and the teams that run them, including public works, emergency services, libraries, parks, medical facilities, and more. This chapter has three goals and the associated strategies outlined at the end.



Our History (Cultural Resources Element)

This chapter shows many old photographs of North Myrtle Beach as it explains the historic and cultural resources of the city, including the historic site and districts. There are also many images and references to the rich history of South Carolina's official state dance, the Shag. This chapter has two goals and the associated strategies outlined at the end.



Who We Are (Population Element)

Chapter four breaks down the current population numbers, projections, and demographics. Most of the statistics were provided by the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau Report, ESRI, and local and regional governments. A fun addition to the usual information is ESRI's Tapestry Life Mode Groups which tackles a more difficult aspect of demographics and socioeconomic characteristics.



The Way We Grow (Land Use Element)

This chapter discusses the city's framework for growth and the future land use plan while identifying key focus areas. The focus areas are ideal locations to implement the framework for growth. Focusing on making these areas more pedestrian-oriented with a denser mix of uses will help to serve adjacent neighborhoods and the city as nodes of activity.



The Way We Move (Transportation Element)

Chapter six addresses the main corridors in the city: Ocean Blvd, US Highway 17, Main Street, and Sea Mountain Highway. Here we discuss the importance of street design and access management to create easy and safe conditions for traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists. Adjacent developments, public beach access, parking, open space, and public transit are all studied in this chapter regarding their relationship to the street.



Where We Live (Housing Element)

Chapter seven explains the trends in housing and development in the city. Most of the city's housing is second homes; only 25% are occupied year round. The city is made up mostly of multifamily units, rather than single family homes. The goals contained in this chapter aim to diversify the housing choices for the City of North Myrtle Beach residents.



How We Sustain (Natural Resources Element)

Chapter eight includes natural environmental concerns, like preserving and protecting the coastal resources, wetlands, and swamps, as well as other open spaces, like parks and recreation areas. Other important topics addressed are topography, soils, tree preservation, and wind energy, all regulated by state and local governments. This chapter has one goal and associated strategies outlined at the end.



The Way We Prosper (Economic Development Element)

This chapter covers economic factors, jobs, and investment. Seasonal tourism is the leading economic factor in North Myrtle Beach. It drives everything from real estate to employment to population. Retail, accommodation and food services, and real estate dominate the economic sectors in North Myrtle Beach.



The Way We Implement (Priority Investment Element)

This final chapter summarizes the ideas outlined in the comprehensive plan and distills them into a table of overall goals and strategies. It also includes a priority investment list of projects to catalyze the plan's realization.



TOP 6 GOALS & STRATEGIES

The following top goals and strategies were pulled from the ten chapters outlined on the previous pages. They best address the public’s priorities and exemplify the guiding principles that influence the focus of the overall comprehensive plan. The icons on the sides of each goal correlate with the icons for each guiding principle. As one can see, each goal addresses four-to-six of the principles.



Encourage high quality mixed-use districts (downtown and neighborhood activity centers) consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, office, civic and common open space land uses supported by alternative modes of transportation.

- ▶ Neighborhoods are the fundamental unit of development and will be supported by neighborhood or village centers within walking or biking distance.
- ▶ Encourage mixed-use projects that contain a variety of uses, and provide necessary supporting public and community facilities.
- ▶ Locate mixed use centers on likely future transit corridors and include multi-modal facilities.
- ▶ Direct higher density development towards new and existing village centers as well as along US 17.
- ▶ Encourage infill development and the redevelopment of aging commercial areas to develop at higher densities and to create mixed-use, walkable centers (Incentivize).
- ▶ Pro-actively rezone designated activity centers (commercial) to permit higher densities and require mixed-use.
- ▶ Architecture, landscape design, and site planning of mixed-use projects will be of the highest quality, and will emphasize a pedestrian orientation and safe, convenient access between uses.
- ▶ Ensure that adequate parks and/or other public spaces are incorporated within mixed-use projects and areas to allow for social interaction and community activities.



Encourage multi-modal connectivity in and around neighborhoods and mixed-use areas.

- ▶ Limit cul-de-sacs and encourage road stubs to connect to future adjacent development.
- ▶ Trail systems can be amenities within a development, but can also link to other trails in adjacent developments and public open spaces to encourage walking and biking as transportation choices or recreational outlets.



Prioritize infill and redevelopment on Main Street and in other town centers.

- ▶ Strengthen 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, Main Street, and Sea Mountain Highway as local and regional destinations for specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, employment, culture, and the arts.
- ▶ Revise zoning and land uses patterns to support mixed-use infill development.

- ▶ Provide incentives that make infill redevelopment attractive for a broad range of individuals to live and work. Target key infill residential opportunities including small lot and row homes, apartments and condominiums, and live/work loft space.
- ▶ Provide incentives to renovate existing buildings in and around Main Street and other town centers (i.e. façade grants).

Provide for a more varied housing stock to attract and retain a more diverse population.

- ▶ Promote mixed income neighborhoods throughout North Myrtle Beach, especially near employment centers and transit facilities.
- ▶ Revise zoning regulations to incentivize a variety of balanced housing types, including, but not limited to: Multifamily, apartments, townhomes, quadplexes, duplexes and accessory units in order to appeal to families, young professionals, seniors, and visitors.
- ▶ Ensure that residential development is located near activities and facilities that cater to the needs of North Myrtle Beach residents throughout the generations. (i.e. schools, churches, sports, recreational facilities and programs, health facilities, etc.)



Ensure a system of parks, trails and open spaces adequate for a wide variety of active and passive leisure pursuits, contributing to the quality of life within the City of North Myrtle Beach.

- ▶ Create a Park and Open Space Master Plan that identifies the future location of parks and open space based upon the future growth of North Myrtle Beach.
- ▶ Open spaces should be interconnected to facilitate activities, such as walking and bicycling, and to create ease of access to and from recreation sites.
- ▶ Seek to establish connections to sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, and other recreational thoroughfares of surrounding communities.
- ▶ Strategies should be developed to connect the North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex and Central Park to Main Street in North Myrtle Beach.
- ▶ Require new residential developments to provide land for neighborhood or pocket parks or other amenities.
- ▶ Plan, develop, and operate diverse recreation activities for citizens of all ages.
- ▶ Continue to collaborate with Horry County School District to co-locate and jointly use park, recreation, and school facilities to facilitate transit use and bicycle and pedestrian access.



Protect and preserve the city’s natural resources to the greatest extent practical.

- ▶ Coordinate with other government entities in the management of water resources.
- ▶ Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands in the City of North Myrtle Beach.
- ▶ The city shall minimize environmental and ecologic impacts, to the best extent practicable, through their land development regulations.
- ▶ The city shall encourage developments which promote the use of transportation alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, such as mass transit, carpooling, ride-sharing, or use of alternatively fueled commercial vehicles.

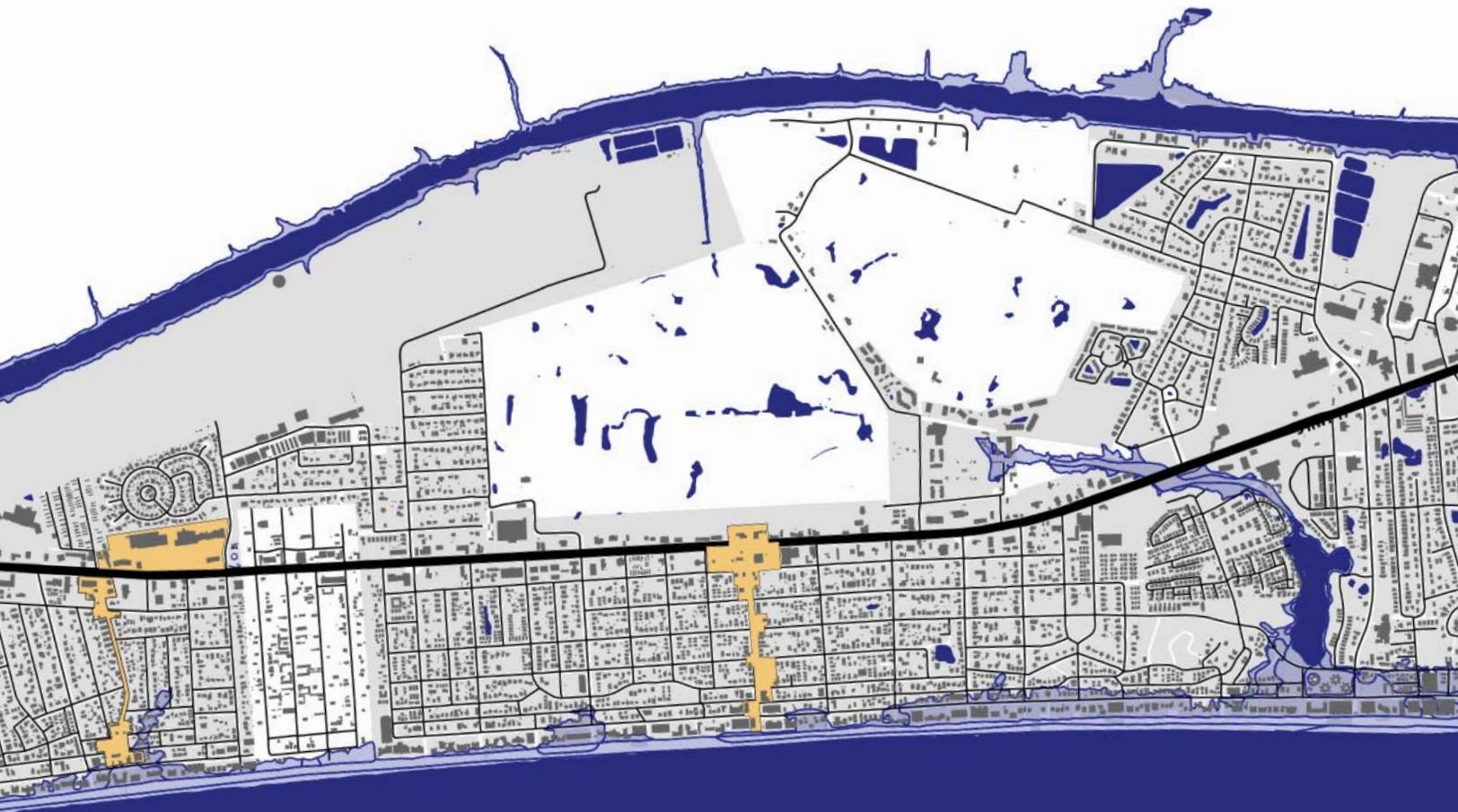


HOW IT ALL APPLIES TO THE CITY

The guiding principals, goals, and strategies provide appropriate tools to help the city grow and change in line with the vision statement developed by the community. Several focus areas were identified as having great potential for change; these areas provide a location for the recommendations of this plan to be tested and implemented. These focus areas are dispersed throughout the city and are important linkages between neighborhoods and commercial corridors.

The major focus areas are:

- ▶ 37th Avenue South
- ▶ 17th Avenue South
- ▶ Main Street
- ▶ Sea Mountain Highway
- ▶ Little River Neck Road



The following critical design guidelines should be used for guidance in planning and implementing projects in the focus areas:

Streetscape Guidelines

- ▶ Reevaluate parking requirements
- ▶ Reduce curb cuts
- ▶ Provide on-street parking
- ▶ Implement street trees
- ▶ Use decorative, pedestrian-scaled lighting
- ▶ Provide dedicated bicycle facilities

Building Guidelines

- ▶ Screen parking from street view
- ▶ Build up to the right-of-way line or designated set-back requirements
- ▶ Provide areas for outdoor dining
- ▶ Ground floor active use or retail
- ▶ Create a cohesive architectural style

Public Space Guidelines

- ▶ Provide space for pocket parks or other appropriate open spaces
- ▶ New public spaces should safely connect to existing ones
- ▶ Accommodate multiple uses and users
- ▶ Incorporate cultural and sustainable features





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2

HOW WE FUNCTION



“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

Activities and services provided for the public are fundamental to the city's growth and development. As the city grows, these facilities may need to expand or be rehabilitated. This basic inventory can inform future capital improvement programming.

Principal Elected Officials

- ▶ Mayor Marilyn B. Hatley
- ▶ Councilmember Jay Baldwin, Crescent Beach Ward
- ▶ Councilmember Bob Cavanaugh, At-Large
- ▶ Councilmember Fred Coyne, Cherry Grove Ward
- ▶ Councilmember Nicole Fontana, Windy Hill Ward
- ▶ Councilmember Hank Thomas, At-Large
- ▶ Councilmember Terry White, Ocean Drive Ward

Principal Appointed Officials

- ▶ Michael G. Mahaney, City Manager
- ▶ Steven E. Thomas, Assistant City Manager
- ▶ Randy J. Wright, Finance Director
- ▶ Patrick Wall Jr., Information Services Director
- ▶ John W. Bullard, Parks and Recreation Director
- ▶ James W. Wood, Planning and Development Director
- ▶ Kevin D. Blayton, City Engineer/Public Works Director
- ▶ Jay A. Fernandez, Public Safety Director

Departments and Divisions

General Government Department

- ▶ General Services Division
- ▶ Legislative Division
- ▶ Administrative Division
- ▶ Legal Division
- ▶ Human Resources Division
- ▶ City Court Division

Finance Department

- ▶ Accounting Division
- ▶ Revenue Division
- ▶ Utility Billing Division

Planning and Development Department

- ▶ Planning Division
- ▶ Building Division

Information Services Department

- ▶ Information Services Division

Public Safety Department

- ▶ Public Safety Administration Division
- ▶ Uniform Patrol Division
- ▶ Community Services Division
- ▶ Detectives Division
- ▶ Communications/Detention Division
- ▶ Records Division
- ▶ Victim Rights Advocate Division
- ▶ Public Safety Training Division
- ▶ Fire/Rescue Division
- ▶ Fire Prevention/Inspection Division
- ▶ Beach Services-Lifeguards Division

Public Works Department

- ▶ Beach Cleaning Division
- ▶ Commercial Collection Division
- ▶ Construction/Maintenance Division
- ▶ Public Works Administration Division (Engineering)
- ▶ Recycling Division
- ▶ Residential Collection Division
- ▶ Streets/Drainage Division
- ▶ Transfer Station Division
- ▶ Trash/Litter Collection
- ▶ Wastewater Treatment Division
- ▶ Wells/Lift Maintenance Division

Parks & Recreation Department

- ▶ Aquatics and Fitness Center
- ▶ Recreation (Administration) Division
- ▶ Recreation (Athletics) Division
- ▶ Recreation (Programs/Events) Division
- ▶ Recreation (Sports Complex) Division
- ▶ Parks/Grounds Division

Support Services Department

- ▶ Purchasing Division
- ▶ Fleet Maintenance Division
- ▶ Custodial/Facility Maintenance Division

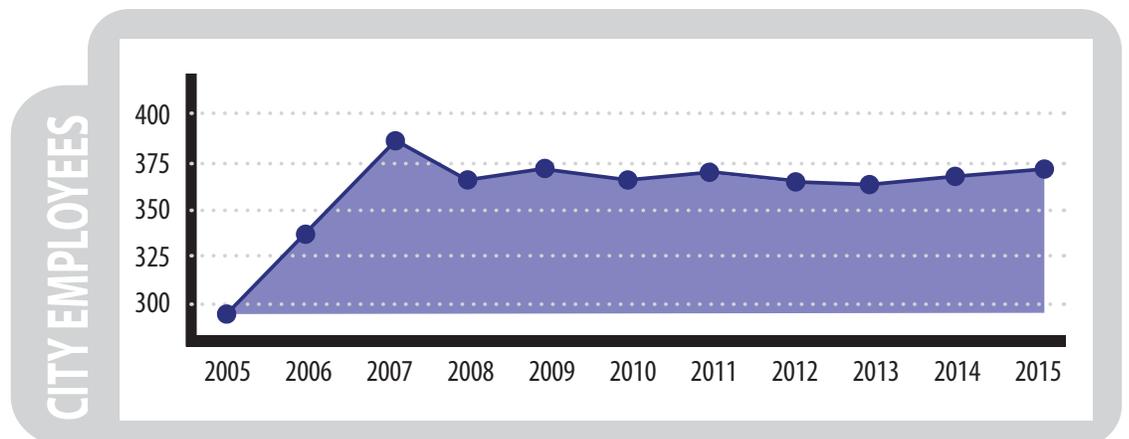
GOVERNMENT FACILITIES & FUNCTIONS

North Myrtle Beach operates in and is governed by the laws of the state of South Carolina and also by its own charter, which was first adopted by the electorate on May 7, 1968. The charter provides for a council-manager form of government. Legislative authority is vested in the mayor and six council members elected at-large. One council member shall be a resident of Windy Hill, Crescent Beach, Ocean Drive, and Cherry Hill; two council members are not restricted to a location within the city. The terms of office are four years. The mayor and council enact ordinances and resolutions relating to city services, tax levies, appropriation and borrowing, licensing/regulating of businesses and trades, and other municipal purposes.



► City Hall

City Hall, located at 1018 2nd Avenue, houses the departments of City Administration, Finance, Information Services, Planning and Development, Public Works, and Human Resources. Over the last 10 years, the number of full-time employees increased from 318 in 2005 to 374 in 2015.



► Number of city employees from 2005-2015.

City Council

The city council serves as the governing body for the City of North Myrtle Beach. With a council-manager form of government, the city manager is appointed by council, which includes the mayor and six council members. The mayor and council members serve four-year, staggered terms. Council duties include adopting codes, appropriating funds and adopting annual budgets, levying taxes and issuing bonds, expanding the city's jurisdiction through annexation, administering public lands, and enacting policies to promote the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of North Myrtle Beach.

City Administration

In the City Administration Department, the city manager oversees all city business and implements council's direction by coordinating the work of all city departments and employees, expending monies as approved by council, making recommendations to council on legislation and policy, managing financial programs and other matters to keep council informed of city business and its financial condition.

The city clerk is responsible for attending and recording city council meetings and preparing minutes from those meetings. The position is also responsible for maintaining the city's Code of Ordinances, filing enacted ordinances and legal documents, maintaining the city's historical records, providing copies of city documents to the public, and assisting the Election Commission with municipal elections.

City Attorney

The city attorney's office oversees all litigation and other legal matters involving the city and acts as legal advisor to the city council, city manager, city departments, and appointed boards. The office also prosecutes

cases in municipal court and represents the city in lawsuits and administrative matters.

Finance

This department is divided into three divisions that include: Accounting, Revenue, and Water Billing. The Finance Department is responsible for the financial administration of the city. All city expenses, revenues and assets, utility billing, and preparation and coordination of the city budget are the responsibilities of this department.

Information Services

The Information Services Department provides information and communication technology assistance, support, and Geographical Information System (GIS) software to city departments.

Municipal Court

Municipal Court is a court of limited jurisdiction that hears both criminal and traffic offenses that occur in city limits, and that carry a penalty of not more than thirty days in jail and/or \$500 plus court costs. Driving under the influence, seat belt violations, moving violations, insurance and registration violations, criminal domestic violence, trespassing, public disorderly conduct, and open container offenses are all issues heard in Municipal Court.

Planning & Development

The staff members of the Planning and Development Department work in one of three divisions: Building, Planning, or Zoning. The Building Division's primary responsibilities are plan review, enforcement of all relevant construction codes, issuing of building permits, and construction inspection. This division is also responsible for maintaining the city's Insurance Service Organization program and the Community Rating Service of the National Flood

Insurance Program, which helps secure low cost flood insurance for city residents.

The Planning Division is responsible for both current and long-range planning activities. Examples of current planning activities include site-specific development plan review and staff support to Planning Commission for subdivision review, zoning map amendments, planned district development coordination, and annexations. Examples of long-range planning activities include policy creation, zoning text amendments, and special projects and studies such as the Local Comprehensive Beachfront Management Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and transportation planning.

The Zoning Division is responsible for enforcing the Zoning Ordinance via review and approval of all building permit applications, site-specific development plan review, review of business license applications, and reviews of proposals to subdivide land. In addition, Zoning Division staff provides support to the city's Board of Zoning Appeals.

Standing Boards, Commissions and Committees

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission has the authority to engage in a continuing planning program for the physical, social, and economic well-being of the city. Appointed by the mayor and city council to serve four-year terms, the commission is responsible for promoting municipal planning, which includes the adoption of a comprehensive plan. The commission also has the authority to initiate changes to the zoning ordinance and land development regulations, the city's future land use map, and review of the city's capital improvement program. In addition, the commission administers the

land development regulations and approves preliminary and final plats for major subdivisions of property.

Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of Zoning Appeals is appointed to four-year terms by the mayor and council. It is the board's duty to hear and decide appeals where there is an alleged error in the administration of the zoning ordinance, and to hear and decide appeals for variances from the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

The board also hears and decides requests for special exceptions. Decisions of the board may be appealed to circuit court.

Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals

The Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals was established to hear appeals of decisions and interpretations made by the building official and to consider variances to the adopted technical building codes. Creation of the board is authorized under Section 108 of the Standard Building Code and under the city's code of ordinances. Appointed by city council, most board members have knowledge and experience in the adopted technical building codes working as design professionals, contractors, or building industry representatives. One member represents the general public. Two of the nine board members serve as alternate members at-large.

Citizen Advisory Committee

The Citizen Advisory Committee was formed in 2002 to serve on an interim basis. Members of the committee were selected by the mayor to discuss issues of concern to the community. The concerns and the committee's recommendations are then reported to the mayor and city council.

Tree City Board

The Tree City Board was established in 2005. Its primary function is to manage public trees, with special concern for heritage trees (24" diameter or greater), and advise the city in all tree-related matters. Since 2006, the city has been awarded the status of Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation. The board remains very active in fulfilling the requirements of the Tree City USA program, by hosting an annual Arbor Day celebration, recognizing Earth Day, and holding various tree-related events throughout the year.

Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful

Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful is a committee associated with the city, but members are not appointed. Instead, participation is open to all interested citizens. Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc. The committee's goals are to educate the public about the disposal of solid waste and litter, to develop effective solid waste and litter collection and removal programs, to encourage effective enforcement of litter control ordinances, and to develop and implement programs that beautify the city's public lands. The committee is coordinated by the Parks & Recreation Department.

SOUTH CAROLINA



BY THE NUMBERS

41 Tree City USA communities

23.10% of SC lives in a Tree City USA community

100% Recertification Rate

South Carolina's longest-running active Tree City USA communities:

Largest
Anderson County
POPULATION 146,199

Cheraw, Columbia
37 YEARS

Smallest
Patrick
POPULATION 354



Growth Award

- 5** Growth Award recipients
- 2 NEW** Growth Award recipients

Longest Active Growth Award
Florence, Greenville
11 years

Beyond Tree City USA

- 85.37% of communities completed online applications
- 8 South Carolina Tree Campus Schools
- 0 New Tree Campus School
- 1 Tree Line Utility

Longest Running Active Tree Line USA Utility:
Gaffney Board of Public Works (16 years)

Source: arborday.org

Tree City USA 2015 infographic brochure for South Carolina's cities awarded the Tree City USA title.

PUBLIC WORKS

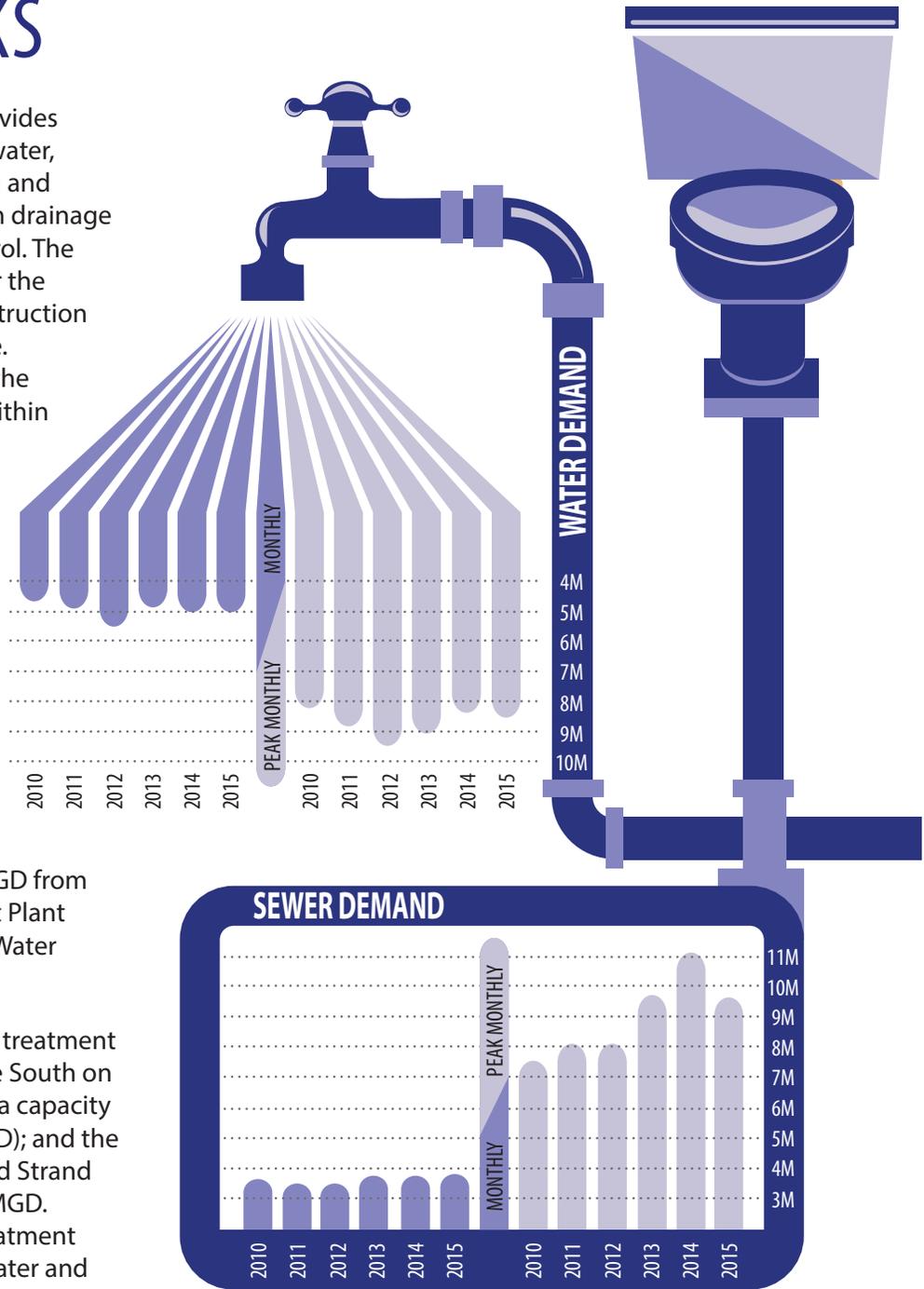
The Public Works Department provides services to city residents such as water, sanitary sewer, garbage collection and disposal, road maintenance, storm drainage maintenance, and mosquito control. The department is also responsible for the planning, management, and construction of the city's physical infrastructure. The provision of these services is the responsibility of the employees within engineering: Sanitation, streets, drainage, and utilities.

Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The city is classified as a consecutive water system because we purchase treated drinking water from GSWSA on a wholesale basis. Current available water capacity is 12.6 MGD from the Myrtle Beach Water Treatment Plant and 3.0 MGD from the Bull Creek Water Treatment Plant.

The city operates two wastewater treatment plant facilities: One at 2nd Avenue South on the city's municipal campus, with a capacity of 4.5 million gallons per day (MGD); and the other is in Crescent Beach at Grand Strand Airport and has a capacity of 2.9 MGD. The city contracts for 3.0 MGD treatment capacity with the Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA).

North Myrtle Beach water and sewer facilities are designed and operated to accommodate in excess of 100,000 daily peak population, even though we only serve approximately 13,500 customer taps. Utility Division staff maintains approximately 500 miles of buried pipeline in addition to other pumping, storage, and treatment assets.



2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
4.5m	4.9m	5.32m	4.82m	4.95m	4.98m	WATER (monthly avg. daily use)
8.23m	8.75m	9.42m	9m	8.29m	8.36m	WATER (peak month avg. daily use)
3.5m	3.31m	3.27m	3.71m	3.68m	3.8m	SEWER (monthly avg. daily use)
7.55m	8.1m	8.11m	9.88m	11.15m	9.76m	SEWER (peak month avg. daily use)

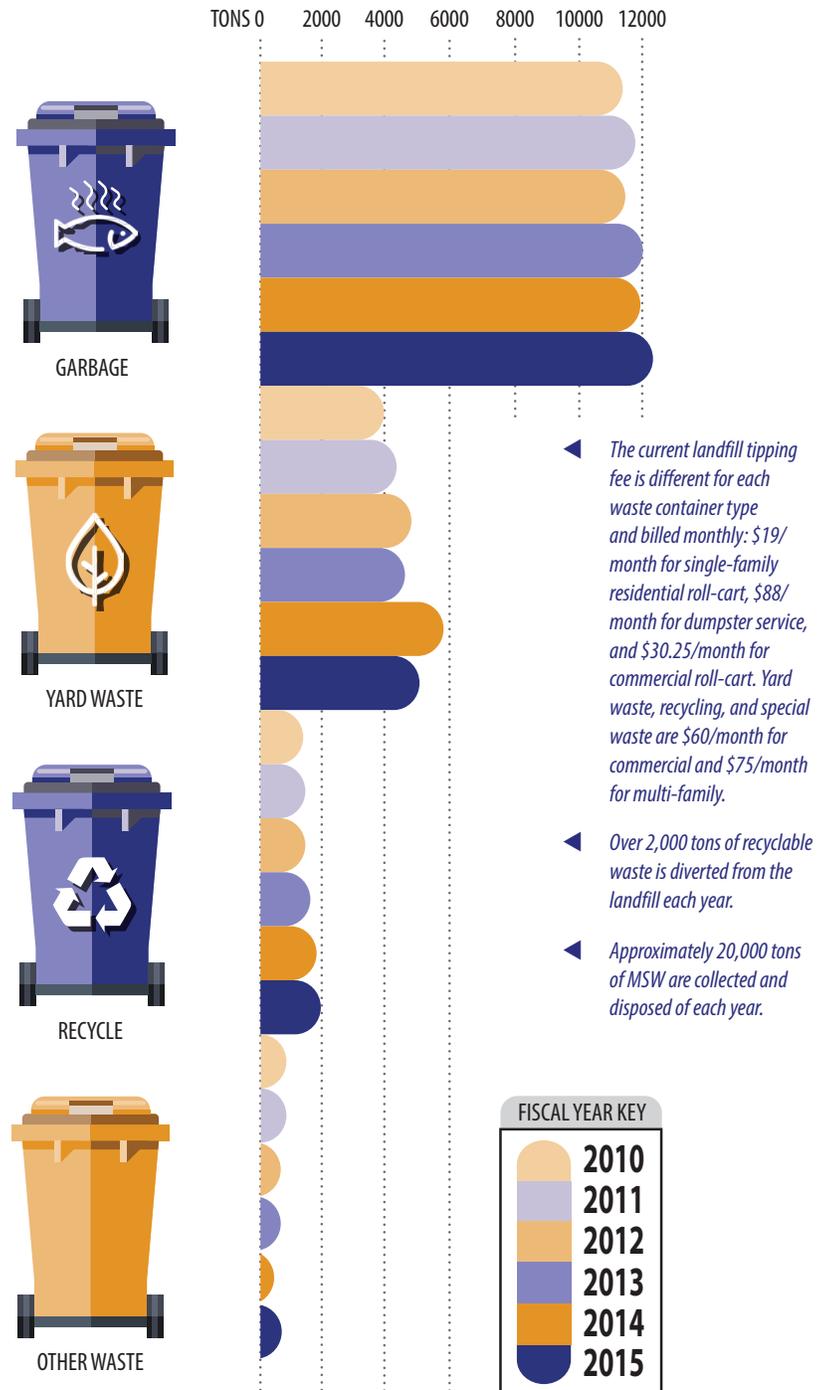
▲ Water and Sewer monthly averages and peak monthly averages are measured in million gallons per day.

Sanitation

North Myrtle Beach provides sanitation services to residential and business customers. All solid waste is brought to the city’s transfer station, located on 2nd Avenue South near the waterway. At the transfer station, waste is compacted before it is transferred to the county landfill on Highway 90 near the City of Conway.

Service is provided through the use of curbside roll-carts for garbage and recycling collection. Yard waste is also collected curbside bagged or in loose piles separated from other collection materials. Special collections are scheduled for furniture, appliances, or other bulky items. The city does not provide collection for construction/demolition debris. Under current city ordinance, commercial customers may elect service from the city or choose a private hauler.

In addition to curbside recycling, the city provides bulk recycling collection for multi-family, commercial, beach, and parks. Materials are taken to the Horry County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) Material Recovery Facility, MRF. No tipping fee is charged for recycling material delivered to the MRF with the exception of electronic waste, which is assessed a processing fee.



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
GARBAGE	11,580 tons	11,716 tons	11,602 tons	12,044 tons	11,984 tons	12,124 tons
YARD WASTE	3,971 tons	4,114 tons	4,764 tons	4,668 tons	5,890 tons	4,925 tons
RECYCLE	1,534 tons	1,612 tons	1,645 tons	1,711 tons	1,827 tons	1,916 tons
OTHER WASTE	804 tons	771 tons	716 tons	708 tons	676 tons	702 tons

▲ All garbage collection is measured in tons.



▲ Before photo of a typical dumpster along Ocean Blvd. It is without a lid and faces one of the community's main roads.



▶ A photosimulation of what the existing dumpster along Ocean Blvd would look like with a lid.

▶ A photosimulation of what the existing dumpster along Ocean Blvd would look like with a colorful lid and beach themed mural painted on visible sides. There are programs, like 'Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful, that beautify dumpsters with local artists and community members.



▶ Photo from Keep North Myrtle Beach Beautiful showing community members alongside dumpsters they painted.



Stormwater Management

North Myrtle Beach implemented a stormwater utility in July 2000 and continues to assess fees on all developed property in the city limits. This dedicated funding source is used solely for flood improvement and water quality improvement projects. The current fee is \$8/month for an equivalent residential property, based on 3,500 square feet of impervious area. A factored fee is assessed for commercial properties. Approximate revenue is currently \$2,800,000 per year.

The city is designated as a Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System, MS4, in accordance with state and federal regulations. As such, we maintain National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit coverage for stormwater discharges under the SCDHEC General Permit, which mandates stormwater monitoring, reporting, and education requirements. City staff currently maintains 140 miles of storm drainage pipe and ditches in compliance with the permit conditions.

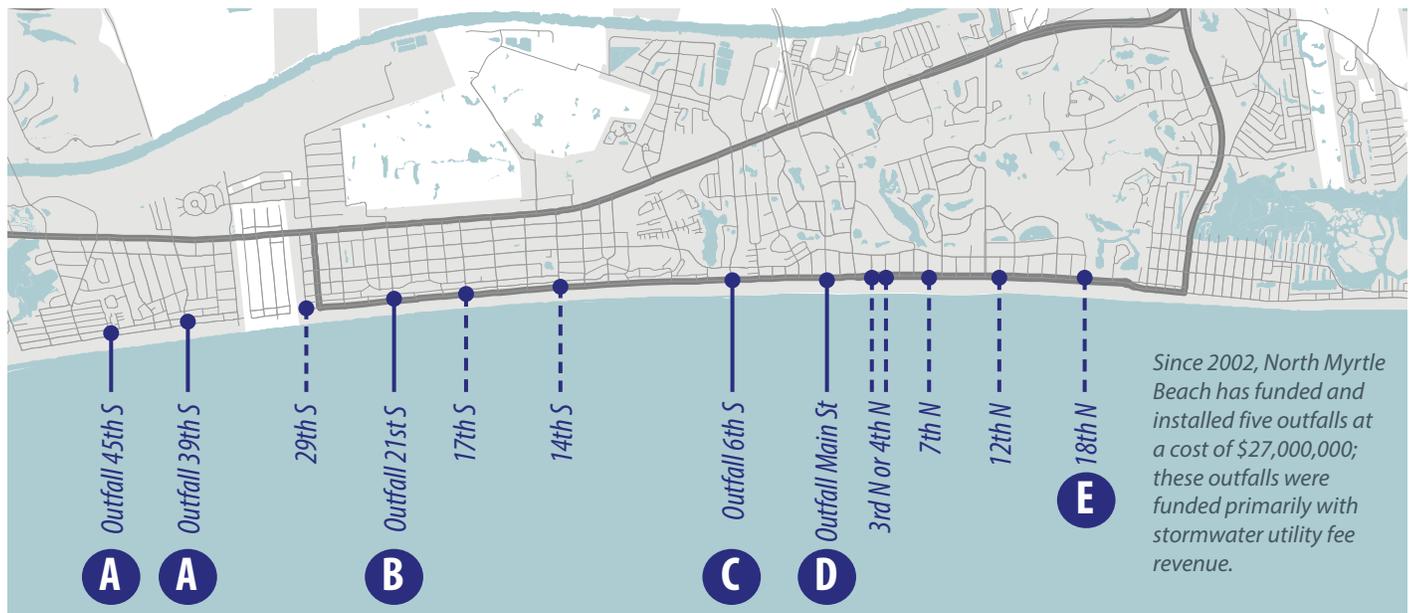
Beachfront Water Quality Improvements - Stormwater Ocean Outfall

Extending stormwater drains located on the beach to deeper water has proven to be the most cost-effective solution to coastal water quality and inland flooding issues. Stormwater discharge into deeper water (approximately 1,200 feet offshore) reduces near shore bacteria levels and, therefore, reduces the potential for swimmer contact and illness.

This program does not increase total stormwater volume reaching ocean waters. Existing stormwater flows are relocated to a point offshore in lieu of retaining the existing discharge pipes on the beach face that are a relic of South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) roadway drainage systems.

Installation of offshore stormwater drainage piping with appropriate inland drainage connections eliminates stormwater discharge on the beach face and provides the following benefits:

- ▶ Improved water quality in the surf zone and swimmer contact areas
- ▶ Reduced inland flooding
- ▶ Reduced damage to the federal beach renourishment project
- ▶ Improved safety and aesthetics on the public beach



- ▲ A: 6 pipes eliminated (2004) \$3,000,000
- ▲ B: 2 pipes eliminated (2006) \$5,800,000
7 pipes eliminated @ 18/19/20 & 25th street widening (2008)
- ▲ C: 2 pipes eliminated (2005) \$4,600,000
- ▲ D: 4 pipes eliminated (2015) \$11,750,000
- ▲ E: permitted; projected construction date (2018)

STREETS

Public Works conducts a citywide analysis for resurfacing public streets every few years and establishes a priority list for resurfacing. Currently there are 241 miles of paved roadways within the city, including state, city, and private roads. Annual street resurfacing needs exceed \$2,000,000 to maintain roads in average condition. This is not fully funded by the city or state at this time, leading to potentially deteriorating road conditions and increasing maintenance costs.

Underground Utilities

North Myrtle Beach has developed a program in conjunction with local electric, telephone, and cable utility providers to replace overhead wired utilities with underground installations. To date, this underground conversion program has completed installation along 4.5 miles of roadway, with an additional two miles in design. Ocean Boulevard and US Highway 17 are designated as the high priority corridors for continuation of this program. Smaller interconnecting streets are considered on a case by case basis. Program expenditures to date are approximately \$20,000,000.



▲ Example of a new street light along Main St.



▲ Example of underground utilities beautifying the streetscape.



▲ Example of public realm visual clutter caused by overhead utilities.



▶ Uground utilities power conversion map.

PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Public Safety Department

The Public Safety Department is the largest department in the city and is responsible for providing emergency services within the city, which include police, fire, rescue, and emergency medical response. The 170 personnel employed in FY 2018 offer victims' services, uniform patrol, community services, investigations, professional standards, records, communications, and fire prevention.

The Public Safety Department is located on 2nd Avenue South, across the street from city hall. There are also four additional fire stations in the city located on 33rd Avenue South, Sea Mountain Highway, Little River Neck Road, and at Barefoot Resort.

Fire Rescue

The Fire and Rescue Division of the Public Safety Department provides fire, rescue, HAZMAT, medical, and first response protection within the city limits. The Fire

Division also has a contract with Briarcliffe Acres and Horry County to provide services to areas adjacent to the city and east of the Intracoastal Waterway.

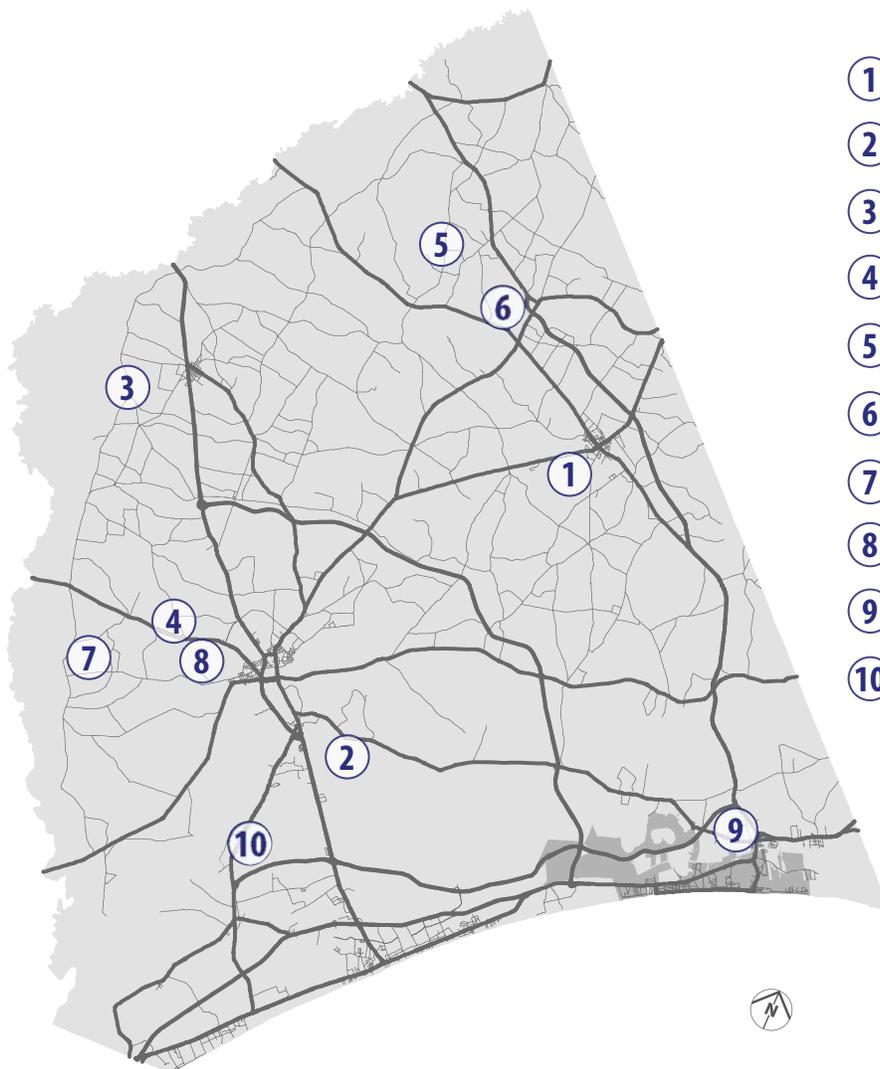
The fire department currently has over 50 fire rescue personnel, five stations, six engines, three ladder trucks, a 4-wheeler, four staff cars, one squad car, a multipurpose fire safety trailer, and a utility truck. In order to meet existing demand and future growth in the city, the Fire Division has indicated a need for additional facilities, staffing, and equipment. Since the number of service calls has doubled in the past ten years, Fire-Rescue also needs additional personnel. In 1992, Fire-Rescue responded to over 1,700 calls; in 2009, over 3,500 calls.

The city has acquired land west of the Intracoastal Waterway for a future station #6. This station will require approximately twelve firefighters to staff. The building has been designed and will cost an estimated \$1.75 million plus the cost of furnishings and a new fire engine.

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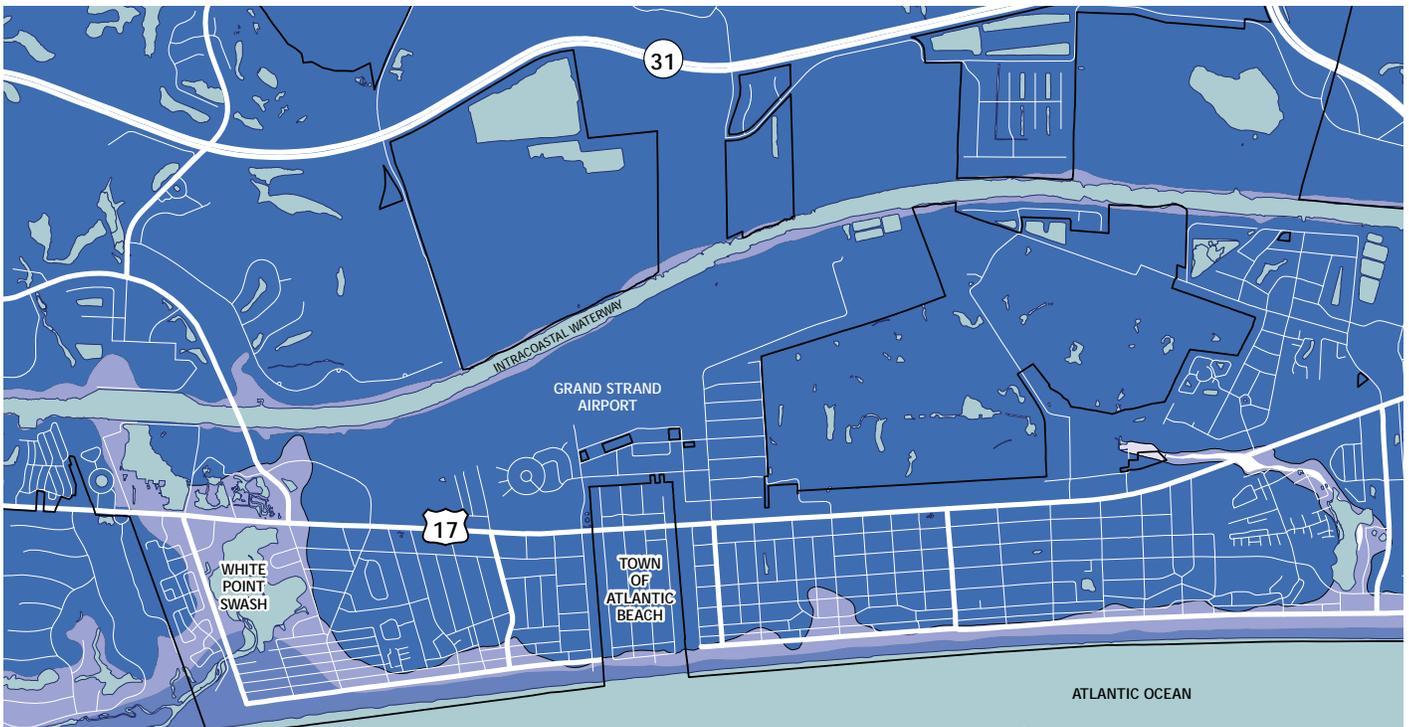
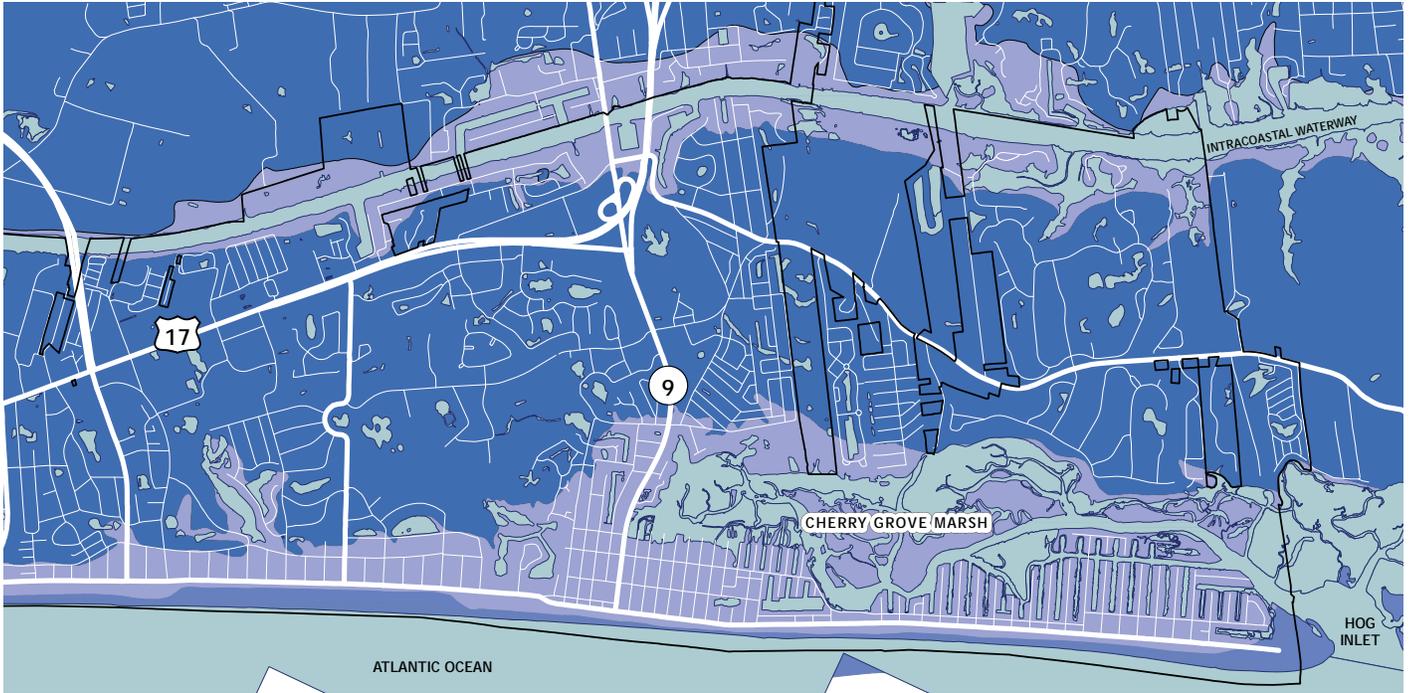
The Insurance Service Organization (ISO) is a nationally-recognized entity that evaluates a community’s firefighting preparedness. Communities are rated on a scale of one to ten, with one as the best and ten as the worst. The ratings are based on factors that include the number of fire stations, water supply, distribution, firefighting equipment, and staffing. For instance, ISO awards points if there is less than 1 ½ miles between stations, and 2 ½ miles between ladder truck locations. Insurance companies use ISO’s rating system to determine fire insurance rates for buildings. The organization evaluates communities every five (5) years. The city currently has a strong community class rating of two.

In case of disaster, the city has a hurricane emergency management plan coordinated closely with Horry County and State of South Carolina plans. In the event of a hurricane, the Red Cross has approved shelters west of the waterway. The city also has an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Fire Station #1 across from City Hall. The EOC is equipped to address any natural disaster, civil disturbance, or weapons of mass destruction incident. The EOC serves as an information gathering and control room before, during, and after any emergency. The Fire Chief serves as as both the emergency preparedness manager and EOC coordinator.

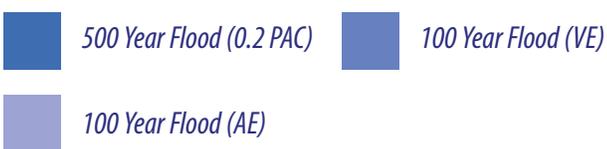


Hurricane Shelters

- ① *Loris Elementary, Middle, & High School*
- ② *Blackwater Middle School*
- ③ *Aynor Elementary & High School*
- ④ *Conway High School*
- ⑤ *Green Sea Floyds Elementary & High School*
- ⑥ *Green Sea Floyds Middle School*
- ⑦ *Pee Dee Elementary School*
- ⑧ *Whittemore Park Middle School*
- ⑨ *North Myrtle Beach High School*
- ⑩ *Palmetto Bay Elementary School*



LEGEND

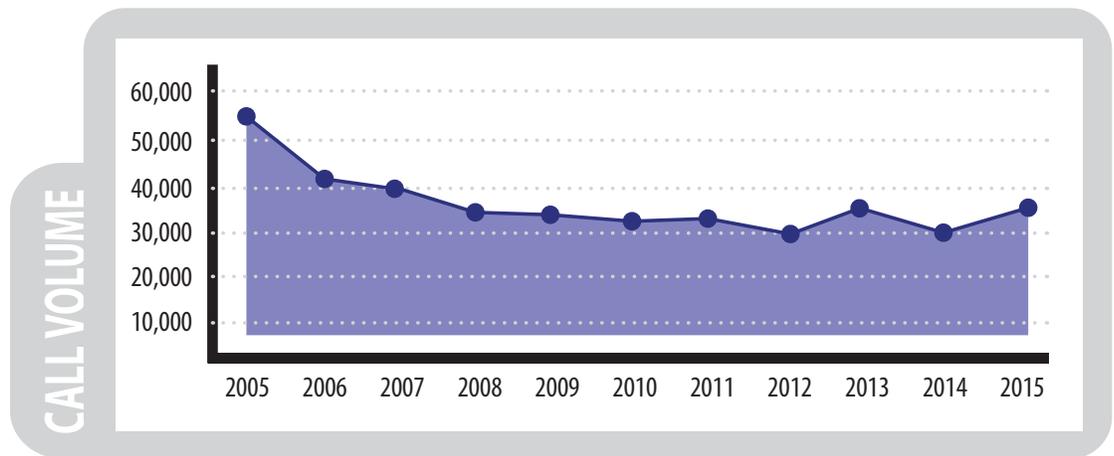


▲ Preliminary 2016 FEMA Flood Plain data has not yet been adopted but shows the potential areas at risk for flooding, especially during a hurricane's storm surge.

Police

The police provide service only to areas within the city limits unless otherwise requested. The department is comprised of 117 people in eight divisions that include Administrative Services, Victim’s Advocate, Community Services, Investigations, Professional Standards, Records, Communication (which includes the jail and dispatch), and Uniform Patrol, which provides beach, motorcycle, and bicycle patrols.

In the last five years, the Public Safety Department has purchased 38 cars, 1 van, 5 beach trucks, 2 SUV trucks, 25 laptops, 5 motorcycles, 1 jet ski, 1 AFIS system, an up-graded radio system, 1 digital radio and phone recorder, 51 mobile vision dash cameras, and 22 e-ticket printers. In the next five years, the department anticipates purchasing 8 police cars per year, 4 motorcycles, 4 beach patrol trucks, 2 jets skis, 5 ATVs, and continued upgrades to the radio system to better coordinate communications with other agencies, including Horry County.



► The number of annual police calls from 2005-2015.

► Photograph from the North Myrtle Beach Public Safety Police Department and Specialized Units homepage



North Myrtle Beach Rescue Squad

The North Myrtle Beach Rescue Squad was formed in 1958 and has been providing ambulance service continually since then. Housed in the Horry County EMS building, which is shared with Horry County Fire and Rescue, the rescue squad is a non-profit community-supported organization that provides over \$1 million in service annually to the city. This includes staffing two fully equipped ambulances with at least 1 paramedic and 1 EMT/ driver per advanced cardiac ambulance. A board of directors oversees the operation of the 75-member squad. The rescue squad also works closely with the Public Safety Department and the Beach Patrol Division to create a water rescue team that makes our beach safer for visitors and residents. Additionally, the North Myrtle Beach Rescue Squad is the only water rescue team to provide nighttime rescues.

Animal/Environmental Control

Animal/Environmental Control is dedicated to serving the community with animal issues. Officers enforce city codes and provide education to the public on the care and keeping of animals. They work closely with the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Humane Society of North Myrtle Beach, Inc. The animal control officers have received a Class 3 certification from the SC Justice Academy and are also trained in alligator nuisance control. Additionally, they assist in the protection of endangered sea turtles in concert with other state and federal agencies.

Beach Patrol Division

The Beach Patrol Division was created in 2006. This division is responsible for the seasonal operations of beach lifeguards, parasail franchises, and the safety of all beachgoers. The Beach Patrol Division has 5 officers that are certified by the American Red Cross in lifeguarding, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED). Their equipment consists of 5 pickup trucks, 2 jet skis, 1 boat, and 5 ATVs.

▼ *Photograph from the North Myrtle Beach Public Safety Police Department and Specialized Units homepage*



LIBRARIES & EDUCATION FACILITIES

Libraries

A centralized county library system serves nearly 200,000 residents in Horry County. The first public library was established in the auditorium of the Conway Town Hall in the late 1930s. The library system now includes ten locations throughout Horry County. In addition to the libraries throughout Horry County, the library provides a bookmobile and outreach program to institutions, rural areas, and the homebound.

After requesting that a library branch be constructed in North Myrtle Beach, the city's first public library opened in 1958. The North Myrtle Beach Library moved to its location on 1st Avenue South in 2011. The almost 20,000 square-foot facility contains over 35,000 volumes, has an annual circulation of 154,227, and provides the use of publicly available computers.

Horry County Schools

Horry County Schools is a countywide school district that presides over 51 schools in nine attendance areas with more than 42,500 students and more than 5,540 employees in 2015-2016. The district has 27

schools serving pre-kindergarten through fifth grades, 11 middle schools, 9 high schools, 3 career and technical academies, a Scholars Academy, and four charter schools. Three new facilities and two replacement facilities are currently being constructed and are scheduled to open in the 2017-18 school year.

In November 2008, the citizens of Horry County approved a one-cent local option sales tax to fund future school building needs. The sales tax will be collected for fifteen years, providing revenue to help pay for growth and allow collaboration for educational programs with Horry County Schools, Coastal Carolina University (CCU), and Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC). A small portion will be shared with CCU and HGTC in order to help with their capital improvement needs.

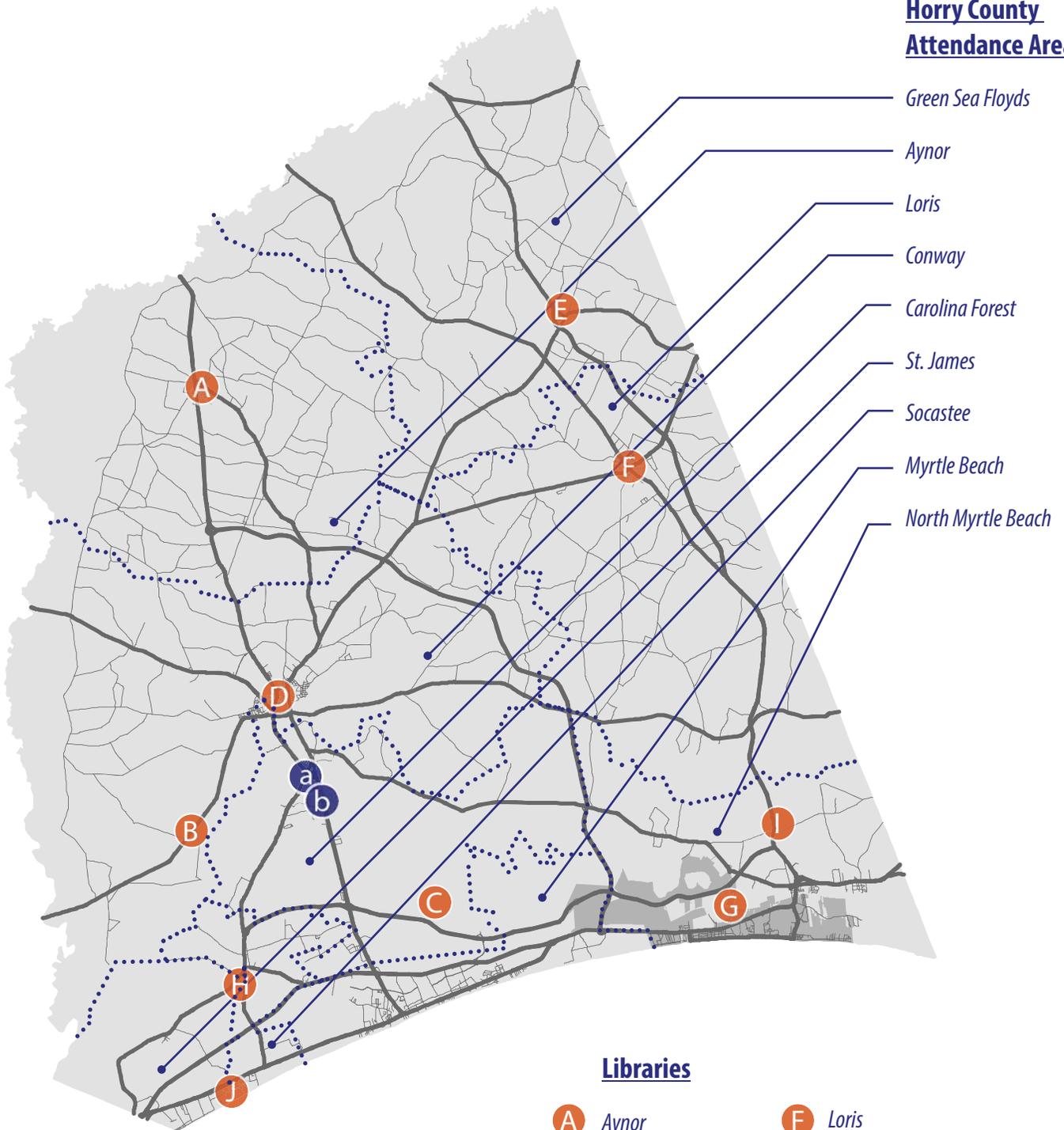
Five schools are located on the north end of the Grand Strand. Ocean Drive Elementary School, located on 11th Avenue North, is the only school located in city limits and has a student population of 870 as of 2015. Horry County Schools completed a major addition and renovation to the original primary school, bringing the structure up to current standards. The addition included a guidance area and resource room, upgraded HVAC system, interior renovations, and twenty-five new/replacement classrooms.

The North Myrtle Beach Middle School and North Myrtle Beach High School are located west of the waterway and not within the city limits. The middle school is located on Highway 90 while the high school was constructed on Sea Mountain Highway, between Highway 90 and Highway 9. Horry County School Board recently approved major expansion and renovation projects for both North Myrtle Beach middle school and high school.



► Photo of the North Myrtle Beach Library

**Horry County
Attendance Areas**



Colleges

- a** Coastal Carolina University
- b** Horry-Georgetown Technical College

Libraries

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A Aynor | F Loris |
| B Bucksport | G North Myrtle Beach |
| C Carolina Forest | H Socastee |
| D Conway | I Little River |
| E Green Sea | J Surfside Beach |

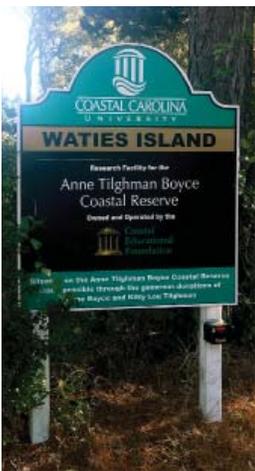
Coastal Carolina University

In 1954, Coastal Carolina Junior College opened as a branch of the College of Charleston. In 1975, the school awarded its first four-year degree. In 1991, the school was established as an independent institution known as Coastal Carolina University (CCU). Located in Conway, near Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) on Highway 501, CCU has an enrollment of nearly 8,300 students and offers 73 areas of study towards the baccalaureate degree, 28 master’s degree programs, two educational specialist degrees, and a Ph.D. in marine science. In addition to the main campus, classes are held in Litchfield, Georgetown, and at the CCU Myrtle Beach Education Center. Marine science and wetlands biology students also have access to Waties Island, a 1,062-acre barrier island located just north of Hog Inlet that serves as a natural laboratory.

Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC)

HGTC is the fourth largest technical college in the state. Established in 1966, the school offers more than 80 degrees, diplomas, and certificate programs as well as corporate and business training programs through continuing education. Although the main campus is located on Highway 501 in Conway, classes are also offered at two other campuses: Georgetown campus and the Grand Strand campus in Myrtle Beach on the former air force base.

Marine science and wetlands biology students also have access to Waties Island, a 1,062-acre barrier island located just north of Hog Inlet that serves as a natural laboratory.



▲ Image of Coastal Carolina's Waties Island sign.



▲ Image of Waties Island.

PARKS & RECREATION

The city's Parks and Recreation Department provides a range of facilities, events, and programs that meet the needs of youth and adults, providing opportunities for recreation while preserving the unique environment. In addition to offering athletic events throughout the year, the department hosts athletic camps, tournaments, programs, and other activities at its various facilities. The department employs forty-three staff members who run facilities that provide a safe environment with affordable programs and community events. Individuals and families are able to enjoy active lifestyles promoting health, fitness, social interaction and overall wellbeing.

Beach Services

In 2007, the City of North Myrtle Beach took on the task of providing lifeguards, chair and umbrella rentals, and concessions to its citizens and visitors. There are no full time regular employees; however, 110 part-time employees are hired during the summer season as concession, lifeguard, and rental employees. The city's obtained the coveted United States Lifesaving Association's (USLA) certification, which certifies the training programs and standards for open water (beach) lifeguard providers. Each one of the lifeguards is required to receive certifications from the American Red Cross and USLA. In 2008, Beach Services implemented the lost child wristband program. The program

has been so successful that USLA has implemented the same program in other communities. Beach Services distributes more than 1,500 wristbands throughout the course of the tourist season; and each season several children are reunited with their families using these wristbands.

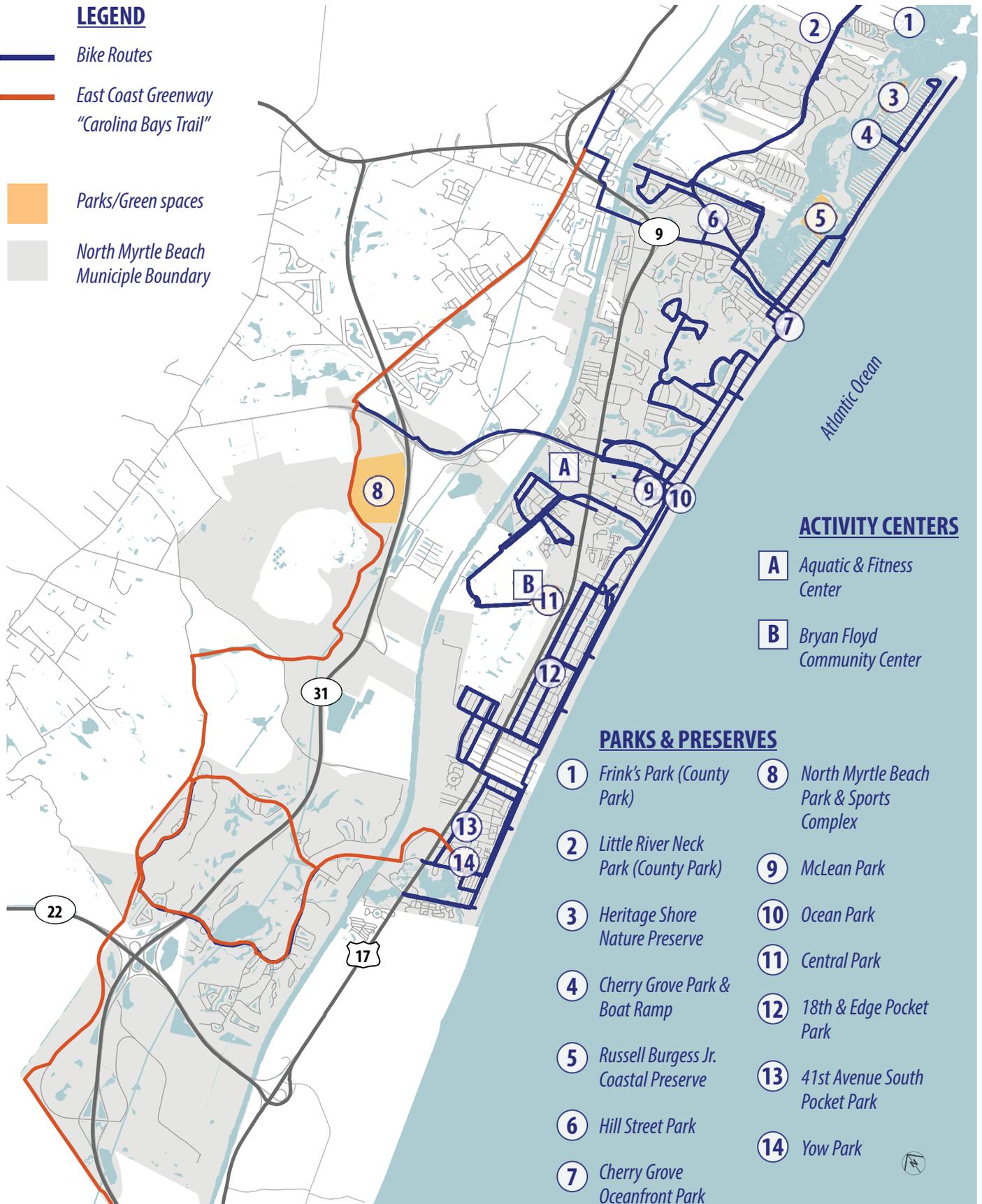
Aquatic & Fitness Center

The 64,055 square-foot facility offers an indoor eight-lane lap pool and an indoor three-lane warm water therapy pool with accessible ramp and wheelchair lift. In addition to the pools, the center includes:

- ▶ 2 indoor racquetball courts
- ▶ Weight room with equipment suitable for all abilities
- ▶ Indoor walking and jogging track
- ▶ Double full-court gym
- ▶ Family and special needs changing area
- ▶ 1 classroom
- ▶ Teen fitness orientation
- ▶ Adult fitness orientation
- ▶ Cardio theater
- ▶ 2 aerobic rooms
- ▶ Personal Trainers
- ▶ Child watch facilities
- ▶ Aerobic classes
- ▶ Whirlpool and dry sauna
- ▶ Health & Wellness Seminars
- ▶ Cardiac Rehabilitation follow-up
- ▶ 20' water slide in the therapy pool

LEGEND

-  Bike Routes
-  East Coast Greenway
"Carolina Bays Trail"
-  Parks/Green spaces
-  North Myrtle Beach
Municipality Boundary



ACTIVITY CENTERS

- A** Aquatic & Fitness Center
- B** Bryan Floyd Community Center

PARKS & PRESERVES

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Frink's Park (County Park) | 8 North Myrtle Beach Park & Sports Complex |
| 2 Little River Neck Park (County Park) | 9 McLean Park |
| 3 Heritage Shore Nature Preserve | 10 Ocean Park |
| 4 Cherry Grove Park & Boat Ramp | 11 Central Park |
| 5 Russell Burgess Jr. Coastal Preserve | 12 18th & Edge Pocket Park |
| 6 Hill Street Park | 13 41st Avenue South Pocket Park |
| 7 Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park | 14 Yow Park |

Parks & Nature Preserves

There are fourteen parks located in the North Myrtle Beach area, with twelve located within the city limits:

Frink's Park (County Park)

Just past the entrance to Tidewater Golf Club off of Little River Neck Road, Frink's Park was established to honor the Frink Family who were early settlers of this area. Nicholas Frink received a land grant in 1734, and his son, Jabesh, fought in the Revolutionary War; some Frink descendants still live in the area.

Little River Neck Park (County Park)

Located on Riverside Drive off of Little River Neck Road, this park offers seating centered on a small pond.

Heritage Shores Nature Preserve

As part of a land exchange with developers of the Heritage Shores single-family subdivision, the city acquired approximately seven acres of property on the north end of an island located on Williams Creek and the Cherry Grove Marsh, off 53rd Avenue North. At the southern end of the island

lies the Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp; a subdivision is located directly adjacent. This land exchange allowed the creation of the Heritage Shores Nature Preserve, which was dedicated in January 2007. This preserve has a walking path with elevated boardwalks, observation platforms, picnic shelters, benches, bike rack, and a stationary boat dock. . Additionally, the preserve has educational opportunities provided by fifty-one interpretive signs listing information on forty-eight different marine and terrestrial animals, insects, and plants that can be seen throughout the preserve.

Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp

To provide access to the ocean, the city maintains public boat ramps. Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp provides a double boat ramp, floating dock, fishing pier, public restrooms, shelter, nature trails, kayak launch, boardwalk with stairs to the Intracoastal Waterway, twenty-nine paved parking for vehicles and boat trailers, and overflow coquina parking with thirty spaces. Although the boat launch is situated along Williams Creek and the Cherry Grove Marsh, access to the ocean is conveniently less than one mile away.



◀ Heritage Shore Nature Preserve

Other City Boat Landings

Along the Intracoastal Waterway at 2nd Avenue South, a boat landing facility provides users with a boat launch and public parking in an unimproved parking lot. Another public boat ramp in the city is a county maintained boat ramp on Little River Neck Road named the Johnny Causey Landing in honor of the late county councilman. The city's Parks & Recreation Department provides limited sanitary services at this location.

Russell Burgess Coastal Preserve

In 2004, the city acquired property located on Lake Drive in Cherry Grove. That same year, the area was renamed the, "Russell Burgess Coastal Preserve," in honor of local resident and past city council member Russell Burgess, Jr. Long used as a local fishing spot, the preserve provides restrooms, paved parking, and a marsh boardwalk with water access. The city's Public Works department is interested

in extending the boardwalk along 38th Avenue North in the future, but the city does not own the property.

Hill Street Park

Hill Street Park is located about one mile west of the ocean, where Hill Street intersects the Sea Mountain Highway. It is a 2.5-acre neighborhood park with one tennis court with lighting, a playground, and picnic area.

Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park

Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park was completed in late summer 2008. Through an agreement with the developers of the Towers on the Grove resort in exchange for relocating public beach accesses, the city received a perpetual easement over 15,000 square feet of ocean-front property for the creation of public open space. In the relaxing setting featuring a Santee Cooper wind turbine, the city provides restrooms, accessible parking, accessible beach showers, picnic gazebo, naturalized



▲ *Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park*

landscaping, swings, ocean views, and accessible beach access at the end of 22nd Avenue North.

The North Myrtle Beach Park and Sport Complex

The North Myrtle Beach Park and Sport Complex opened in 2014. It consists of a ten-acre meadow, baseball/softball fields, batting cages, soccer/lacrosse fields, amphitheater, three miles of walking and bike trails, three-acre dog park, picnic shelters, playgrounds, nature preserve, veteran's memorial plaza, administrative building, and a 25-acre lake for water-related activities, including Shark Wake Park for cable wake boarding and Go Ape zip line and treetop climbing adventure.

McLean Park

McLean Park has been described by residents as the most beautiful park in the community with a meditation garden and gazebo overlooking a two-acre lake. The park is located two blocks west of the ocean between 1st and 3rd Avenue South, at the

heart of the city. In addition to the gardens and lake, the park also has playgrounds, a fitness trail, tennis courts with lighting, picnic shelters, a youth baseball field, and restrooms.

Ocean Park

Ocean Park is located one block west of Main Street on Ocean Boulevard. It provides public parking, restrooms, and access for beach visitors and houses several amenities, including picnic shelters, beach showers, seasonal concessions, and the Hippo waterslide.

18th & Edge Pocket Park

As former home to a city water tower, this pocket park contains a fountain marking the previous water tower location, walking path, benches, trash cans, and a pet waste station.



▲ *The North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex*

41st Avenue South Pocket Park

As one of the newest and smallest parks in the city, this pocket park is located on 41st Avenue South between Poinsett and Birchwood Streets. It features a paved strolling path and garden centered on a circular mound of turf referencing the location of a former water tower. Park amenities include pergolas, benches, a Tri Active American Warm-up Station for exercise, and a pet waste station.

Yow Park

Yow Park is a 1.5-acre neighborhood park located in Windy Hill on Windy Hill Road. The popular playground destination also offers restrooms, half-court basketball, and a picnic area.

Central Park

Adjacent to the J. Bryan Floyd Community Center, this 20-acre park offers multiple active and passive recreation areas. The amenities include a paved walking path, accessible playgrounds, hard-surface tennis courts with lighting, picnic shelters the public can reserve for events, half-court basketball courts, batting cages, outdoor pickleball courts, multi-purpose fields, concession stands, baseball fields, and restrooms.

J. Bryan Floyd Community Center

The city operates many recreation programs at the J. Bryan Floyd Community Center on Possum Trot Road, adjacent to Central Park in Crescent Beach. Originally built in 1981 and renovated in 2009, the 30,000 square foot facility contains two gymnasiums, meeting rooms, an art studio, offices for administrative personnel, reception/customer service area and restrooms. A 2009 expansion included the construction of a centralized administrative office, new lobby and restrooms, and the addition of a second gymnasium. The entire facade and grounds were updated and rehabilitated.

Programs offered through the Parks and Recreation Department are open to residents, nonresidents, and visitors to North Myrtle Beach. Approximately 450 - 700 adolescents participate in programs each season, and the community center serves between 450 - 700 adults each week. The Community Center offers many classes on a variety of topics ranging from yoga, bridge, mahjong, jazzercise, karate, and painting groups. The cost to participate in activities varies depending on the visitor's residency status. The City of North Myrtle Beach also receives money from Horry County to provide programs including football, baseball, basketball, soccer, and adult softball.



▲ J. Bryan Floyd Community Center

MEDICAL FACILITIES

McLeod Seacoast Hospital

Serving northern Horry County, McLeod Seacoast Hospital is located about one mile outside of city limits west of the waterway in Little River, SC. McLeod Seacoast has 50 acute care beds, features a newly constructed 9,600 square foot emergency department, and offers a wide range of services including cardiac, surgical, orthopedic, and women's health. The hospital is currently constructing an expansion bringing another 50 beds, inpatient tower, emergency room enlargement, operating rooms, same-day services suite, and a modern labor and delivery area.



▲ Computer rendering of McLeod Seacoast Hospital



▲ Hand-drawn sketch of McLeod Seacoast Hospital

Grand Strand Health North Strand ER

Opened in October of 2016, the Grand Strand Health North Strand ER is the newest full-service emergency room in the City of North Myrtle Beach. This ten bed, 10,820 square foot facility is a campus of Grand Strand Medical Center in the North Myrtle Beach area. The North Strand ER is staffed with 39 staff members including board-certified emergency physicians and highly trained clinical and support personnel.



▲ Photo of Grand Strand Health North Strand ER

Grand Strand Medical Center

Grand Strand Medical Center is a 301-bed acute care hospital located approximately 10 miles from the city in Myrtle Beach, SC. Offering the area's only cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, and pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) programs, this hospital is home to a Level II trauma center. First opening in 1958, this medical center is one of the oldest in the area.

Little River Medical Center

Providing general primary medical care, dental care, and behavioral health care for all ages, Little River Medical Center in nearby Little River, SC, has provided high-quality care for residents of Horry and Brunswick counties since 1978.

Stephen's Crossroad Clinic

Located six miles from the city, Stephens Crossroads Clinic is run by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and offers family planning, sexually transmitted infections treatment, HIV services, and women, infants, and children services.

Myrtle Beach VA Outpatient Clinic

Located on the former Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, this clinic offers 16 treatment rooms providing primary care, mental health, and digital radiology services to nearly 13,000 veteran patients in Horry County and the surrounding communities.

Urgent Care Facilities

Offering convenience and after-hours access for non-life-threatening illnesses, there are multiple urgent care options serving the North Myrtle Beach community such as Access Medical Center in Windy Hill, Doctor's Care in Crescent Beach, and the CVS Minute Clinic in Ocean Drive.

Residential Care Facilities/Nursing Homes

There are no residential care facilities or nursing homes located within the City of North Myrtle Beach, but Myrtle Beach Manor Retirement Community and Summit Place of North Myrtle Beach are located close to the city and provide 111 and 80 beds, respectively.

Hospice Providers

Focusing on comfort and support, hospice services are provided to individuals living with life-threatening illnesses. There are numerous area hospice providers serving the North Myrtle Beach community including Mercy Care of Lower Cape Fear, Heartland Hospice, Agapé Hospice of the Grand Strand, and InCare Home Health & Hospice.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

2.1 . Provide for a variety of facilities and resources that expand and enhance the community’s cultural and educational offerings.

2.2. Maintain criteria, regulations, and procedures that allow for the siting of essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities.

2.2.1. Work Cooperatively with Horry County, the state and/ or other cities to site essential public facilities and to promote intergovernmental partnerships to reduce overall costs and maximum use.

2.2.2. Consider the following when locating essential public facilities:

- Accessibility to the people served
- Protection of neighborhoods
- Preservation of natural resources
- The cost effectiveness of service delivery
- Location near transit and mixed-use centers
- Goals and policies of the comprehensive plan



▲ Main Street

2.3. Ensure a system of parks, trails and open spaces adequate for a wide variety of active and passive leisure pursuits, contributing to the quality of life within the City of North Myrtle Beach.

2.3.1. Update the Parks and Open Space Master Plan to identify the location of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities based on the future growth of North Myrtle Beach.

2.3.2. Open spaces should be interconnected to facilitate activities, such as walking and bicycling, and to create ease of access to and from recreation sites.

2.3.3. Seek to establish connections to sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, and other recreational thoroughfares of surrounding communities.

2.3.4. Strategies should be developed to connect the North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex and Central Park to Main Street in North Myrtle Beach.

2.3.5. Require new residential developments to provide land for neighborhood or pocket parks or other amenities.

2.3.6. Plan, develop, and operate diverse recreation activities for citizens of all ages.

2.3.7. Continue to collaborate with Horry County School District to co-locate and jointly use park, recreation, and school facilities to facilitate transit use and bicycle and pedestrian access.



▲ North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex

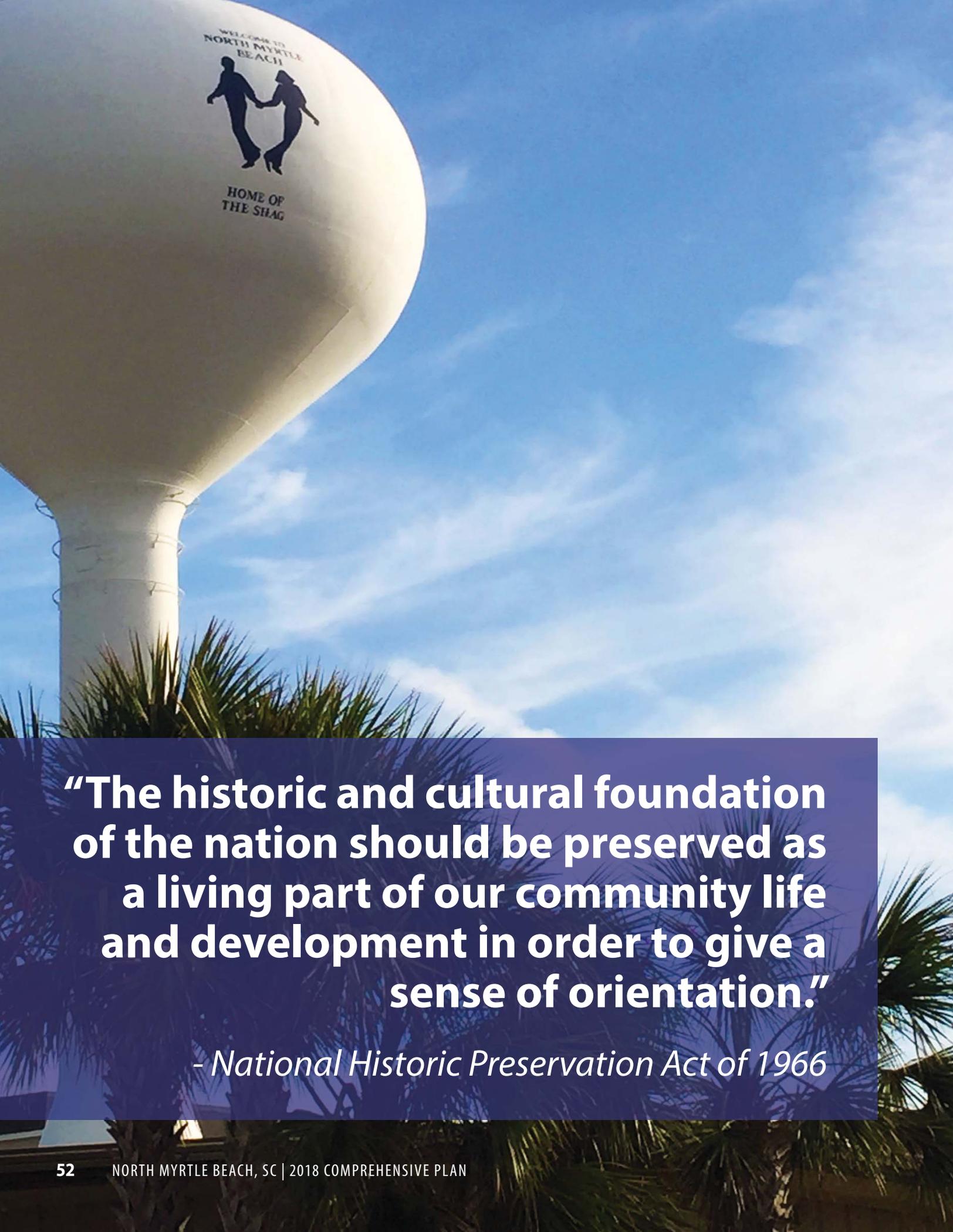


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3

OUR HISTORY

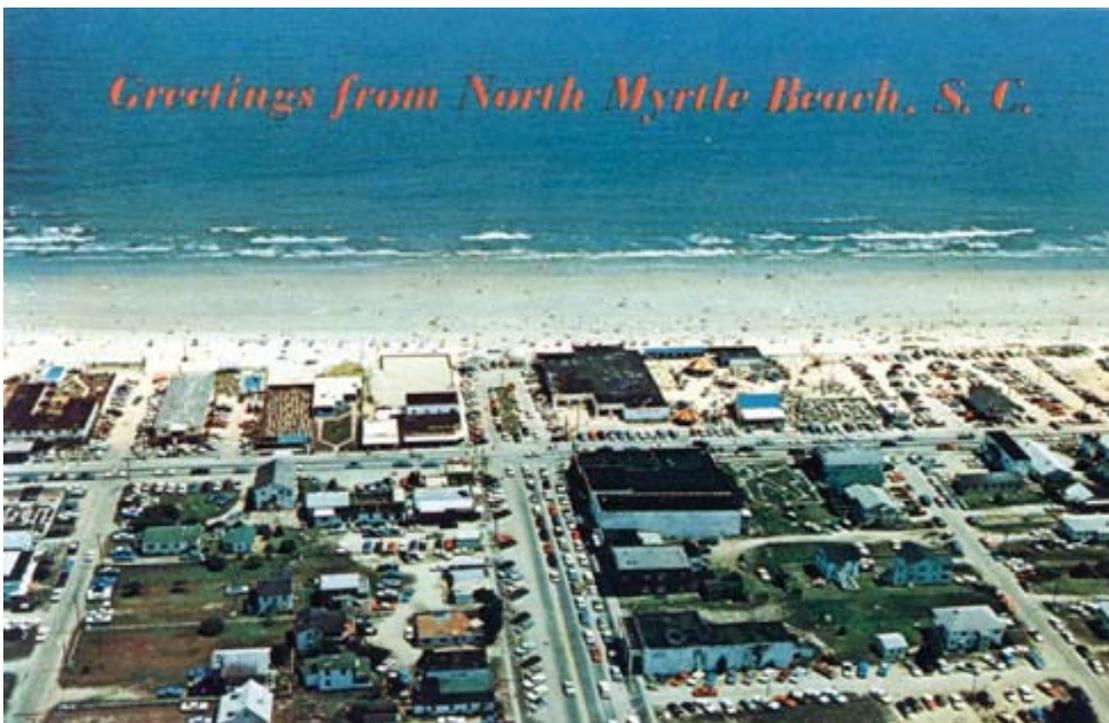


“The historic and cultural foundation of the nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation.”

- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

A community's identity, character, and sense of place stem from its history. The North Myrtle Beach community was originally inhabited by the Winyah and Waccamaw Indians. These Indians called the area "Chicora," meaning "the land." The Spanish were the first non-indigenous people to explore the North Myrtle Beach area as early as 1514. The infamous pirate Blackbeard sailed the bays and inlets in the 1700s. Cherry Grove Beach used to house flourishing indigo plantations; however, due to insufficient means to reach the North Myrtle Beach area, it remained uninhabited until 1900 when the first railroad was created by the Burroughs & Chapin families.

The oldest settlement in the North Strand was along today's Little River Neck Road in Cherry Grove, when King George III granted a number of large tracts of land to William Allston and John Altman in the 1700s. These tracts were used primarily for agriculture. North Myrtle Beach's history as a tourist destination dates back to 1740, when William Gause opened one of the first inns near Gause Swash, which is now White Pointe Swash in the Windy Hill section of North Myrtle Beach. Legend has it that in 1791, President George Washington visited the Gause Inn while on a tour of the South, giving official name to Windy Hill Beach due to the local weather conditions.



◀ Greeting postcard of North Myrtle Beach

In the 1920s, Nicholas Nixon purchased fifteen square miles of land from Colonel Daniel Jordan to develop the area known as Cherry Grove. Nixon lobbied for a road to be built in order to connect Loris with Cherry Grove. Highway 9 was constructed, and the first tourists started to visit the area to enjoy the beach. In 1924, W.K. Allen drew up plats for the Nixon family in preparation for development of the area. Thirty years later in 1954, Cherry Grove beachfront was extended by two miles when a descendent, C.D. Nixon, filled in the Cherry Grove Inlet and connected Futch Beach Island with the mainland. Most of the Cherry Grove beach houses were built on filled marshland between 1954 and 1969. With the advent of the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), additional filling of the marsh was prohibited. There are still platted lots under water in Cherry Grove Marsh, left over from the time of development.

While Cherry Grove was being built, the Ocean Drive section of the city started to develop as an entertainment area that included dancing at Roger's Pavilion, going to the movies or bowling, and cruising on the beach. On June 8, 1948, Ocean Drive Beach incorporated, making it the first of the four beaches to do so. For many people growing up in the 1950s, Ocean Drive was the place to be. The Shag, South Carolina's official dance, originated in places like the O.D. Pavilion and The Pad. The area remains a central commercial area due to the number of shag clubs, restaurants, and

businesses located along Main Street.

During World War II, sections of Windy Hill were leased to the federal government for use as a training camp. Most of the development of Windy Hill did not happen until after World War II. Also, as part of the national defense program, the federal government used portions of Horry County for bombing range practice. A portion of today's Barefoot Resort in Windy Hill contains part of the Conway Bombing and Gunnery Range used during that time

Between 1931 and 1934, the federal government created the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AICW), an inland passage from Maine to Florida, to be used and maintained for national defense. In North Myrtle Beach, the waterway extended in Little River from SC 9, at what is now the Little River Swing Bridge, south past Camp Branch Brook in today's Barefoot Resort. Called "the ditch" by local residents, the Waterway is now considered an important recreational boating and fishing amenity.

In 1968, the City of North Myrtle Beach officially incorporated by combining the four beaches of Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach, and Windy Hill. Each of the four beaches had commercial strips: Sea Mountain Highway in Cherry Grove, Main Street in Ocean Drive, 17th Avenue South in Crescent Beach, and 37th Avenue South in Windy Hill.

For many people growing up in the 1950s, Ocean Drive was the place to be. The Shag, South Carolina's official dance, originated in places like the O.D. Pavilion and The Pad.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The city's history has also been shaped by Mother Nature in the form of hurricanes. On October 15, 1954, when Hurricane Hazel swept through North and South Carolina; it was estimated that close to a thousand structures were completely destroyed from Windy Hill to Cherry Grove. In 1989, the wind and storm surge from Hurricane Hugo caused over \$50 million in damage.

After Hurricane Hazel, motels like the Windjammer, Royal Palm, and the Rockin' K

replaced many of the single-family cottages on the oceanfront, allowing more people to stay overnight. Similarly, after Hurricane Hugo, a new phase of development began in the early 1990s. With changes in the zoning code and a strong economy, nine to twelve-story condominiums began replacing many of the cottages. Most recently, small motels and condominiums have given way to eighteen-story structures, first in the Main Street area, then Windy Hill, and in parts of Crescent Beach.



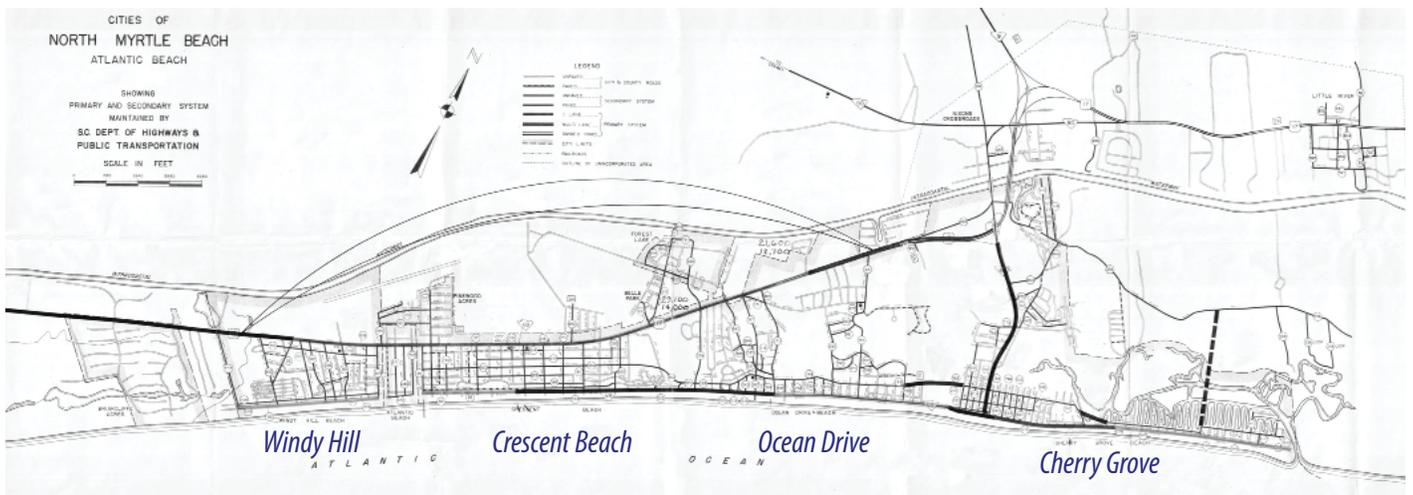
▲ Photo of damages to homes on Crescent Beach caused by Hurricane Hazel in 1954.



▲ Photo of damages to the boardwalk on Ocean Blvd in Myrtle Beach after Hurricane Hugo in 1989.



▲ Photo of an 18 story hotel called Windy Hill Dunes.



▲ Historic map of North Myrtle Beach.

HISTORIC SITES

Located just outside city limits on Little River Neck Road, the oldest remaining historic site in the area is Fort Randall. The purpose of the fort was to protect Little River during the Civil War from the Union Navy. On January 5, 1863, Union Officer William B. Cushing gained possession of the fort for a brief period of time. A few days later, about 125 Confederate soldiers drove them out of the area. Fort Randall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Properties are evaluated following the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria. The NRHP is the official register of properties that are historically and/or architecturally significant.

In response to the proposed expansion of I-73 through Horry County, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and Horry County created funding administered by South Carolina Department of Archives and History to conduct a countywide historic resources survey. The final report, called the Horry County Historic Resource Survey, was released in June 2009 and reported on 2,914 resource sites, of which 125 were in the city limits of North Myrtle Beach. In addition to the historic resources, the City of North Myrtle has two properties that meet the eligibility criteria to be included in the National Register of Historic Places: 706 15th Avenue South (C.B. Berry home) and the Altman House located at 2207 Spring Street in Cherry Grove.

Properties are evaluated under four criteria:

- ▶ Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to broad patterns of our history
- ▶ Properties that are associated with lives of persons significant in our past
- ▶ Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction
- ▶ Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, important information in prehistory or history



▲ A scenic view of Fort Randall.



▲ The historic Altman House in Cherry Grove.

Windy Hill

Windy Hill Beach has twenty-two recorded historic sites, all residences, save for one commercial structure. This beach is known to have one of the area’s earliest residents of record; William Gause received a land grant from the British crown in 1737. Gause’s 250 acres included a swash near modern-day 48th Avenue South; now known as White Pointe Swash; the area was originally called Gause Swash. William Gause built an inn that served travelers along Kings Highway, reportedly known for its good food and hospitality. Local history purports that President George Washington stopped at this beach on a hill to rest during his travels here in 1791. The name “Windy Hill” was created when a strong gust of wind led Washington to comment, “My! What a windy hill!”



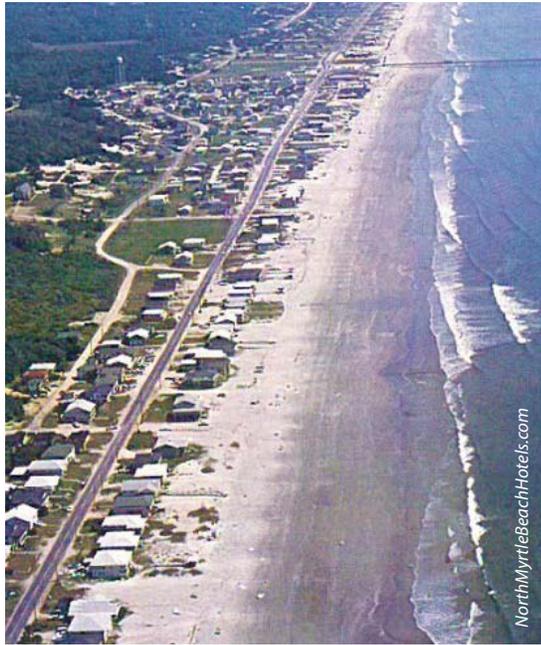
▲ Postcard from the 1960s of sunbathers on Windy Hill Beach.



◀ Historic map of Windy Hill Beach.

Crescent Beach

There are 77 historic sites recorded in Crescent Beach, 73 residential structures and four commercial structures. Crescent Beach used to be made up of large parcels owned by the Bell, Ward, and Lewis families, and the town's first mayors, J.W. Perrin and I.C. Jordan, can be credited with creating the town. Perrin owned large tracts of property, eventually developed by others, and Jordan served on city council and the board of Crescent Beach Corporation.



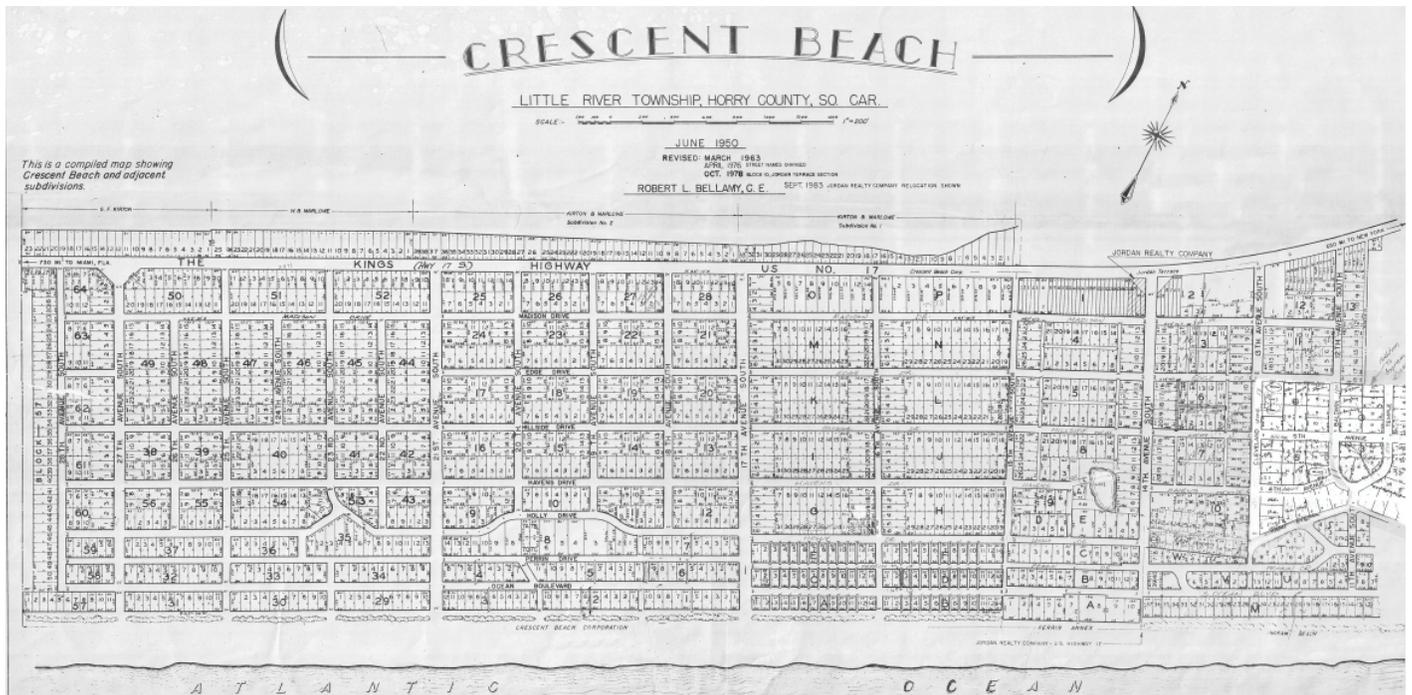
▲ Postcard of Crescent Beach's main drag.



▲ Crescent Beach's fishing pier and beach.

▼ Historic map of Crescent Beach.

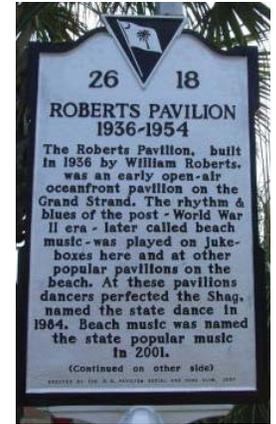
▲ Aerial of Crescent Beach looking north.



Ocean Drive

In 1926, a group of businessmen from nearby Florence County purchased and subdivided land to form Ocean Drive Estates. The area later became known as Ocean Drive Beach when it became the first of the four original beach towns to incorporate on June 8, 1948. Branded the, "Widest beach in the world," the town boasted a beach wide enough to hold automobile races. A pavilion was built here by the Roberts family of Green Sea, South Carolina in 1936. The Roberts Pavilion was a popular dancing spot, but unfortunately, the structure was destroyed by Hurricane Hazel on October, 25, 1954. From 1955-1957, the Ocean Drive Pavilion was constructed using some of the wood from the destroyed pavilion. The O.D. Pavilion Shag Club erected a historic marker in 2007 representing the location of Roberts Pavilion.

Ocean Drive Beach is the home of North Myrtle Beach's Main Street-- a commercial district with both one and two-story brick commercial structures that generally adjoin the street and bisect residential development. There are approximately 42 recorded historic sites in Ocean Drive Beach; twelve of these sites are commercial, twenty-four are residential structures, and one is a religious building. As the only dense collection of commercial structures in North Myrtle Beach, Main Street in Ocean Drive is a significant historic resource.



▲ Historic marker for O.D. Pavilion.



▲ Historic postcards of Ocean Drive Beach activities. Source: NorthMyrtleBeachHotels.com

▲ Historic map of Ocean Drive Beach.



Cherry Grove

Within the city, ninety-two structures were identified as having been built before the 1940s. According to the county’s historic resource survey, Cherry Grove Beach contains about 58 of the surveyed resources in total; a majority of these sites are residential.

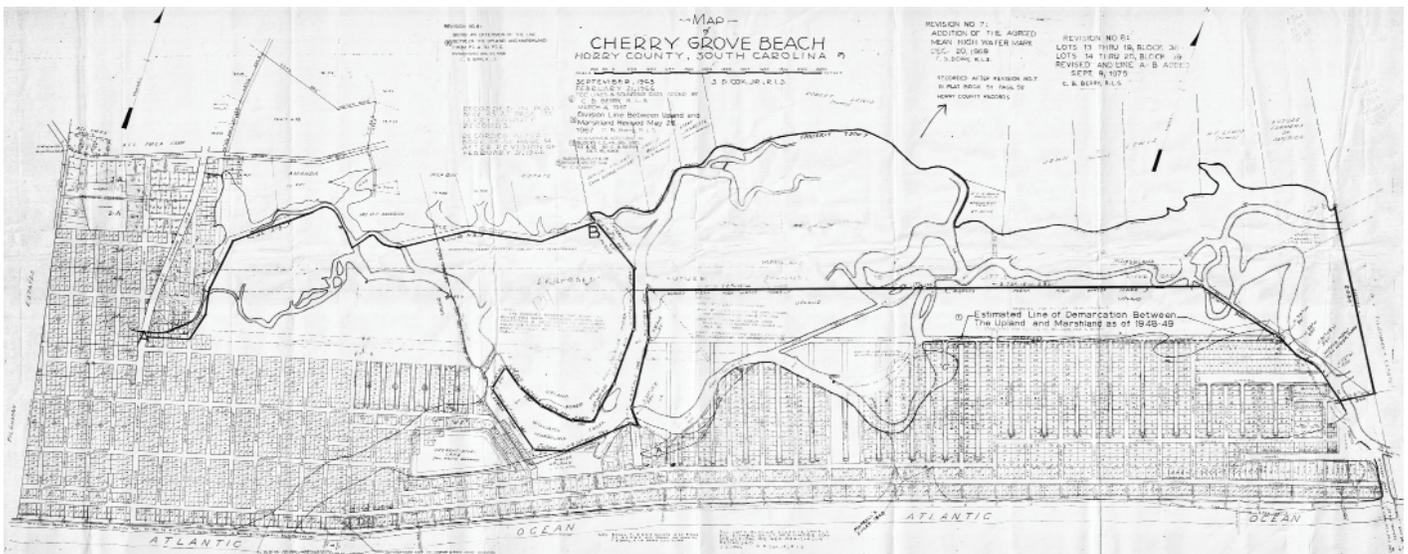
In addition to historic sites, there are other features in the City of North Myrtle Beach that are of local historic importance. For example, the Krispy Kreme sign in the 1600 block of US Highway 17 South is approximately fifty years old and one of the original twelve signs that Krispy Kreme erected nationally. Recently designated as an historic sign by city council, the sign is a beloved piece of highway Americana.



▲ Postcard from the 1960s of a couple looking out over Cherry Grove Beach from the fishing pier.



▲ Postcard from the 1960s of sunbathers enjoying Cherry Grove Beach.



▲ Historic map of Cherry Grove Beach.

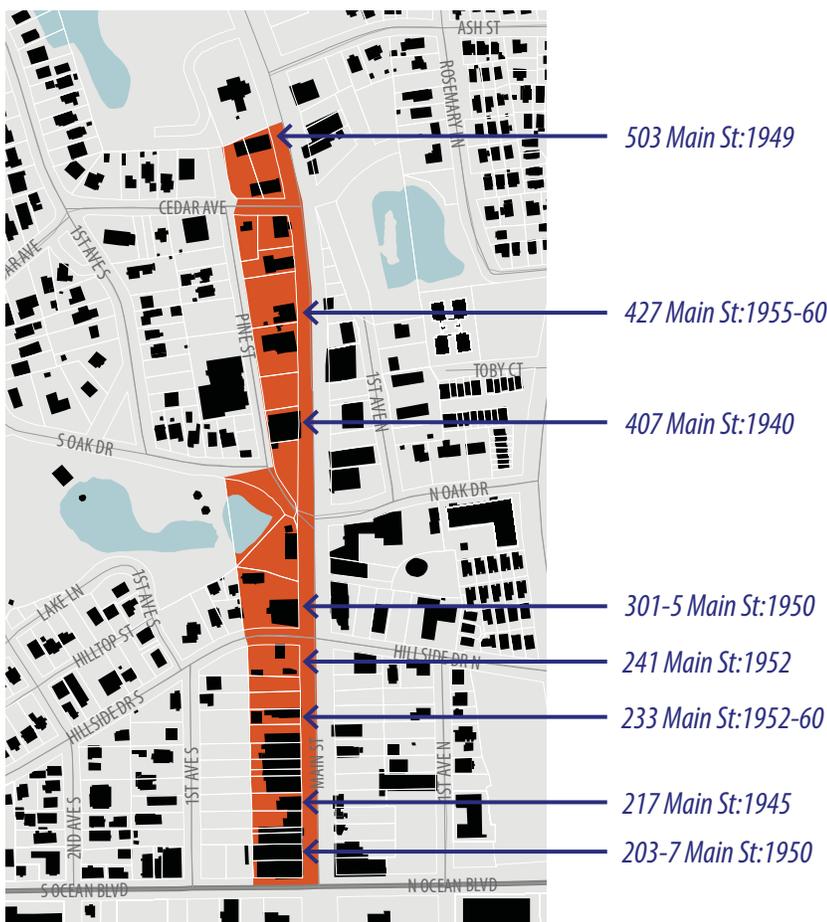
POTENTIAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The Horry County Historic Resource Survey documents two potential historic districts within the city limits. One is the Ocean Drive Beach Commercial District and the other is the Crescent Beach Historic District.

Ocean Drive Beach Commercial District

The Ocean Drive Beach Commercial District would be located on Main Street between Ocean Boulevard and Ash Street. This street has experienced substantial growth over the past few decades; only a handful of historic structures remain today. The pace of growth and lack of consistent standards has resulted in a corridor having a diversity of building types with no common scale, rhythm, or orientation to the street. In contrast, the proposed historic district would make use of common features including masonry construction, often with brick veneer on the front façade, and a one-part commercial block style.

While some of these buildings feature replacement windows and slight alterations, the district as a whole would seek to retain integrity through location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The map below shows properties recommended for the NRHP in the Ocean Drive District, along with the current SHPO evaluation.



Map of Main Street (2015) with historic structures called out with their addresses and construction dates. Under NRHP categorization, each property is recommended as categories A and C. They are also deemed not eligible under SHPO evaluation.



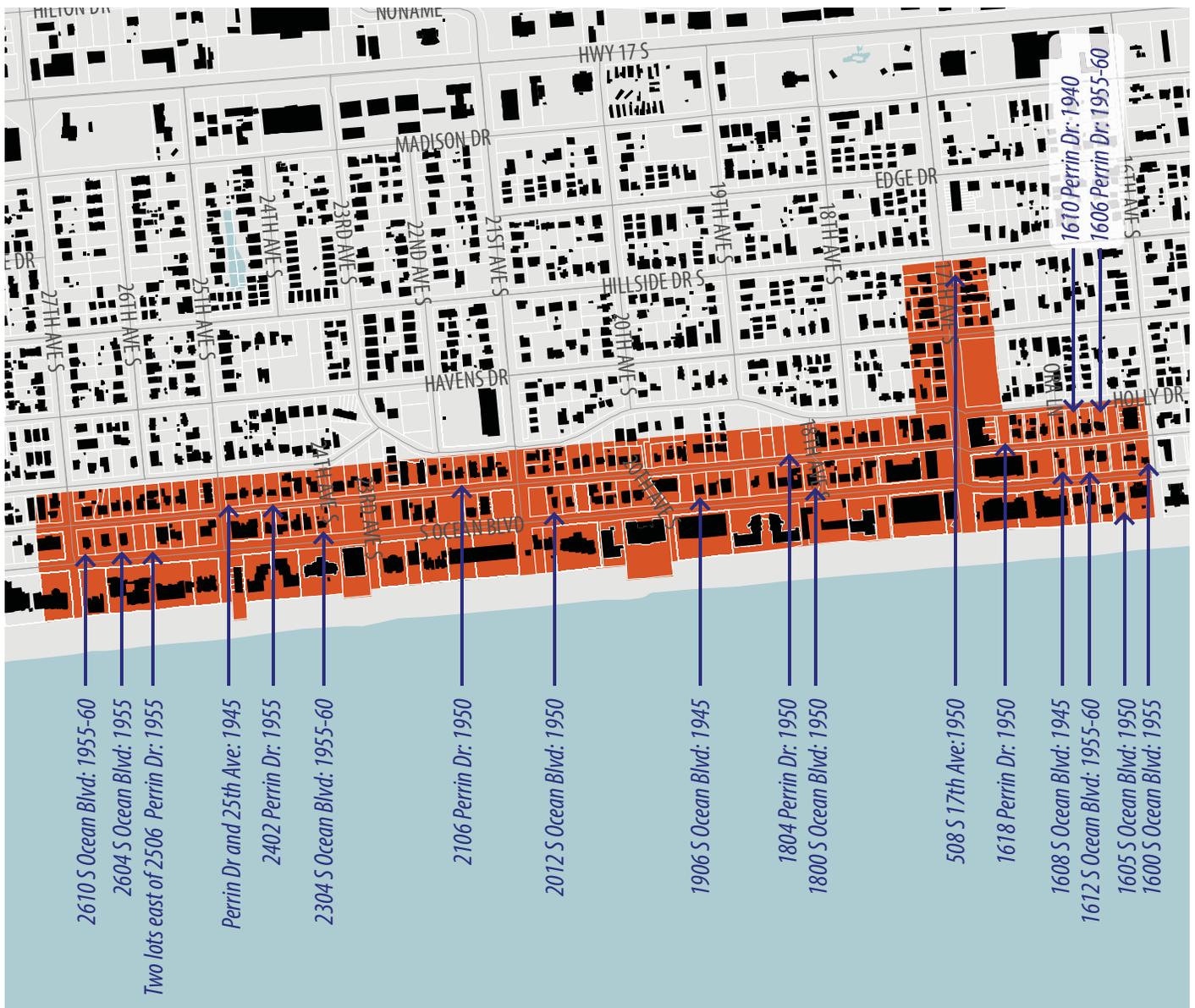
The main drag of historic Ocean Drive Beach.



Main Street 2015.

Crescent Beach Commercial District

The potential Crescent Beach Historic District was identified due to the high degree of integrity of its community of large beach homes. This area is unique within the Horry County coast; however, it has been heavily disturbed by modern development and infill. This district contains twenty-three buildings, including both beach homes and structures for servant quarters, typically sharing the features of asbestos shingles, gable roofs clad in composition shingles, porches across the façade, and wood awnings. Most often, these structures are two-story wood frame construction and date from the 1950s. The district is bounded by 16th Avenue South to 27th Avenue South and South Ocean Boulevard to about Holly Drive. The graphic below shows properties recommended for having potential to be a part of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in Crescent Beach, but the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff considers these structures ineligible due to the changes made over the years.



Preservation Ordinances

Although recommendations for the National Register of Historic Places help highlight historic sites in the city, only designation and adoption of a local historic preservation ordinance will ensure the survival of these structures. Ordinances are available to serve as models for a future city ordinance; the tools detailed by these examples include review processes, stays on demolition, and local property tax abatements for projects of substantial rehabilitation.

Preservation can bring real value to a community. For example, designation of a historic neighborhood may boost tourism by featuring a seasonal event or open house tours. Historic designation may also help ensure the integrity of a neighborhood's visual appeal. A flexible ordinance that allows for varying levels of review responding to a structure's significance can be of value to the community. A common theme among nearly all designated properties and newly created historic districts is that property values often increase after designation.

Though a comparatively young city, there is enough of a critical mass of historically significant properties that the city should give consideration to adoption of local ordinances that prize these properties.

Case Study: Summerville, SC Historic District

The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) reviews projects in the historic district and designates historic properties. There are no historic district regulations specific to Summerville; the only guidance for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness is the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, a very general guideline.

Design guidelines ensure the preservation and continuation of the established Lowcountry style. These guidelines stringently define accepted architectural details and preservation methods without precluding opportunities for future infill and redevelopment.



◀ *Historic commercial building in Summerville, SC*



◀ *Historic home in Summerville, SC*

Archaeological Sites

Fifty-two archaeological sites have been surveyed throughout North Myrtle Beach. Most of the sites were discovered during the development of Tidewater Plantation and Barefoot Resort. Seven sites were eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Five of these sites are from the Woodland Period and offer a view of Native American activity during the period between 1,500 B.C. to about 1,000 A.D. The other two sites provide an understanding of the tar and timber industry that played a role in the economic development of Horry County from the 1700s to the 1920s. These sites include a tar kiln and a fallen chimney located between Little River Neck Road and Cherry Grove Marsh that was estimated to have been built and used between the 1870s and the 1920s. Historians believe that this fallen structure was once attached to a one-story building that was part of a farmstead or small plantation. Artifacts from the Tidewater site are held at the University of South Carolina's Institute for Anthropology and Archaeology.

North Myrtle Beach Area Historical Museum

In March 2005, the North Myrtle Beach Area Historical Museum was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The museum's mission is to foster a deeper appreciation for the culture, history, and science of the North Myrtle Beach area. The North Myrtle Beach Area Historical Museum opened on April 7, 2013, at 799 2nd Avenue North. The museum chronicles the history of the northeast corner of South Carolina with exhibits including spoken history interviews with city residents and pictorial historic exhibits.

North Myrtle Beach Area Historical Museum promotes a strong sense of community pride and fosters an appreciation for our place in the region's rich history... Exhibits and programs focus on stories from the region's first inhabitants to the development of today's tourism industry.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The city is the home of the Shag, South Carolina's official state dance. With its rhythm based in 4/4 time, the Shag is an evolution of swing dancing with intricate steps primarily performed to Carolina beach music. The Shag has been significant to North Myrtle Beach for many years. More than just a dance, the Shag is a cultural icon evocative of the nostalgia of youth and summer nights for the thousands of shaggers that continue to make North Myrtle Beach their dancing mecca. Known as S.O.S., the Society of Stranders hosts two major dance events in the City each year, the Spring Safari and Fall Migration. The two events are attended by over 12,000 shaggers who come for a week of beach music, reunions, and dancing.

While The Pad is now gone, several dance halls still keep Main Street a thriving destination for shaggers. Main Street also regularly hosts dance competitions; it can take years of competition for a shagger to earn the coveted professional status.

There are also several junior shag clubs that meet annually in North Myrtle Beach for Junior S.O.S. Their shag week includes dance workshops, competitions, general dancing, food, beach activities, and music.



▲ Duck's Beach Club



▲ Fat Harold's Beach Club



▲ OD Arcade and Lounge



▲ Spanish Galleon



▲ Pirate's Cove Bar and Grill

GOALS & STRATEGIES

3.1. Protect the historic resources that are important to North Myrtle Beach.

3.1.1 Identify and, to the maximum extent practical, preserve historic buildings and sites.

3.1.2 Existing community events and programs should be supported and expanded where possible.



▲ Historic photo of "The Pad" bar and shag hang out spot.

3.2. Provide a variety of facilities that enhance the community's cultural and educational offerings.

3.2.1. Support the continued operation of the historical museum in order to retain, document, and collect the area's history.

3.2.2. Continue to support cultural and community events, such as the Music on Main concert series, within the Main Street area and look for opportunities to expand events to the 17th and/or 37th Avenue South areas.

3.2.3. Coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Department to assist with enhancing or improving beach recreation facilities and activities.

3.2.4. Coordinate with the Public Works Department to assist with enhancing Intracoastal Waterway recreation facilities and activities, i.e. marsh boardwalk.



▲ Photo of the North Myrtle Beach Historical Museum.



▲ Susan and Kevin Harrell dancing at the OD Arcade & Lounge.



▲ Heading for the Starting Line at the DIVAS Half Marathon, 2016.



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WHO WE ARE

A young boy with blonde hair is leaning over a wooden railing, looking down at the water. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The boy is wearing a light blue t-shirt. The water is dark blue and reflects the light. The railing is made of light-colored wood.

“There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.”

- Jane Jacobs



▲ *There is a huge need in the city to balance out the age gap between young families and seniors.*

North Myrtle Beach needs to continue to attract people from all age groups, which means the population should continue to grow over time. The reality is that all cities are competing with each other to attract the best and brightest residents and businesses in order to be successful.

The city also faces the challenges of balancing permanent residents and tourists. In order to grow economically, the city relies heavily on tourism. However, all resources and city improvements should benefit all populations and continue to focus on growing a base of year-round residents.

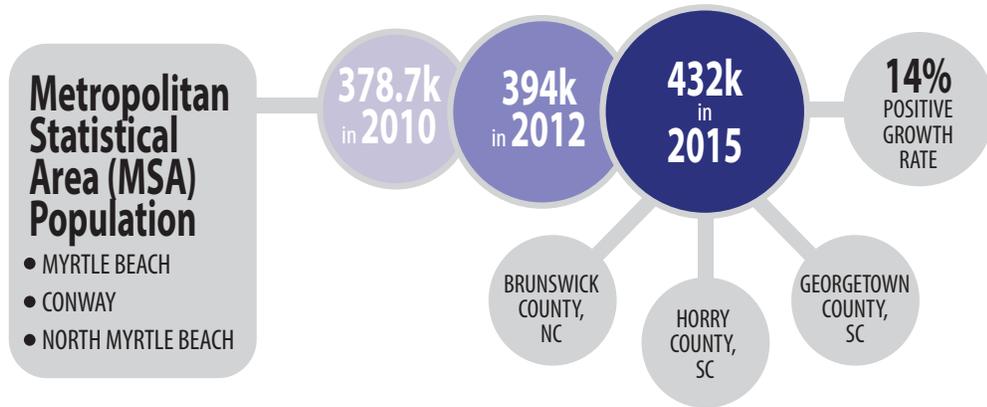


▲ *With such a large population of seniors, active and compact lifestyles are important to keep the population happy and healthy.*

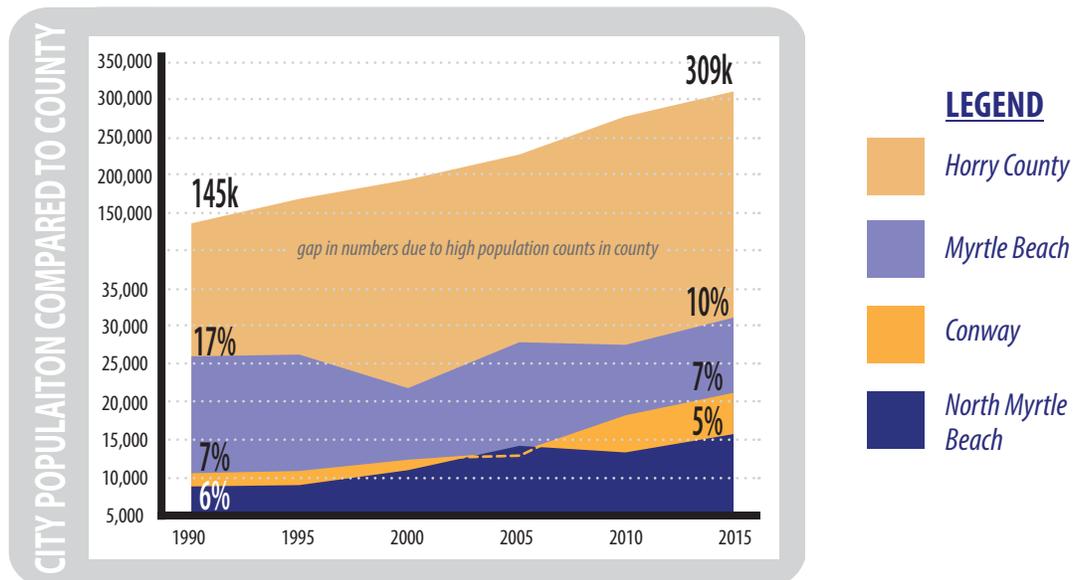
Even some of the U.S. Census Bureau's population data is skewed because it only represents the information for people claiming North Myrtle Beach as their primary residence. While millions of people visit the Grand Strand annually, Horry County only had 269,291 residents as of 2010 and North Myrtle Beach was estimated to have a population of 15,579 in 2015. Though the number of year-round residents has increased, so has the number of tourists. The city's demographics of permanent residents may differ from those of tourists, but their population data is a good place to start in analyzing how the city has and may continue to grow.

POPULATION

North Myrtle Beach is part of the Myrtle Beach-Conway-North Myrtle Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA consists of Horry County and Georgetown County in South Carolina and Brunswick County in North Carolina. The MSA has seen a 14% increase in population from 2010 – 2015 according to the US Census Bureau.

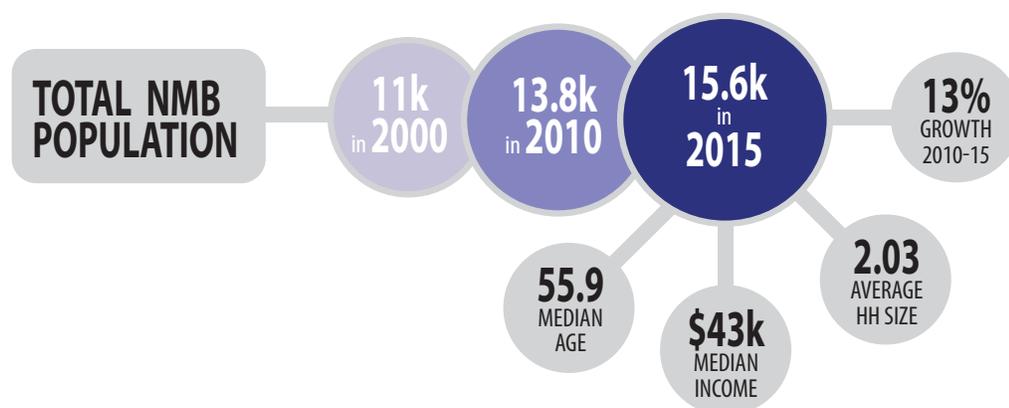


Horry County is a major contributor to the region’s growth. In 2014, the county surpassed the 300,000 residents mark for the first time. The majority of growth has been outside the MSA, evidenced by shrinking population percentages in the cities in comparison to the county. In 1990, Myrtle Beach was 17% of the total county population, but in 2015 it was only 10% of the total county population. In 2015, Myrtle Beach had a population of 31,035; Conway had a population of 21,053 and North Myrtle Beach had a population of 15,579. The remaining Horry County population equaled 241,532. Though the population in these cities continues to increase, their percentage of the overall County population is decreasing. North Myrtle Beach’s proportion of the county population went from 6% in 1990 to 5% in 2015.



Population Growth and Density

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the 2015 population for North Myrtle Beach to be 15,579, a 13% increase from the 2010 census estimate of 13,572. The city has seen a rapid increase in population since it's formation in the late 1960s. Beginning around 1990, population growth started to level out with an increase of 27%. From 2000 to 2010 the population increased again by 25%. The city appears to be on track to continue its population growth over this decade.



It appears from the census data that Myrtle Beach, while still the most densely populated area on the Strand, is not growing as fast as other communities. North Myrtle Beach has annexed 6,263 acres of additional land since 2005 and will likely continue to experience an increase in population over the next ten years.

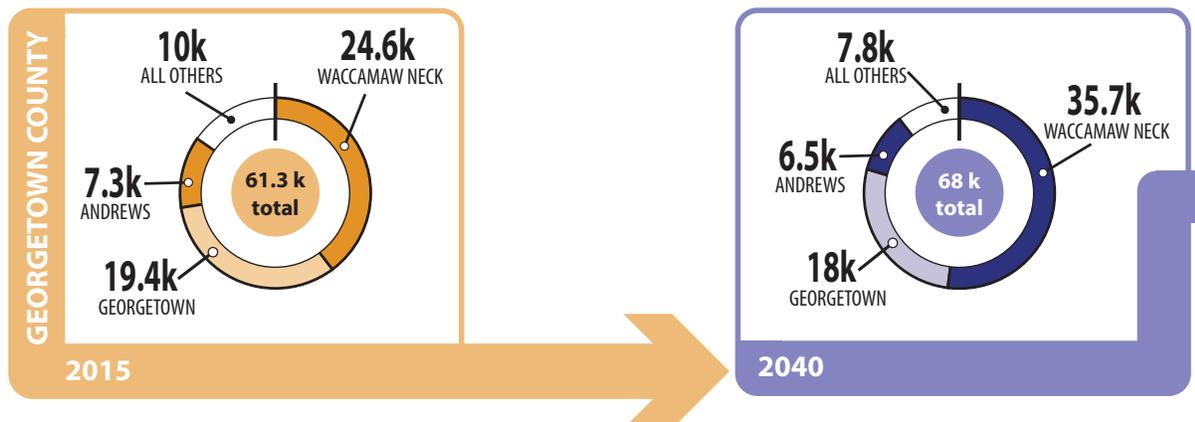
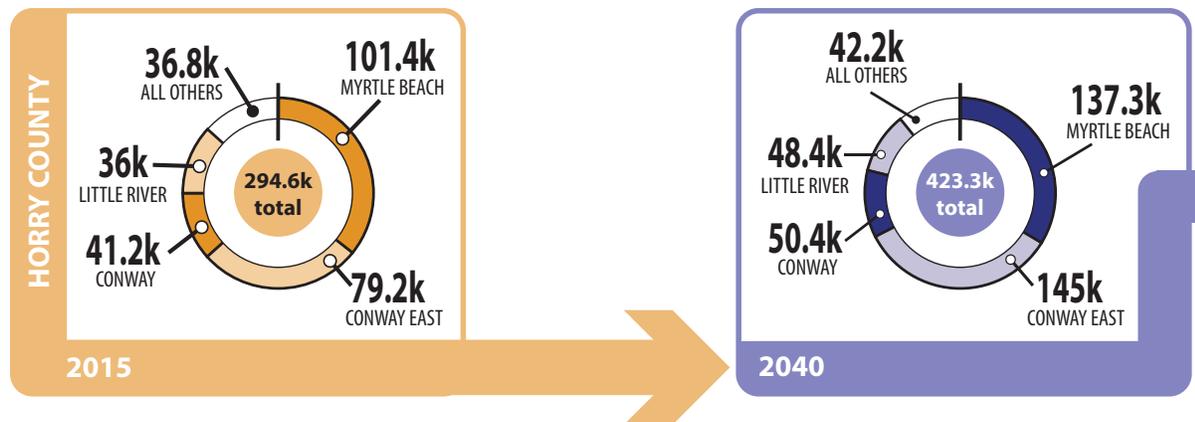
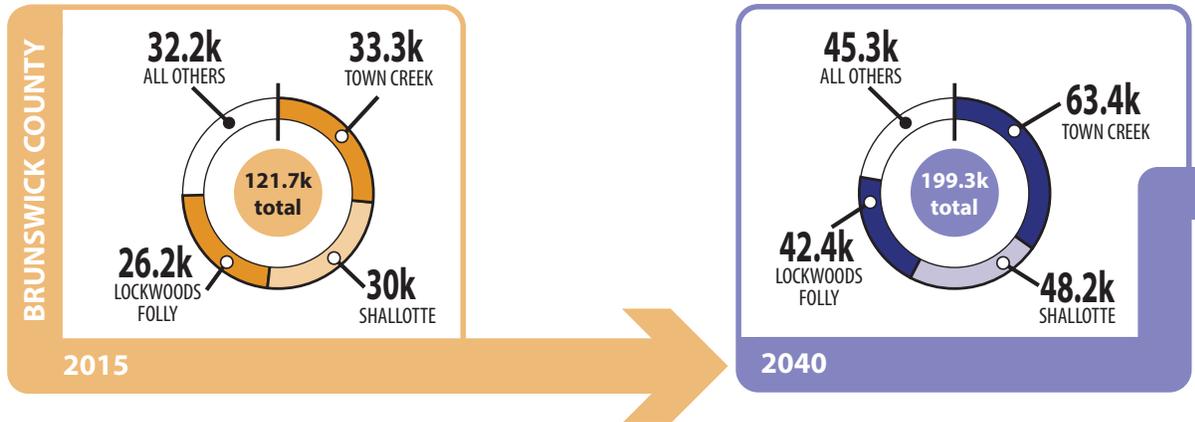
In 1999, the city annexed the 2,300 acre Barefoot Resort, bringing the city's total land area to 13.5 square miles. The city began expanding again in 2007, adding another 43.8 acres with the Esperanza Planned Development District. In 2008, the city annexed another 1,363 acres in the Parkway Group Planned Development District annexation. In 2011, the city continued to grow through annexation with an additional 1,877 acres from the Sandridge Tract annexation. These annexations increased the city's land area from 13.5 square miles to 22.35 square miles.

	North Myrtle Beach	Myrtle Beach	Conway	Horry County
2010 POPULATION	13,752	27,109	17,103	269,291
# OF HOUSING UNITS	27,584	23,262	7,238	185,992
AREA (square miles)	13.5	16.8	13.4	1,255
DENSITY (persons per sq. mi.)	1,019	1,614	1,276	215
DENSITY (housing units per sq. mi.)	2,043	1,385	540	148

▲ This table shows the population, number of housing units, area in square miles, density in persons per square mile, and density in housing units per square mile in 2010 for North Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, Conway, and Horry County.

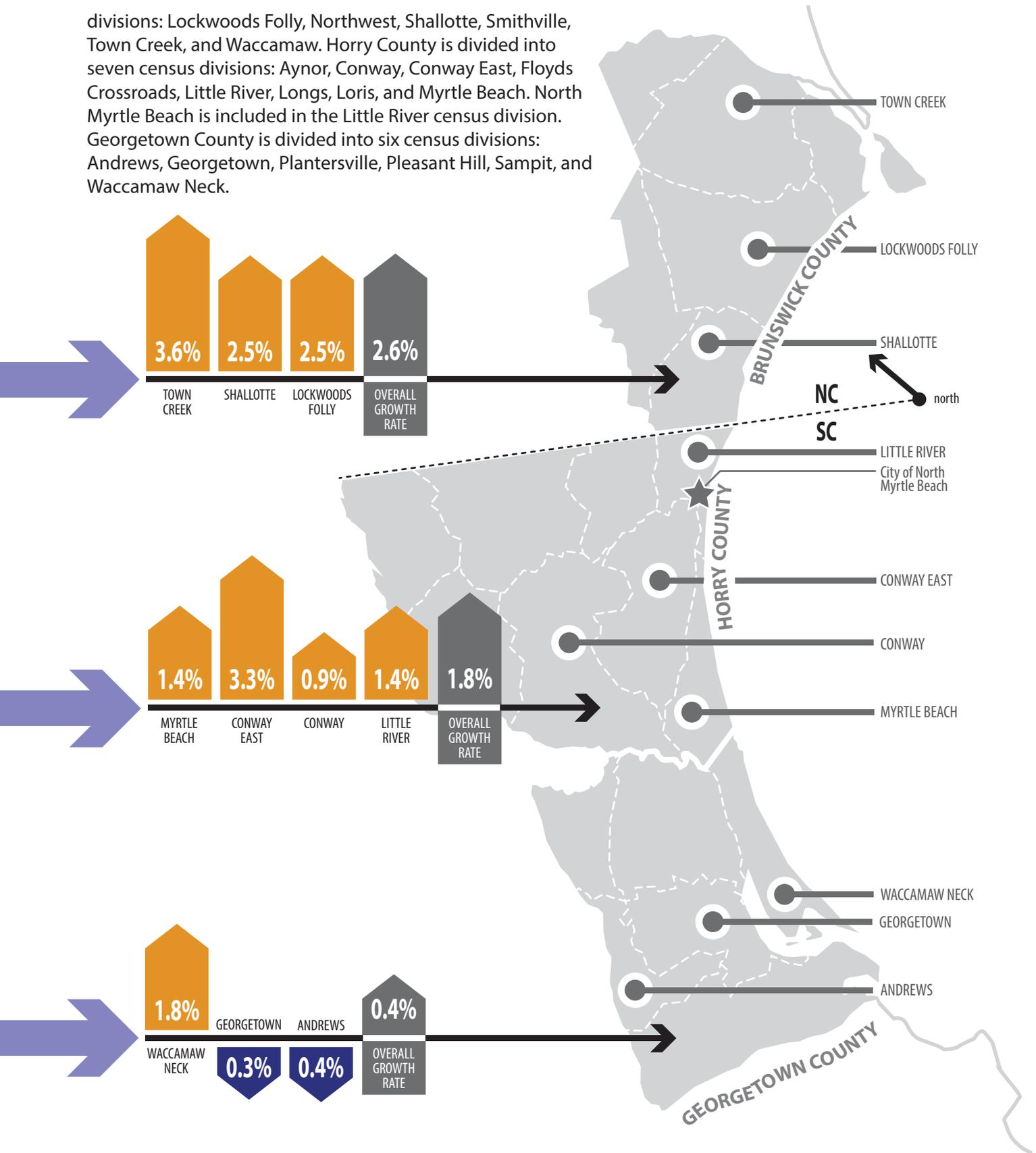
Population Projections

The Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments prepared population projections through 2040 in five year intervals for multiple counties, including those in North Myrtle Beach’s MSA. From 2015 to 2040, the total population of Brunswick County is expected to increase from 121,700 to 199,300; Horry County is projected to increase its total population from 294,600 to 423,300. Lastly, Georgetown County is expected to increase from 61,300 to 68,000. Every county is divided into census divisions to further analyze data within each county, including population projections. Brunswick County is divided into six census



► This graphic represents the further analysis of population changes over the next 25 years with the total county populations divided into the top major county census divisions as a pie chart and a map with their division locations. It also shows each division’s growth rates and the county’s overall growth rates, the yellow upward arrows represent positive growth while the purple downward arrows represent negative growth.

divisions: Lockwoods Folly, Northwest, Shallotte, Smithville, Town Creek, and Waccamaw. Horry County is divided into seven census divisions: Aynor, Conway, Conway East, Floyds Crossroads, Little River, Longs, Loris, and Myrtle Beach. North Myrtle Beach is included in the Little River census division. Georgetown County is divided into six census divisions: Andrews, Georgetown, Plantersville, Pleasant Hill, Sampit, and Waccamaw Neck.



POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2010 Census provided demographic information on age, race, household income, housing types, household composition and education for permanent residents by sampling a portion of the population.

Age Distribution

As of 2010, the median age of residents in North Myrtle Beach was 54.7 years. Following the trends of the national population, the city's population median age has increased steadily from 37.8 in 1980 to 54.7 years in 2010. The majority of the population lies within the 55 to 74 years old age cohorts (41.4% of the total population).

Racial Composition

The majority of North Myrtle Beach's population is overwhelmingly white at 88.3% of the population. This is not far above the county's population of 82.4% white or its adjacent North Carolina county, Brunswick, which has an 85.5% white population. However, this does vary from the other South Carolina coastal counties, which range from 53.9% white (Jasper County) to 77.2% white (Beaufort County).

Household Income

The median income for all households is \$45,780 and income per capita is \$33,753. Most of these households are families, and those in two-parent households earn the highest wages.

Household Composition

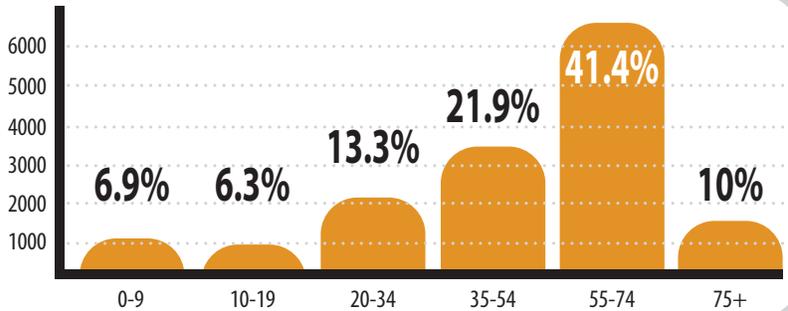
A household is defined as all persons who occupy a given housing unit such as a house, apartment, group of rooms, or single room, occupied as separate living quarters. Since the 1980s, there has been a national trend towards smaller family households, non-family households and single-parent households, resulting in greater numbers of smaller sized households. The average household size within North Myrtle Beach mimics the national trend and has been decreasing at a steady rate over the past 30 years. Currently, the average household size is 2.04 persons per unit. The households are also largely owned and reflect similar national trends of resort towns with a 75.5% vacancy rate. This most likely reflects the high amount of seasonal, second homes in North Myrtle Beach.

Educational Information

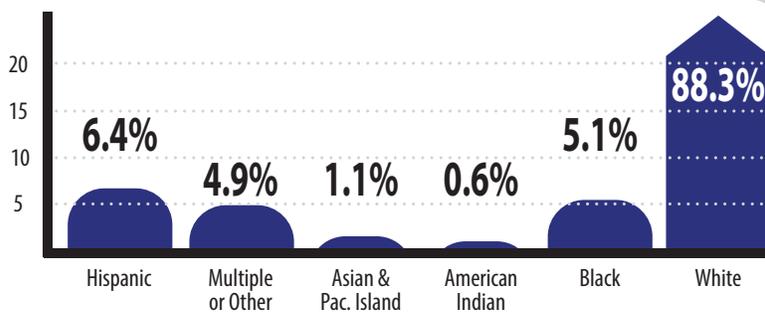
An estimated 1,574 students, about 11.6% of the total population, ages 3 years and older are enrolled in school. Undergraduate/College has the highest enrollment with 30%, and elementary (1-4) and middle school grades (5-8) each have an enrollment of 21%. Of the total population, 93.3% are a high school graduate or higher and 32.6% have a bachelor's degree or higher.

North Myrtle Beach Statistics

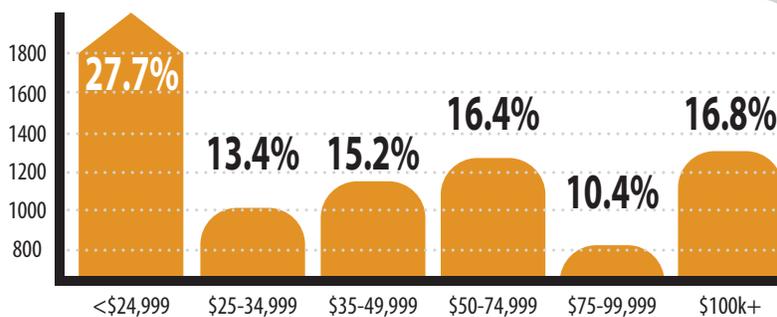
AGE



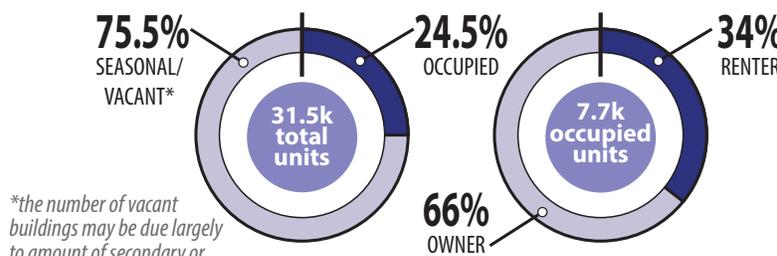
RACE



INCOME



HOUSING



*the number of vacant buildings may be due largely to amount of secondary or seasonal homes in the area

◀ The graphic to the left shows age, race, income, and housing statistics for North Myrtle Beach. All information provided by US Census Bureau.

◀ As of 2010, the largest age group in North Myrtle Beach is between 55-74 at 41.4% of the total population.

◀ The racial composition is overwhelmingly White at 88.3%.

◀ Household income varies with almost a third of the population making less than \$25,000 annually; however, the rest of the income brackets are fairly even ranging from 10.4% to 16.8%

◀ The housing statistics show a large number of vacancies, most likely due to seasonal usage of second homes. It also shows that a healthy number of 66% of housing is owned.

TAPESTRY LIFE MODE GROUPS

Tapestry is an ESRI product that, “classifies neighborhoods into 67 unique segments based not only on demographics but also socioeconomic characteristics.” (ESRI-Tapestry) These segments are called “Life-Modes” and cross-examine multiple traditional demographics, like age and sex, with socioeconomic characteristics, like hobbies and generational preferences, to create easily understood groups.

North Myrtle Beach consists of predominantly the following three Life Mode Groups:

Rural Resort Dwellers

This group is close to retirement, but is extending their working years to accommodate their current active lifestyles. They are passionate about their hobbies, but otherwise enjoy the simpler things in life.

Old and Newcomers

This group is in transition, at both ends of the age spectrum. They are young renters beginning their careers and older folks looking at retirement. The main feature is lifestyle on a budget.

Silver and Gold

This group is the most affluent senior market and is still growing. They have the financial opportunities to retire in sunnier climates that feature exclusive communities and vacation homes.

Rural Resort Dwellers

BASIC OVERVIEW

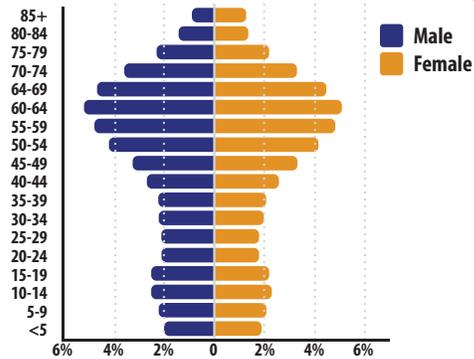
largely owner-occupied, single-family homes (some mobile homes)

high market of second homes equals a higher rate of seasonal vacancies

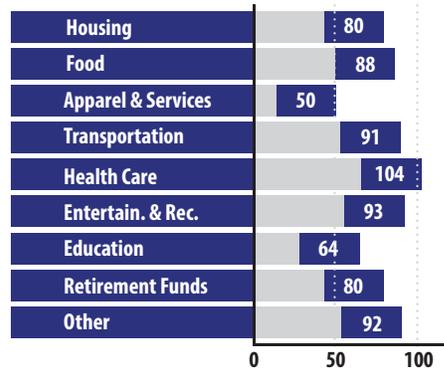
scenic rural locations with proximity to outdoor activities like fishing, boating, and hunting

53.2%

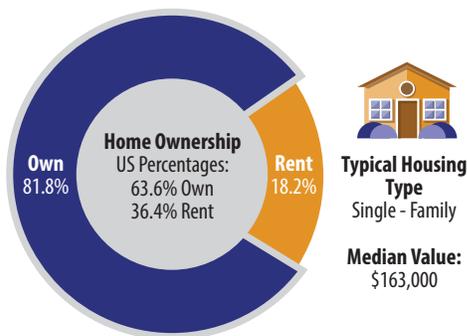
AGE



HOUSEHOLD BUDGET



HOUSING



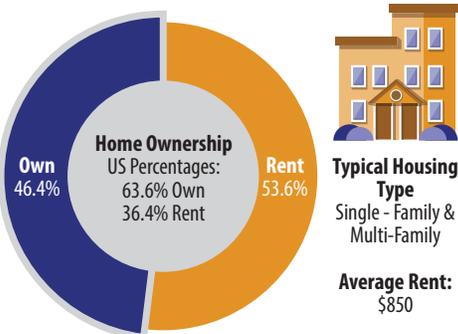
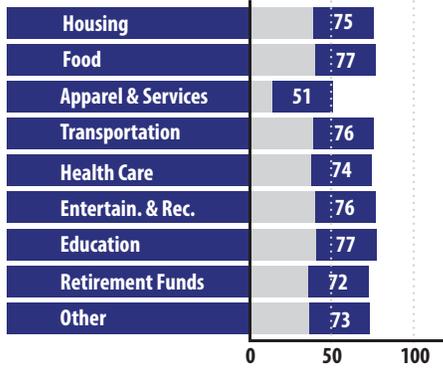
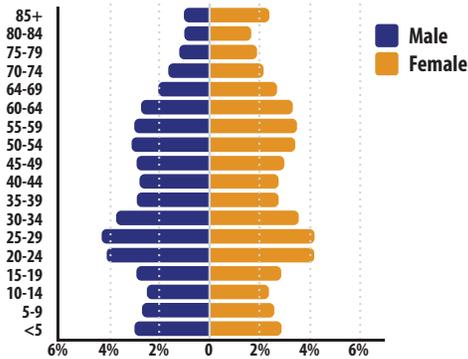
Old & Newcomers

prefer to rent for cheap in or near large metropolitan cities

mostly single households with a mix of young married couples or roommates

price conscious and attentive to environmental concerns

29.6%



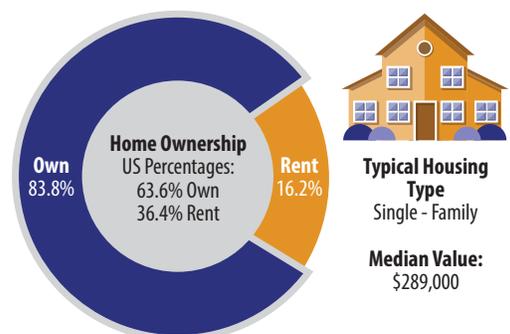
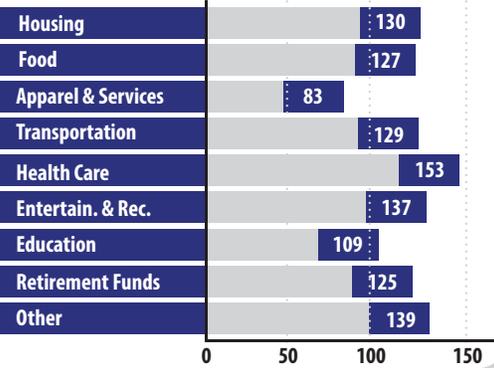
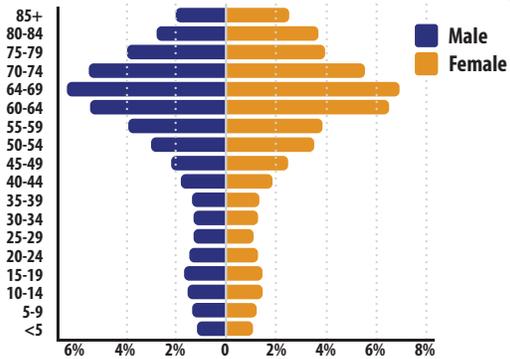
Silver & Gold

prefer countryside but within a quick drive to metropolitan cities

highest self-employment rate of any group but also large retirement rate

strong consumer class with the financial resources to enjoy the good life

17.3%



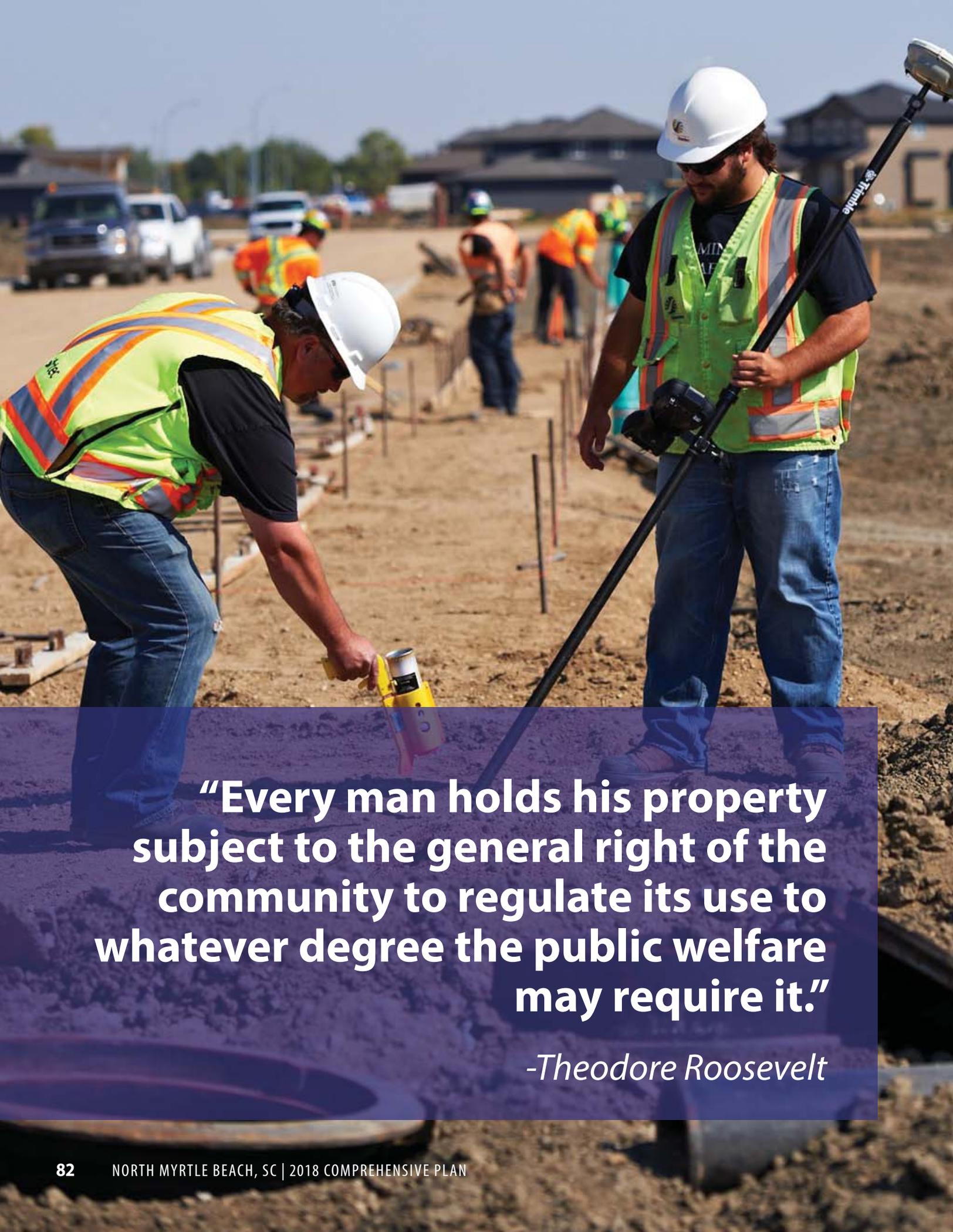


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5

THE WAY WE GROW



“Every man holds his property subject to the general right of the community to regulate its use to whatever degree the public welfare may require it.”

-Theodore Roosevelt



◀ Photo looking out towards the beach from one of the 185 great public access points along Ocean Blvd.

The City of North Myrtle Beach has the reputation of being a great family-oriented beach destination -- a great place for gathering without the noise, congestion, or high cost of other beach resort areas. Today's decisions about land use policy will determine the city's relationship with its greatest physical asset -- the beach. The city can encourage high-rise development or maintain a diversified "portfolio" of

single-family beach homes and high-rise resorts with the latest on-site amenities. Property values and long-term growth rely on residents and guests having visual and physical access to the beach; the city supports this access by providing clear street-ends, convenient public parking, well-designed walkways and boardwalks for beach access, and clean places to put chairs and blankets in the sand.

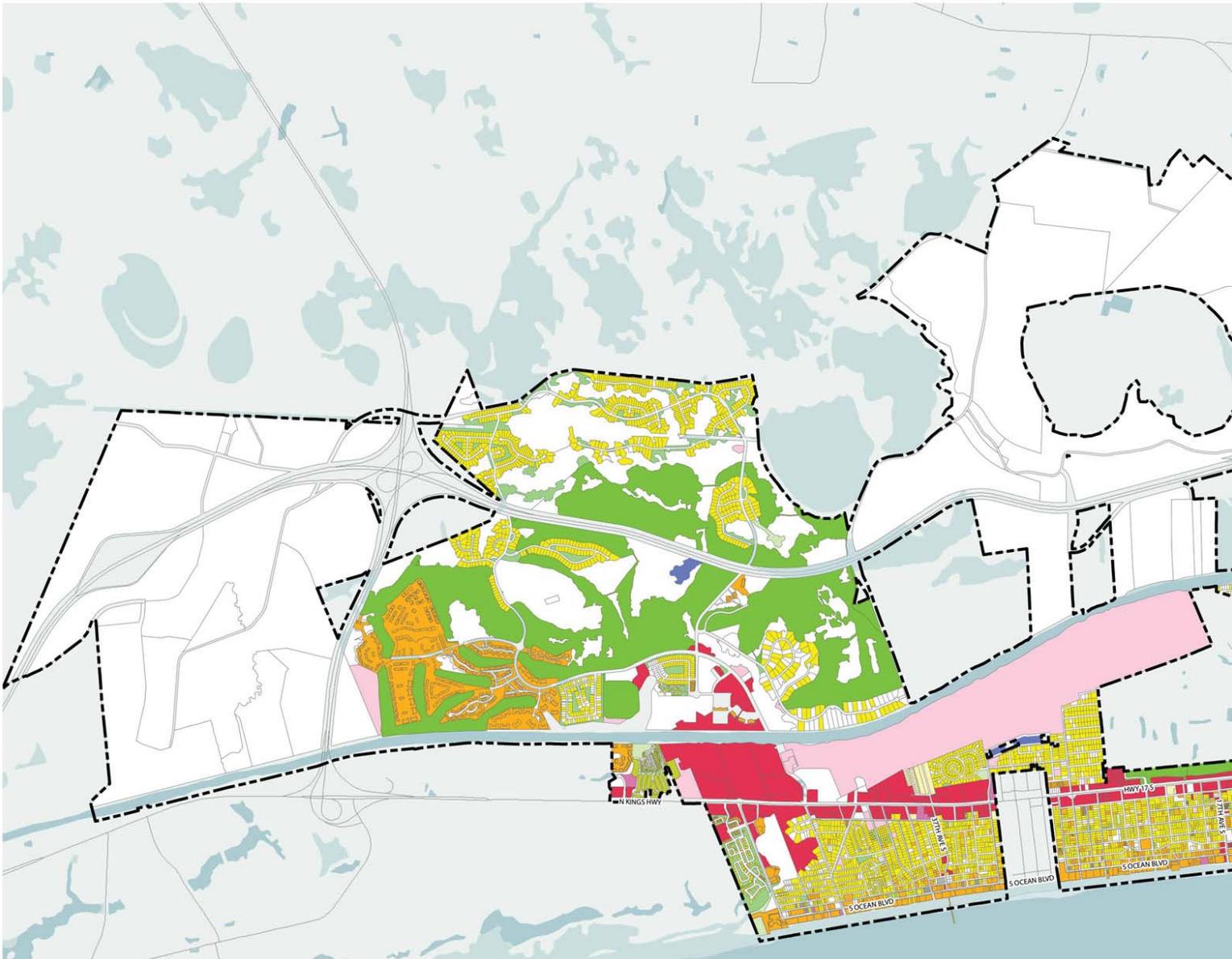


◀ Photo looking south down the beach near Main Street

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use plan forms the basis for much of the future land use plan for the city, but that has not been the only determinant in creating the future map. Other requirements and needs that contributed to the future land use plan include the review and analysis of

natural features, transportation routes, and community facilities, as well as the need to regulate growth rates in a way that minimizes traffic congestion, noise, and overcrowding. Less economically viable and outdated uses were revised and removed from the future land use map.



Legend

 NMB Municipal Area	2018 Existing Land Use	 Golf Course	 Private Parking Lot
 Horry County	 Amenity Area	 Hotel / Motel	 Public, Social, Cultural
 Beaches & non-forested wetlands	 Amusement	 Industrial / Warehouse	 RV / Campground
 Bay Estuary	 Commercial	 Mobile Home	 Single-Family
 Open water, bays & estuaries	 Common Open Space	 Multi-Family	 Town House
	 Duplex	 Parking Lot	 Vacant



PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

North Myrtle Beach Comprehensive Plan (2005 and 2010 Update)

With tourism as the driving economic force, the city’s growth through 2005 included a diversity of housing stock and price ranges. Previous land use policies promoted high-density growth on the oceanfront and lower densities elsewhere; the Intracoastal Waterway became an important second waterfront attracting high-density resort development. General commercial activity was designated along US Highway 17, with beach-oriented business along the main routes feeding Ocean Boulevard, such as Sea Mountain Highway and Main Street. Zoning generally respected the land use plan, and subsequent requests for zoning changes were consistent with the plan in most cases. Between 2005 through 2010, most large development tracts were designated as Planned Development Districts. For example, the 173-acre former Robber’s Roost golf course, originally zoned R-1 Single-Family Residential Low-Density, was subdivided into the 68-acre R-1 Seabrook Plantation subdivision in 2007. In 2009, the remaining 100 acres were rezoned from R-1 to the Robber’s Roost PDD: a mixed-use residential and village commercial community not possible in the R-1 zoning district. Likewise, the Parkway Group PDD

annexation and zoning of 1,363 acres occurred in 2008, creating the conditions for a mixed-use community with access to and from the Carolina Bays Parkway. Between 2011 and 2016, an exception to large tracts of land being zoned as PDD’s began to occur as represented in multiple annexation petitions and approvals. For example, some 2,504 acres were annexed into the city, of which just 128 acres were zoned PDD (approximately 1200 acres are now conservation easements). The remaining land was zoned with by-right use districts ranging from low-density residential, medium and high-density residential, to low and high-intensity commercial.

GSATS Long Range Transportation Plan (2005 to 2035)

The city’s 1995 Comprehensive Plan included a transportation component located on the Future Land Use Map. Many of the improvements noted were included in GSATS Long Range Transportation Plan in 1996 and have since been completed. These included the widening of North Ocean Boulevard in Cherry Grove, the widening of South Ocean Boulevard in Windy Hill, and completing the Robert Edge Jr. Parkway.

The following projects were included in the GSATS Long Range Transportation Plan, but were not funded:

- ▶ Second connector to the Carolina Bays Parkway (17th Avenue South)
- ▶ Widening of Little River Neck Road and a connector to U.S. 17 over the waterway

▶ Cover Image of the North Myrtle Beach Comprehensive Plan 2010 Update



Since completion of the city's 2005 comprehensive plan, the Main Street connector (Robert Edge Parkway) was completed in 2009 and provides a connection to the Carolina Bays Parkway and lands west of the Intracoastal Waterway. A possible second connection to the Carolina Bays Parkway planned at 17th Avenue South is only conceptual at this time with no concrete plans for implementation; the future of this connection depends largely on the future redevelopment of the Beachwood, Azalea Sands, and Possum Trot golf courses. The widening of US Highway 17 from 11th Avenue North to the Cherry Grove off-ramp was completed in both north and southbound directions in 2011. 48th Avenue South was widened in 2006 through city funding. The realignment of the Sea Mountain Highway/Old U.S. 17 intersection was completed in 2003; however, plans to realign Little River Neck Road between the swing bridge and US Highway 17 need further study due to their high cost and potential environmental impact. GSATS is currently drafting its 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan based on the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan; this plan should be completed by 2017 and will help rank and prioritize transportation projects and funding over the entire GSATS region.

Horry County Comprehensive Plan (Envision 2025)

Horry County adopted its newest comprehensive plan, called Envision 2025, in August 2008. Envision 2025 rewrote and updated Horry County's previously adopted 1999 comprehensive plan. The county's plan categorizes future land uses within cities according to the future land use maps for each jurisdiction. The county has identified the land uses of areas adjacent

to our city limits as, "Urban Communities." Urban Communities are the unincorporated areas of Horry County that have developed at urban and suburban densities outside of city limits. Although these areas are unincorporated, Urban Communities are compatible with the urban and suburban development patterns found within incorporated cities such as North Myrtle Beach. These communities have access to urban and suburban corridors. According to the county's plan, "Urban Communities are settlements with a variety of urban and suburban residential, commercial, institutional, recreational and industrial uses capable of absorbing a large proportion of future growth. Urban Communities are proximate to Urban and Suburban Corridors." Adjacent land uses in the city do not appear to be in conflict with Horry County in these areas.

Atlantic Beach Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Atlantic Beach adopted an update to its Comprehensive Plan in 2017. This plan calls for varying levels of mixed-use along the oceanfront, S. Ocean Boulevard, 2nd Avenue, 31st Avenue South, and 30th Avenue South with commercial uses along US Highway 17. The transportation element of the Atlantic Beach comprehensive plan identifies providing beachside connectivity with North Myrtle Beach as a goal, but the plan identifies 2nd Avenue as the superior access point between the two jurisdictions. Additional plans for the town include creating new streets connecting 29th Avenue S to 32nd Avenue S to improve connectivity, closing 3rd Avenue to provide more room for the US Highway 17 commercial area, closing 1st Avenue (Ocean Boulevard) to provide more room for the development of beachfront properties, and improving the pedestrian environment through streetscape enhancements.

LAND USE CATEGORIES



▲ *Plan for a typical Residential Suburban block: all single-family homes at up to 4 du/acre.*



▲ *Axonometric sketch of a typical Residential Suburban block*

The following description of land uses is to be used in conjunction with the Compliance Index and the Future Land Use Map (Appendix B) as part of the review of rezoning requests and land use policy. Density, which is defined in this document as dwelling units per acre, reflects not only minimum lot size, but includes acreage needed for street rights-of-way and other public and open space set-asides.

Residential Suburban (RS)

The purpose of this classification is to define, protect, and provide low density, single-family detached housing areas where designated, and to prohibit any development that would compromise existing residential characteristics. In addition, these areas are intended to provide for in-fill and expansion of existing neighborhoods and subdivisions. Standards and densities for these areas are designated to reflect existing conditions. This area is also intended to allow incorporation of property west of the waterway at densities typical of inland development. Primarily single-family lots, small farms and farm related uses such as produce stands, and mobile homes on individual lots, excluding large mobile home parks, are compatible uses here. This category allows up to five dwelling units per acre (du/acre).

Residential Neighborhood (RN)

This classification supports a mix of residential uses at medium densities, which includes mostly duplexes, townhouses, and patio homes, as well as, multi-family housing up to 6 stories. This designation could also allow infill mixed-use development and neighborhood commercial uses. This category allows 5-10 du/acre.



▲ Photo exemplifying an existing medium density townhouse development in North Myrtle Beach.



▲ Rendering of a typical Residential Neighborhood street with medium density housing.



▲ Plan for a typical Residential Neighborhood block: a mixed-density ranging from two story townhomes to six story multi-family units.



▲ Axonometric sketch of a typical Residential Neighborhood block

Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU)

This classification is intended for neighborhoods serving mixed uses including commercial and business development in relatively small areas of the community in proximity to residential uses including neighborhoods, resorts and high-rise residential. The purpose of this district is to maintain a local business environment to serve the population that does not detract from existing residential development. This category does not include shopping centers in excess of 50,000 square feet and high-rise construction. Landscape standards and setback requirements may include provisions for buffers adjacent to residential neighborhoods.



▲ Precedent image of Neighborhood Mixed-Use in Summerville, SC.



▲ Rendering of a typical corner within a Neighborhood Mixed-Use block.



▲ Plan for a typical Neighborhood Mixed-Use block.



▲ Axonometric sketch of a typical Neighborhood Mixed-Use block; note the scale and density is similar to the Residential Neighborhood but with a small addition of mixed-use on the corner and single-family homes converted to businesses.

Residential Urban (RU)

This classification allows for high-rise construction in certain areas of the community. This category generally includes mid- and high-rise construction above 6 stories with minimal side and rear yard setbacks. Above-grade structured parking is likely to serve these high density uses. This category generally encompasses high-rise hotel and resort development already in place.

Oceanfront PDDs offer the opportunity to improve design so that the mass of the building (how much space it takes up on the property) and the form create a friendly streetscape for pedestrians. The benefits of planned developments include mitigation of traffic and other negative neighborhood impacts that would not be addressed through by-right zoning. This category allows 11-75 du/acre.



▲ Plan for a typical Residential Urban block, much like what exists on Ocean Blvd today.



▲ Rendering of a typical street within a Residential Urban block.



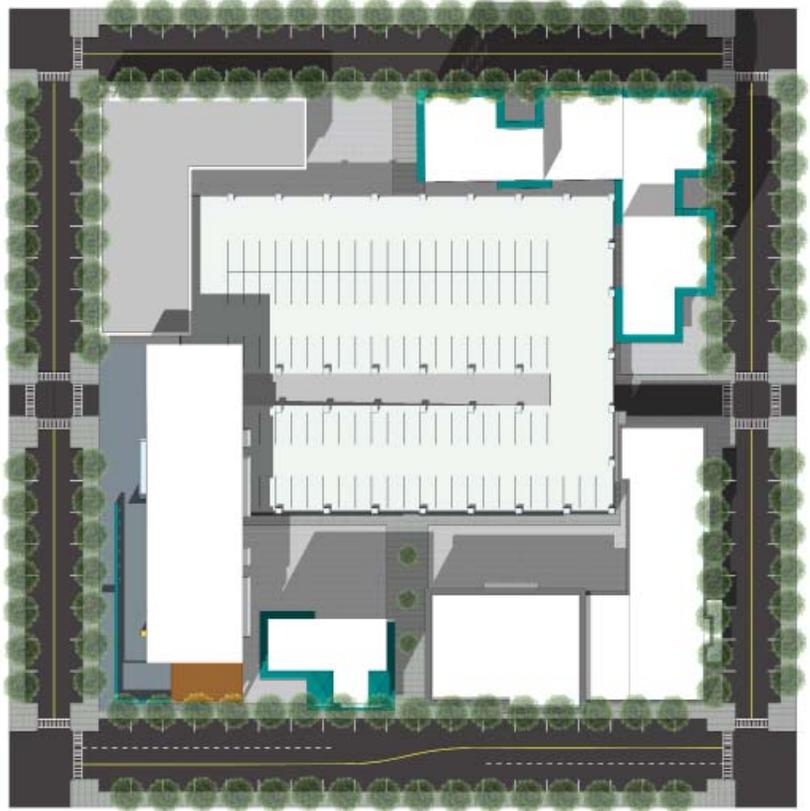
▲ Axonometric sketch of a typical Residential Urban block; note the parking deck opposite the main structure is wrapped in smaller commercial buildings to hide it from the street and make a more pleasant walking environment.

Mixed-Use (MU)

This classification is intended for larger scale mixed-use development at key transportation nodes and gateways in the community. The intersection of Main Street and US Highway 17 is an example of such a node. Areas of this sort are well positioned for intense mixed-use development, especially given their access to major transportation corridors. This category supports the creation of walkable areas where users can park once and access live, work, and play services in close proximity.



▲ *Rendering of a highly pedestrian Mixed-Use sidewalk with outdoor dining and street trees*



▲ *Plan of Mixed-Use block*



▲ *Axonometric sketch of a typical Mixed-Use block; note the parking deck is wrapped on all sides with retail facing as many streets as appropriate, starting with the most important intersection or main street.*

Highway Commercial (HC)

This is a broad-based commercial, office, and business classification. It is intended to provide commercial opportunities to the traveling public and areas in the community where large-scale commercial projects may take place with minimal impact on contiguous residential development. This classification is designed to support local shopping, regional shopping centers, and business complexes. It will accommodate a wide range of business and commercial uses, clustered where feasible, for “cumulative attraction” and located for optimum accessibility. Many of the existing uses here are already highway-oriented commercial and are likely to remain, but mixed use development may occur in this designation over time and should be encouraged.



▲ Photo of existing Highway Commercial shopping centers along US Hwy 17.



▲ Photo of existing Highway Commercial shopping centers along US Hwy 17.



▲ Plan of Highway Commercial



▲ Axonometric sketch of a typical Residential Urban block; note the parking deck opposite the main structure is wrapped in smaller commercial buildings to hide it from the street and make a more pleasant walking environment.

► *Image of existing example of Service and Production land-use category*



Service and Production (Service)

This classification is designed to accommodate industry and business support activities. These are generally more appropriately sited west of US Highway 17, away from resort facilities and residential use; the Grand Strand Airport is also classified under this land use category.

► *Photo of City Hall, one of the buildings classified as Service and Production*



Civic and Education (CV)

This classification is reserved for all municipal uses including schools, fire stations, police stations, and city hall. Religious institutions are also in this category.

► *Photo of the wetlands along Sea Mountain Highway, one of the many areas protected by the Resource Protection and Conservation land-use classification.*



Resource Protection & Conservation (RPC)

Areas with this designation are intended to preserve and protect scenic and natural resources for future generations. This includes protecting land directly adjacent to the marshes, estuaries and waterways from intense development. These areas also provide a network of critical open space and non-renewable resources. Formal parks and informal open spaces are included here.

Marina Mixed-Use (MMU)

The Intracoastal Waterway has become the second busiest area for development in recent years. Development along the waterway can support various marine related uses like docks, dock facilities, storage areas, housing, and restaurants or retail where it's appropriate. Looking towards future potential annexation west of the waterway, and existing land use patterns along it in the city, a mixed marina district defines those areas where marinas and related uses would complement existing land use.



◀ Photo of a Marina Mixed-Use development on the north side of the Intracoastal Waterway.



◀ Rendering of a typical Marina Mixed-Use area. This example depicts a proposed development along the Intracoastal Waterway within a new residential community along Little River Neck Road.

Conservation Community (CC)

This classification is intended to provide an alternative type of development that preserves undisturbed natural areas, creates common open spaces, and has a light impact on the environment. It is ideally applied to undeveloped greenfield land that may be adjacent to sensitive environmental areas like wetlands and waterways.

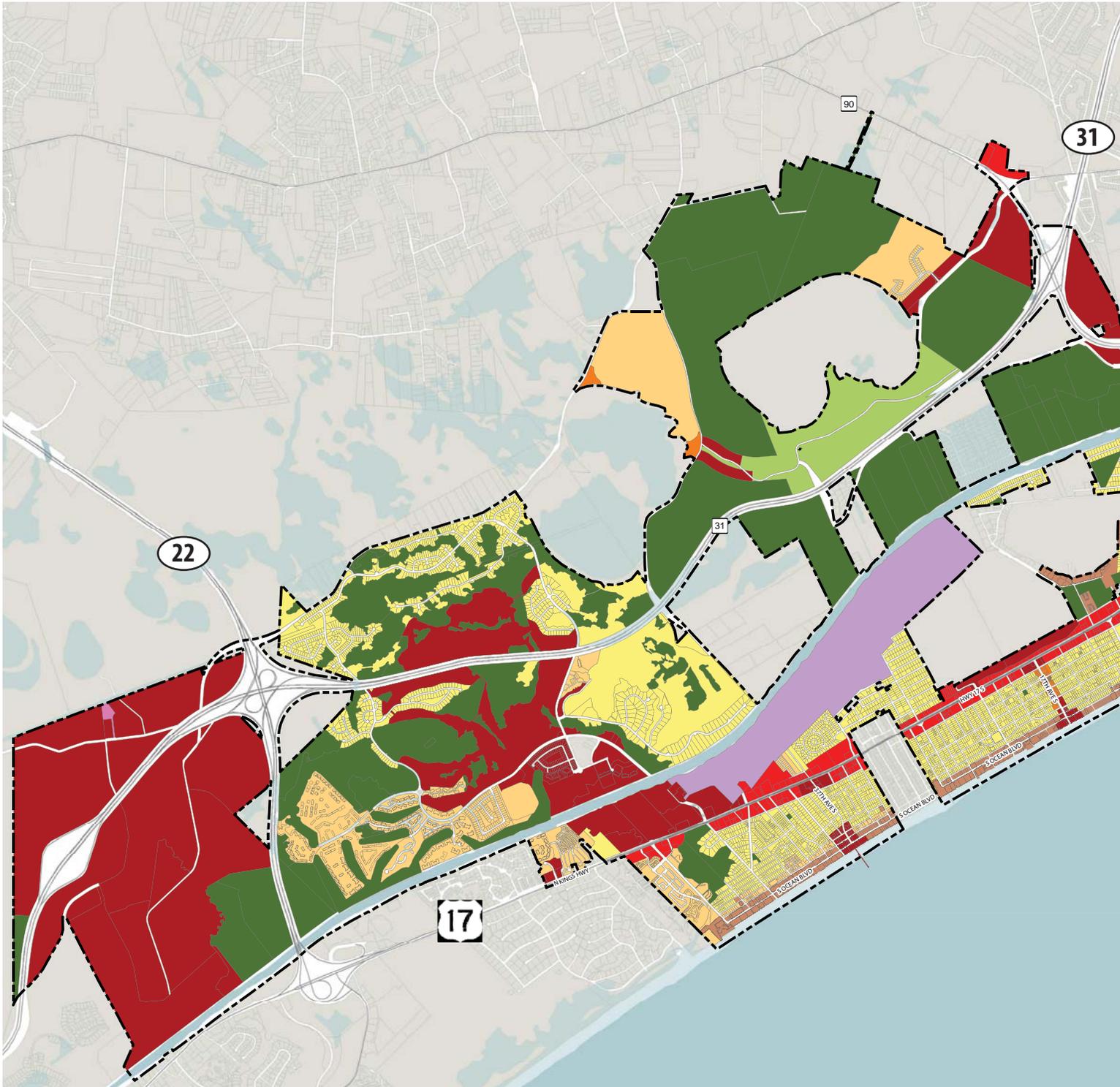


◀ Photo looking down Little River Neck Road. Much of the new developments along this corridor will be classified as Conservation Community, including the focus area off of Little River Neck Road.

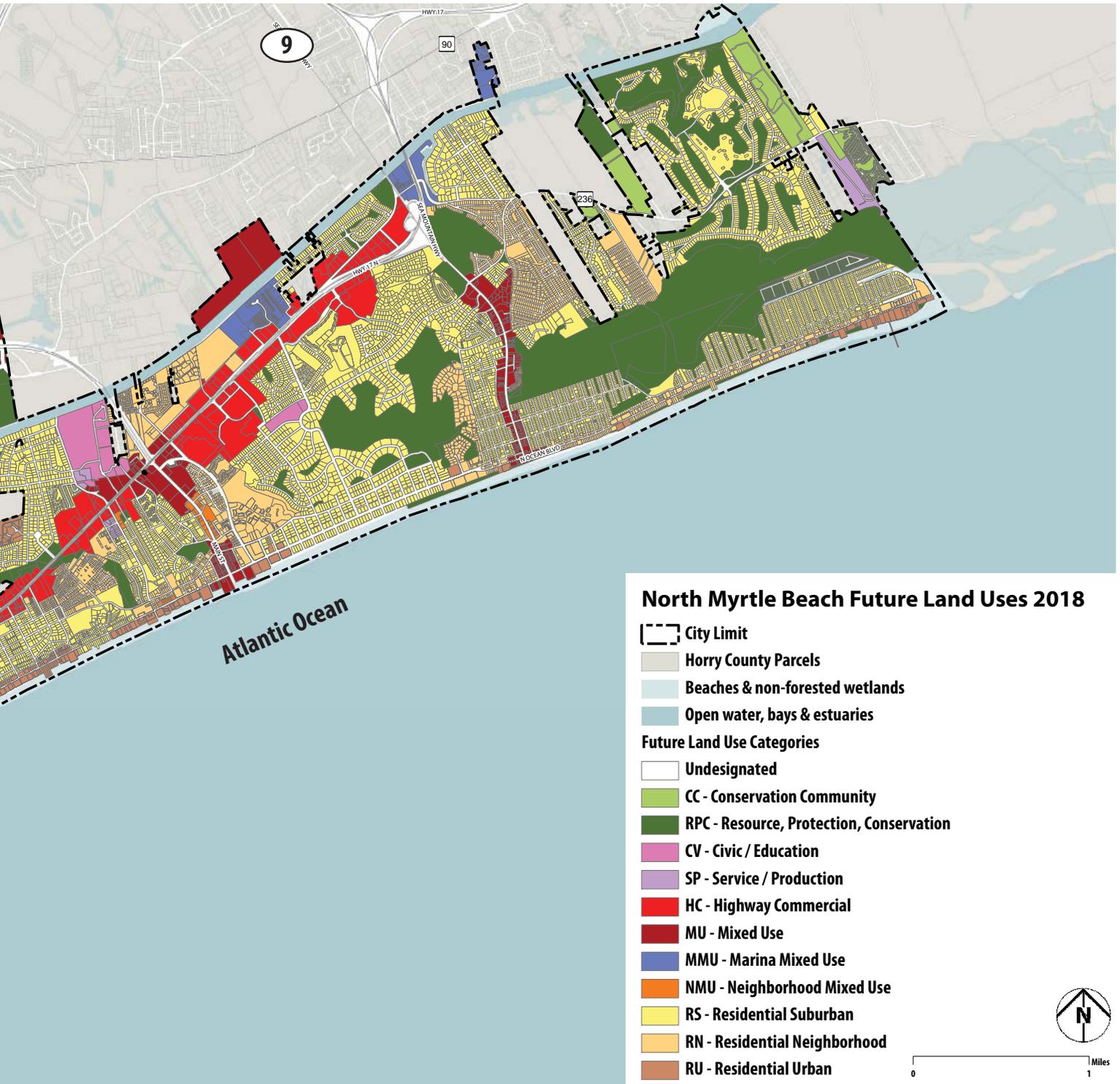


◀ Rendering of a typical Conservation Community alongside a waterway, with compact lots and ample preserved green space, along with common open spaces.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP



The Future Land Use Map is based on the parcel and land use data in the geographic information system (GIS). It includes growth areas outside of the City limits and along Little River Neck Road. Uses are those designated on pages 88-95.



FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

After its incorporation in 1968, North Myrtle Beach grew only slightly over the next 20 years. In part, this slow growth was due to South Carolina’s annexation laws, which require property owners to voluntarily petition the city for annexation. An unfortunate consequence of this owner-initiated annexation policy is pockets of unincorporated land surrounded by property within city limits. In years past, the city was bordered on the west by the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, to the northeast by Hogs Inlet, and to the southwest by the Ocean Creek development. In 1988, however, the city annexed approximately 500 acres for the development of Tidewater Golf Club and

Plantation, revising its northern boundary. In 1999, the annexation of over 2,300 acres west of the Waterway within the Barefoot Resort planned development changed the city’s western border and increased the city’s size to almost 14 square miles. The city began expanding again in 2007, adding another 43.8 acres in the Esperanza planned development, 1,619 acres in the Parkway Group planned development in 2008, and ~2,400 acres in the Sandridge tract/West of the Waterway annexations that began in 2011; in 2017, the city occupied just over 22.35 square miles. The city now spans both sides of the Waterway, and the amount of land that could potentially annex into the city has increased dramatically.



▲ *The Parkway Group was annexed into the city in 2008.*



▲ *The Sandridge tract/West of the Waterway annexations added ~2,400 acres to the city beginning in 2011.*

THE ANNEXATION PROCESS

Annexation is the process by which the city extends its municipal services, regulations, voting privileges and taxing authority to new territory (lands). Cities annex territory to provide urbanizing areas with efficient municipal services and to exercise regulatory authority necessary to protect public health and safety. Through annexation, North Myrtle Beach ensures that residents and businesses outside their corporate limits who benefit from access to the city's facilities and services share in the tax burden, governance, and administration of those programs. Annexation and imposition of land use controls are also excellent growth management tools to implement in the comprehensive plan.

The most commonly used annexation process involves the submittal of an annexation petition and a zoning application, which allows the property owner to request a particular zoning designation. After a notice is published, the planning commission holds a public hearing on the proposal. Before it is presented to the planning commission, city staff reviews the petition based on several criteria. In addition to requiring the property to be contiguous to city limits, access to city services such as schools and roads is assessed. The Public Works Department also determines whether or not the property can have access to city water and sewer; the property owner is required to pay impact fees to tie into the system. The requested zoning designation is also reviewed by city staff for compliance with the comprehensive plan and consistency with the Future Land Use Map. When this review is completed, the planning commission's recommendation is forwarded to city council for consideration. If council decides to approve the annexation, then an ordinance annexing the property and designating the zoning district must be adopted at two meetings.

Although property owners are obligated to pay impact fees upon annexation in order to receive city water and sewer, they also receive police and fire protection, garbage collection and disposal, and reduced fire and homeowner's insurance premiums due to the city's favorable ISO rating (see Chapter 1, Section 5, Community Facilities). In addition, most of the city's streets have been paved, and all streets are regularly maintained. The city's public parks are available to residents and visitors, but recreational program fees are based on residency.

Property taxes account for a fraction of the city's general fund. Houses that are considered permanent residences are taxed at 4% of assessed market value, while second homes are taxed at 6% of assessed market value. Due to the expense of providing public services such as fire and police protection, annexing properties with only residential uses requires careful fiscal impact analysis. Commercial establishments enhance the city's revenue stream; commercial properties are also assessed at 6% of market value, the same as second homes. Additionally, the city generates hospitality fees from commercial properties, which are 0.5% of gross sales and sales tax along with business licenses, which are 0.2% of gross sales.



ANNEXATION OPPORTUNITIES

While the city generally does not aggressively pursue or initiate annexations, there are several areas from where annexation requests by property owners may originate. Regions that could be annexed into the city limits include unincorporated parcels (both large and “pocket” areas) already surrounded by the city limits, the south side of the city, tracts of land on the northeast side of the city along Little River Neck Road, and property on the west side of the waterway.

Large Unincorporated Tracts

Unincorporated tracts of land include three golf courses; Possum Trot, Beachwood, and Azalea Sands comprise approximately 440 acres of land that could potentially be annexed into the city and be redeveloped. All three courses are also located near each other between US Highway 17 and the waterway, Beachwood and Azalea Sands are contiguous. Additionally, three courses use US Highway 17 as their primary access.

The former Robber’s Roost golf course development may provide insight into future redevelopment possibilities for these areas. The 173-acre former golf course was developed into a 68-acre single family home subdivision and 105-acre mixed-use planned development district (PDD). Within the PDD, there are two large commercial areas, the Town Center and Village Shops, and 155 single-family residential lots. Since no development separates the two, Beachwood and Azalea Sands could be developed simultaneously as a 271-acre project.

Unincorporated “Pockets”

Unincorporated urban “pockets” are unincorporated lands within the city’s urban service area that have not been annexed, remaining under the land use authority of Horry County. Individual unincorporated lots are scattered throughout North Myrtle Beach. Although these unincorporated areas have a low impact on the city’s growth, they can have a high impact on city services. For this reason, the development/ redevelopment of these sites is of importance to the city.

These scattered properties under county jurisdiction pose multiple challenges for both the city and county governments. As North Myrtle Beach has been steadily annexing around these pockets over the years, the county’s role in providing services to urban neighborhoods has been severely limited. As more of the pockets have been annexed into North Myrtle Beach, it has become increasingly less efficient for the county to provide services and maintain infrastructure for the relatively few people living in unincorporated urban pockets scattered over the city’s large geographic area.

Annexation of these pockets into North Myrtle Beach jurisdiction would enable residents to receive more efficient and generally higher quality services and programs to benefit their neighborhoods. Residents and property owners in unincorporated pockets that annex also gain greater influence over the decisions that most directly impact the quality of life in their communities, i.e. the decisions of city council. As long as these pockets remain unincorporated, they remain largely disenfranchised from those decisions.

Other challenges facing these unincorporated pockets include disputes over code violations, difficulty in ascertaining appropriate emergency response agencies, and improper taxation. Additionally, problems may arise over water and sanitation services. For example, the city provides water, sewer, and garbage collection and disposal for city residents and commercial properties, but county residents pay more for these services.

Some smaller pocket parcels for possible incorporation are:

- ▶ In the Windy Hill section, in the vicinity of 27th Avenue South and Terminal Street near the Grand Strand Airport
- ▶ Land around the interchange of Highways 22 and 31
- ▶ 1st Avenue South from Robert Edge Parkway to the North Myrtle Beach Library, as well as, a green tract between the Intracoastal Waterway and 2nd Ave North and Buffkin Road
- ▶ Areas around the North Myrtle Beach Sports Complex, however, many of these are undevelopable
- ▶ Areas around the US Highway 17 and Old US Highway 17 split



Southern City Limit

Unincorporated land that has already been developed also has the potential to be annexed, especially developments on the south end of the city. Adjacent to Briarcliffe Commons subdivision on the north side of US Highway 17 is an unincorporated residential subdivision known as the Forest at Briarcliff Acres. The unincorporated area on the east side of US Highway 17 begins with the Ocean Creek development and continues again on the south side of the incorporated town of Briarcliffe Acres. These areas mark the beginning of a stretch of unincorporated Horry County that includes Myrtle Beach Mall, Walmart, Tanger Outlet Mall, businesses in “restaurant row,” and Arcadian Shores, which is a mix of residential and hotels uses.

Northern City Limit

The northeast end of the city along Little River Neck Road is another region with potential to dramatically increase the city’s size. Although residential areas such as Charleston Landing and Tidewater Plantation are now in the city limits, there remains over 2,000 acres in the county. The unincorporated areas consist primarily of single-family houses, mobile homes, churches (3), and large tracts of undeveloped land. The only access, however, is Little River Neck Road, which is a two-lane state road that begins at Sea Mountain Highway and dead-ends after approximately four miles. Because of the potential for development on this end of the community, the city’s 1993 Transportation

Plan called for the widening of Little River Neck Road from two lanes to three lanes in 2015; this widening further emphasized in the joint city/county 2009 Northeast Area Transportation Plan. The road widening would extend to Tidewater, but may run the length of the road; its end-point depends on whether or not development occurs at Tilghman Point located at the end of Little River Neck Road, the site of the historic Fort Randall. Providing city fire and police protection to this larger area would not present a tremendous challenge since Station #5 was constructed northeast of Tidewater near the Myrtle Beach RV Resort. If property were annexed under existing conditions, there would be few streets added to the city’s maintenance program, since so much of the land along Little River Neck road is undeveloped. The city currently requires developers to assume the cost of constructing roads and installing water and sewer when subdivisions are platted; this policy would continue to apply to large tracts of undeveloped land that might incorporate.

Access to Waties Island is controlled and requires permission from Coastal Carolina University, which uses the island for research purposes. The property could be purchased by the state of South Carolina with grant money and be designated as a state park. Because Tilghman Point is both historically and environmentally significant, certain sections could be opened to the public to learn about the history of South Carolina and the fragile coastal environment while maintaining other areas under restricted access for protection.

Growth West of the Waterway

Since the city’s corporate boundaries cross the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, the city could potentially annex thousands of acres to its west side. The construction of Robert Edge Parkway has assisted in furthering the annexation potential of lands west of the Waterway.

While the properties west of the waterway are served by Horry County, upon annexation into the city, the city would provide fire and police protection, and the city would need to contract with Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA) in order to provide water and sewer service.

Although it would be market driven, undeveloped tracts of land west of the waterway might be appropriate for the following uses:

- ▶ Light industrial park
- ▶ Retail center
- ▶ Corporate park
- ▶ Marinas
- ▶ Residential development
- ▶ Multi-family development
- ▶ Visual/performing arts center or museum
- ▶ Regional park with athletic fields, playground and trail system
- ▶ Learning center for higher education
- ▶ Agriculture
- ▶ Mixed use development, including single-family, townhouses, apartments, and commercial



▲ The Southern City Limit and areas that have recently developed



▲ The Northern city limit and unincorporated land in Little River Neck



▲ Area west of the waterway

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to potential annexations of tracts of land and unincorporated pockets, there are also tracts of land already within the city that could be redeveloped. These areas have potential for redevelopment due to increases in land value, or because the existing uses are in decline. Golf courses are always prime candidates for redevelopment, as market forces drive up land values and consumer recreation preferences shift. Great care must be taken to ensure such redevelopments do not negatively impact the quality of life of residents who purchased property on or near golf courses with the expectation that the golf courses would always remain.

Recent Redevelopment

In 2006, the 17-acre former Grand Prix amusement park was replaced with the Barefoot Commons commercial shopping center. A series of commercial and retail outlets and connected retail uses now accompany the anchor tenant Super Bi-Lo.

In 2007, the 57-acre Barefoot RV Resort Park was rezoned and replaced with a new use, the development of North Beach Plantation. Located on the southwest side of 48th Avenue South, the resort features an oceanfront tower and on-site spa, and

a series of residential neighborhoods and retail shops and offices. Some homes are still under construction.

The former Robber’s Roost golf course was rezoned into a planned development district (PDD) in 2009. In 2013, construction began on the Coastal North Town Center, the PDD core commercial district, featuring 384,000 SF of retail/restaurant space. The second commercial district, the Village Shops, began construction in 2016 and will eventually house another 130,000 SF of commercial space. The final phase of the PDD will house a 155-lot residential neighborhood developed in five phases.

Future Opportunities

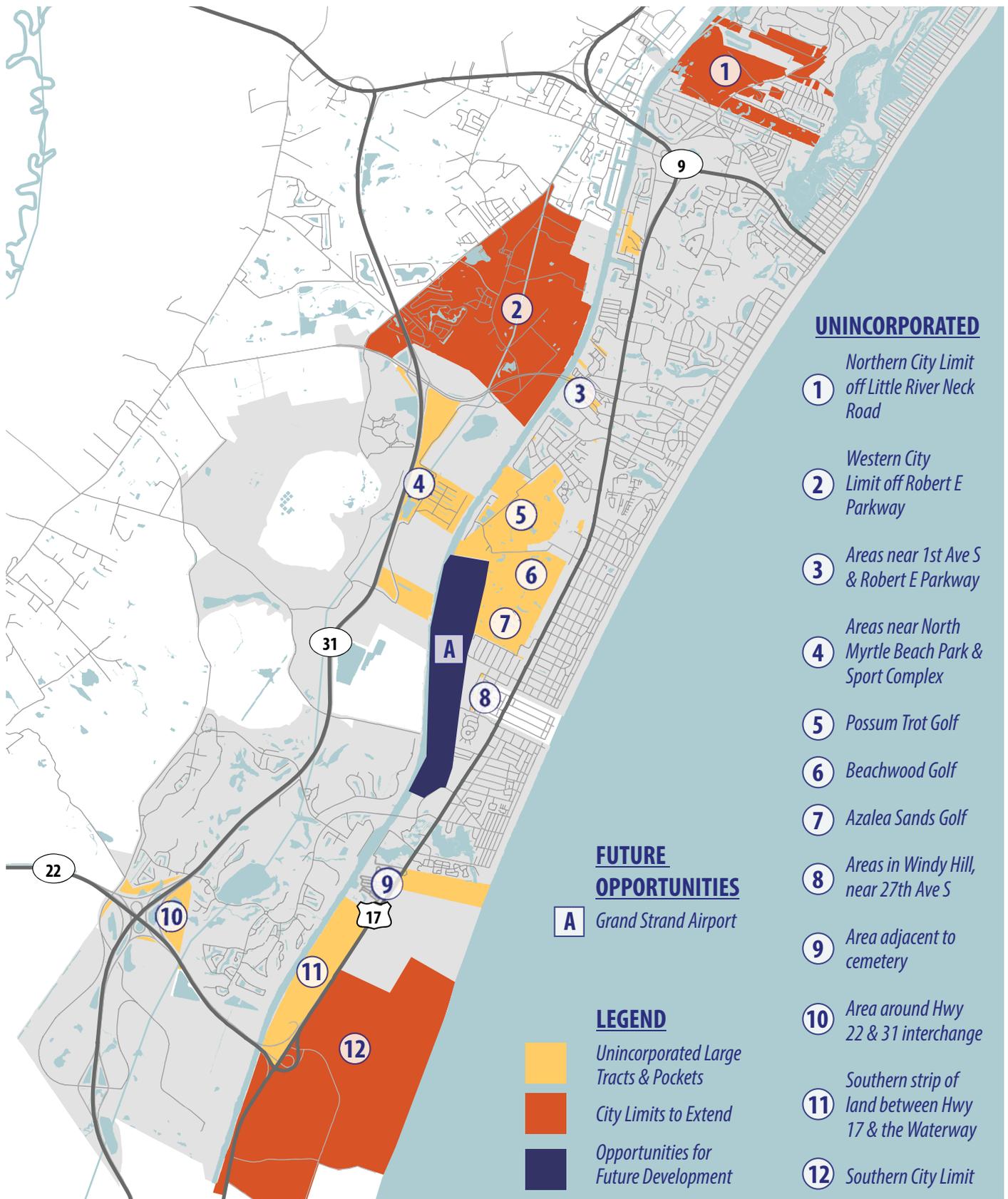
One additional tract of land that could also affect the city’s growth is the Grand Strand Airport. It is a large tract of land that could be redeveloped into a more intense use, if the Horry County Airport Commission decides to close it. Currently, the commission has committed to maintaining the facility, which has 413 acres of land, and extensive frontage along the waterway. City Council acknowledged the airport’s importance to the local economy by passing a resolution in May 2002.



▲ North Beach Plantation rezoned and replaced Barefoot RV Resort Park in 2007

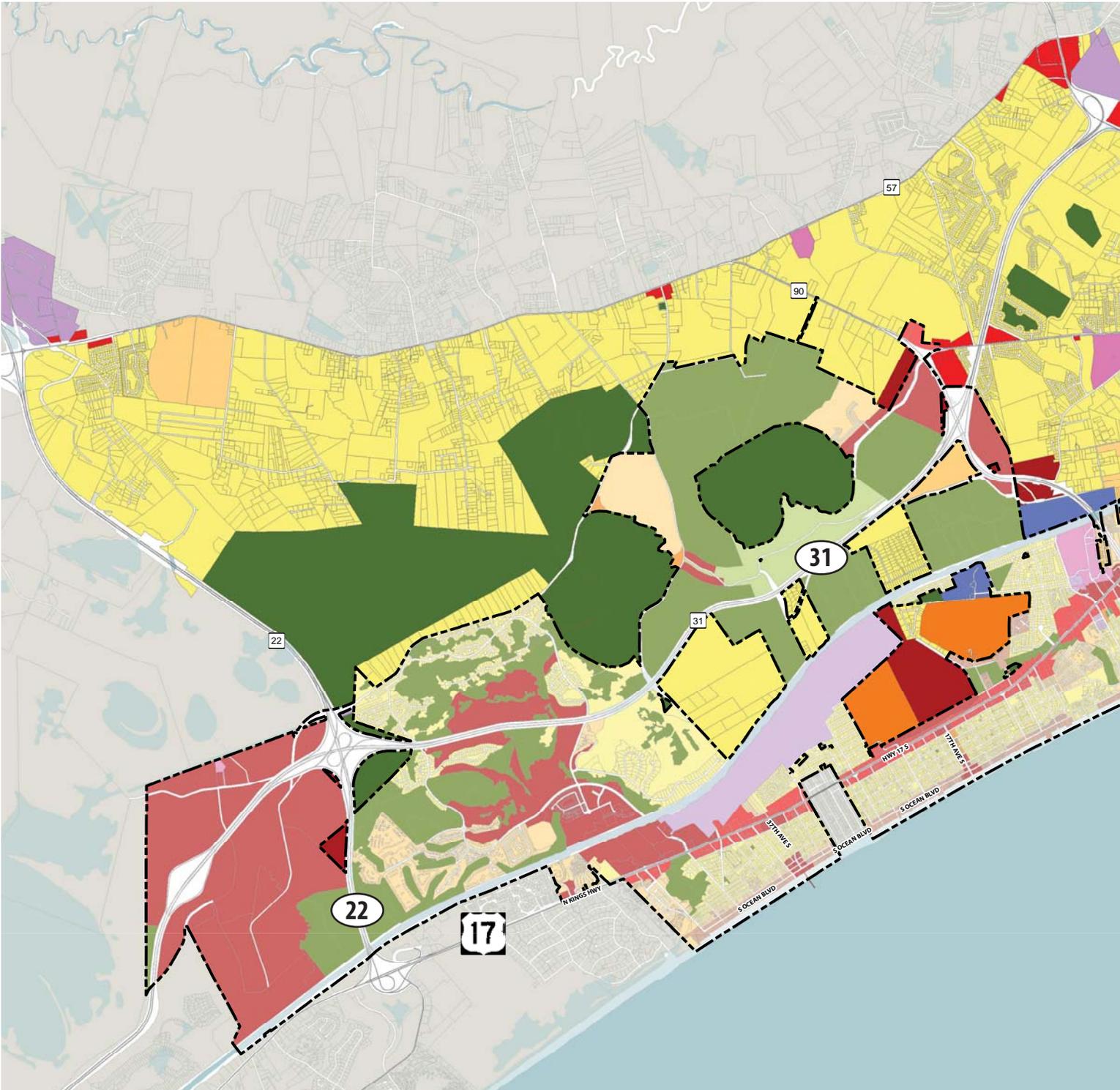


▲ Coastal North Town Center PDD core commercial district



▲ Map of Annexation Opportunities with unincorporated areas, both large tracts and smaller pockets, city limit extension opportunities, and future redevelopment opportunities

LAND USE FOR FUTURE ANNEXATIONS



DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Overview of Existing Land Development Regulations

For orderly development to occur and to improve the health, safety, and welfare of a community, certain development standards should be in place, particularly with large tracts of land and intense uses. Development standards guide developers in providing safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access, reduced impact on environmental systems, coordinated infrastructure improvements, and projects that are compatible with surrounding areas.

The city's Land Development Regulations outline design standards for development, including street improvements. In 2008, city council adopted the Complete Streets Ordinance within the Land Development Regulations that requires pedestrian-scale improvements, such as street trees and sidewalks, along new streets. Bike lanes and connectivity between neighborhoods have also been included in the updated regulations, providing a network for pedestrians and bicyclists to access activities. Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility helps reduce traffic impact and improves aesthetics.

Street connectivity is also now required. Rather than designing a subdivision with numerous cul-de-sacs that can harm efficient traffic circulation, development standards now require that subdivisions and other large-scale projects connect to the existing street network. Constructing a continuous grid of interconnected streets that offer numerous connections and direct routes has been proven to reduce traffic congestion. Unlike poorly connected street layouts, which concentrate traffic onto arterial streets, a grid network disperses traffic. The number of cul-de-sacs in proposed developments has also

been limited, and the regulations require subdivisions to connect via roadways or, at minimum, pedestrian/golf cart paths.

In addition to implementing a street network, developers are also required to improve applicable existing streetscapes, with the following elements:

- ▶ Planting street trees that provide shade and improve aesthetics and air quality, and help block noise.
- ▶ Providing street lighting fixtures that would compliment others found throughout the city.
- ▶ Developing character standards that reflect the character of the community. Since North Myrtle Beach is a coastal community in the South, the design standards should reflect the city's heritage.

Additional information regarding streets is outlined in the specific focus areas of this chapter and expanded to include other major roads in Chapter 6, The Way We Travel.

The city could revisit its parking lot landscaping standards to provide for higher levels of plantings and buffers. In commercial developments, for example, requirements for parking lot trees could be increased to help reduce the urban heat island effect caused by large expanses of pavement. Shade trees could be required using tree-to-parking-stall ratios or even require a minimum distance from a parking stall to a tree.

The city should continue its program of burying existing overhead utility lines, and continue its policy of requiring new developments to utilize underground lines. Burying lines would improve the visual appeal of the area and reduce dangers

associated with overhead power lines during and after major storms.

With the possibility of more single-family subdivisions and multifamily projects being built, more parks and open space will be needed. Development standards could require projects of a certain size to set aside open space to be used for recreation, or to protect the area's natural resources. Horry County uses an open space formula based on the number of dwelling units, the average household density, and the number of acres required per person. Furthermore, the county requires that a certain percentage be set aside for active recreation rather than allowing natural features such as wetlands to fulfill the open space requirement. The city's Parks & Recreation Department has begun asking for these types of developer concessions when reviewing Planned Development District proposals.

Another tool that some communities use to improve the appearance of the city is a design review board. State Enabling Legislation allows such boards where it is necessary to preserve and protect historical and architecturally valuable districts, neighborhoods, corridors, and natural scenic areas.

As an alternative to having an appointed design board, many communities prefer to establish clear design criteria within their ordinances, administered by staff. This approach removes the often contentious subjectivity argument used by opponents of design boards.

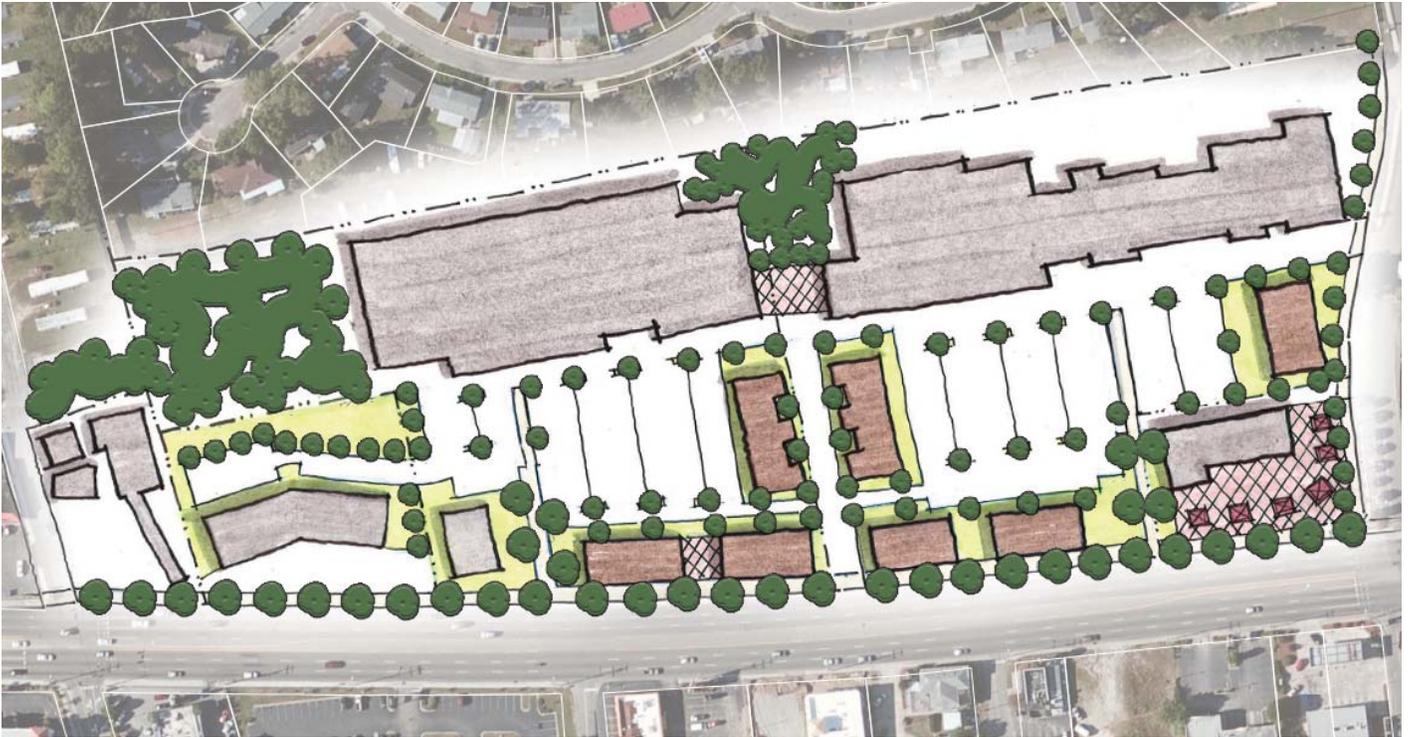
Finally, the city's sign ordinance has permitted commercial and residential signage which has often been out of character with the surrounding environment. With or without a design review board, the city's sign ordinance should be reviewed for consistency with the goals of the comprehensive plan.

Highway 17 Design Standard Overlay

US Highway 17 is the main corridor through North Myrtle Beach. The city has the most to gain, especially in representing the community's character, through a Design Standard Overlay for US Highway 17. The new future land-use category of "Highway Commercial" can catalyze the transition from a generic commercial land-use type to a higher quality, uniform standard. As part of Highway Commercial land use category, developers are encouraged to develop out-parcels in existing strip malls, create mixed-use centers around popular intersections, and construct higher-density developments with various user groups in mind.

As part of the visioning process, the city can begin with certain tracts of land that are due for redevelopment soon. These areas could be classified as "ripe" for redevelopment and include out-dated, older, and/or vacant buildings and lots. One such example is the North Village shopping center near 34th Avenue South in Windy Hill.

In this location, there are many possibilities for redevelopment to illustrate higher quality design standards for US Highway 17. Barefoot Landing anchors the gateway into North Myrtle Beach as the first major development at the southern city limit. Development along the west side of US Highway 17 then turns into land adjacent to Grand Strand Airport, which is also ripe for redevelopment in the future. Next along US Highway 17 is the new retail center, Barefoot Commons. This development has many outparcels that could redevelop again in the near future. The next major tract of land is North Village, which terminates the southern portion of US Highway 17 in the city as it transitions to Atlantic Beach for a few blocks.



▲ Photo of existing conditions

▲ Plan of US Hwy 17 Option 1 (top of page): This plan illustrates changes to North Village that could occur today with out-parcel redevelopment. The existing strip mall and out-parcels remain but other parcels are created along US Hwy 17 to bring development closer to the street and enhance the pedestrian experience including streetscape improvements, and public plazas. Buildings also line the entrance to the shopping mall, terminating at a public plaza.



▲ Rendering pictures the intersection of 33rd Ave & US Hwy 17 illustrating details from the plan above, including streetscape improvements & market plaza



▲ *Plan of US Hwy 17 Option 2: This plan illustrates changes to North Village that could occur once the strip mall is demolished. It is a lower density version with a variety of townhomes, multi-family units, and commercial buildings. In this design, there are about 120 townhomes, 30 multi-family units, and 45,000 square feet of commercial space.*



▲ *Rendering illustrates details from the plan above, including streetscape improvements and two-story commercial buildings along US Hwy 17 with ground floor retail and second floor office.*



▲ *Plan of US Hwy 17 Option 3: This plan illustrates changes to North Village that could occur once the strip mall is demolished. It is at a higher-density than the previous plan with townhomes, multi-family units, and mixed-use with residential and ground floor retail. In this design, there are about 52 townhomes, 205 multi-family units, and 15,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space.*



▲ *Rendering illustrates details from the plan above, including streetscape improvements and four-to-five-story mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and upper stories with residential along US Hwy 17.*

FOCUS AREAS

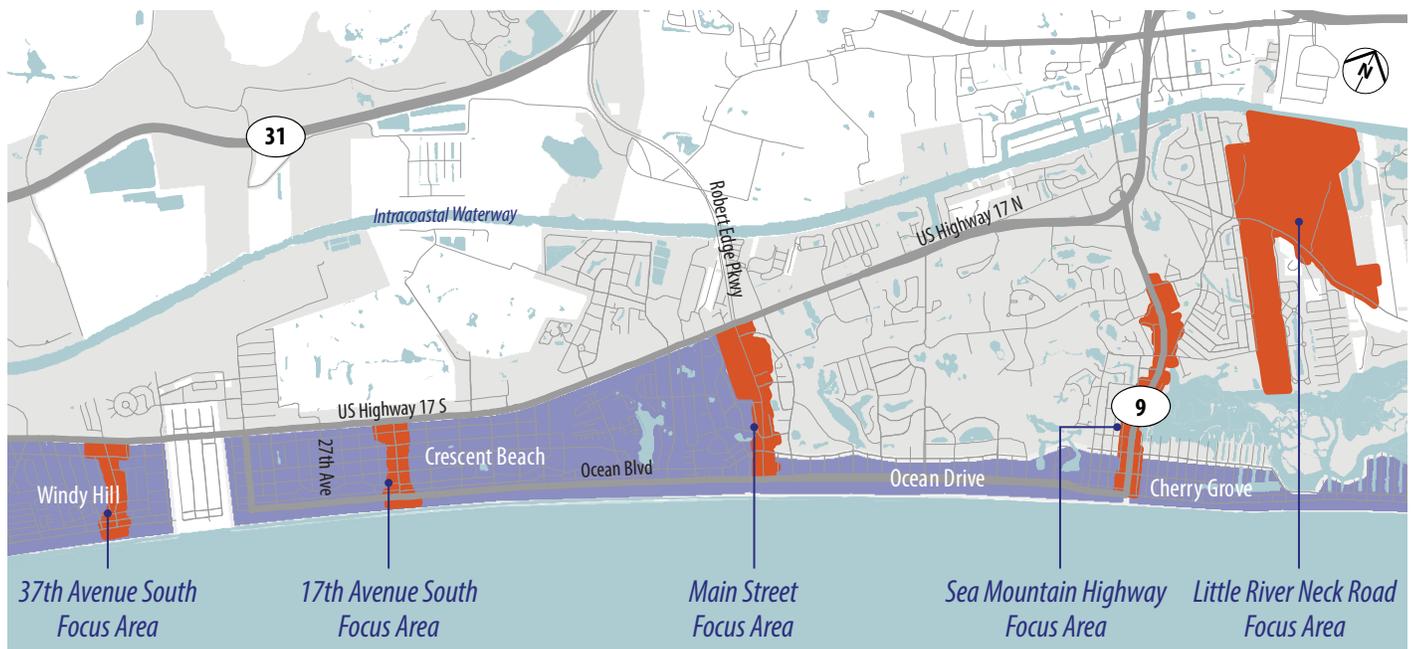
Key corridors in North Myrtle Beach were identified during the planning process as areas that would benefit from establishing specific design standards to encourage quality development in the future. These design standards would enforce and encourage quality design. The following five locations were identified to receive further analysis to create contextual design recommendations.

The five Focus Areas are:

1. Main Street
2. 17th Avenue South
3. 37th Avenue South
4. Sea Mountain Highway corridor
5. Little River Neck Road

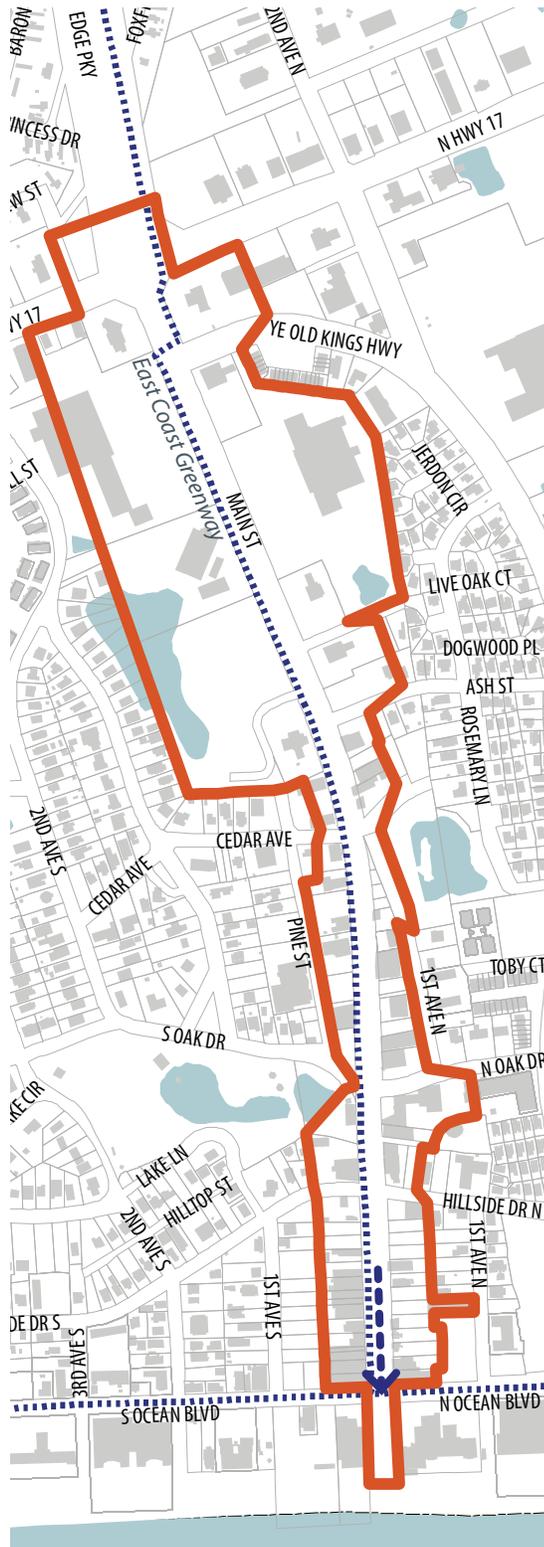
These focus areas are generally distributed throughout the municipal boundary with Little River Neck Road to the north, the Main Street focus area being centrally located, and 17th Avenue South and 37th Avenue South in the southern portion of the city.

Each of these focus areas includes property that is an important component to their respective community. As such, strategic planning in these areas will impact the broader areas served. The growth and development that occurs in these areas over time should follow the community's vision and take the form of walkable, mixed use centers in order to best serve the local neighborhoods and hospitality needs, as well as benefit the city overall.



▲ Map of the five focus areas within the context of the greater North Myrtle Beach municipal area.

1. Main Street Focus Area



▲ Map of Main Street Focus Area with the view for the photosimulation on page 115 called out in a dashed blue arrow.

Overview

Main Street is approximately 0.75 miles long and stretches south from US Highway 17 at Robert Edge Parkway to Ocean Boulevard. It was the original Main Street of Ocean Drive Beach before the small town consolidated into the larger North Myrtle Beach.

Ocean Drive Beach is home to the Shaggers' Hall of Fame and is reported to be the location where the unique dance form began. Only a few historic structures still exist along Main Street, but these form the heaviest concentration of historic buildings in the city.

Existing Conditions and Character

Small-scale, Historic Commercial Buildings

- ▶ Eight historic structures
- ▶ Dense and compact
- ▶ One-to-two story buildings

Dense one-to-two Story Buildings

- ▶ New buildings should reflect character and/or scale of historic buildings
- ▶ Mostly retail or commercial dominated with restaurants, bars, and shops
- ▶ Some quirky, colorful buildings and/or awnings

Big Box, Auto-oriented Commercial near US-17

- ▶ The 'gateway' onto Main Street is dominated by parking lots and recessed Big Box stores (Big Lots and Kroger) and restaurants (McDonalds and BurgerFi)

Terminating Vista at a Public Beach Access

- ▶ Main Street ends at the North Myrtle Beach Horseshoe which serves as an event space or beach access with parking

Main Street Transformed Streetscape (2009)

- ▶ Strategically placed planted medians with Palm trees, landscaping, decorative lighting, benches, and golf cart parking
- ▶ On-street parking
- ▶ Landscaping with Palm trees in on-street parking bulb outs
- ▶ Sidewalk improvements with colorful, consistent material
- ▶ Design encourages outdoor seating and sidewalk retail displays
- ▶ Did not address or consolidate excessive number of curb cuts

Multiple Surface Parking Lots

- ▶ Most buildings are set back from the street to allow parking in the front
- ▶ Approximately 43 street facing parking lots have been identified along Main Street



▲ Typical souvenir and tourist shop.



▲ Deckerz Bar and Grill off of Main Street.



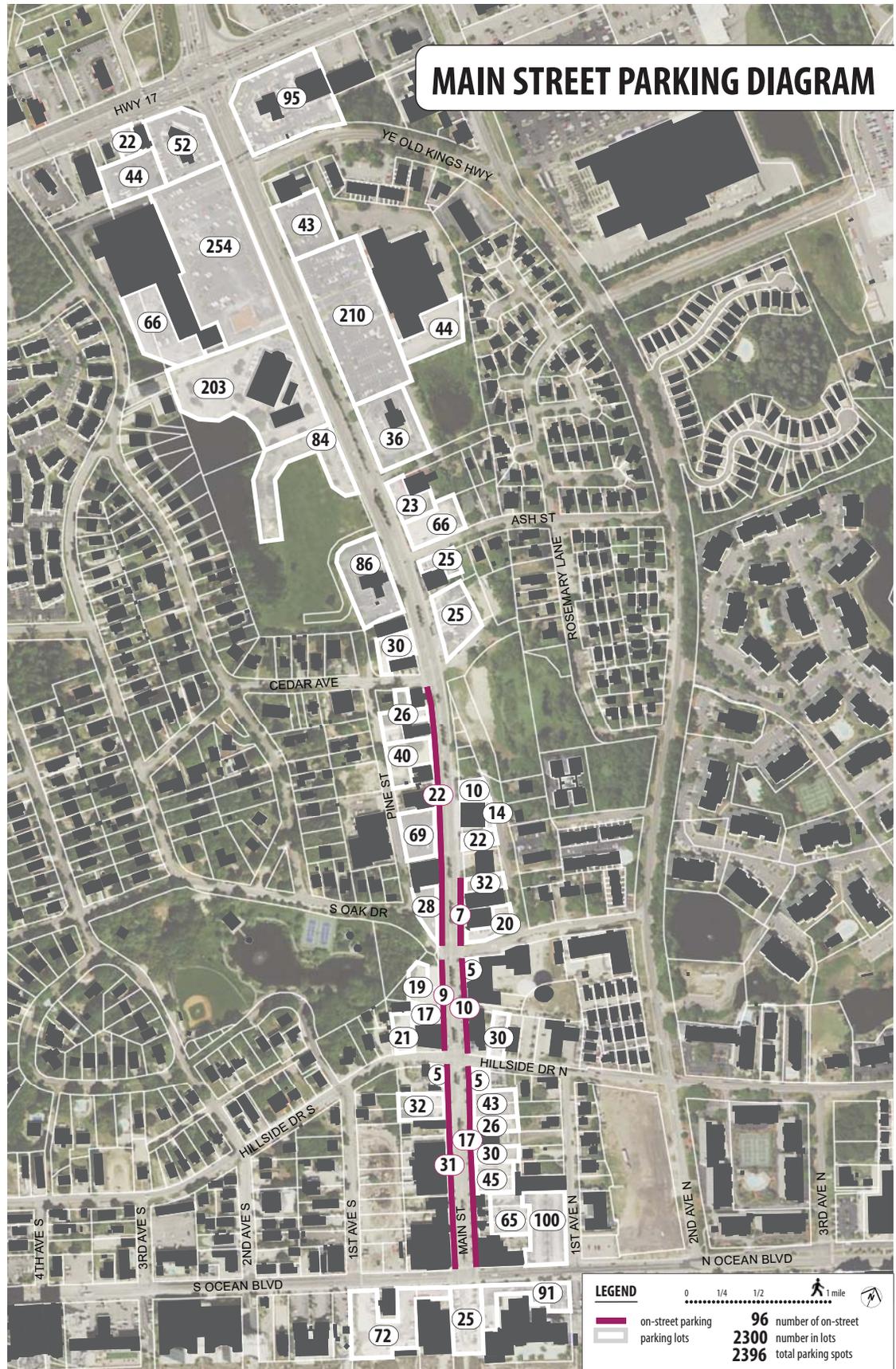
▲ Ocean Drive Beach welcome sign in a typical planted median on Main Street



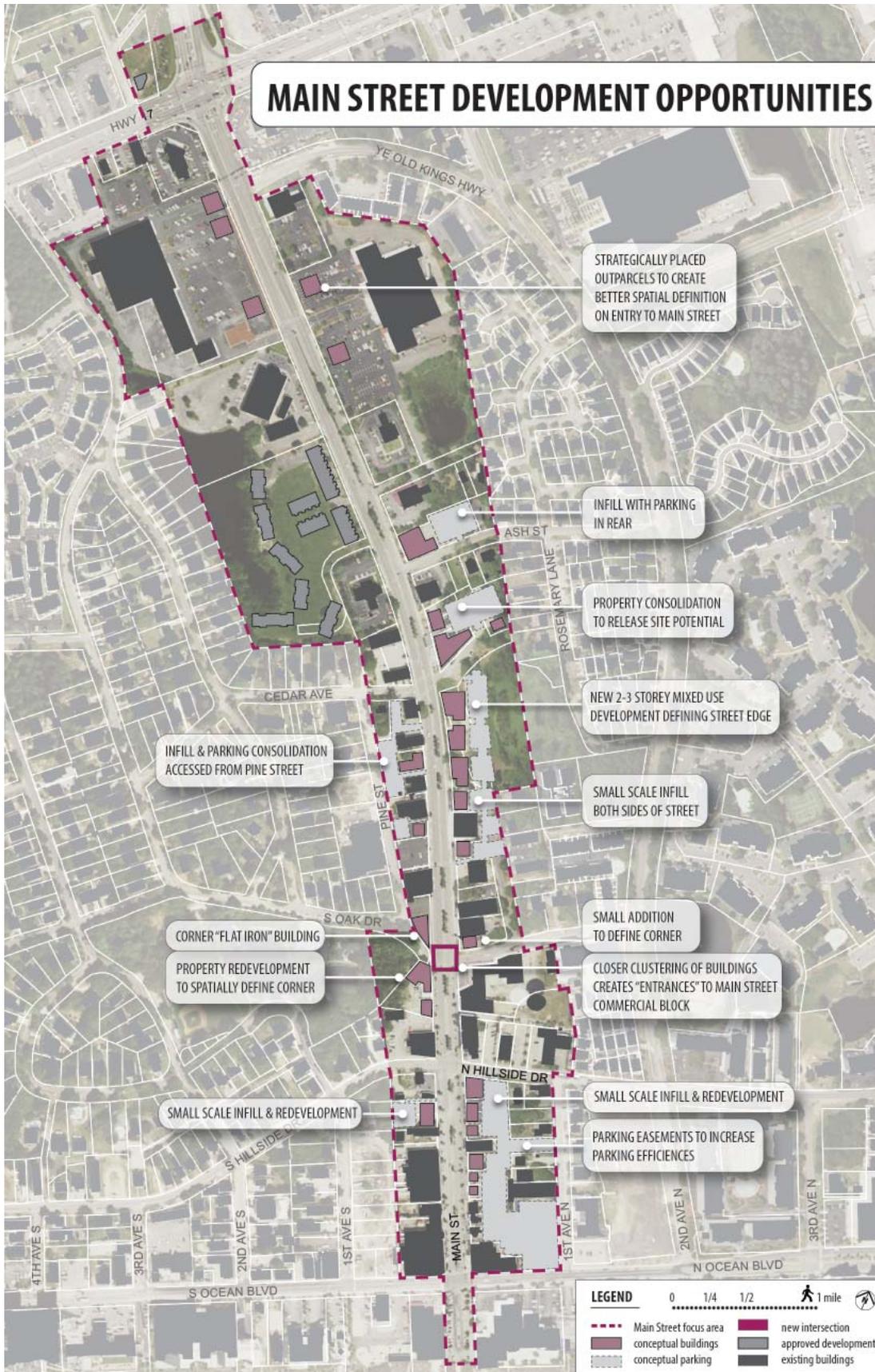
▲ Along the sidewalk in front of Duck's Beach Club.



▲ Convenience Store and ABC Liquor Store at the corner of Main Street and Hillside Drive.



► The Main Street Parking Diagram shows the number of parking spots in highlighted parking facing and/or accessible from Main Street. There are 96 on-street parking spots and 2,300 parking spots in lots, equalling 2,396 total parking spots.



◀ *The Main Street Development Opportunities Diagram outlines infill and redevelopment opportunities, as well as, approved new developments. It also illustrates conceptual parking solutions for new buildings which include shared parking lots to reduce the number of curb cuts and access drives, especially along Main Street.*

Issues and Opportunities

Overall, the streetscape and built environment have existing characteristics that make the area pedestrian-friendly, but there are still many opportunities to improve upon, including enhancements to the following foundation elements:

Number of Curb Cuts and Access Drives

- ▶ Reduce the number of curb cuts by creating shared parking access drives along side streets
- ▶ Connect new and existing parking lots

Surface Parking Visible from the Street

- ▶ Create outparcels to develop along Main Street that allows buildings up to the right-of-way line instead of being setback from the street

Enhancing Transformation Streetscape

- ▶ Create alternative on-street parking strategies including parallel and diagonal
- ▶ Utilize the more continuous street frontage created by reduced curb cuts for planting evenly spaced street trees
- ▶ Widen sidewalks to make space for outdoor seating, dining, and pop-up retail
- ▶ Introduce bicycle facilities
- ▶ Encourage planting of shade trees instead of Palm trees

Create a Safer Multi-modal Environment

- ▶ Widen sidewalks to allow for more street furniture while maintaining pedestrian access
- ▶ Introduce protected bicycle facilities
- ▶ Reduce number of traffic lanes

◀ Existing photo of Main Street.



◀ Main St. Photosimulation: Reduce number of travel lanes and reduce curb cuts to allow more continuous streetscape of angled on-street parking with large landscaped bulb outs that include shade trees. Also add sharrows to the travel lanes for cyclists.

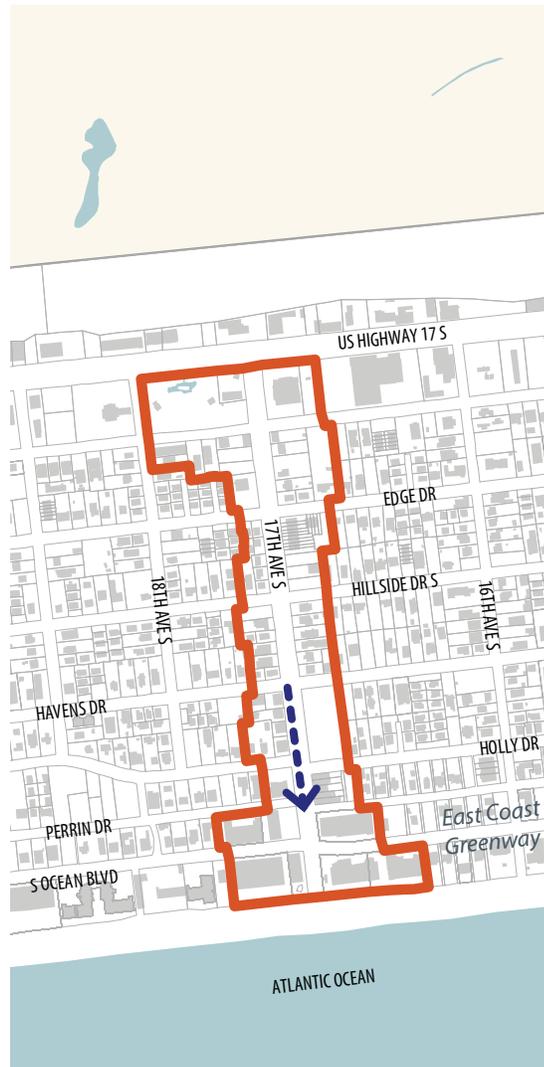


2. 17th Avenue South Focus Area

Overview

17th Avenue South is a very walkable 0.38 miles long and connects US Highway 17 to Ocean Boulevard. It is the historic main street of Crescent Beach.

Development along the corridor is predominately residential with small commercial businesses located closer to US Highway 17 and Ocean Boulevard; dense beachfront hospitality development is located on Ocean Boulevard .



▲ Map of 17th Avenue South focus area with the view for the photosimulation on page 121 called out in a dashed blue arrow.

Existing Conditions and Character

Mixture of Small-scale Residential

- ▶ One-to-three story houses and apartments
- ▶ Rentals and owner occupied homes

Commercial Hub

- ▶ Commercial and hospitality development at 17th Avenue South & Ocean Blvd

Terminating Vista at a Public Beach Access

- ▶ Street ends at a public beach access with parking framed by high-rises

Streetscape

- ▶ Strategic planted medians with Palm trees
- ▶ Mostly no curbs or roll curbs
- ▶ Informal paved bicycle lane on both sides of the street
- ▶ Narrow sidewalks buffered from the road by planting strips with sporadic tree placement
- ▶ On-street parking begins at Havens Drive and continues to Ocean Blvd
- ▶ Large overhead power lines on west side of the road are located right behind sidewalk

Issues and Opportunities

Number of Curb Cuts and Access Drives

- ▶ Reduce the number of curb cuts by creating alleys for residents and shared parking for commercial



Enhance Streetscape

- ▶ Create alternative on-street parking strategies including parallel and diagonal
- ▶ Utilize the more continuous street frontage created by reduced curb cuts with evenly spaced street trees
- ▶ Enhance bicycle facilities
- ▶ Encourage planting of shade trees

- ◀ *Vacant land one full block in length is located adjacent to commercial and hospitality development at 17th Avenue South and Ocean Boulevard. This site is ideal for mixed-use infill development that would better serve surrounding neighborhoods and create a more walkable street.*



- ◀ *The same vacant land re-imagined with infill development containing a mix of two-to-three story buildings with residential, office, and ground floor retail. The streetscape is enhanced with on-street parking, wide sidewalks, crosswalks, and street trees to provide shade.*



▲ 17th Avenue South at the northern end is predominately residential.



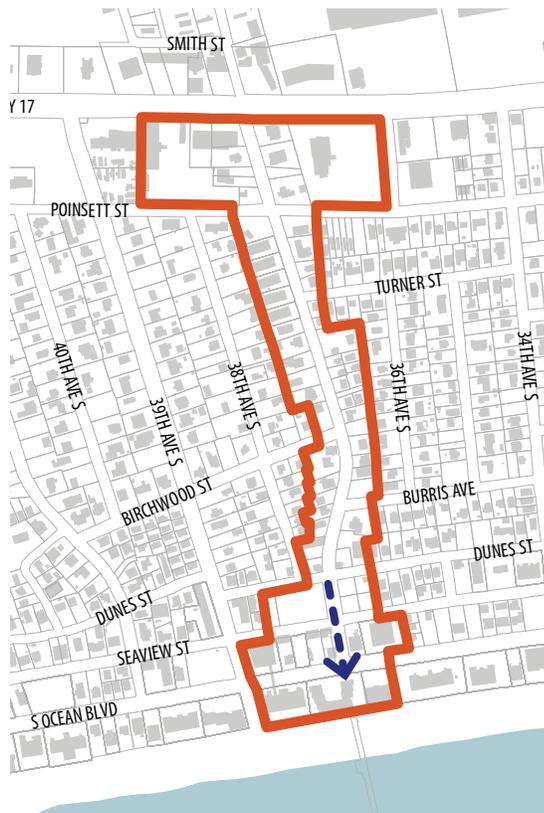
▲ Commercial and hospitality development near 17th Avenue South and Ocean Boulevard.

3. 37th Avenue South Focus Area

Overview

37th Avenue South is a walkable 0.44 miles long and connects US Highway 17 to Ocean Boulevard. It is the old main street of Windy Hill. This area of the city is located between Atlantic Beach, the Grand Strand Airport, and Barefoot Landing.

Development along the corridor is predominately residential with some neighborhood commercial businesses located closer to US Highway 17 and Ocean Boulevard with dense beachfront hospitality development on Ocean Boulevard. The commercial hub near the beach was recently renovated and contains a large public parking lot and empty parcel for potential redevelopment.



▲ Map of 37th Avenue South focus area with the view for the photosimulations on page 123 called out in a dashed blue arrow.

Existing Conditions and Character

Mixture of Small-scale Residential

- ▶ One-to-three story houses and apartments
- ▶ Rentals and owner occupied homes

Commercial Hub

- ▶ Commercial and hospitality development at 37th Avenue South & Ocean Blvd
- ▶ No public access to the beach

Streetscape

- ▶ Mostly no curbs or roll curbs
- ▶ Informal paved bicycle lane on southwest side of the street
- ▶ Few narrow sidewalks without buffers
- ▶ Off street public parking lot and private parking for Nathan’s on 37th Avenue South near beach
- ▶ Small, criss-crossing overhead power lines

Issues and Opportunities

Number of Curb Cuts and Access Drives

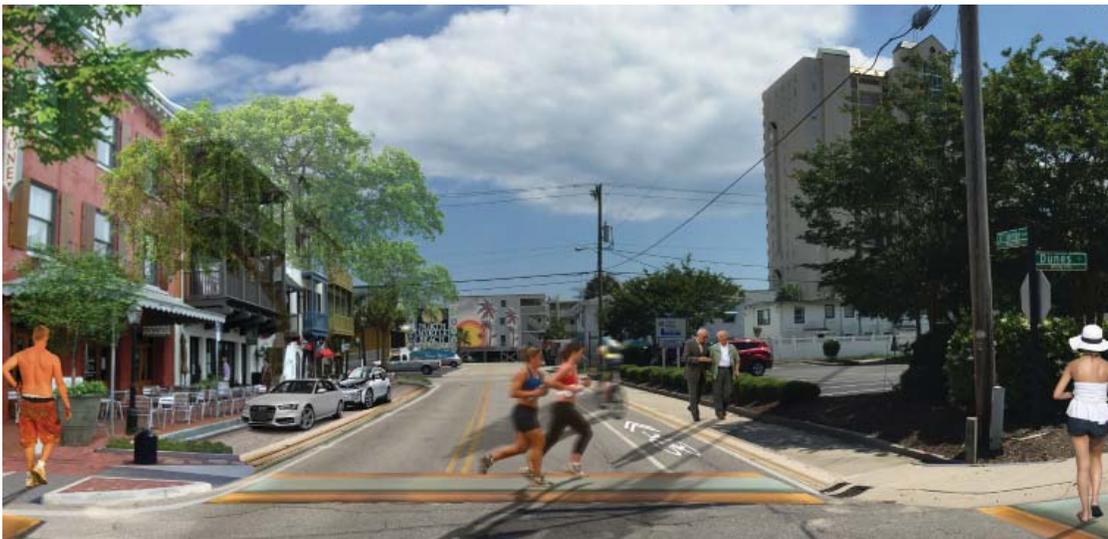
- ▶ Reduce the number of curb cuts by creating alleys for residents and shared parking for commercial

Enhance Streetscape

- ▶ Create on-street parking strategies including parallel and diagonal
- ▶ Utilize the more continuous street frontage created by reduced curb cuts by creating planting strips or grates with evenly spaced street trees (preferably shade trees)
- ▶ Enhance bicycle facilities



◀ Vacant land one full block in length is located adjacent to commercial and hospitality development at 37th Ave S and Ocean Blvd.

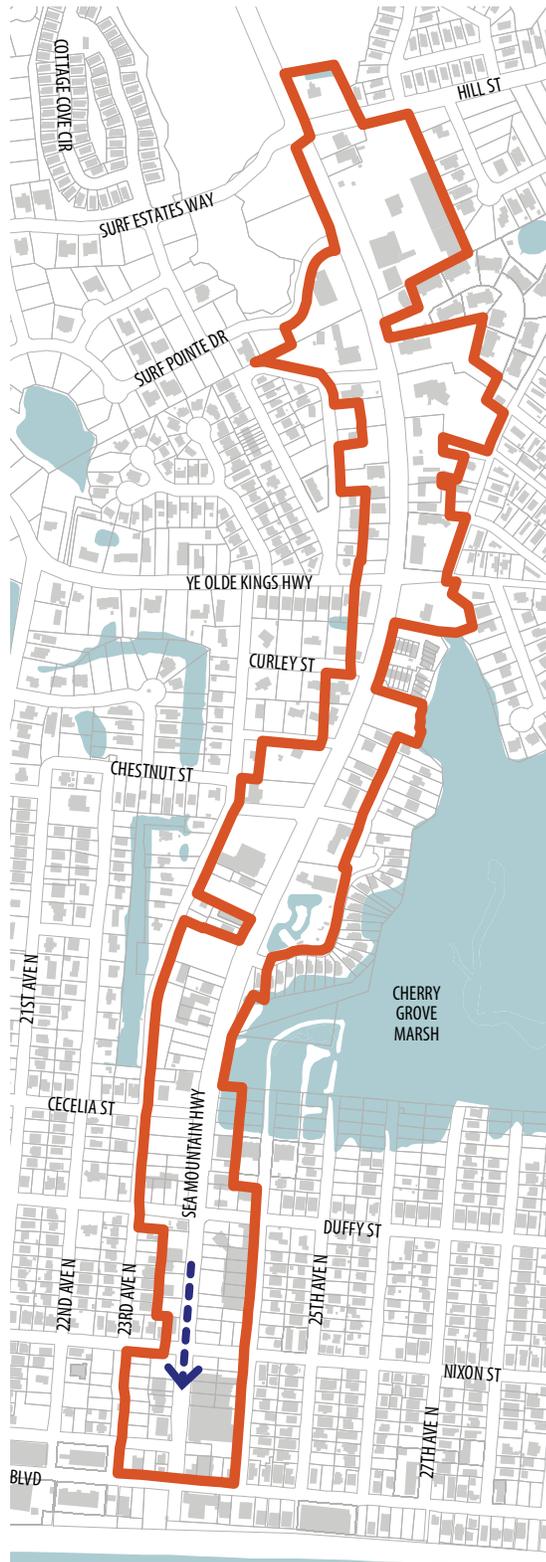


◀ Photosimulation Option 1: Low-country style redevelopment is proposed in the open lot; this image also shows streetscape improvements like curbs, an improved bike lane, crosswalks, on-street parking, outdoor dining, and shade trees. The building 37th Ave S terminus on could be improved with beach themed murals.



◀ Photosimulation Option 2: An alternative to the first option is a contrasting Miami style proposed redevelopment in the public parking lot. On this side of the street there are also Palm trees and back-of-curb vegetation leading up to a raised sidewalk for outdoor seating. The terminus is further enhanced with a welcome gateway.

4. Sea Mountain Highway Focus Area



Overview

Sea Mountain Highway begins at the junction of US Highway 17 as a continuation of State Road S-26-20 and US Highway 9; however, the focus area does not begin until further south at the first populated crossing, Hill Street and Surf Estates Way. Sea Mountain Highway is a 1.08-mile long high traffic street with two wide travel lanes on each side and center turn lane. The approximately 75' wide public right-of-way served as the original main street of Cherry Grove Beach and still has a commercial hub and public beach access near Ocean Blvd.

Development along Sea Mountain Highway is sporadic and lacks a consistent typology or common land use. It varies from protected marsh lands to access drives for expensive new developments with everything in between. The road was divided into character zones with prominent gateways for each, access control for intersections, crosswalks, curb cuts, and medians. The end closest to the beach was detailed to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment, roughly the same scale as similar main streets in the City.

Map of Sea Mountain Highway focus area with the view for the photosimulations on page 126-127 called out in a dashed blue arrow.

Existing Conditions

Limited Street Facing Residential

- ▶ Various housing options, mostly accessed through side streets
- ▶ Some single-family homes converted to commercial

Commercial Spine

- ▶ Auto-oriented commercial and retail all along Sea Mountain Highway
- ▶ Public access to the beach

Terminating Vista at a Public Beach Access

- ▶ Sea Mountain Highway ends at a public beach access with parking

Streetscape

- ▶ Narrow sidewalks without buffers
- ▶ Continuous center turn lane
- ▶ Large overhead power lines on west side of the road, right behind sidewalk, until Nixon Street



◀ One small planted median at the Ocean Blvd intersection.



◀ Typical auto-oriented commercial development along Sea Mountain Highway.



◀ View of Cherry Grove Marsh.



◀ Photo exemplifying the visual dominance of overhead power lines and lack of trees.

Issues and Opportunities

Number of Curb Cuts and Access Drives

- ▶ Reduce the number of curb cuts by creating alleys for residents and shared parking for commercial

Enhance Streetscape

- ▶ Create on-street parallel parking strategies
- ▶ Create opportunities for strategically placed planted medians within the existing center turn lane
- ▶ Utilize the more continuous street frontage created by reduced curb cuts with evenly spaced street trees
- ▶ Enhance bicycle facilities
- ▶ Encourage planting of shade trees
- ▶ Create opportunities to cross the street at mid-block
- ▶ Widen sidewalks with new developments

- ▼ *Existing photo of Sea Mountain Highway southbound, looking toward the beach. A strip mall with ACE Hardware is on the left with curb cuts, overhead power lines, and narrow sidewalk along the right side of the photo exemplifying typical conditions found along the road.*



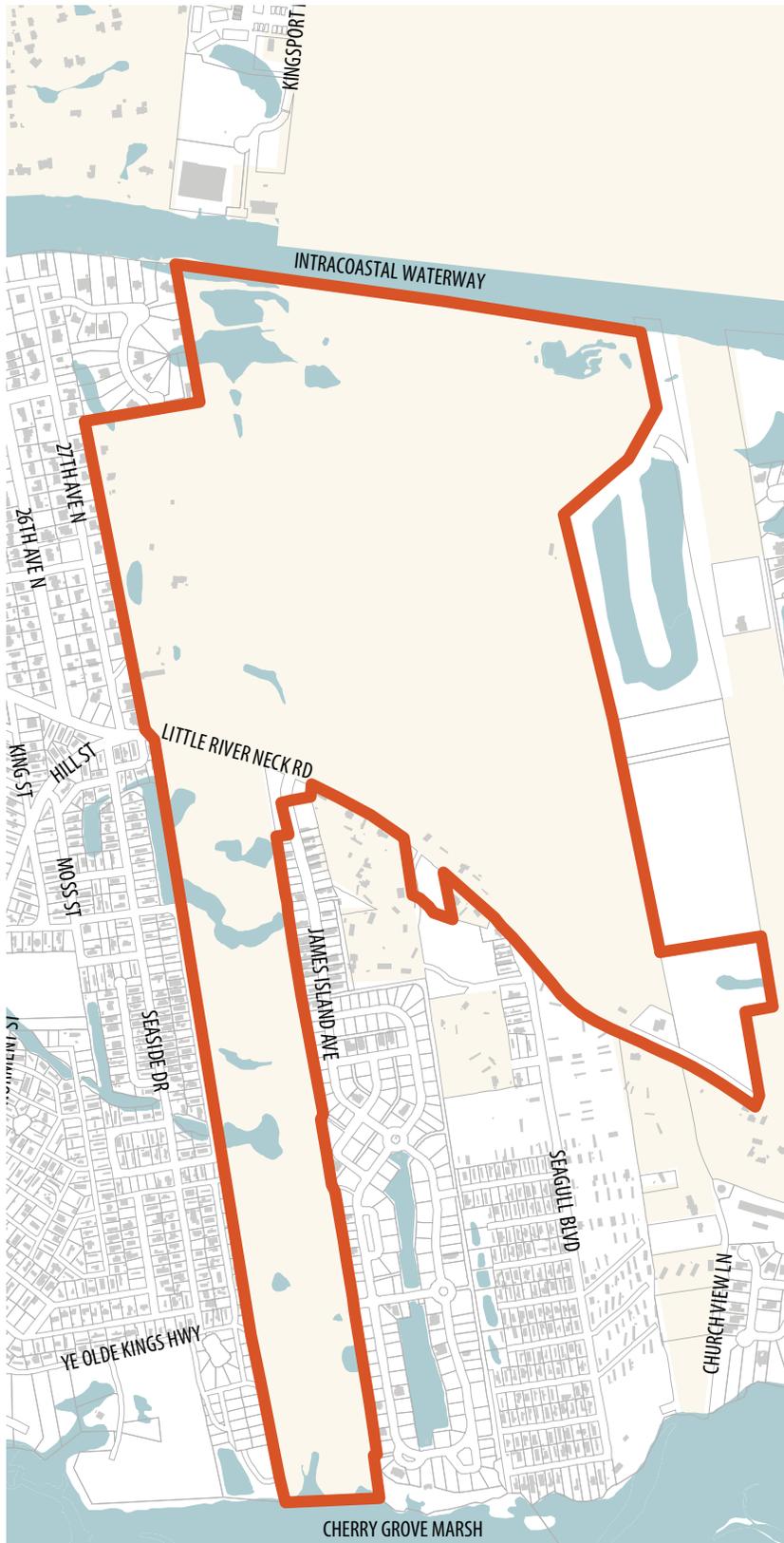


▲ *Photosimulation Option 1: This option illustrates strategically placed planted medians in the center turn lane with large shade trees. Parking lots facing onto Sea Mountain Highway should also be screened with vegetation where possible.*

▼ *Photosimulation Option 2: This option shows strategically placed planted medians with shade trees, vegetation and shade trees along the east side of the street (where there are no overhead power lines), Palm trees along the west side of the street (under overhead power lines), and a wider sidewalk. The existing four lane road with a center turn lane is proposed to be a two lane road with parallel on-street parking on both sides of Sea Mountain Highway. It also illustrates a high-intensity, activated crosswalk (HAWK) at Nixon Street.*



5. Little River Neck Road Focus Area



Overview

Little River Neck Road is rapidly developing with a variety of residential uses, ranging from mobile home parks to luxury golf resorts with condos. This nearly 300-acre area of undeveloped parcels along a 0.9 mile stretch of Little Rive Neck Road could define the future character of this area of the City.

The focus area is bound by water with the Intracoastal Waterway at the northern end and Cherry Grove Marsh at the southern end; additional water bodies are scattered throughout the remainder of the site. The stretch of road included in the focus area has only two traffic lanes, one in either direction, with no curbs and narrow grass shoulders. There are no signalized intersections or turn lanes. Few properties have direct access to the Little River Neck Road along this stretch; it's mostly accessed through side streets into residential developments.

Existing Conditions

Limited Street Facing Residential

- ▶ Various housing options, mostly accessed through side streets

Streetscape

- ▶ No curbs and narrow shoulders
- ▶ Few turn lanes (none in focus area)
- ▶ No sidewalks
- ▶ No signaled intersections
- ▶ Split rail fence lining street in some sections
- ▶ Overhead power lines do not line the street the entire length, sometimes even crossing over the street

Issues and Opportunities

New Development

- ▶ Develop activity hubs around existing social centers like the Macedonia AME Church.
- ▶ Develop residential to face onto Little River Neck Road
- ▶ Create a water-based commercial hub on the Intracoastal Waterway, possibly with docks for boat access

Preservation and Open Space

- ▶ Preserve existing wet-lands and ponds to create pockets of open space inside new development
- ▶ Create other green open space opportunities throughout new development
- ▶ Buffer the Intracoastal Waterway and Cherry Grove Marsh from new development

Streetscape

- ▶ Add a multi-use path buffered by a planting strip on one side of the street
- ▶ Create an area of opportunistic informal plantings on the opposite side of the street
- ▶ Create a consistent edge of split rail fence, which adds to the character
- ▶ Widen Little River Neck road to three-lane section
- ▶ Create dedicated turning lanes or acceleration/deceleration lanes as new development warrants

LEGEND

	Single-Family		Commercial
	Multi-Family		Open Space
	Water Bodies		Preserved Buffer



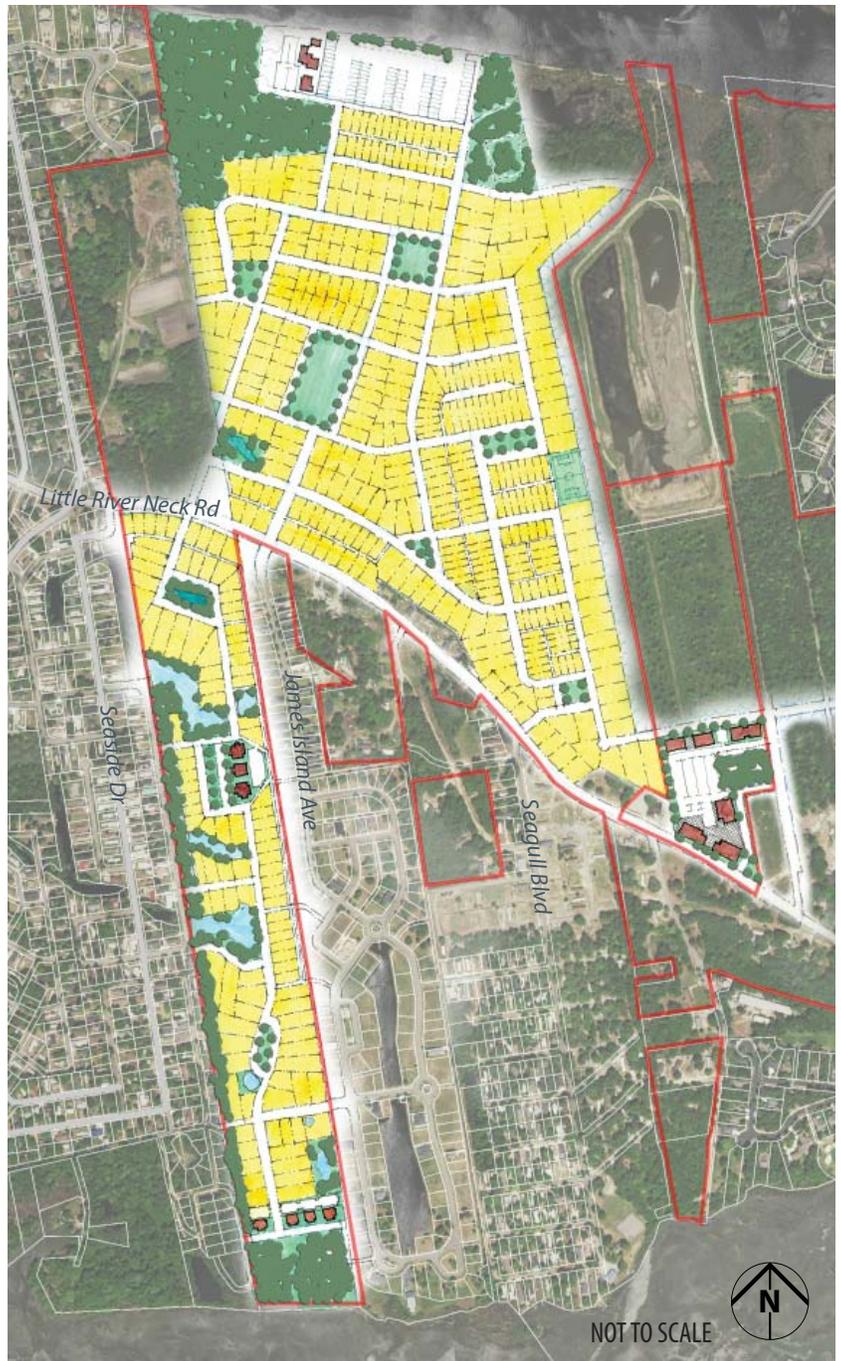
▲ New residential construction.



▲ View down the street.



▲ View of Cherry Grove Marsh.



Potential Conservation Communities along Little River Neck Road

Green fields and marsh lands along Little River Neck Road provide ample opportunities for development under the new Conservation Community land-use category. The vision plan on the previous page exemplifies a development created for the Conservation Community land-use category, and it is suggested that this land be classified as so if annexed into the city. It shows largely single-family lots with variations in depth and width to accommodate larger estates and more compact homes serviced by alleys. There are also a few strategically placed multi-family units, including those facing the Cherry Grove Marsh. At the other end of the development, facing onto the waterway, the small center shows a Marina Mixed-use development. This introduces a potential commercial and urban residential center typology along the waterway for restaurants, retail, and other neighborhood amenities. Another potential location for these uses is along Little River Neck Road with the introduction of neighborhood-scale commercial to service the long-term residents in the area.

The most notable feature of this development and the Conservation Community land-use category is the open space preservation. Being located next to the waterway and marsh, the land overall is very environmentally sensitive. The existing marshy areas that wind throughout the area would be preserved and buffered. Additional, formal open spaces are also shown to provide functional, communal space for the residents. These include a variety of parks for passive and active recreation, green fields, and large green buffers along the marsh and waterway for meandering paths or enclaves for non-motorized boating.

The street network for this example is laid out like a traditional urban community to promote connectivity within the neighborhood and to the larger surrounding community. This example does not preserve as much open space as may be desirable in this area. However, the key factor to consider when laying out a Conservation Community is the sustainability of compactness. It is more sustainable to create a small network of roads with dense housing that preserves large parcels of undisturbed land than meandering roads with housing dispersed throughout smaller, fragmented parcels of preserved land.

► *One of the many informal green spaces preserved throughout the Conservation Community land-use category example.*





◀ Street view along a proposed street with larger estate homes on the left and compact homes on the right.



◀ Patio seating overlooking the waterway in the Marina Mixed-use center.



▼ Bird's eye of a Conservation Community envisioned for Little River Neck Road.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

5.1. Encourage high quality mixed-use districts (neighborhood activity centers) consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, office, civic and common open space land uses supported by alternative modes of transportation.

5.1.1. Neighborhoods are the fundamental unit of development and will be supported by neighborhood or village centers within walking or biking distance.

5.1.2. Encourage mixed-use projects that contain a variety of uses, and provide necessary supporting public and community facilities.

5.1.3. Locate mixed-use centers on likely future transit corridors and include multi-modal facilities.

5.1.4. Direct higher density development towards new and existing village centers as well as along US Highway 17.

5.1.5. Encourage infill development and the redevelopment of aging commercial areas to develop at higher densities and to create mixed-use, walkable centers (Incentivize).

5.1.6. Proactively rezone designated activity centers (commercial) to permit higher densities and require mixed-use.

5.1.7. Ensure architecture, landscape design, and site planning of mixed-use projects will be of the highest quality; emphasize a pedestrian orientation and safe, convenient access between uses.

5.1.8. Ensure that adequate parks and/or other public spaces are incorporated within mixed-use projects and areas to allow for social interaction and community activities.

5.2. Reinforce the original main streets of Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach and Windy Hill as the “hearts” of the community.

5.2.1. Strengthen the identity and character of Main Street, Sea Mountain Highway, 17th Avenue South, and 37th Avenue South by preserving the historic character of the community, while allowing for new structures that are architecturally compatible with, and complementary to, the existing urban fabric.

5.3. Encourage pedestrian-scaled, mixed-use development in each focus area.

5.3.1. Provide incentives, such as higher density and flexible parking requirements to attract quality development.

5.3.2. Complete small area plans for each focus area that accommodate future infill and redevelopment with a supportive public realm and mobility network.

5.3.3. Include specific policies for the focus areas in other planning documents.

5.3.4. Improve street design on key corridors in North Myrtle Beach, in particular the Main Streets of the original beaches in order to create a sense of arrival at key gateways to reinforce the city’s natural, cultural, and historic characteristics.

5.3.5. Consider the development of a public improvements plan to implement the streetscape and gateway design concepts for Main Street, 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, and Sea Mountain Highway.

5.4. Establish annexation and growth strategies for the City of North Myrtle Beach.

5.4.1. Establish a future growth strategy and identify areas for future annexation.

5.4.2. The city should actively pursue annexations of parcels of land that are currently “donut holes” in order to achieve orderly growth while developing a more cohesive and less fragmented city boundary.

5.4.3. No annexation application shall be recommended by the planning department or the planning commission, or granted by the city council unless a determination has been made that the request is in compliance with all of the following standards related to the annexation:

- A consideration of whether the proposed petition for annexation will have a favorable or unfavorable effect on the city’s budget;
- Whether the proposed annexation will have a negative effect on established levels of service established for public

facilities and services and indicate how and when city services will be provided;

- Whether the annexation may result in circumstances that are inconsistent with the city’s comprehensive plan;
- Whether the boundary of the real property to be annexed is reasonably compact and contiguous to the boundary of the corporate city limits; and
- Whether the petition is consistent with Title 5, Chapter 3 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws*.

5.5. Promote Main Street as an attractive, vibrant, historic, pedestrian-oriented shopping, dining and entertainment district for residents and visitors.

5.5.1. Consider the adoption of design guidelines for Main Street in order to foster a sense of place to attract residents and visitors.

5.5.2. Establish a central “Main Street” character through attention to site and building design, land use mix, housing opportunities, and enhanced streetscape improvements

5.5.3. Establish a main street façade grant program to encourage the reinvestment and redevelopment of existing buildings/structures along the main street corridor.



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6

THE WAY WE MOVE



“Trying to solve traffic congestion by widening roads is like trying to cure obesity by loosening your belt.”

- ITE Traffic Engineer



◀ Photo looking northward along Main Street, showing the different streetscape elements after upgrades.

In the early days, coming to the beach meant crossing the Waccamaw River and swamp, occasionally requiring a local farmer's team of horses to pull the car across after a heavy rain, and traveling on King's Highway into North Myrtle Beach. Few houses existed at the beach then, and camping and driving on the beach was typical. By 1954, there were only 250 year-round homes between the North Carolina state line and Briarcliffe. It was rare to pass a car on the road you didn't recognize or see a face you didn't know.

Today, over 40,000 vehicles use US Highway 17 each day on average; this volume makes navigation difficult for residents and tourists alike. Similarly, finding a place to park at most beach access points can be equally trying. Concerns remain that large-scale resorts and the continuing development of communities west of the waterway will cause the beaches to become too crowded to enjoy.

US Highway 17, Ocean Boulevard, Sea Mountain Highway, and Main Street are more than just transportation routes; they serve parallel roles of accommodation and retail, destination, and attraction. Maintaining and building connections

throughout the growing community, whether through additional streets, new services, or pedestrian access has become the focus of the city's transportation planning. As the city grows, the need for new mobility capacity will equally increase; how these new facilities are built and determining who pays for them are important considerations of the comprehensive plan.

In 2007, the South Carolina General Assembly passed the Priority Investment Act. Pursuant to S.C. Code § 6-29-510, this act requires South Carolina counties and municipalities to provide more specific information regarding housing, priority investment, and transportation within mandated comprehensive plans. In compliance with this new mandate, the new Transportation Element is made part of the City of North Myrtle Beach's Comprehensive Plan. This element analyzes the city's transportation facilities, including major road improvements, new road construction, transit projects, and pedestrian and bicycle projects. The Transportation Element makes a connection to the current land use element, in researching how transportation and land use interact and can better interact in the future.

STRATEGIC CORRIDORS

Main Street

Existing Conditions

Main Street is a city-owned roadway that begins at the intersection of US Highway 17 and continues south to Ocean Boulevard. Main Street was explored in depth during the *Main Street: Transformed* effort in 2010. As noted during that study, Main Street has two contexts described as the Upper (US Highway 17 to Cedar Avenue) and the Lower (Cedar Avenue to Ocean Boulevard). The lower context underwent streetscape improvements in 1996, and those improvements added great value to the character of Main Street. The upper context is part of an on-street, signed, and designated bicycle route from Ye Olde Kings Highway to Cedar Avenue. The entire street can generally be described as a five lane divided section with varying numbers of turn lanes found at various intersections. Median plantings are also characteristic of Main Street.



▲ Character imagery of existing conditions

Proposed Improvements

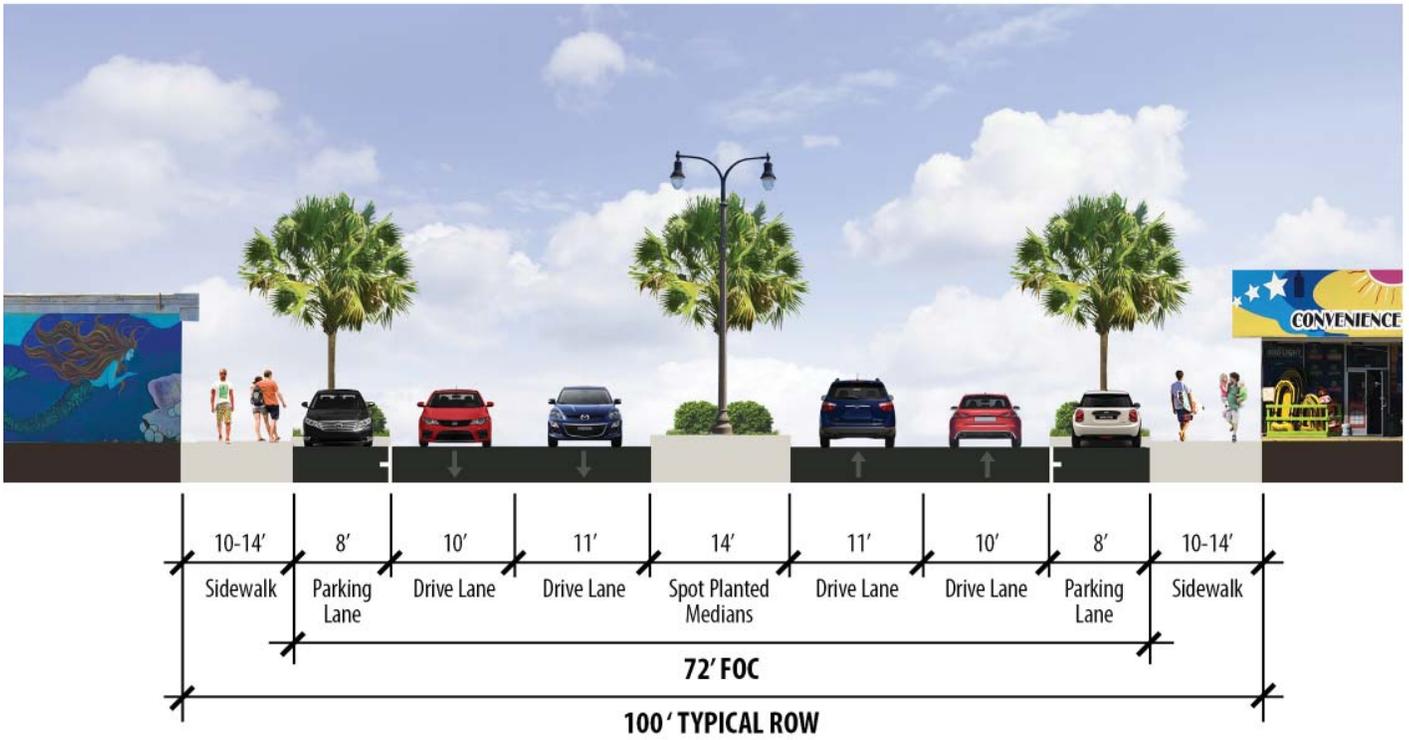
The proposed section examines the area of Main Street from Cedar Avenue to Ocean Boulevard. The average daily traffic counts provided by SCDOT show that Main Street is carrying approximately 12,600 vehicles per day. This threshold can easily be carried utilizing a three lane divided section, that is, two lanes with a center median.

The proposed street retrofit restripes one travel lane in each direction with angled parking. The additional width is given back to the travel lanes, so that a bicycle “sharrow” marking can be added to the center of each lane. A sharrow marking designates a lane as shared by both bicycles and automobiles. The bulb-out islands are larger in size due to the angled parking and to accommodate larger shade trees. The median is often used as vendor space during city festivals and as truck delivery access for adjacent merchants; therefore, the use of flush medians with paint or paver accents is recommended. As other median improvements are implemented, electrical service should be added to the space. The sidewalk in this urban section of Main Street should be a minimum of 14’ wide to accommodate outdoor dining.

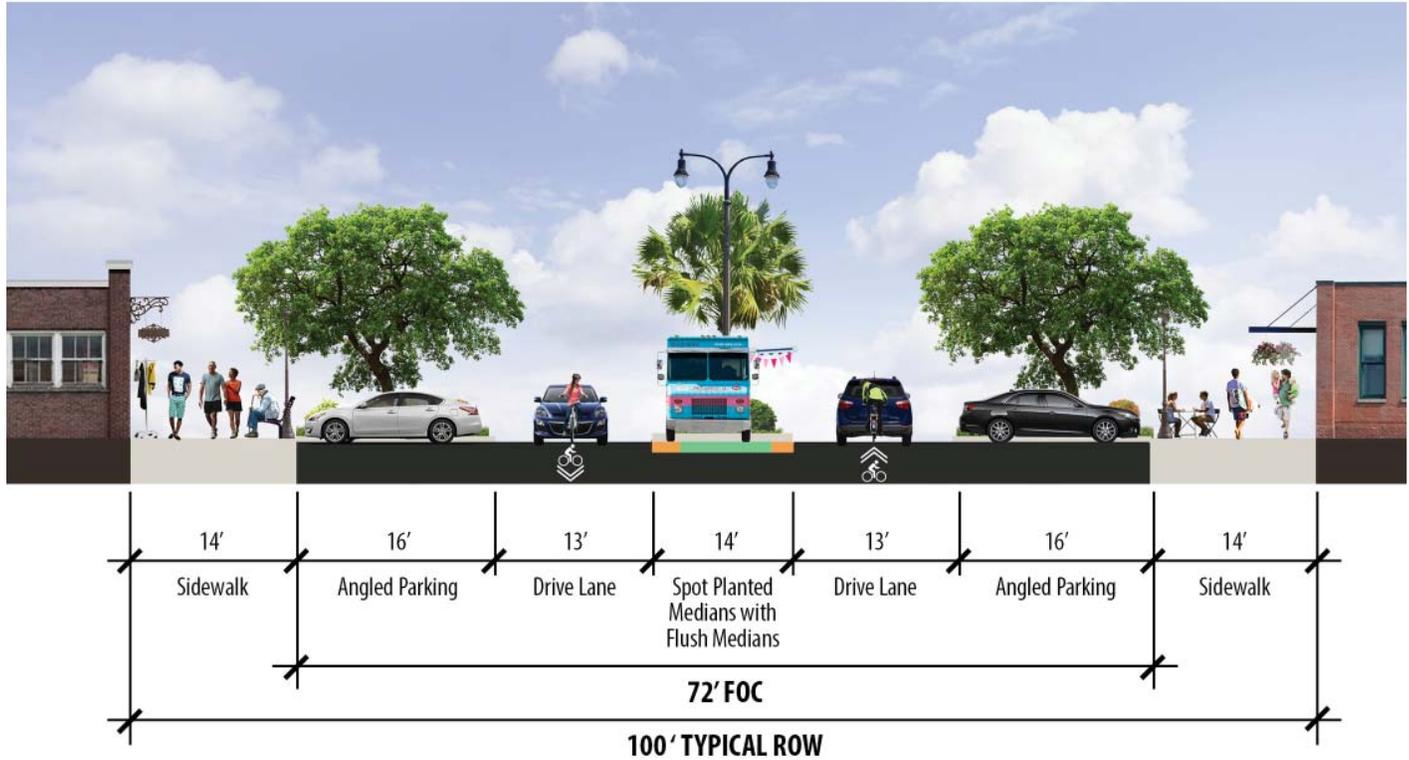


▲ Character imagery of existing conditions

Note: This plan encourages the development of the proposed Main Street Facade Improvement Program, the Main Street Property Improvement Award Program, and the Main Street Design Overlay District as outlined in the Main Street: Transformed document created in 2010.



▲ Existing Section Looking North: Main Street



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Main Street

US Highway 17

US Highway 17 is the principal arterial roadway for the city, the service provider for visitors, and the economic locus for retail, amusements, and restaurants. These uses are often in conflict as local and through traffic mingle with visitors and service vehicles. The mix can lead to a chaotic stop and go traffic pattern that defies traditional fixes. However, by implementing access management, much of the confusion can be remedied. Strategies that address land use, streetscape design, and consistent visual appeal should be developed to make travel along US Highway 17 a better experience for all users.

US Highway 17 Corridor Study

In 2005, the city completed a two-year transportation study of the US Highway 17 corridor to address traffic capacity needs, access issues, aesthetics, potential alternative modes of transportation and geometric design considerations. The study's goals were multiple:

- ▶ Develop a transportation plan that balances local access needs with through- travel needs along the corridor
- ▶ Enhance the use of alternative travel modes, including transit, pedestrian, and bicycle
- ▶ Incorporate strategies that encourage a reduction in vehicular trips
- ▶ Implement programs and projects that are context sensitive and aesthetically pleasing

US Highway 17 Corridor Design Plan

The US Highway 17 Design Plan (Design Plan) was initiated from recommendations that were developed as part of the US Highway 17 Corridor Study. Those recommendations provided a foundation for the Design Plan. The purpose of the Design Plan was to redefine US Highway 17's identity and to reinforce the theme of a resort tourism area through pedestrian mobility and safety, landscape and visual improvements, wayfinding and signage, and major intersection improvements. The Design Plan could be used as a blueprint for improvements in the public right-of-way. The city continues to implement these goals; a wayfinding and signage master plan has been introduced and major intersection improvements are being engineered.

Reducing Trip Generation through Land Use & Urban Form

There is great potential for redevelopment along US Highway 17. Most of the redevelopment potential comes from acreage located between the waterway and the highway. Three golf courses in Crescent Beach— Possum Trot, Azalea Sands, and Beachwood—contain approximately 850 acres of redevelopment potential that would require primary access to US Highway 17. These golf courses are currently under Horry County jurisdiction; however, if annexed, staff anticipates the property would be rezoned as a planned development district.

Expanding Roadway Capacity

Although there are not many areas where rights-of-way can be expanded without land acquisition, the northern end of US Highway 17 is one such area. The right-of-way width varies up to 600 feet near the Sea Mountain Highway interchange. Installing the traffic light at Gator Hole Plaza near 8th Avenue North in 2002 caused the traffic to back up in the southbound lane, and the northbound merge after the light caused additional congestion. The highway was widened by one additional lane in both the northbound and southbound directions to alleviate this congestion; this widening was completed in 2011.

Another way to increase capacity on US Highway 17 is to use reverse frontage and rear access along parallel streets. This is possible in the Windy Hill section along Poinsett Drive and in Crescent Beach along Madison Avenue between 27th Avenue South and 14th Avenue South. The city began implementing this program by constructing Elm Avenue between 6th Avenue South and 2nd Avenue South as a way to allow local traffic to navigate those blocks without having to use US Highway 17.

To create additional capacity on US Highway 17, cross-access between adjacent retail/commercial and office uses is now required as part of the Land Development Regulations. Cross-access describes a service drive connecting two or more contiguous sites or parcels that allows motorists and/or pedestrians the ability to access the adjacent site without re-entering the public street system. Well-implemented cross-access improves traffic flow and reduces traffic conflicts between motorists on the main street and motorists entering and leaving driveways.

As development occurs west of US Highway 17, similar opportunities should be sought to provide parallel access to US Highway 17. Areas where this is possible include 2nd Avenue North to 8th Avenue North, from Outrigger Road to Hilton Road, and a continuous road from Cenith Street to Windy Hill Extension should be built to serve the redevelopment of the Azalea Sands and Beachwood golf courses, when it occurs.

Another method of alleviating traffic may be to increase signage to the north of the city so that through-traffic is aware of the SC Highway 31 (Carolina Bays Parkway) alternative.



▲ *The intersection at Gator Hole Plaza*



▲ *An example of cross-access between two commercial properties*

Aesthetics & Visual Clutter

Currently, the predominant land use along US Highway 17 is tourist-oriented businesses: Restaurants, beachwear, golf, furniture stores, banks, and grocery stores. As noted in the economic element, US Highway 17 provides the majority of business licensing revenues and has the highest gross receipts in the city. To remain competitive within the larger Grand Strand market, substantial improvement in the quality of businesses as well as the appearance of US Highway 17 must be made.

Opportunities to develop guidelines and standards along US Highway 17 should be investigated; these design recommendations could address the following elements:

- ▶ Architectural and material construction standards
- ▶ Massing and building orientation standards
- ▶ Increased landscaping
- ▶ Reduction in number and types of signage allowed
- ▶ Improved standards for site lighting
- ▶ Requirements for establishing safer pedestrian facilities and street trees



▲ Visual clutter along US Highway 17 with multiple sign types, overhead power lines, and inconsistent landscaping

Main Street Connector

Connecting Main Street to the Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Highway 31) has provided some relief to congestion on US Highway 17 north of its intersection with the Robert Edge Parkway. This additional access across the waterway was a necessary component in maintaining the city’s connectivity to the region and provides a much needed hurricane evacuation route. The Main Street Connector to the Carolina Bays Parkway was completed and open for traffic in the Fall of 2009. A sidewalk was incorporated into the bridge, allowing foot access to points west of the waterway. However, the US Highway 17 Corridor Study found that given the background growth, it will provide only temporary congestion relief. A second connection in the vicinity of the intersection of US Highway 17 and 17th - 21st Avenue South will be needed by 2025.



▲ The main street connector at Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Highway 31)

Ocean Boulevard

Ocean Boulevard is an important north-south route along the oceanfront in the city; it serves as a principal transportation route along the beach – the central place of attraction and recreation and the core of the tourism economy. Ocean Boulevard is more than a street; it is a destination for the millions of tourists who visit annually. The streetscape is important on every level, and design of the right-of-way, adjacent properties, land use, and transportation contributes to the overall urban form and user experience.

Street Design

Although Ocean Boulevard is a state highway, ranging from fifty feet to one hundred feet in width, traffic volumes are low even during peak season. In 1999, July 4th weekend traffic volumes ranged from 9,162 to 14,510 vehicles per day. By 2002, the year-round trips had risen to over 12,000 average annual daily trips. In part, this low volume is due to the lack of connectivity to Atlantic Beach and destinations south. Tourist inexperience with the city street system is also a possible factor in keeping volumes low; the section from Cherry Grove to Crescent Beach is not heavily used as an alternative even when US Highway 17 is heavily congested. The low volume of vehicular traffic on Ocean Boulevard provides a safer experience for pedestrians going to and from the beach.

Because Ocean Boulevard originally spanned part of four separate towns, its built cross-section varies greatly from north to south. The number of street ends available for beach parking also varies. Most of Ocean Boulevard has been widened to three lanes or more. There are sidewalks on at least one side of the street throughout its length. Each section of the town has at least one major thoroughfare that connects to US Highway 17 and creates at least a small commercial area near at Ocean Boulevard.

Three sections of the Boulevard have been renovated in the past twenty years: Cherry Grove, Main Street area in Ocean Drive, and Windy Hill. In 1999, the SCDOT completed the widening of Ocean Boulevard to two lanes with a center turn lane and new sidewalks from Sea Mountain Highway to 54th Avenue North. Another federally funded project widening Ocean Boulevard in Windy Hill was completed in 2000. Streetscape improvements such as lighting, sidewalks and landscaped medians were implemented as part of the Windy Hill widening. The Main Street widening improved the area on Ocean Boulevard between 2nd Avenue North and 2nd Avenue South with new sidewalks, paving and lighting.



▲ Streetscape improvements to Ocean Blvd



▲ Improved crosswalks conditions on Ocean Blvd

Atlantic Beach

At 28th Avenue South, Ocean Boulevard stops. A strip of land running from US Highway 17 to the beach was platted in the 1950s to prevent street connections to Atlantic Beach. The design of Baywatch Resort at the corner of 28th Avenue South and Ocean Boulevard could allow for the continuance of Ocean Boulevard through the property by the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Both the reserve strip and the area in Baywatch would have to be purchased or condemned by the state in order to extend Ocean Boulevard and connect to Atlantic Beach.

Ocean Boulevard may someday extend through Atlantic Beach. The Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) models the extension of Ocean Boulevard through Atlantic Beach for the 2035 Transportation Improvement Plan update. Atlantic Beach has another town road, First Avenue, which might be more suitable for extension of Ocean Boulevard. Again, private property would need to be acquired to make that connection, including the reserve strip previously mentioned.



▲ Character imagery showing where Ocean Blvd stops, looking in to Atlantic Beach.

Building Layout and Design

Properties along Ocean Boulevard are divided into first and second row as a way of describing location. “First row” is used to denote the first row of structures on the oceanfront. Subsequent rows are referred to by the block location relative to the ocean.

First row development must be designed in accordance with state regulatory requirements for flooding and dune protection. The oceanfront is subject to a wave velocity zone in addition to a flood elevation that further constrains building design. Permanent structures in this zone require additional flood proofing and cannot have habitable floor area at the street level. However, parking is permitted. This has led to building design with parking on the street creating a first floor void that allows views to the beach and ocean on the street level.

There is also a baseline for development, known as the 40-year retreat line, established by the state Office of Coastal Resource Management to re-establish the dunes. The baseline prohibits development seaward of the retreat line. This area of beach was enhanced during beach re-nourishment between 1989, 1994, and

again in 2009. The area seaward of platted lots and mean high water defines the public beach. Most lots along the first row were originally platted for single-family houses. The lots that still remain today as they were originally developed consist of cottages set back from the road with side yard spacing that allows views of the dunes and beach from the street. Rezoning to allow higher densities on the oceanfront brought redevelopment that combined multiple lots to create large buildings. Setbacks were reduced, allowing buildings to be placed closer to the road and each other. New development using these revised setbacks created a closed-in effect along Ocean Boulevard.

Revised zoning requirements permitting off-site parking structures on the second row helped frame the streetscape with structures, but these uses do not support pedestrian mobility. Lack of regulation of dumpsters allowed placement of the dumpsters and solid wall enclosures in the side yard setback and eliminated pedestrian views of the ocean between buildings from the street. Mid- and high-rise development along Ocean Boulevard has been restricted by the presence of public walkways and beach accesses; these parcels restrict parcel recombination along the oceanfront.



▲ Existing Conditions: Crescent Beach



▲ Existing Conditions: Ocean Drive



▲ Existing Conditions: Windy Hill



▲ Existing Conditions: Cherry Grove



▲ Existing Conditions: Windy Hill

Sea Mountain Highway

Understanding the Context

The complexion of Sea Mountain Highway (State Highway 9) varies greatly along its length. The plan investigates these character areas beginning at US Highway 17 to the north and ending at Ocean Boulevard to the south. The four different contexts explored in this chapter include: Coastal Scenic, Commercial Thoroughfare, Marsh View, and Urban Core.



1. Waterway/Marina



2. Highway Interchange



3. Coastal Scenic



4. Commercial Thoroughfare



5. Marsh View



6. Urban Core



Sea Mountain Highway: Character Zones & Proposed Gateway Improvements

1. Waterway/Marina (Swing Bridge to Interchange)

- ▶ Add a pull-off area for pictures at Welcome to NMB Sign
- ▶ Introduce interpretive signage explaining the history of the swing bridge
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety

2. Highway Interchange (@ Highway 17)

- ▶ Increase plantings within Sea Mountain Highway ramp loop and at the top of ramp across the street
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety

3. Coastal Scenic (Interchange to Hill Street)*

- ▶ Add entry icon to northern end of median planting
- ▶ Introduce public boardwalk in wetland areas on east side of roadway
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety
- ▶ Prune and maintain overgrown vegetation
- ▶ Replace cobra lights in median with updated fixtures
- ▶ Add pedestrian lighting on sides of roadway

4. Commercial Thoroughfare (Hill Street to Pointe Marsh Lane)*

- ▶ Implement an access management plan
- ▶ Implement spot median plantings
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety
- ▶ Add pedestrian lighting on sides of roadway

5. Marsh View (Pointe Marsh Lane to Cecelia Street)*

- ▶ Introduce public boardwalk with marsh overlook
- ▶ Implement spot median plantings
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety
- ▶ Add pedestrian lighting on sides of roadway

6. Urban Core (Cecelia Street to Ocean Blvd)*

- ▶ Reduce travel lanes and add on-street parking
- ▶ Implement spot median plantings
- ▶ Implement an access management plan
- ▶ Improve bicycle/pedestrian facilities and safety
- ▶ Add pedestrian lighting on sides of roadway

LEGEND



*Street Section Provided

Coastal Scenic

Existing Conditions

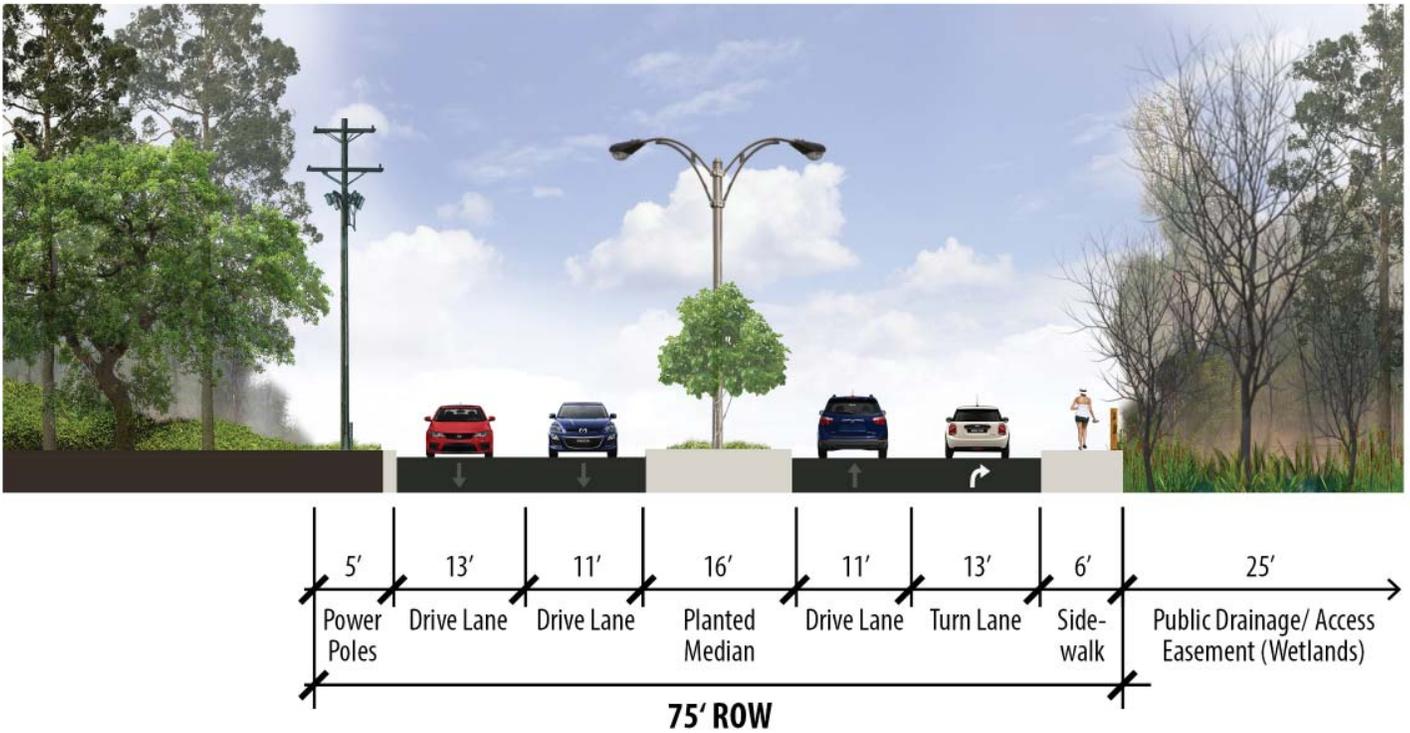
Beginning at the Highway 17 ramp and ending at the Hill Street intersection, there is an existing planted median with shrubs and trees. A power easement with large poles runs along the western side of the roadway. A narrow sidewalk runs along the eastern edge and is bordered by a wooden barrier to protect pedestrians from the adjacent wetland area.

Proposed Improvements

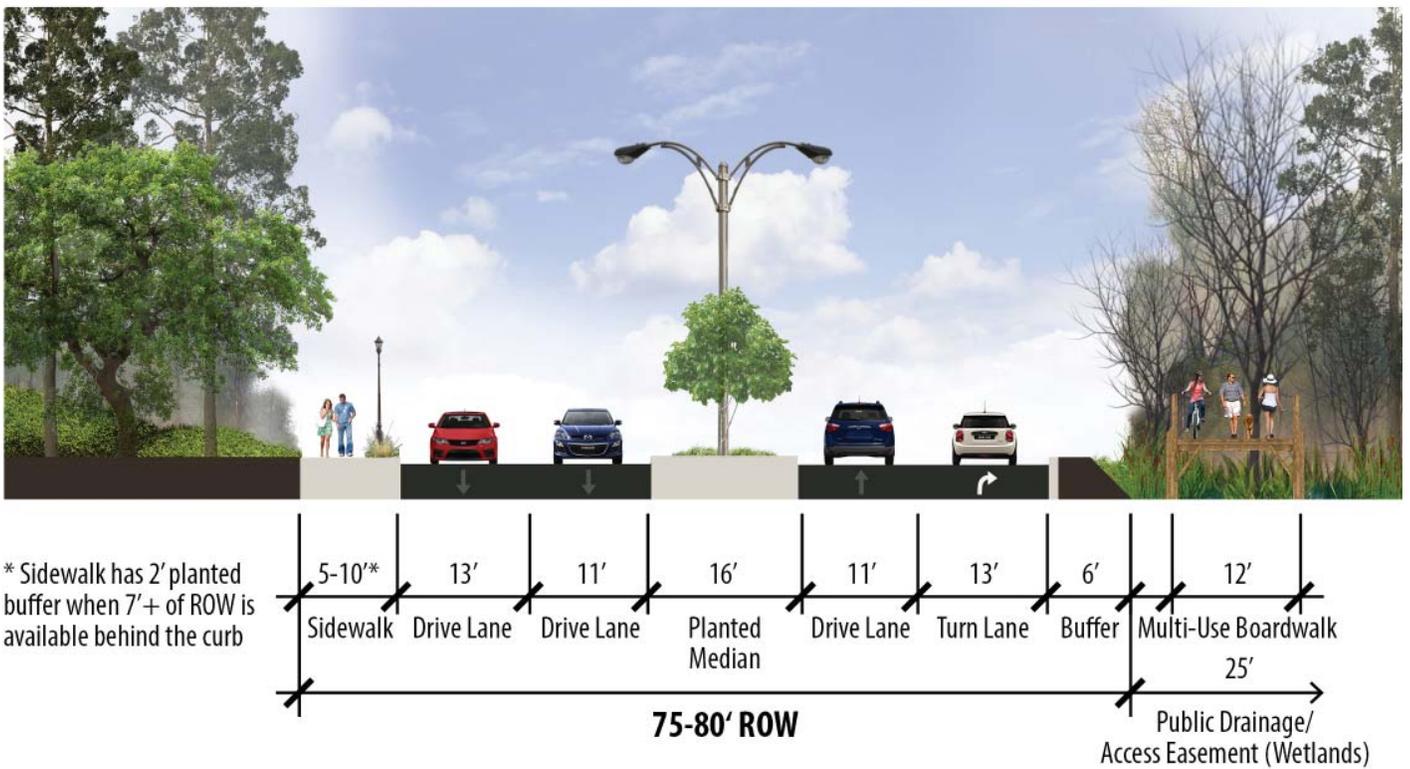
The proposed section illustrates burying the power poles (currently planned project) and building an 8' sidewalk with pedestrian-scaled lighting provided in a 2' verge area that can be planted with dwarf ornamental grasses. This would require the acquisition of an additional 5' of right-of-way on the western edge. The existing sidewalk on the east side would be converted into a buffer area, and a 12' multi-use boardwalk would be constructed within the 25' public drainage easement adjacent to the right-of-way. Every effort to maintain existing mature trees in this area is recommended. The plantings within the median need to be simplified with any overgrown shrubbery removed and replaced with ornamental grasses.



▲ Character Imagery of Existing Conditions



▲ Existing Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Coastal Scenic



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Coastal Scenic

Commercial Thoroughfare

Existing Conditions

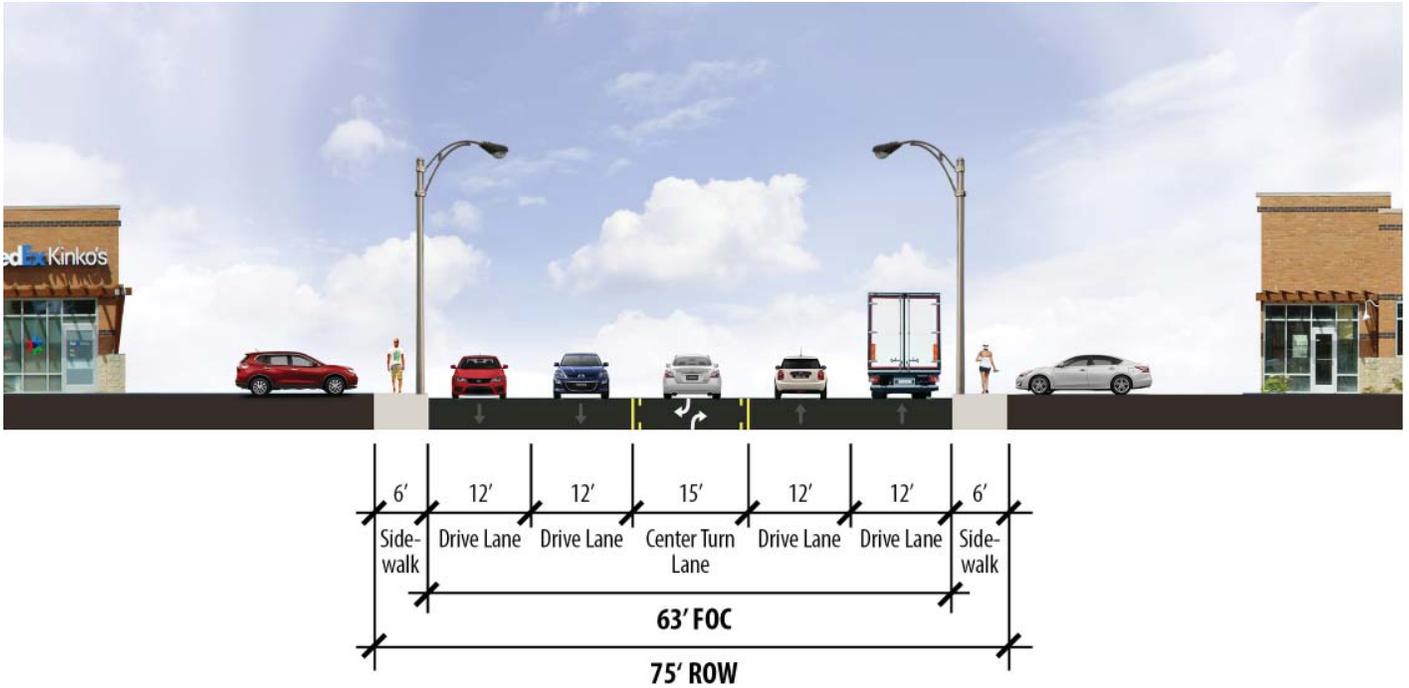
From Hill Street to Pointe Marsh Lane, a typical five lane divided section is currently in place. Narrow sidewalks are found on the back side of the curb traveling in both directions. Street level lighting is provided for this section of roadway.

Proposed Improvements

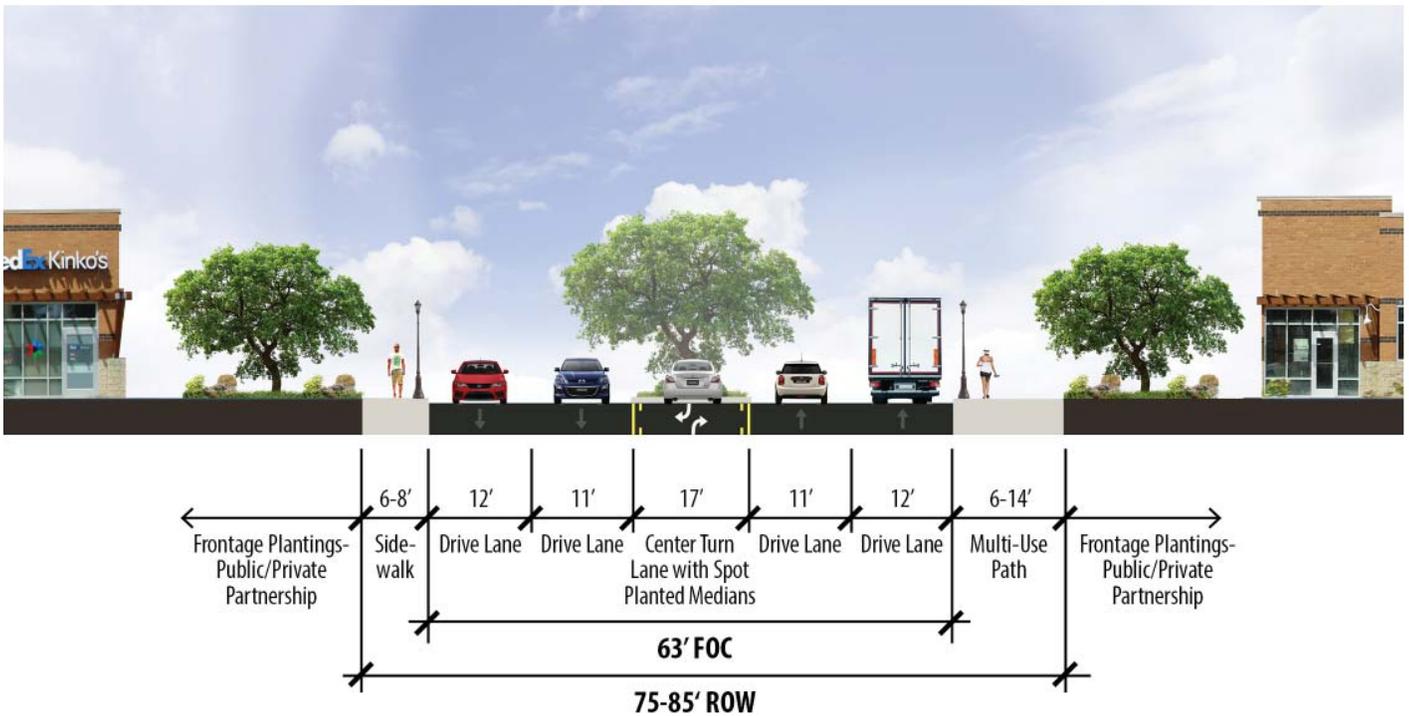
The proposed section illustrates utilizing the existing median space for spot planting opportunities for beautification and to aid in controlling access along the corridor. Street level lighting is replaced by pedestrian scale fixtures; however, taller fixtures could be placed in the planted medians as well. The sidewalks are widened to 8' on the west side and a 14' multi-use path on the east side. The section also depicts more robust plantings outside of the right-of-way as opposed to parked cars along the frontage area. A public-private partnership between the city and the property owners should be established to help execute this initiative and provide street trees in this context.



▲ *Character Imagery of Existing Conditions*



▲ Existing Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Commercial Thoroughfare



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Commercial Thoroughfare

Marsh View

Existing Conditions

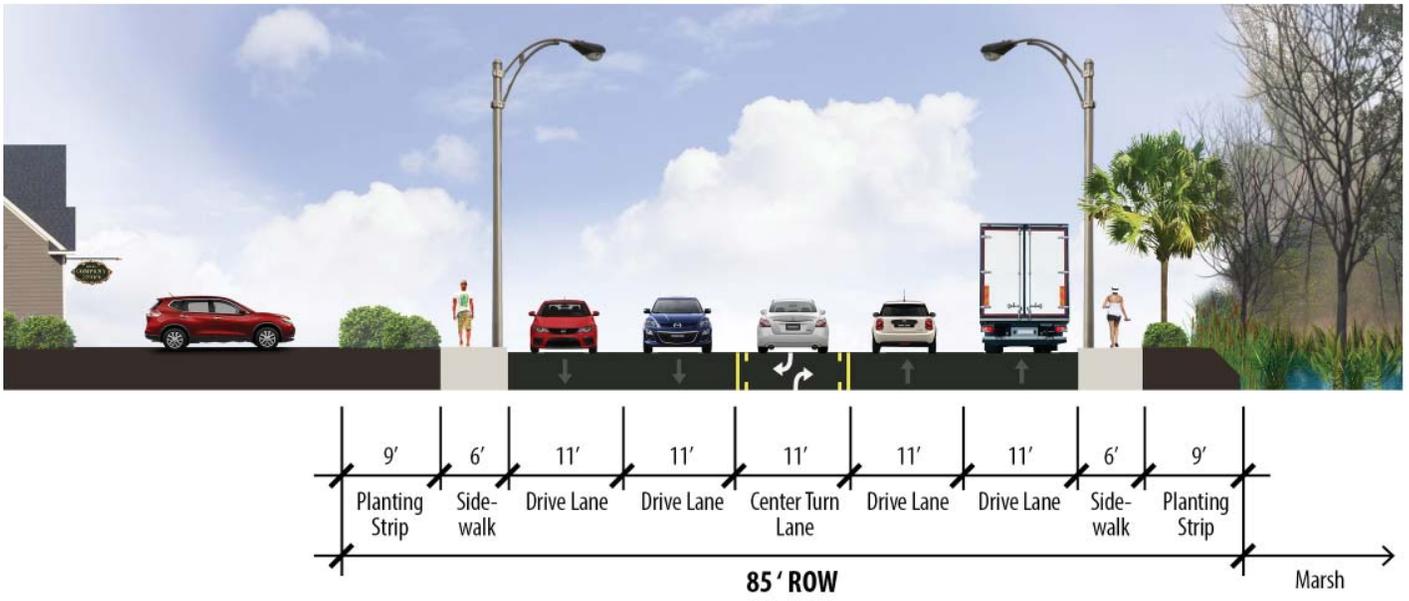
From Pointe Marsh Lane to Cecelia Avenue, a typical five lane divided roadway section is currently in place; however, the lanes are more narrow than those to the north. Narrow sidewalks are found on the back side of the curb traveling in both directions. Street level lighting is provided for this section of roadway. A beautiful view of the marsh is visible along this portion of Sea Mountain Highway.

Proposed Improvements

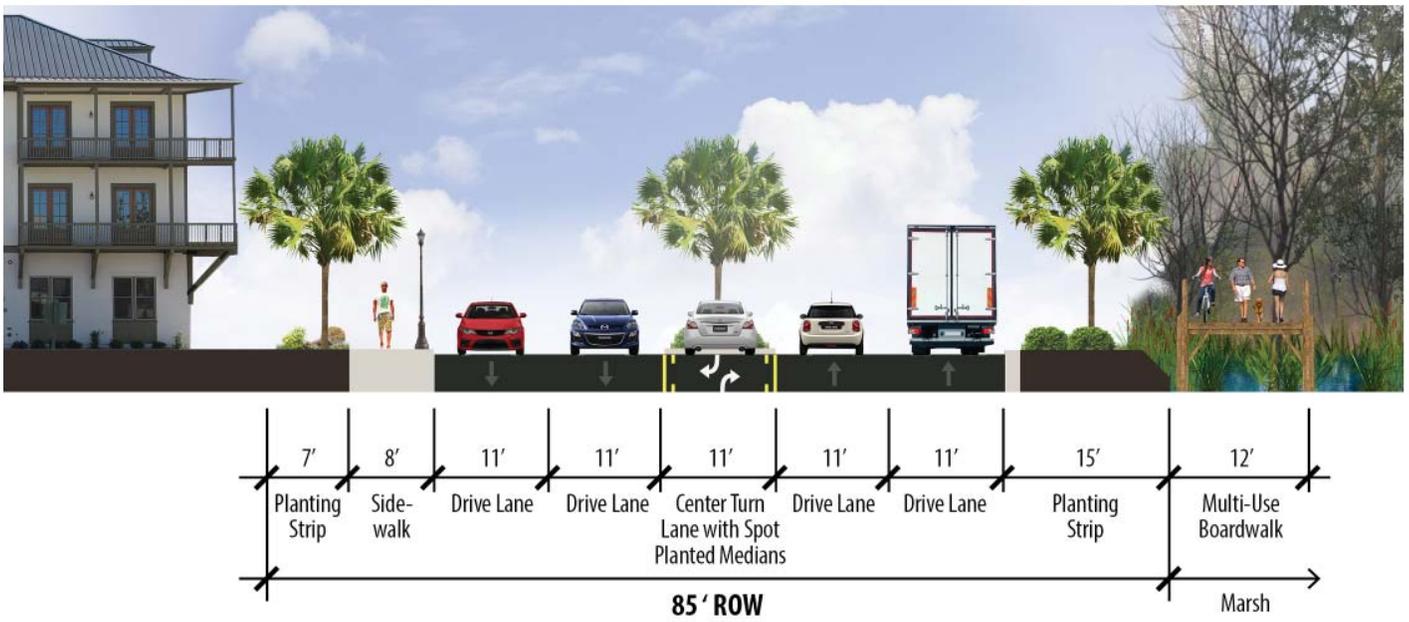
The proposed section utilizes the existing median space for spot planting opportunities for beautification and to aid in controlling access along the corridor. Street level lighting is replaced by pedestrian scale fixtures; however, taller fixtures could be placed in the planted medians as well. The planting strip on the west side is enhanced with trees where possible. The sidewalk is widened to 8' on the west side, and the sidewalk on the east side is replaced with a 15' planted buffer. A 12' multi-use boardwalk is constructed alongside the marsh to provide pedestrians and cyclists with a protected facility in this area as part of the corridor.



▲ *Character Imagery of Existing Conditions*



▲ Existing Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Marsh View



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Marsh View

Urban Core

Existing Conditions

From Cecelia Avenue to Ocean Boulevard, the context of Sea Mountain Highway changes dramatically. The right-of-way varies greatly along this stretch from a 90' width at the northern end to a 65' width at the southern end. The roadway is characterized by a five lane roadway section of narrow 11' travel lanes. Street level lighting is currently provided, and the sidewalks vary in width on both the east and west sides of the highway.

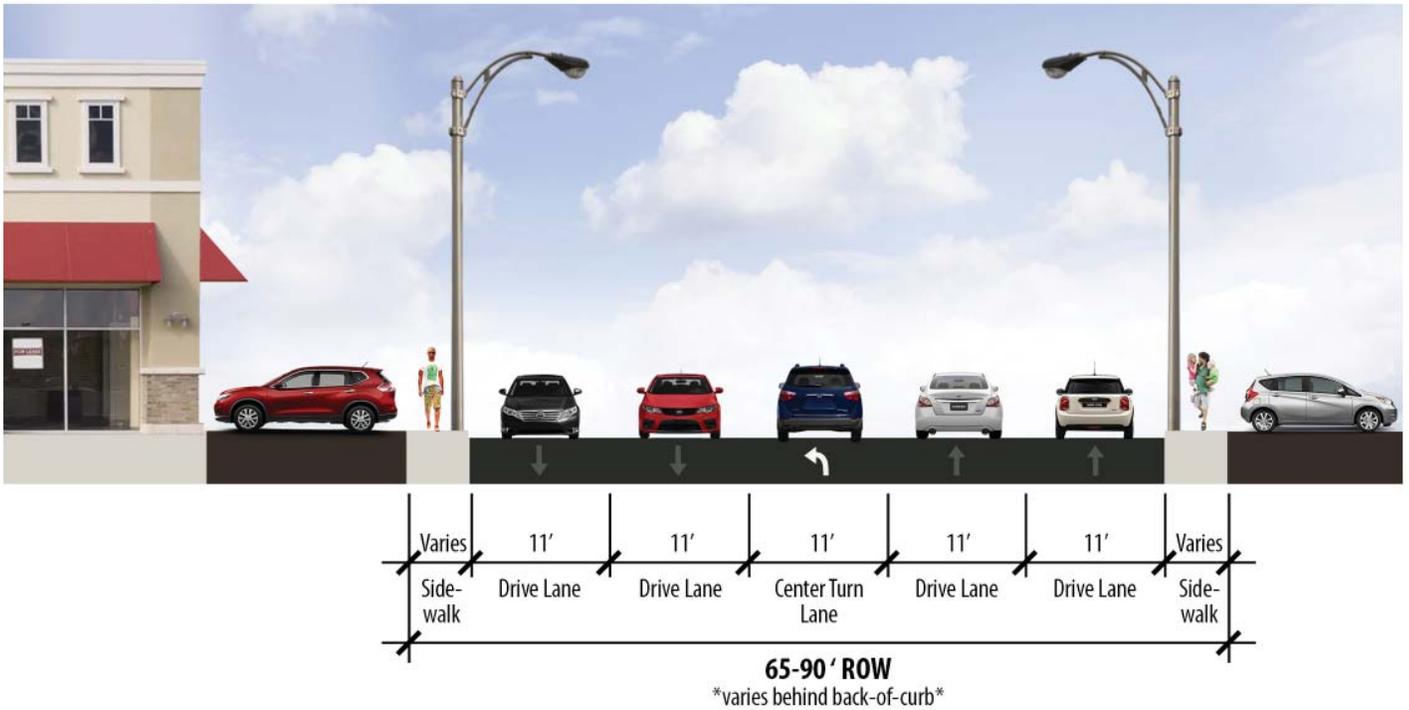
Proposed Improvements

The proposed section utilizes the existing median space for spot planting opportunities for beautification and to aid in controlling access along the corridor. Street level lighting is replaced by pedestrian scale fixtures; however, taller fixtures could be placed in the planted medians. The preferred width on the sidewalks in this area would be 14' to accommodate outdoor dining as needed. One travel lane in each direction is replaced with on-street parallel parking with spot bulb-out plantings for street trees. Bicycle facilities in this area will need to cross the street at Nixon (as illustrated in the photosimulation in Chapter 5: The Way We Grow).

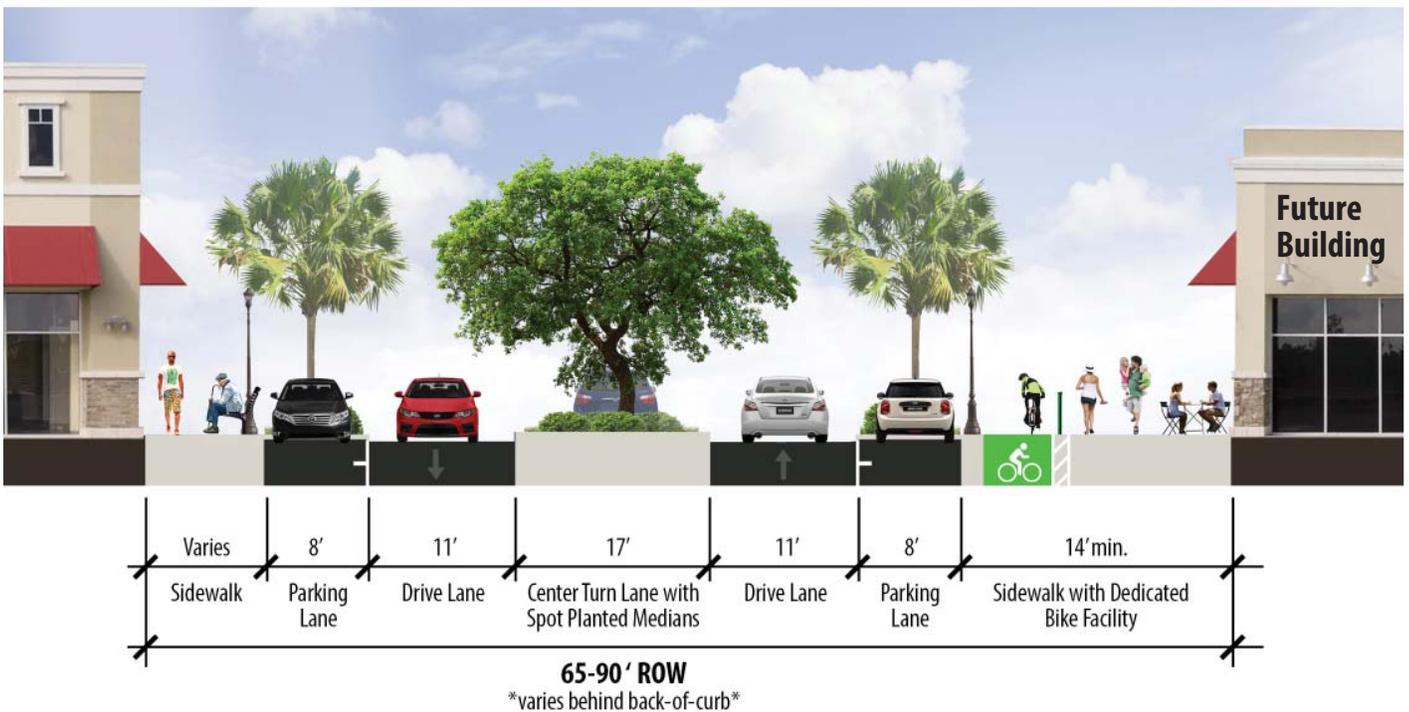


▲ Character imagery of existing conditions

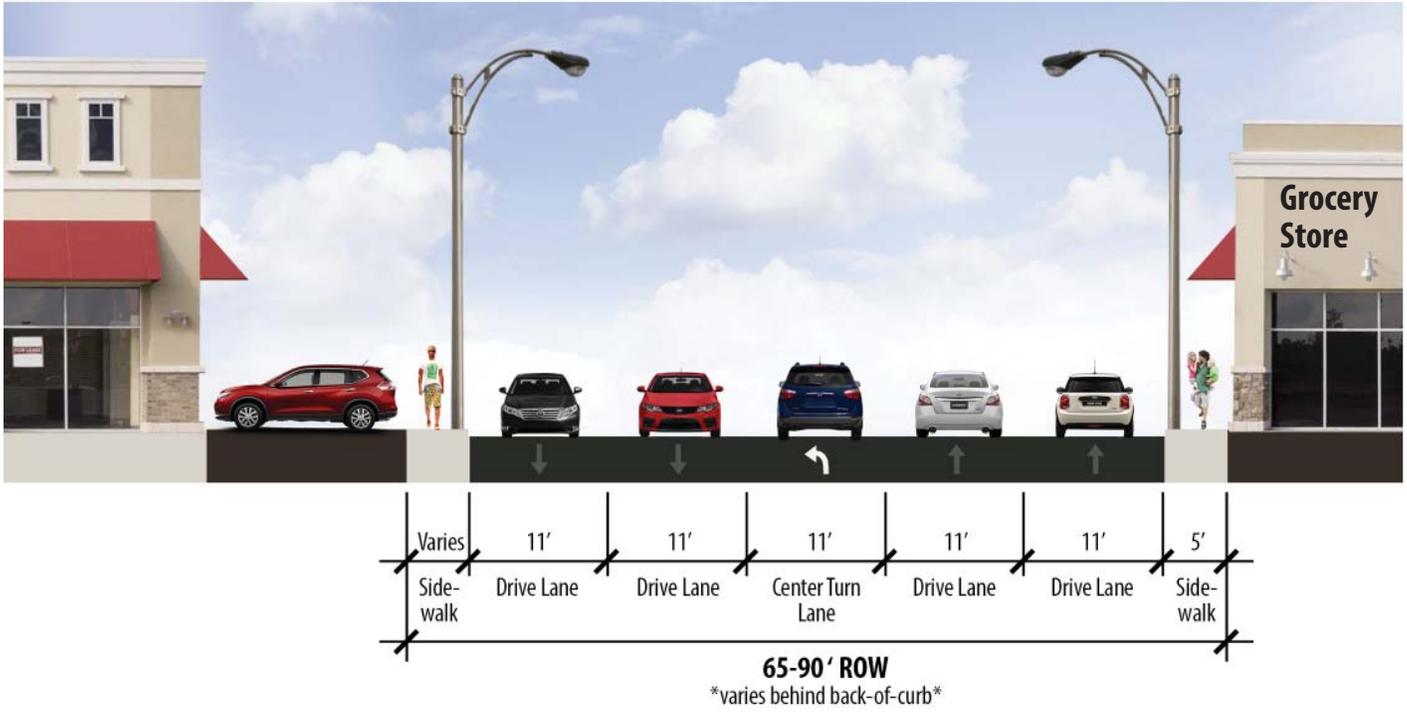
Note: Per SCDOT's request, the right turn lane will remain at the intersection with Ocean Boulevard beginning at the Spring Street intersection. The west side on-street parking will go away along this block. However, this plan recommends removing that free right as it poses a high risk pedestrian hazard at Ocean Boulevard. Moving cars during the busy peak season is important, but this plan advocates to hold the pedestrians and bicyclists safety higher than the vehicles. The plan proposes to extend the curb along that one block to increase the width of the sidewalk for both pedestrians and cyclists.



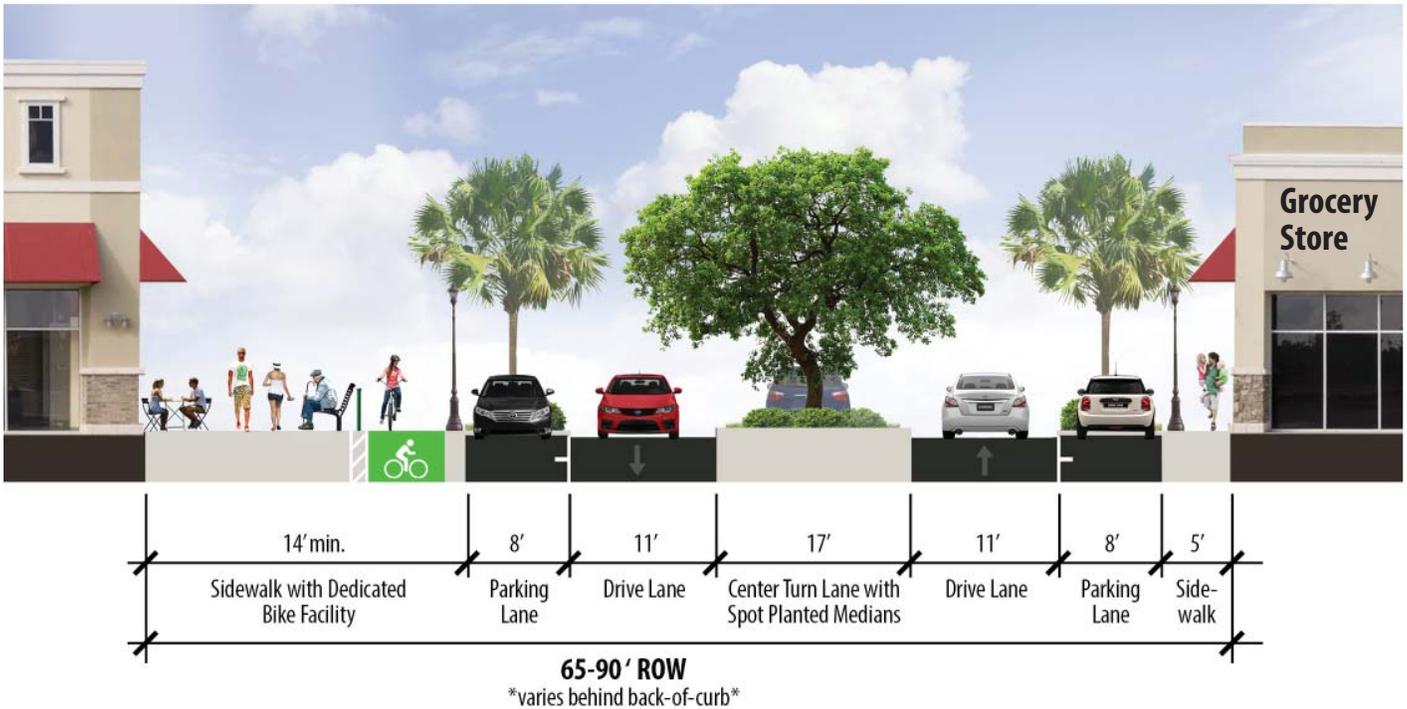
▲ Existing Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Urban Core (north of Nixon Street)



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Urban Core (Proposed Section A)



▲ Existing Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Urban Core (south of Nixon Street)



▲ Proposed Section Looking North: Sea Mountain Highway-Urban Core (Proposed Section B)

Sea Mountain Highway: Sidewalk with Dedicated Bike Facilities in Urban Core Context



◀ The sidewalk with dedicated bike facilities will need to cross from the east side of the roadway (Proposed Section A, page 155) to the west side at Nixon Street (Proposed Section B, page 156). This concept is illustrated in the photosimulation in Chapter 5. The existing grocery store is sited in a way that prevents a wide sidewalk from continuing to Ocean Boulevard; therefore, the route needs to cross Sea Mountain Highway at a highly visible, pedestrian-controlled crosswalk. The route will continue southward along the west side of Sea Mountain Highway as depicted in the diagram to the left.

Little River Neck Road

Existing Conditions

Little River Neck Road begins at the intersection of US Highway 9 and US Highway 17. The winding roadway then traverses east until it dead ends at the Anne Tilghman Boyce Coastal Reserve entrance. Currently, the entire three mile length of Little River Neck Road is characterized by one travel lane in each direction with wide grass shoulders. The addition of split-rail fencing can be found along various lengths of Little River Neck Road, and there is no current management of stormwater other than sheet flow into drainage swales.

Today, the only two intersections that have a left turn lane provided include Tidewater Drive and Hill Street. Traffic counts are approximately 4,000 vehicles per day according to SCDOT's records.

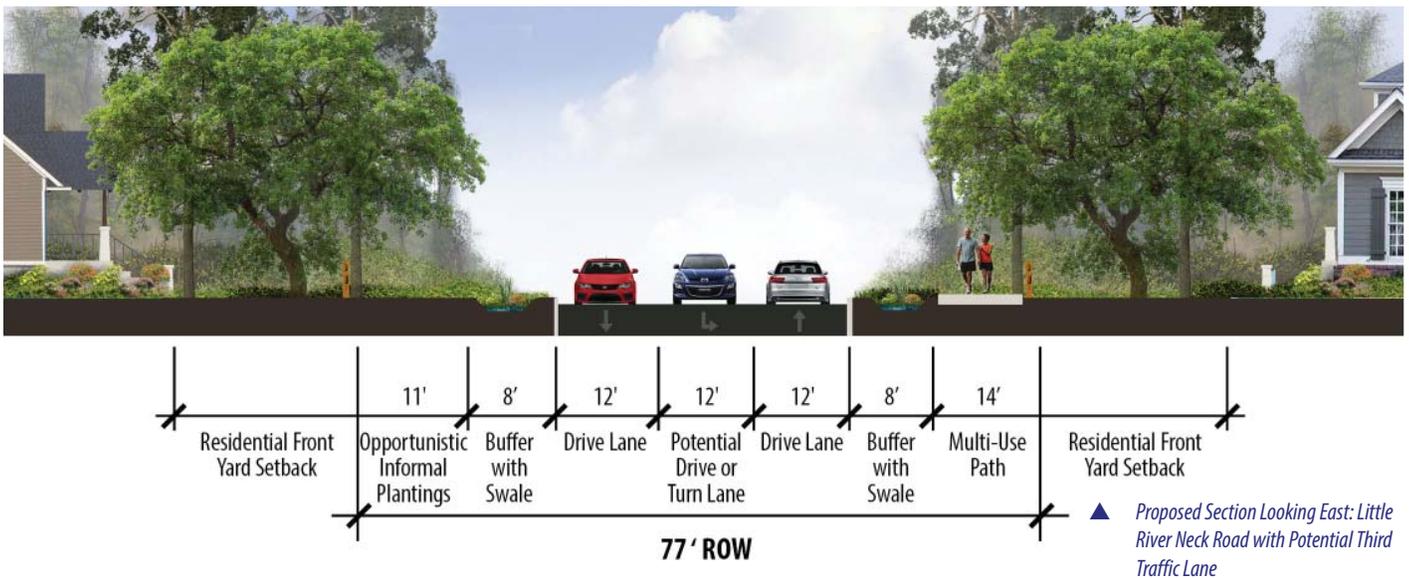
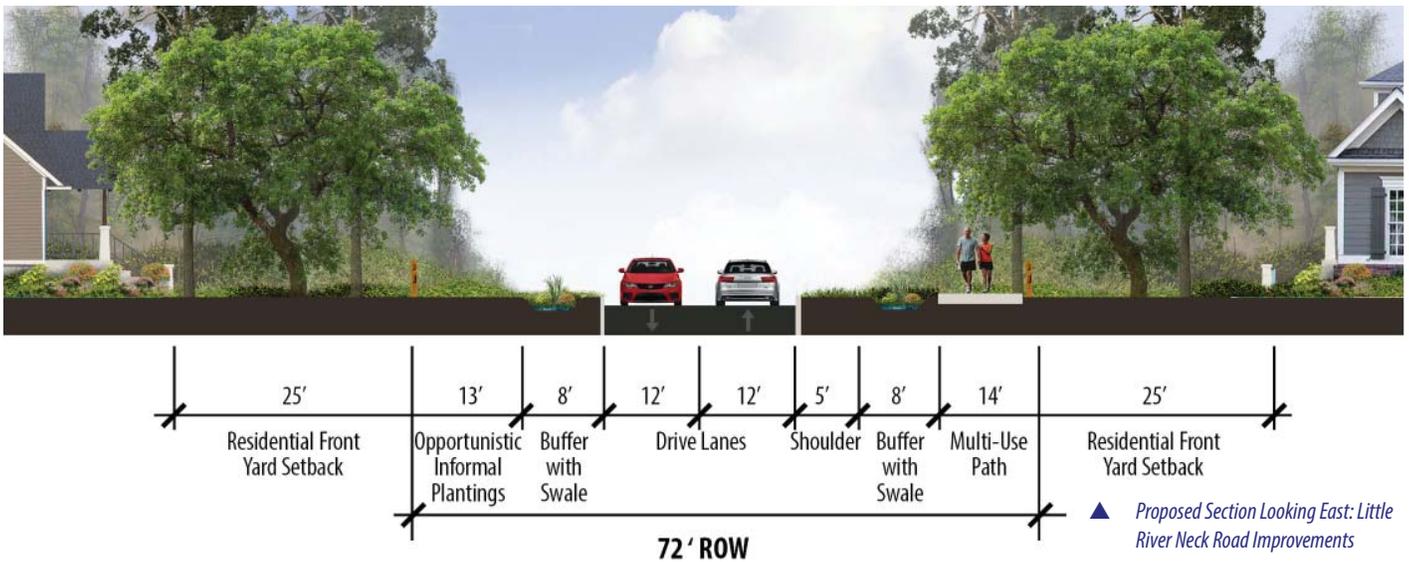
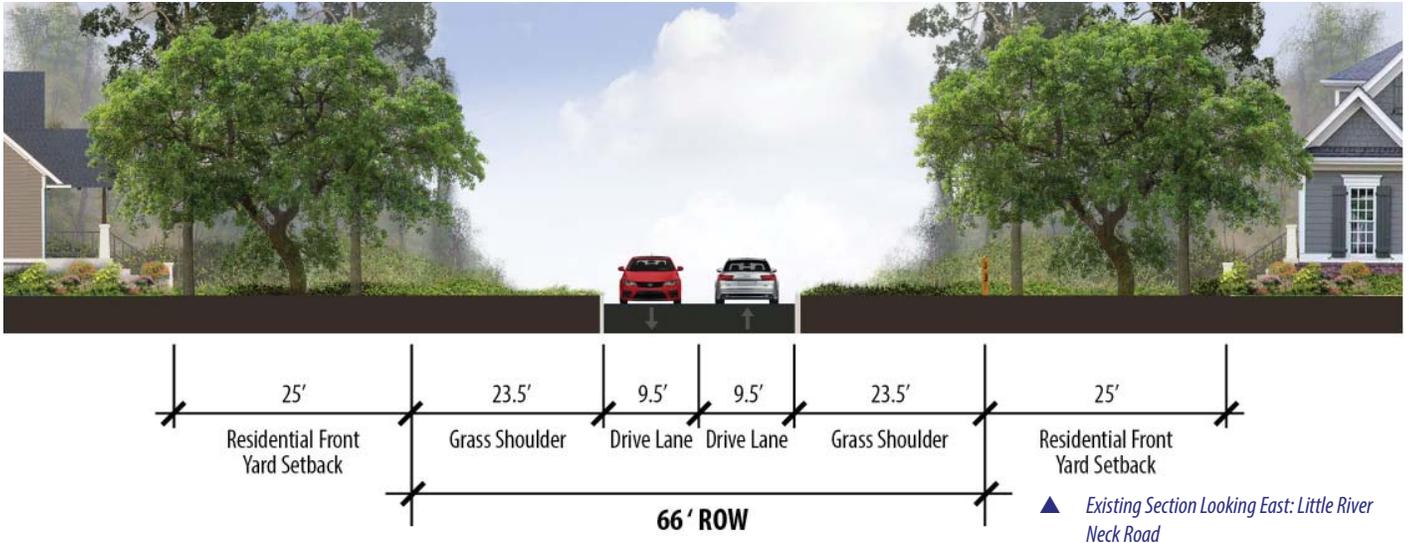
Proposed Improvements

The proposed section illustrates the addition of a multi-use path on the south side of the roadway. This amenity will serve both pedestrians and cyclists in a buffered off-road facility that is 14' wide. The delineation of an 8' buffer and swale on each side of the road will provide stormwater management for this corridor. The northern side of Little River Neck illustrates an opportunity for informal plantings at regular intervals. The outermost twenty-five feet of right-of-way on both sides should be maintained with existing mature trees that contribute to the residential area buffers along Little River Neck Road.

Update on Previously Proposed Plans

Previous planning efforts have explored the possibility of widening Little River Neck Road to a three lane divided roadway section in anticipation of future development. One of the previous corridor recommendations even showed it as a four lane divided minor arterial roadway in the future. As noted in Chapter 5 of this document and on the Future Land Use Map, this document recommends a conservation-minded approach to the undeveloped areas along this corridor. Use of a wider cross-section with dedicated turning and/or acceleration/deceleration lanes should be considered as the population on this road increases. Construction of this wider roadway cross-section may require additional land to be purchased or condemned to create a larger public rights-of-way. The 2040 GSATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan identifies the Little River Neck Road widening with the addition of a multi-purpose path as a short term goal. Included in this widening is the construction of a roundabout north of Hill Street.

Little River Neck was previously identified in the GSATS Long Range Transportation Plan as a signed on-road bicycle route; however, the proposed multi-use path will eliminate the need for this designation.



EFFICIENT ACCESS

Wayfinding

A recommendation of the US Highway 17 Corridor Study was to develop wayfinding signage to provide convenient access to city residents and visitors. In 2009, a wayfinding master plan was developed to create consistent branding for the City of North Myrtle Beach, provide for user-friendly navigation, and make the tourist experience more memorable. A system was developed to organize the city into four districts—the original beach towns of Windy Hill, Crescent Beach, Ocean Drive, and Cherry Grove. The signage assigned a color to each district's signs and provided road names, district identity, and directional information for nearby amenities. The local Chamber of Commerce also coordinated to ensure that their maps utilized the district color-coding system. Initial implementation efforts of this plan revealed opportunities to better address city-wide wayfinding efforts and create an easier installation and maintenance program. The current master plan should be updated to better address the city's current needs, resolve inconsistencies in application, and improve navigation through the use of elements such as back-lit signage.



▲ Street signs in Crescent Beach, Windy Hill, and Cherry Grove



◀ Examples of city-wide wayfinding signage



▲ Example of private establishment's signage along auto-dominated corridors



▲ Example of private establishment's signage along auto-dominated corridors

Public Beach Access

In 1984, the city conducted a public beach access study resulting in recommendations for maintaining and relocating oceanfront beach access ways. This plan recognized that the location of oceanfront public beach accesses helped to maintain a lower density of building massing and spacing—fewer, smaller buildings with a proportional amount of space between buildings. In 1985, city council adopted the beach access plan and a policy for maintaining the walkways. At the same time, the city began formally adopting the accesses on the first row to ensure that they would remain open to the public in the future.

The original beach access policy was re-adopted in 2002 with several modifications. After requests to relocate 14 walkways and use easements instead of fee simple property, the policy was amended to:

- ▶ Require a compelling public purpose for relocating or closing a walkway
- ▶ Disapprove the use of easements for public walkways
- ▶ Disallow the use of air rights over public walkways (In particular, this arose due to several requests to build skywalks over a walkway to connect two adjacent towers)
- ▶ Reinforce the structure against abandoning or closing walkways that are aligned with street ends

Over the past ten years, numerous improvements have been made to public beach access. Walkways are marked with posts indicating public usage, and many have had dune walkovers installed. Beach walkways are being improved to create more accessible beach access points to allow people with disabilities better access to the beach.

Currently, there are 247 public beach accesses within the City of North Myrtle Beach. Of these, 185 provide direct access the beach via dune walkover or walkways; 62 public walkways extend through the second and third rows. Oceanfront beach accesses are comprised of 54 dune walkovers, 92 walkways, 36 streetends, public parking, and 2 public parks – Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park and Ocean Park.



▲ Public walkway sign looking towards the ocean



▲ 9th Avenue South streetend with public beach access



▲ 21st Avenue South streetend with public beach access

Parking

City-owned parking lots provide direct access to the beach for residents and visitors alike. Public beach access ways provide 589 automobile parking spaces and 109 golf cart/ low-speed vehicle parking spaces; an additional 629 automobile parking spaces are located at 17 public parking lots in the second and third rows. The city has another approximately 220 spaces for public beach access available as on-street parking.

2007 Parking Study

In 2007, the city hired Kimley-Horn and Associates to conduct a parking study. The scope of work involved collecting occupancy and turnover rates for all city-owned off-street parking facilities, surveying beach visitors and parking practices in similar coastal communities, preparing a parking demand model, and assessing the current conditions of public parking lots.

2008 Beach Parking Study

In 2008, staff conducted a beach parking needs study and identified another 220 potential on-street parking spaces within roadway shoulders eight feet in width or greater. The Public Works Department implemented these recommendations.

Paid Parking Lots

As of 2017, the City of North Myrtle Beach operates four paid parking lots in an effort to address parking demand issues in very specific locations of the city. Each of the four paid parking lots are adjacent to large resorts. At these paid parking lots, resort employees and guests have not been using the on-site parking facilities, opting instead for the free public parking spaces located adjacent to the resort. This practice has forced residents and visitors who would use these public parking spaces to seek parking spaces further away from the beach. This

increased distance is especially difficult for beach users with young children or older city residents who may have more difficulty moving; transforming the city-owned lots to paid parking areas encourages turnover of the parking spaces and makes them more available to all beach users.

Golf Cart Management

Recent increases in city golf cart travel has led to increased need for management of golf carts. In particular, there is increased demand for dedicated golf cart parking facilities near the beach and routes for golf cart travel. Golf carts permitted by state law are allowed to be operated during daylight hours on secondary roads by a licensed driver within four miles of the driver's residence or business; however, golf carts are not allowed on state roads. Parking spaces designed to accommodate golf carts may be smaller than the spaces provided for cars. A comprehensive golf cart management plan is needed to help better manage golf cart usage within the City of North Myrtle Beach.



▲ Public parking lot sign



▲ Paid parking station



◀ Golf cart parking at public beach access

Access Management

Land use within the city’s commercial areas is typified by a pattern of small lots subdivided for commercial use interspersed with larger tracts containing shopping centers, natural areas, amusements, and golf courses. Development through the 1970s and 1980s resulted in commercial strips of three or four stores with parking in front and small retail centers with mid-size anchor stores approximately 20,000 square feet in size. In the early 1990s, Barefoot Trading Post (now known as Barefoot Landing) added shops in a “festival” layout with boardwalks over existing wetlands and lakes. Recent shopping center developments in the city have been significantly larger big box commercial development, including Barefoot Commons, Gator Hole Plaza, and Coastal North Town Center/Village Shops.

As commercial properties were developed in the city, many properties took advantage of multiple curb cuts; in some cases, the entire street frontage of the lot allowed

open access to vehicles. As the roads accessing these properties widened, other safety features, such as driveway necks and landscaping buffers along the road, were eliminated; these changes created a condition where existing parking areas became immediately adjacent to the side of the road. New development is subject to improved regulations that manages access to commercial properties by minimizing curb cut access to public rights-of-way, requiring shared driveways when possible, and specifying access points for corner lots.

Visual clutter from signage, outdoor merchandise display, utility poles, and lighting make the entrances to specific businesses difficult to find and lend the entire corridor a chaotic, unsightly appearance. As the city moves forward, it should seek to minimize its visual pollution by amending the sign regulations to create a more consistent, low-profile signage standard.

LEGEND

-  Driveway Curb Cuts
-  Roll Curbs

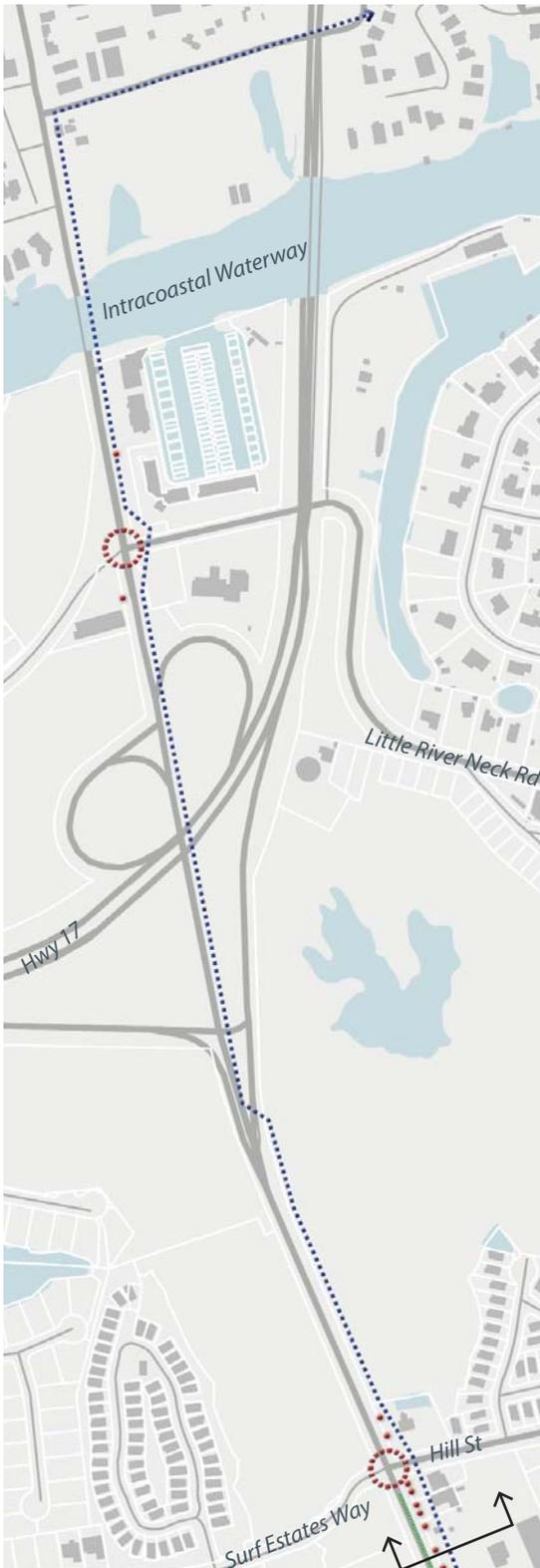


▲ Zoomed in diagram of the block from Duffy Street to Nixon Street in Access Control Example for Sea Mountain Highway. There are 5 driveway curb cuts on the east side of the road for only 2 establishments, whose parking lots are connected. There are 3 driveway curb cuts on the west side servicing 3 separate establishments, including the large driveway for Fire Station 2. There is also an old roll curb, which allowed a single row of parking in the front of the building and required cars to back out into traffic to return to Sea Mountain Highway. The single row of parking has since been converted into outdoor dining by the current restaurant tenant. This provides a good example of how times are changing from auto-oriented development to cater more to human experiences. Unfortunately, there are many other roll curbs still in use along the city’s streets today.



▲ Image of new restaurant tenant in an old auto-oriented building

Sea Mountain Highway: Access Control Example



◀ The Access Control Diagram shows improvements within the public right-of-way for Sea Mountain Highway. The proposed high quality intersections are located at Little River Neck Rd, Hill St, Duffy St, and Ocean Blvd. Almost every other side street needs crosswalk improvements. A HAWK intersection is suggested at Pointe Marsh Lane for the nearby residents and to break up the 1,700 foot stretch between intersections. This augmented crosswalk is necessary to move the multi-modal pathway across the street so enough width is provided for both pedestrians and cyclists. The narrow sidewalk at the existing grocery store could not accommodate multi-modal users along its length. The intersections would be better utilized and the street would become more pedestrian-friendly if the number of curb cuts could be reduced. There are currently over 100 curb cuts in this 1.08 mile stretch of road. If these were reduced, the center turn lane could also be transformed into a beautiful planted median.

LEGEND

- - - - - Planted Median Opportunities
-  Improved Crosswalks on Side Streets
-  High Quality Intersection
-  HAWK Intersection
-  Existing Driveway Curb Cuts

City-Wide Connectivity

The original city street pattern was a grid network with block lengths of approximately 600 feet. The pattern was only interrupted by natural features such as major wetlands and stream crossings. Fewer cul-de-sacs meant that traffic was dispersed and no one street bore the full brunt of beach traffic. Lower traffic volumes allowed pedestrian traffic to more safely navigate the road.

Historic market trends created disconnected neighborhoods, and funneled traffic into already congested arterials. This pattern of development hampered connectivity between neighborhoods, decreased pedestrian accessibility, and introduced inefficiencies in the provision of city services. For example, decreased connectivity increased response times for emergency services; longer sanitation collection routes also increased city costs. Connectivity deficiencies created greater traffic congestion.

Sidewalk installation by private development has been inconsistently implemented throughout the city's

history. Most recent large scale planned developments have included sidewalks, but many other developments have not included sidewalks or provided undersized sidewalks. The city's land development regulations did not require sidewalks until 2009, when the Complete Streets Initiative was adopted. Prior to this initiative, the city approved numerous developments with gaps in sidewalk facilities.

As the city continues to grow, it is important that new growth seamlessly connects to the existing network of streets to reduce costs, maintain efficient traffic circulation, encourage trip reduction through walking or cycling, and provide a sense of community. The city's land development regulations provide that new streets coordinate and extend the existing street system as possible. Newly proposed streets are also required to provide connections to adjacent properties. Though sometimes useful in land planning, cul-de-sacs are also highly regulated within city limits; the total length, percentage of road network, and form are specified in the minimum design standards.



▲ *Examples of new sidewalks in the city*

Transit

The US Highway 17 Corridor Study, developed a series of strategies to improve city roadways; one strategy to address unmet demand was to develop a tourist-oriented transit plan. After reviewing hourly traffic counts over July 2001 and area development and activity patterns, transportation consultants recommended a local transit system originating at Barefoot Landing and operating from 3:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. daily between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Four proposed routes would circulate throughout the city simultaneously; because the system would operate only during the summer peak, costs could be kept manageable.

The area's regional transportation authority, Coast RTA, does not currently provide service in the North Myrtle Beach area, and the recommended tourist-oriented transit plan remains conceptual. Coast RTA's five-year financial plan completed in 2015 does plan to add bus service to the North Myrtle Beach area, but no details or strategies for implementation have been developed.



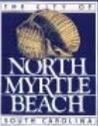
▲ Coast RTA buses

Regional Connectivity

A better connected street network with multiple route options for automobiles and pedestrians leads to a more easily accessible community. The degree to which a street network is connected greatly influences travel choice and emergency access. Longer distances between points reduce the likelihood of travel to a place; emergency service providers experience longer travel times when routes to a location are limited. As the City of North Myrtle Beach's tourist economy expands from seasonal to year-round, the traffic volumes on roads can only be expected to increase. This increased demand will create new bottlenecks and magnify existing deficiencies.



▲ Existing conditions along US Highway 17, North Myrtle Beach's principal arterial road through the city



Thoroughfare Plan

-  State Line
-  North Myrtle Beach City Limit
-  Water Bodies

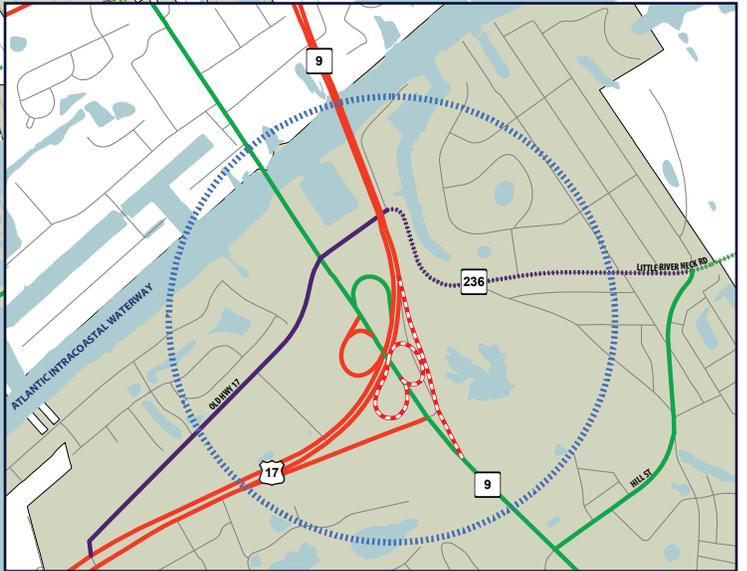
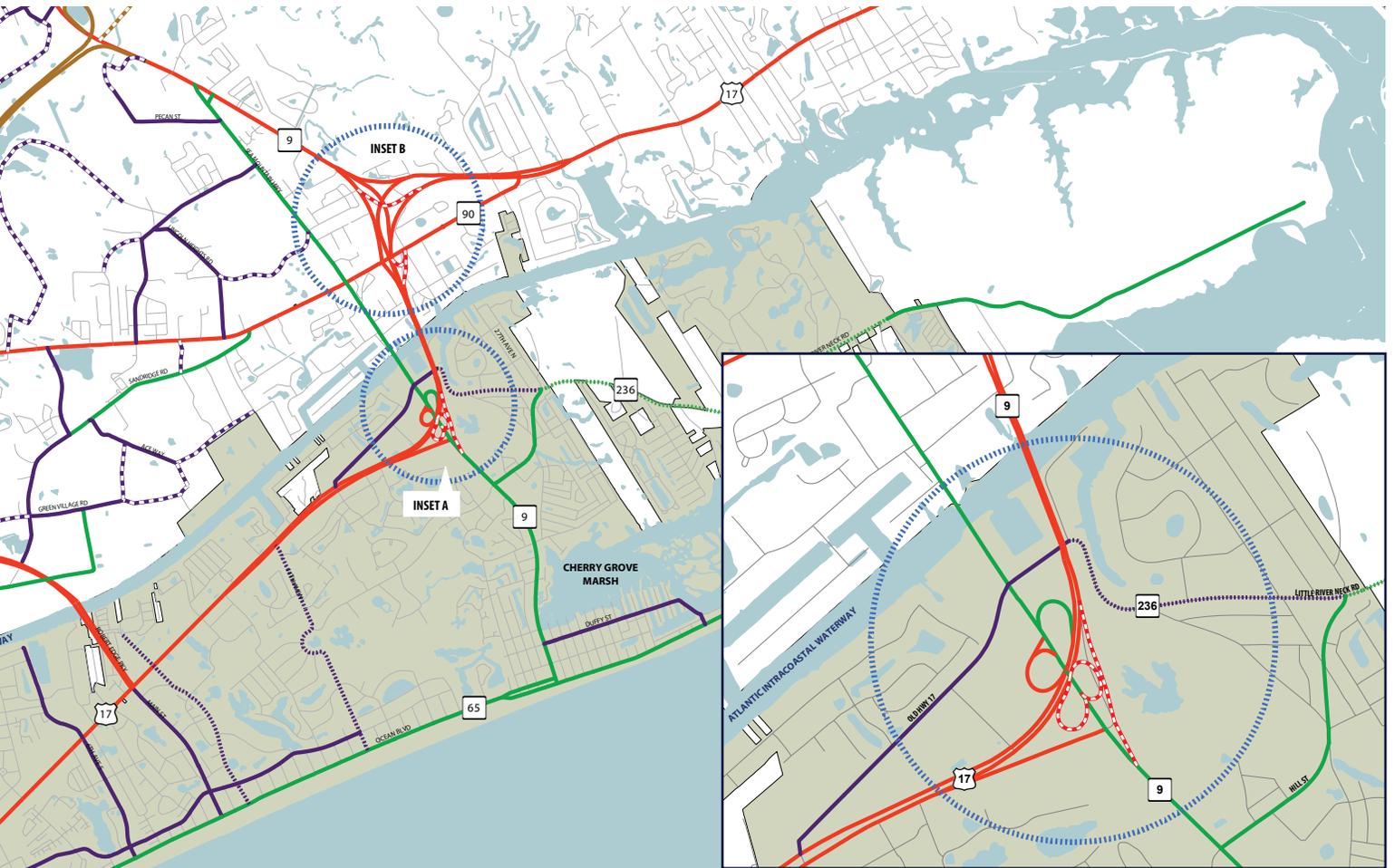
Functional Classification

-  Collector
-  Collector (Improvements)
-  Collector (New Location)
-  Freeway/Expressway
-  Freeway/Expressway (New Location)
-  Interchange Reconfiguration
-  Minor Arterial
-  Minor Arterial (Improvements)
-  Minor Arterial (New Location)
-  Principal Arterial
-  Principal Arterial (New Location)

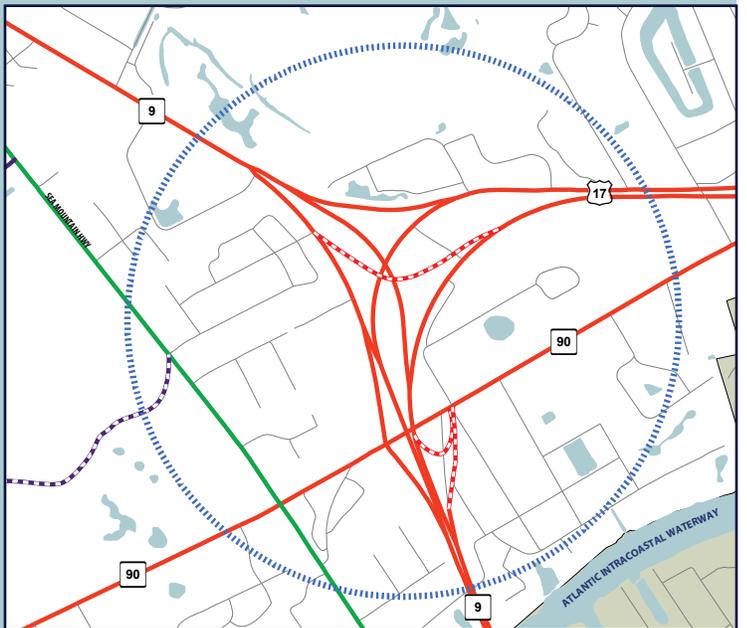



Created by Dawn E. Snider on May 23, 2017





▲ Inset A



▲ Inset B

GOALS & STRATEGIES

6.1. Continue to foster and implement the city's Complete Streets initiative.

6.1.1. The widening or construction of new roadways should be sensitive to surrounding land uses.

6.1.2. The design of each street shall enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

6.2. Increase connectivity between neighborhoods and mixed use areas of the city including civic facilities.

6.2.1. Encourage linkage in and around mixed-use areas using a multi-modal circulation network, particularly transit, pedestrian sidewalks/paths, and bicycle and trail systems.

6.2.2. Encourage connections to Main Street, City Hall and the Park and Sports Complex.

6.3. Prioritize pedestrians and cyclists where it is appropriate.

6.3.1. The city shall ensure encourage the safe movement of bicycles and pedestrians and other non-motorized vehicular transportation through the establishment and maintenance of bicycle paths or multi-use greenways within the community.

6.3.2. The city shall design, locate, and prioritize bicycle lanes and sidewalks or multi-use paths that serve to connect schools, hospitals or medical care facilities, parks and open space areas, beach access locations, commercial activity corridors, and employment centers.

6.3.3. Design of pedestrian and sidewalk facilities should take into consideration the surrounding environment and ensure the safety of non-motorized travelers and encourage increased use of these systems.

6.3.4. The city shall require new development and redevelopment to provide for sidewalks, bicycle access, and bicycle parking facilities.

6.3.5. Bicycle lanes shall be provided wherever turn lanes are constructed and in conjunction with all street resurfacing or reconstruction of local streets. Bike lanes shall be designed at widths that provide cyclists adequate space to operate their bicycles with an acceptable level of comfort.

6.4. Encourage use of light electric vehicles.

6.4.1. The city should develop a golf cart plan to manage golf cart use in the city, address associated problems, and safely accommodate the increasingly-used transportation mode.

6.5. Create attractive centers that best address and prioritize enhancements along the city's mixed use and commercial corridors.

6.5.1. Enhance and expand on the city's signage guidelines to reduce visual clutter.

6.5.2. Expand the city's utility burial program to reduce visual congestion and support the area's natural beauty.

6.5.3. Develop architectural standards that provide a base-line architectural material treatment along the city's strategic commercial routes.

6.6. Expand public transit opportunities.

6.6.1. Work with regional transit providers, Coast RTA, to explore opportunities for enhancement or creation of



service within city limits.

6.6.2. Integrate transit facilities and transit routes within new development where practical.

6.7. Provide parking management solutions that reduce the reliance on the automobile within the city, particularly on Main Street.

6.7.1. Provide a sufficient supply of parking for Main Street and other town centers with respect to land uses, avoid an oversupply of parking, and make better and more effective use of the existing parking supply resources.

6.7.2 Shared parking policies should be implemented on Main Street and at other town and

activity centers. Develop a coordinated, area-wide approach to parking on Main Street and at other town and activity centers that is based on shared parking resources and a “park-once” strategy.

6.7.3 Encourage shared access between adjacent developments.

6.7.4 Retain existing and develop new on-street parking on Main Street and at other town and activity centers to provide convenient short-term parking for visitors. Focus on providing convenient visitor parking in the central area of Main Street as a priority.

6.7.5 Encourage the use of the new fee-in-lieu of parking program recently passed by city council allowing for the purchase of required parking (\$25,000 a space) in lieu of providing it within the Main Street Activity Center Overlay for those properties located in the Parking Investment Boundary.



In This Chapter

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7

WHERE WE LIVE



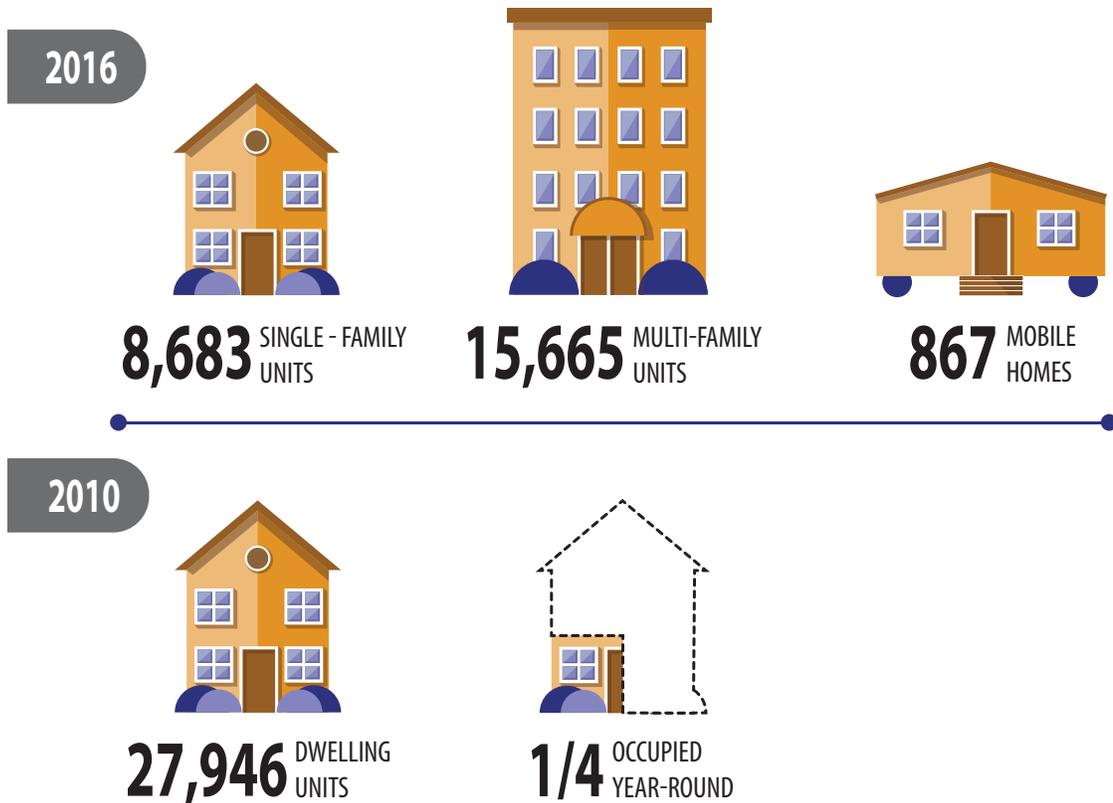
“If they could, 84% of older households would like to remain in their houses rather than move to retirement communities.”

- American Association of Retired Persons

exploreNorthMyrtleBeach.com

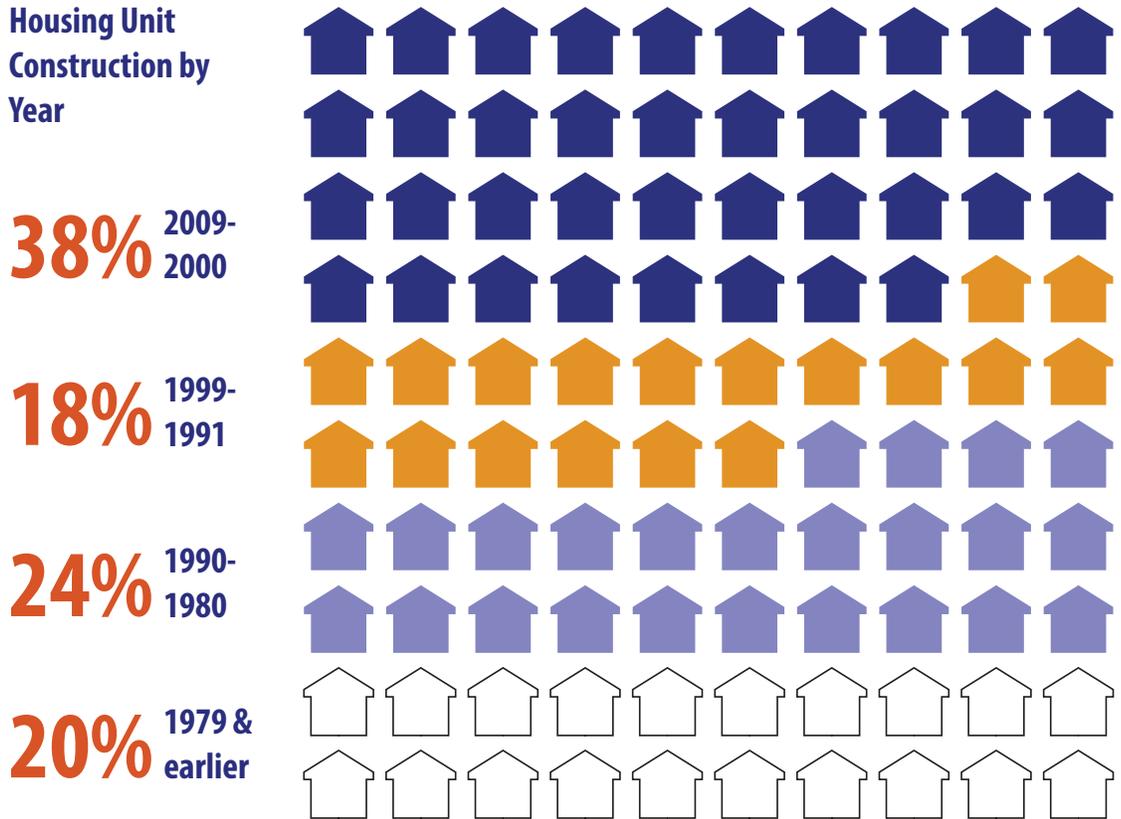
According to North Myrtle Beach Planning & Development Department’s Building Division, as of mid-2016 there were approximately 8,683 single-family units, 15,665 multi-family units, 1,447 townhome units, 398 duplex units, and 867 mobile homes, equaling a total of 27,060 housing units in the city. This is slightly lower than the total provided by the U.S. Census Bureau; however, the census bureau’s figure includes RV’s, vans, and dwelling units in boats. The City of North Myrtle Beach grew to 27,946 dwelling units as of the 2010 census. About one-fourth of these, or 7,582, are occupied year-round. The balance of these dwelling units are either second homes, rentals, or otherwise vacant.

The majority of units, 33%, fall into the twenty-or-more unit category which pertains to multi-family units. The second largest category is made up of single-family detached units, 31% of the total units. Overall, approximately 59% of the units within the city are two or more units.



AGE & SIZE OF HOUSING STOCK

In conformance with state and regional trends, 80% of the housing units in North Myrtle Beach were built between 1980 and 2009. The majority of these units, approximately 38% of the housing supply, were built between 2000 and 2009. The second largest construction period took place between 1980 and 1990 and created approximately 24% of the total housing supply. About 1,000 units per year were built between 1998 and 2004. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, fewer than 100 houses built before 1939 still remain.



1,000 UNITS PER YEAR FROM 1998-2004



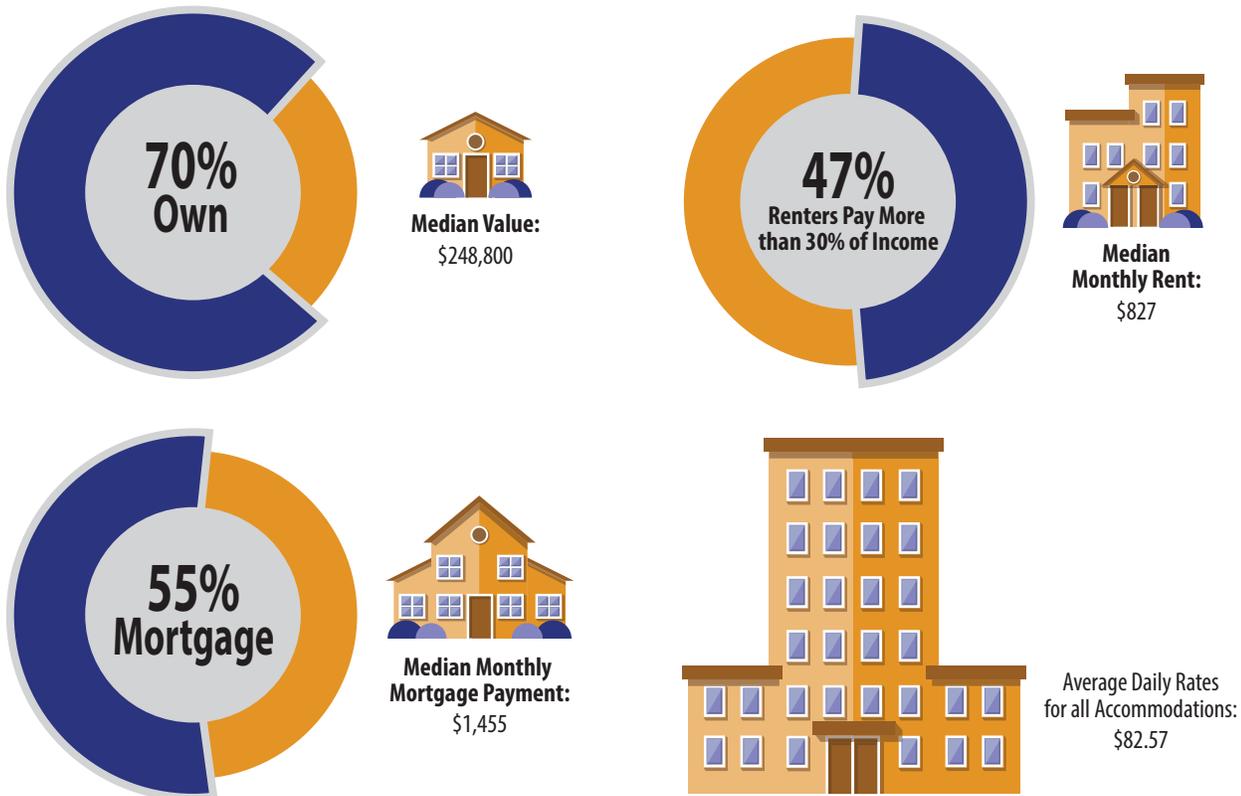
<100 HOUSES BUILT BEFORE 1939



VALUE, MORTGAGE, & GROSS RENT

The 2010 census also provided information on the value of the 5,321 occupied year-round homes. Approximately 70% of these units were owner-occupied with a median value of \$248,800 in 2010. Fifty-five (55%) percent of the units were mortgaged with a median monthly mortgage payment of \$1,455. Renters paid a median monthly rent of \$827; approximately 47% of renters paid more than 30% of their household income in rent. In 2016, the median home value had increased to \$256,000. The median sales price for a condo is \$155,000.

Although the census does not provide age or valuation data on seasonal units, the number and type of units is available through the 20th Edition of the Statistical Abstract for the Myrtle Beach Area of South Carolina. In 2009 in the Myrtle Beach area, the average peak daily room rate for hotels/condos and campsites was \$127.54; the average peak daily room rate for vacation rental homes was \$475.42.



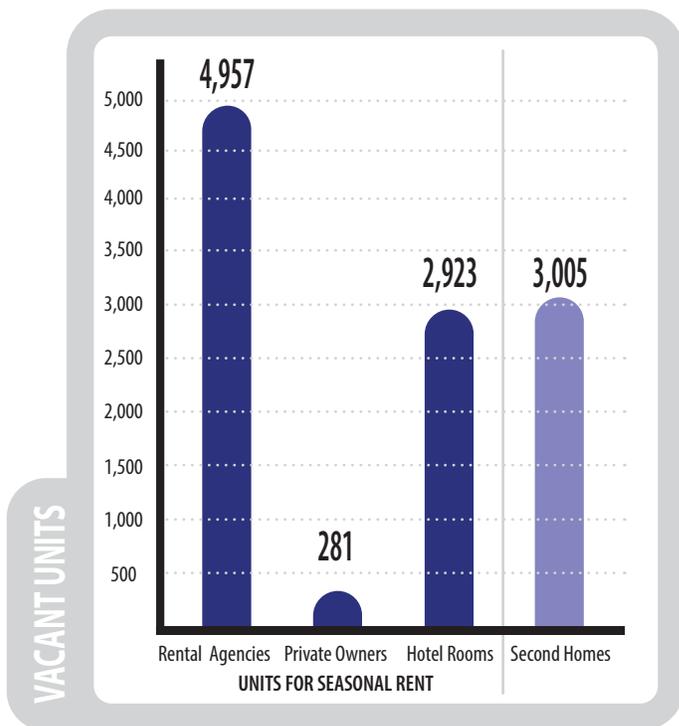
SEASONAL HOUSING

The 2010 census identified 20,364 vacant units in the city. The vacancy rate for rental units was 77.6%. This corresponded closely with the enumeration of seasonal units in the 2001 Seasonal Population Study, which found a total of 7,977 units available for seasonal rental. This includes 4,957 units managed by rental agencies, 281 units rented by private owners, and 2,923 rooms in approximately 60 hotels. In addition to the approximately 8,000 overnight rentals, another 3,005 units were considered second homes. These were also considered vacant in 2000.

Approximately one-third of the total seasonal units in Horry County are located in North Myrtle Beach.

Using the city's Geographic Information System (GIS) land use information, the types of structures identified as second homes in the City's seasonal population study were:

- ▶ 8,747 single-family detached units
- ▶ 387 duplexes
- ▶ 1,457 townhomes
- ▶ 900 mobile homes
- ▶ 15,692 multifamily units
- ▶ 393 other including RV's



▲ *Approximately one-third of the total seasonal units in Horry County are located in North Myrtle Beach.*

◀ *Vacant units in North Myrtle Beach including units for seasonal rent and second homes*



◀ *Barefoot Resort has a number of residential units occupied by both year-round residents and seasonal visitors.*



◀ *Tidewater Plantation attracts many tourists, but the community also has a large percentage of year-round residents.*

CHANGES IN SCALE

A review of development applications indicates that there is a trend away from smaller hotels with fewer than 100 units to large-scale resorts with over 500 units. Since 2000, several large hotel projects have been constructed; these projects first decrease the number of small hotels through demolition, then construct larger redevelopments and new units. In the past, these projects included the Wyndham Resort, which eliminated the Buccaneer Hotel at 4th Avenue South, the Avista, which replaced the Helms Vista and By the Sea motels near 4th Avenue North, Crescent Shores which removed the Rockin' K and Royal Palms near 17th Avenue South, Mar Vista replacing the former Mar Vista hotel, Bay Watch Resort replacing the Holiday Inn hotel and a former hotel for parking in second row, and Atlantic Breeze Ocean Resort replacing the former Bahama Sands hotel on second row.

Several condominium projects also eliminated some smaller hotels; Star View Motel at 6th Avenue South, Hartford Motor Inn at 54th Avenue North, the Marion Earl at 14th Avenue South, Blue Water Keys and Crescent Keys (replacing former single-family and duplexes) were replaced by condominiums. If the trend continues in the future, there will be fewer small hotels and more large resorts with a greater number of bedrooms and resort-style amenities. Of these resort units, most will likely be arranged as condominium developments, allowing rentals.

Single-family units and duplexes have increased from four bedrooms to seven and eight bedroom units, creating the nickname, "Monster beach shack". 50' x 100' lots that were suitable for standard four-bedroom cottages are now carrying larger structures to within five feet of the property line. Parking regulations have been modified to accommodate the need for additional spaces per bedroom, and in some zoning districts single-family dwellings larger than five bedrooms have been prohibited.



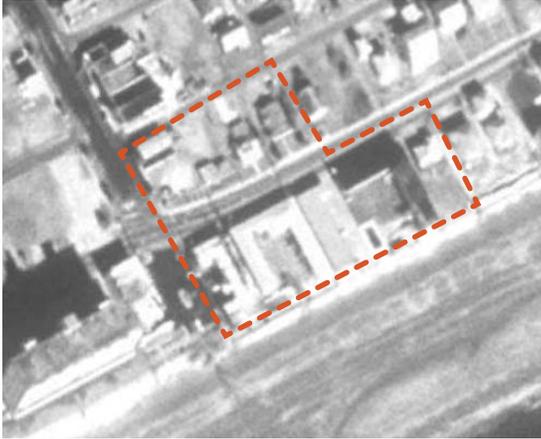
▲ Wyndham Resort



▲ Aerial of Buccaneer Hotel on 4th Avenue South from 1994, before it was torn down.



▲ Aerial of Wyndham Resort from 2014, which replaced the Buccaneer Hotel.



▲ Aerial of the Rockin' K and Royal Palms near 17th Avenue South from 1994, before these hotels were torn down.



▲ Aerial of Crescent Shores near 17th Avenue South from 2014, replacing the Rockin' K and Royal Palms.



▲ Crescent Shores



▲ Aerial of the old Mar Vista on 6th Avenue South from 2003, before it was torn down.



▲ Aerial of the new Mar Vista hotel on 6th Avenue South from 2014, replacing the old Mar Vista.



▲ Mar Vista Hotel



▲ Aerial of Marion Earl and Bahama Sands on 14th Avenue South from 2003, before they were torn down.



▲ Aerial of South Shore Villas and Atlantic Breeze Ocean Resort condominiums from 2014, which replaced the Marion Earl and Bahama Sands.



▲ Atlantic Breeze Ocean Resort

GOALS & STRATEGIES

7.1 Provide for a more varied housing stock to attract and retain a more diverse population.

7.1.1 Promote mixed income neighborhoods throughout North Myrtle Beach and near employment centers and transit facilities, to account for the housing needs of the broadest spectrum of residents possible.

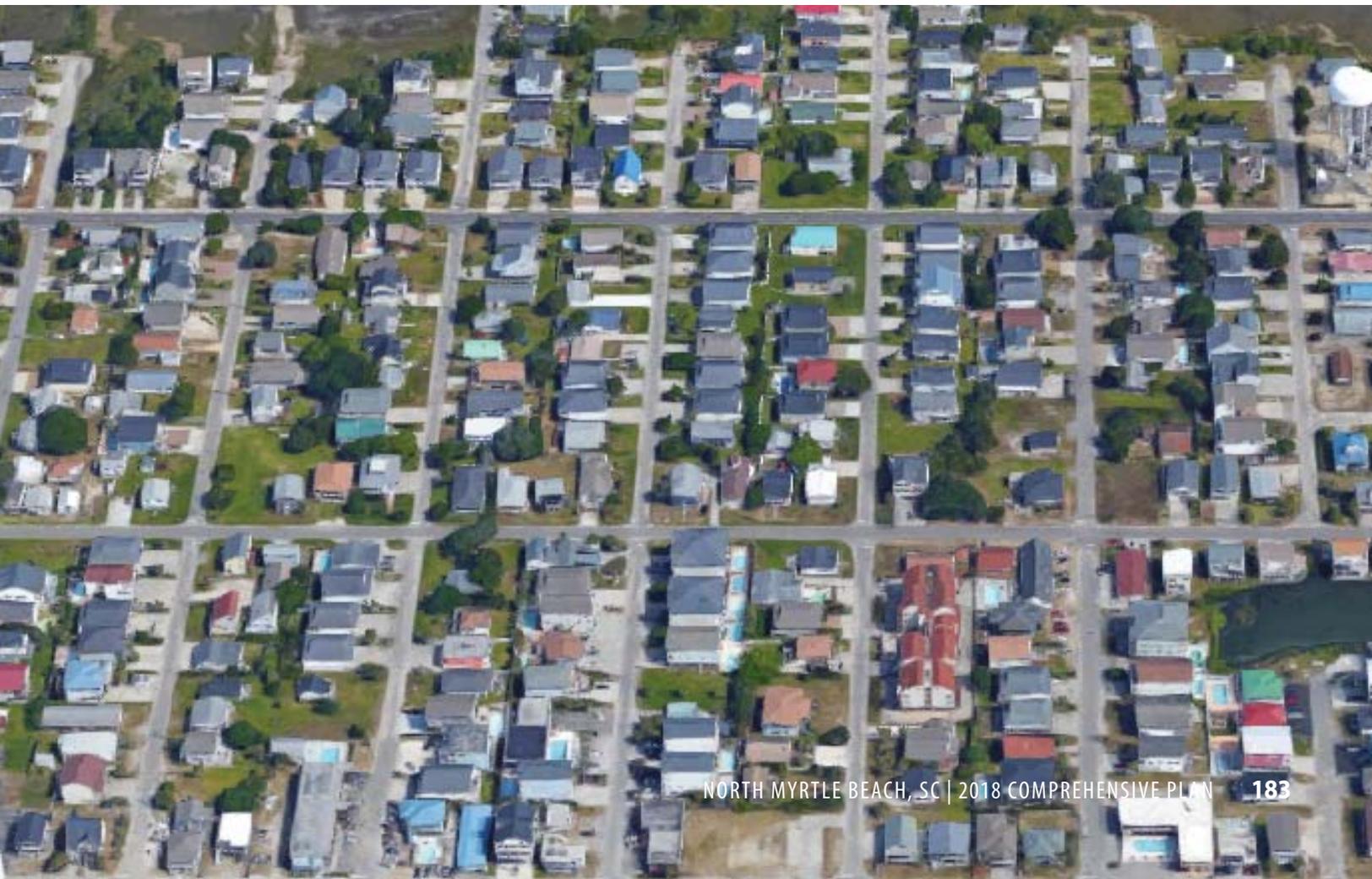
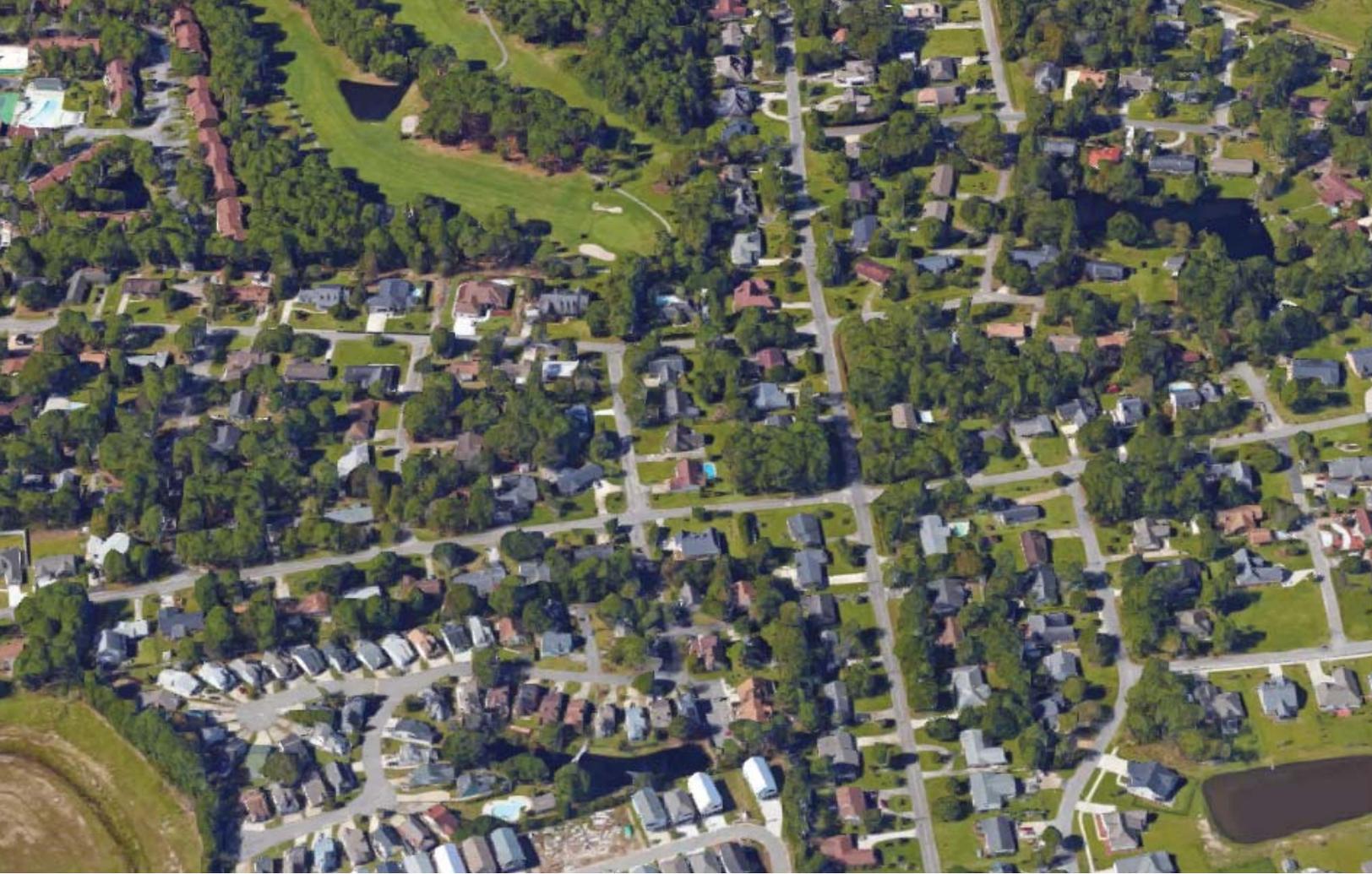
7.1.2 Revise zoning regulations to incentivize a variety and balance of housing types, including, but not limited to: Multi-family units, apartments, townhomes, quadplexes, duplexes and accessory units that appeal to families, young professionals, seniors and visitors.

7.1.3 Ensure that residential development is located near activities and facilities that cater to North Myrtle Beach residents' needs across the span of generations (i.e. schools, churches, sports, and recreational facilities and programs, health facilities, etc.).



▲ A mix of residential typologies in Beaufort, SC. Multi-family units (top); Live-work units (middle); Single-family dwelling (bottom).

► Differing residential neighborhood typologies of North Myrtle Beach. The Links, Belle Park and Forest Lakes (top); Cherry Grove (bottom). The first shows various developments lacking connectivity, while the second shows a highly connected, small block grid system.





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8

HOW WE SUSTAIN



“Earth laughs in flowers.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The term natural environment refers to the realm of living and non-living things that exist independent of human intervention. The City of North Myrtle Beach is blessed with a rich diversity of natural resources. The nine miles of public beach within city limits are one of the most important of these resources, not only as a natural system, but also as the engine that powers our tourist economy. Most communities do not have the luxury of being able to offer a nine-mile long public park to its residents and visitors.

Maintaining and enhancing the quality of the beach experience requires a multi-faceted effort, including preserving and enhancing public access, keeping the beach clean, and providing for its safe and convenient use. Coastal communities also face special challenges regarding protection of sensitive coastal plant and wildlife ecosystems. When planning the built environment, it is critical to protect the natural environment to assure community livability and quality of life, as well as economic sustainability.

The natural environment is directly impacted by the built environment. Our community depends on clean water and a healthy ecosystem. Dynamic natural processes at the interface of land and water create beautiful landscapes essential to both the local ecology and economy. Freshwater and tidal creeks, marshes, dunes, estuaries, and beaches intermix to support complex ecological systems providing invaluable benefit.

Wetlands provide critical habitat, mitigate flooding, and capture, retain, and filter sediments and pollutants, improving water quality downstream. Estuaries provide essential commercial and recreational fish nurseries. Beach and dune systems protect the shoreline against the natural hazards of erosion, storms, and sea-level rise. Because our local economy is so dependent upon tourism, recreation, and retiree living, protecting our natural assets is critical.

Doing so requires balancing the needs of the built environment with those of the natural one. Green infrastructure planning can help North Myrtle Beach achieve this balance. Through green infrastructure planning, a community or region can identify and prioritize natural areas that should be preserved or restored to protect long-term ecological health and build community resilience.

It is anticipated that the process of assessing the city's most important environmental assets will continue; identifying natural and working lands and water bodies that need to be protected or restored.

Humans, animals, and plants all share this ecosystem; and our health is intimately linked to the health of the natural world. Conserving our environment not only ensures the protection of attractive surroundings, and the survival of plants and animals, it also ensures our survival. North Myrtle Beach residents share the responsibility of being good stewards of this delicate ecosystem.

COASTAL RESOURCES

The Beach

Undoubtedly, the Atlantic Ocean and the nine miles of associated beach are the city's most important natural (and economic) assets. They are the primary draw for the tens of thousands of visitors who visit the city annually, drive the city's economy, and contributes significantly to the economic vitality of the region.



► *Sunrise on Cherry Grove Beach looking toward Cherry Grove Fishing Pier*

The beach is generally wide and flat with a well-developed berm and a system of small dunes (1-2' in height) vegetated with native species (Sea Oats and native grasses/forbs). Shoreline stabilization structures are present over approximately 3 miles of shoreline (approximately 16,000 ft. of seawall, 2,200 ft. of bulkhead, and 100 ft. of riprap) and are currently protected from exposure to waves and near shore processes by a berm and dune system in most places.



► *Typical vegetated dunes along North Myrtle Beach coastline*

In general when reviewing erosion rates, most of North Myrtle Beach is reasonably stable over the long-term. The entire length of North Myrtle Beach has been re-nourished twice in the past: Once in 1996-1997, increasing the dry-sand beach width by over 100 ft. and unit-width sand volumes by over 70 cubic yards per ft., and again in 2008. The SC Beachfront Management Act (S.C. Code § 48-39-270(4)) defines beach nourishment as, "The artificial establishment and periodic renourishment of a beach with sand that is compatible with the existing beach in a way so as to create a dry sand beach at all stages of the tide". A typical renourishment project consists of dredging beach compatible sand from an offshore site, pumping the sand onto the beach, and distributing it on the beach face. Renourishment can also include trucking sand to the beach from an upland source. The city pursues beach renourishment projects as needed and as funding allows.

Waties Island

Near the City of North Myrtle Beach municipal boundary, Waties Island is only three miles long and 3/10ths of a mile wide. It is one of the few remaining undeveloped barrier islands in South Carolina. The island was named after William Waties, who was one of the first to trade with the

Native Americans in the area. Over the years, historians and archaeologists have discovered broken pieces of pottery, burial mounds, and arrowheads left behind by Native Americans on the island.

In 1992, Anne Boyce donated 1,049 acres of undeveloped land to the Coastal Education Foundation, Inc. Since the donation, Coastal Carolina University's Marine Biology Department has managed the area as an outdoor classroom that allows students to explore and monitor unique wildlife and plants in a nearly pristine coastal environment. Part of the charm of this island is that it is a sanctuary for a number of threatened and endangered plant and animal species. A few examples include the Piping Plover, Bald Eagle, Loggerhead Sea Turtle and the Wood Stork. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has established numerous critical habitat areas along the Atlantic Ocean in order to protect the threatened Piping Plover population. One of these critical sites extends from the easternmost tip of Cherry Grove point to the southern tip of Waties Island. These sites were designed to protect and encourage the breeding of this small shoreline bird. In addition to endangered wildlife, this island is the home of Seabeach Amaranth, which is a Federally designated threatened plant found only on sandy beaches.





▲ Google aerial of Cherry Grove Marsh.



▲ Cherry Grove Marsh from Sea Mountain Highway.



▲ Google aerial of White Point Swash.



▲ White Point Swash (an estuary) in 2010.



▲ White Point Swash (an estuary) in 2010 looking towards the ocean.

Cherry Grove Marsh

Cherry Grove Marsh serves as another nursery and breeding ground for a variety of plants and animals. Birds, including herons and egrets, live in the saltwater marsh and feed on fish and shrimp that live in the marsh. Smooth Cord Grass (*Spartina alternatiflora*) is present here, too. Most of the marine life is dependent on decomposing detritus from the salt marsh for their food supply. In 2002, the Pew Oceans Commission published Marine Reserves, explaining that coastal development and the loss of such estuarine nurseries was a major threat to the world's oceans and fish and shellfish stocks.

White Point Estuary

White Point Estuary Swash is a coastal estuary ecosystem located near the southeast end of the city. This area is relatively open and is dominated by Smooth Cord Grass. Recognized on maps from the National Wetlands Inventory, this type of ecosystem is extremely valuable as a nursery for many species of marine fish, including many that have commercial and recreational value. Some examples of important Atlantic Ocean fish species dependent upon the estuary in the early part of their lives are Flounder, Spot, Drum, Croaker, Menhaden, Mullet, and Kingfish. Because the estuary is nearly surrounded by development, the ecological value of the swash may be somewhat limited. The hydrology of this estuary is particularly sensitive to its surrounding landscape; increasing the amount of impervious surfaces in adjacent areas leads to increased runoff that can erode soils. Runoff can also carry pollutants that may harm susceptible species of fish and other aquatic life.

Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AICW)

Authorized by Congress in 1919, the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway is a 3,000-mile waterway along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States. Some lengths consist of natural inlets, saltwater rivers, bays, and sounds; other lengths include constructed canals. Within the city there are natural inlets, saltwater rivers, and canals. The AICW provides a navigable route safe from many of the hazards inherent to travel on the open sea.

In our community, the AICW is primarily used by recreational boaters and fishermen. There is increasing interest in water trails offering an eco-tourism experience attractive to paddle sports enthusiasts. Berkeley County Blueways is a nearby successful water trail example; this water trail was a joint effort between the Berkeley County Soil and Water Conservation District, Berkeley County government, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Forest Service, S.C. Office of Coastal Resource Management, and Santee Cooper. As an important natural resource and potential source of revenue, the city should consider investigating the development of a water trail along the North Myrtle Beach section of the AICW, beginning at Hog Inlet.



▲ Intracoastal Waterway from Sea Mountain Hwy.



▲ Sea Mountain Highway's Swing Bridge.



◀ Homepage of the Berkeley County Blueways initiative.

WETLANDS & SWAMPS

According to Horry County's Comprehensive Plan, Envision 2025, approximately 328,444 acres, or 44.85%, of all land within Horry County is considered wetlands. A conservative estimate puts the total wetland acreage in the City of North Myrtle Beach at 1,636 acres, or 19% of the city's land area. The approximate location of wetland areas is generally depicted in the National Wetland Inventory Maps, but the scale of these maps is such that site-specific analysis is not possible.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is charged with determining the exact boundaries of wetland areas. They also issue permits for the alteration or filling of these wetland areas. In addition, the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) has jurisdiction over wetland resources in the coastal counties of South Carolina, and open waters within the coastal plain.

Land development regulations require that wetland areas be delineated on preliminary subdivision plats and site-specific development plans. In the zoning ordinance, planned development districts require wetland delineation. However, determination of wetland areas remains within the statutory authority of the USACE and OCRM.

Sea Mountain Highway Swamps

Both to the north and south side of Sea Mountain Highway, near its intersection with US Highway 17 are wooded sites

containing a mosaic of wetlands and uplands. Vernal pools are found throughout these areas and offer unique habitats for a variety of significant species. For example, many species of salamander (*Ambystoma*) require these types of wooded wetlands as breeding sites. The older trees located in these swamps also provide habitat for nesting birds, as well as the federally designated endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*).

Adjacent residential development can threaten these swamps with contamination caused by stormwater runoff containing grease, oil, gasoline, debris, and anything else washing off from local roads. The effects of urbanization and development, including increased impervious surfaces, sedimentation and erosion, and deforestation, damages the water quality in these ecologically sensitive locations. The natural resources present in these swamps are of a high quality and provide habitat for a variety of local wildlife.

7th Avenue South Swamp

The city purchased roughly 80 acres of property in 2009, so the Public Works Department could plan a stormwater retention facility near 7th Avenue South. This drainage project serves to maintain ecological habitat and help relieve flooding on Hillside Drive. The installation of a public boardwalk with interpretive signage in the future would also make this area a valuable recreational resource to the city.

Conservation Easements

West of the Intracoastal Waterway, there are several large tracts of land located within city limits that have been placed in conservation easements. Conservation easements are legally binding agreements that a property owner places on a piece of property to restrict the development and use of the land and to protect ecological resources. These easements are recorded at the county and are in effect in perpetuity.

The conservation easements in the City of North Myrtle Beach perform the following functions:

- ▶ Habitat preservation for fish, wildlife, and plant species by protecting wildlife corridors, shelter, and breeding and foraging habitats
- ▶ Preservation of land providing scenic enjoyment
- ▶ Preservation of open space for public benefit
- ▶ Buffer the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve, Peter Horry Preserve, and Waccamaw River Basin
- ▶ Support ecological communities: Atlantic Coastal Plain Longleaf Pine Woodland, High Pocosin (G2), Mixed Mesic Hardwood Forest (Coastal Plain Subtype), Nonriverine Wet Hardwood Forest, Pond-Cypress Depression Forest, Sand Barrens (Coastal Fringe Subtype), South Atlantic Coastal Plain Mesic Hardwood Forest, South Atlantic Coastal Plain Depression Pond, Xeric Sandhill Scrub (Coastal Fringe Subtype)
- ▶ Protect key species: American Black Bear, American Kestrel, Blue Grosbeak, Brown Thrasher, Carolina Chickadee, Chimney Swift, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Wood Pewee, Field Sparrow, Great Crested Flycatcher, LeConte's Thistle, Pileated Woodpecker, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Sandhill Rosemary, Summer Tanager, Tufted Titmouse, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler



▲ 7th Avenue South Swamp.



▲ Photo of the wetlands along Sea Mountain Highway.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

Heritage Shores Nature Preserve

Heritage Shores Nature Preserve is one of the most unique parks in the city. The park is located off Heritage Drive on an island that extends into the Cherry Grove Marsh. This land is preserved in its native state and is accessible via a series of boardwalks and observation docks. Interpretive signage throughout the park describes plants, animals, fishes and birds that can be seen in the park. Sweetgrass (*Muhlenbergia filipes*), used by the Gullah/Geetchee people to weave baskets, is also in abundance.

Park amenities include:

- ▶ Forty-station interpretive trail with native soil primitive walking path
- ▶ 2 picnic/shade shelters
- ▶ Stationary boat dock, providing access from the creek

Russell Burgess Coastal Preserve

Named for a former city councilman devoted to preservation and maintenance of the marsh, the Russell Burgess Coastal Preserve provides scenic views of the Cherry Grove Marsh. The preserve also protects and maintains important marsh habitat while providing paved parking and boardwalk access to the water.

Park amenities include:

- ▶ Portable restroom facilities
- ▶ Ample parking, with the ocean a mere two blocks away
- ▶ Marsh boardwalk
- ▶ Native flora and fauna
- ▶ Public Beach Access
- ▶ Soft landing for kayaks and paddleboards

▼ *Cherry Grove Marsh showing Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp.*



The state's beachfront management regulations require full public access to the beach. This public access may include facilities for parking, transportation, and safe and comfortable walkways to the beach. The city's numerous public walkways and parking lots at street ends meet the state's access criteria; the Beachfront Management Plan contains an inventory of all public and private access ways along the oceanfront.

Boating and Fishing

Boating and fishing are very important recreational, cultural, and economic amenities within the city. North Myrtle Beach has three public boat ramps within city limits: Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp, the joint City-County ramp on Little River Neck Road, and the ramp on the Intracoastal Waterway at 2nd Avenue South. Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp provides direct access to the ocean; the other two ramps are located along the Intracoastal Waterway. Private boat facilities are located at Harbourgate Marina off Little River Neck Road, Vereens' Marina on 13th Avenue North, and Barefoot Resort. The local marshes provide excellent boating, kayaking, and shore fishing areas. Surf fishing is permitted along the nine miles

of beach with a state Saltwater Recreation Fishing License.

Pier fishing is available to the public from the privately-owned Cherry Grove Pier and at the Cherry Grove Park and Boat Ramp. There is a second, privately-owned pier at the Sea Cabins in Cherry Grove.

Water Trails and Blueways

Water trails, also known as blueways, provide opportunities for recreational boating and paddling along a river, coastline, or marsh; these water trails are typically managed to promote water accessibility for users and stewardship for the environments these trails traverse. From the waters of Hog Inlet, through the marshes of Cherry Grove, into the Intracoastal Waterway up through the Little River Inlet, there are numerous opportunities for exploration of North Myrtle Beach and its unique ecological habitats by boat. Although there are no official blue trails within the city limits, future resources could be dedicated to expanding, mapping, and conserving the water routes already in use by local paddlers.



FARMER'S MARKET

In 2010, the City of North Myrtle Beach opened a farmers market adjacent to City Hall in a city-owned public parking lot. Held one day each week from late spring through early fall, farmers market vendors sell locally grown produce, flowers, herbs, pasture-raised meats and eggs, baked goods and other prepared foods not made in a commercial kitchen, and fish or shellfish grown, made, raised, harvested, or caught locally. In 2012, the city constructed two new metal-roofed open-air structures and restrooms at the site; colorful shade sails connect the two structures and provide oasis from the elements.

The North Myrtle Beach Farmers Market is part of the Waccamaw Market Cooperative; this nonprofit organization is responsible for coordinating and managing community-based farmers markets throughout Horry County. The estimated annual attendance for 2016 was 19,200; with an average number of 800 shoppers at each of the twenty-four markets held throughout the season. Of the 47 vendors attending the 2016 North Myrtle Beach market, 47% were farmers, 23% were artisans, 12% offered prepared foods, 9% were resellers, and 9% were processors.



▲ Farmer's Market logo



▲ Photo inside the Farmer's Market



▲ Photo outside of the Farmer's Market

TOPOGRAPHY & SOILS

The City of North Myrtle Beach lies within the Atlantic Coastal Plain physiographic region. The topography is relatively flat, ranging from mean sea level (MSL) at the beach to 30 feet above MSL at a few interior locations. The land behind the beaches is low and gently rises towards the west. Exceptions to this topography occur in the back dune area of Windy Hill and in Crescent Beach between 14th and 6th Avenue South between Perrin and Hillside. In these areas, dunes are more prominent. Most of the area soils are rapidly draining sands and sandy loam. Combined with the relatively flat topography, these soils accumulate storm water runoff in low areas with poorer draining soils.

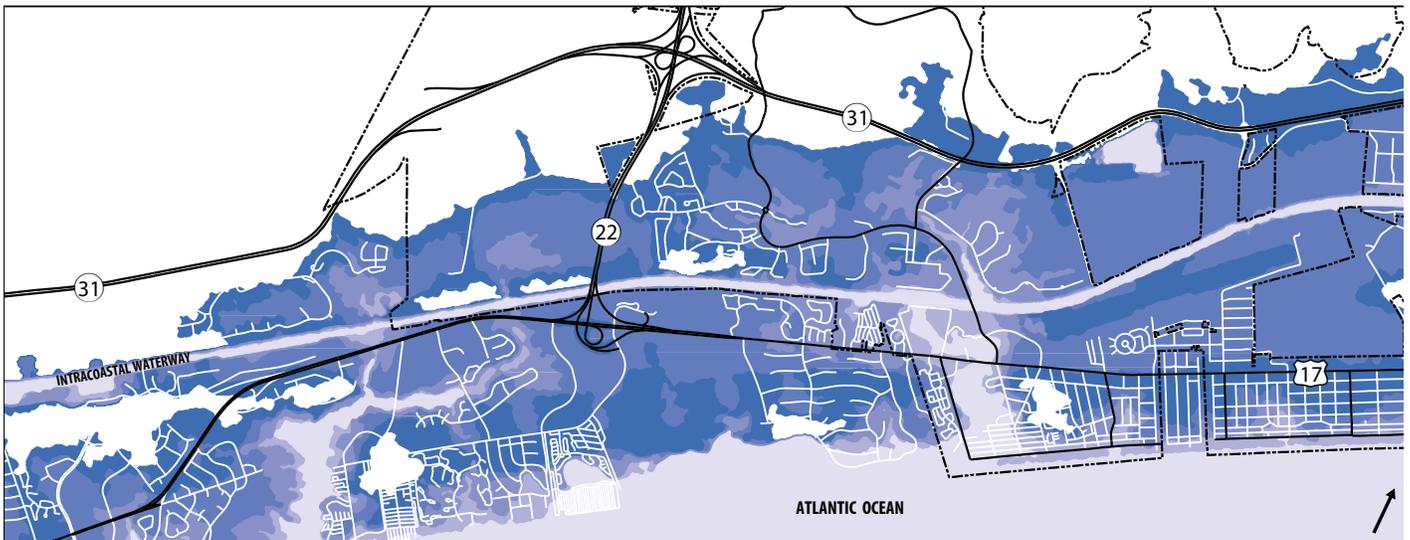
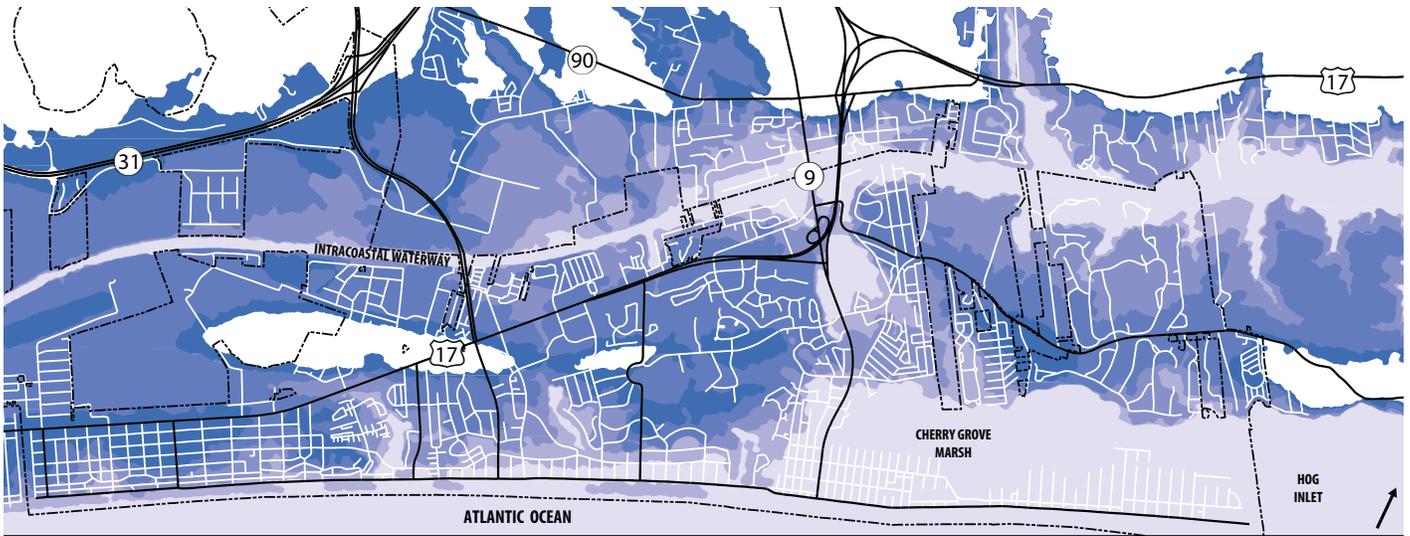
While the city has had a storm water management ordinance in place since 1985, outfalls to the beach have provided the primary outlet for much of the city's street drainage. Since 2002, North Myrtle Beach has funded and installed five outfalls reaching into the ocean. Extending stormwater drains located on the beach to deeper water has proven to be the most cost-effective solution to improving coastal water quality and reducing inland flooding issues. Stormwater discharge into deeper water approximately 1,200 feet offshore reduces near shore bacteria levels and reduces the potential for swimmer contact and illness. Natural drainage courses lead to the White Point Swash and Cherry Grove Marsh; these natural drainage courses are supplemented by the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and several constructed drainage ditches.

Floodprone Areas

As with many coastal communities, North Myrtle Beach administers land development in compliance with the directives of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). NFIP is a federally sponsored program that offers assistance to communities and property owners with sites in flood prone areas. The program is operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood-hazard areas are determined by various modeling techniques. These flood areas fall mostly within the 20-foot or lower contour elevations. Boundaries of flood hazard areas are shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). In addition, designations for areas directly along the coast include calculations for the height of storm surge as a result of wind and wave actions. These are shown as "V," or velocity zones. In those areas, the habitable floor area of new development and renovations must be one foot in elevation above the designation indicated on the FIRM map.

The flood map designation also establishes a minimum building height for new or substantially improved construction. The flood regulations establish minimum building elevations for residential structures and define requirements for "flood-safe" construction in order to minimize the amount of damage likely to occur to buildings in flood prone areas.

The city is also a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating Service Program (CRS). The CRS program encourages and rewards community and state mitigation activities that go beyond the standards required by the NFIP. Its goals are to reduce flood losses, promote the awareness of flood insurance, and facilitate accurate insurance ratings. Communities are encouraged to take steps to lessen the burden of future flood damage, and in return, city residents can realize substantial savings on flood insurance premiums.



LEGEND



▲ Areas likely flooded, categorized by hurricane strength

The City is pursuing the following activities as part of its ongoing CRS Program:

Short Range Activities:

- ▶ Maintain a database of flood elevation certificates on all structures
- ▶ Revise the flood plain management ordinance
- ▶ Provide a list of all buildings built or improved in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)
- ▶ Provide fliers, notices or brochures to residents in flood zones
- ▶ Prepare a physical inventory of buildings in flood hazard areas
- ▶ Update Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Advise and assist property owners with retrofitting of buildings
- ▶ Assist residents in determining whether a property is in a flood prone area

Long Range Activities:

- ▶ Continue monitoring and providing renourishment of the public beach as needed
- ▶ Prepare and implement a hazard awareness program
- ▶ Reduce flooding in areas within the city

The reduction of premiums for those property owners who purchase flood insurance is based on the city's CRS ranking. Areas are rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the best and 10 representing areas meeting the minimum standards. The city plans to continue participation in this program because it results in better and safer construction, encourages citizens to better protect themselves against future disasters, and lowers the cost of insurance premiums for participating policyholders.



▶ Flooding outside OD Arcade and Lounge as outfalls are overwhelmed by debris from three inches of rain falling in two hours in August of 2015 (left). Beach renourishment after Hurricane Hugo in 1989 (right).

Under the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, You Could Save More than \$90,000 over 10 Years if You Build 3 Feet above Base Flood Elevation*



▶ Diagram explaining the financial benefits of building above the Base Flood Elevation in flood prone areas like North Myrtle Beach.

TREE PRESERVATION

Over the last decades, city residents have become concerned over the loss of forest to development in the city. The City of North Myrtle Beach recognized the need to maintain existing trees for their many benefits such as shade, storm water retention, aesthetics, air filtration, and quality of life, and the city took steps to preserve, maintain, replant and protect the tree population. In 1999, the city created a Tree Planting Master Plan to serve as a guide to tree planting and preservation. In February 2002, city council adopted tree preservation standards into the zoning ordinance. These regulations protect trees eight inches in caliper or larger and require replacement for those that are removed.

The ordinance also recognizes trees larger than twenty-four (24") inches in diameter as requiring special protection. Tree surveys are now required prior to site development.

The city enacted a, "Complete Streets" ordinance in 2009, designed to provide safe access to all users. The ordinance requires developers to install street trees on both sides of new roads, and on one side of abutting existing streets when subdividing land. A direct benefit of this policy will be to increase the city's tree canopy. Revising the landscape ordinance and developing a public tree planting program has also been discussed as possible future projects.



▲ Photo of city staff celebrating 11 years of the city's Tree City USA status.

WIND ENERGY

Instability in world oil markets led to sharp increases in oil prices between 2006 and 2010. Such increases brought an intense focus on alternative energy sources and the need to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In 2009, community leaders formed the North Strand Coastal Wind Team (NSCWT) whose mission is to facilitate the development of wind energy resources for the City of North Myrtle Beach and partner with other organizations. The vision of the NSCWT is to establish a community-based wind energy program and sustainable energy plan that allows the city to serve as a demonstration city, builds the local economy, and help develop energy independence.

On November 30, 2010, the NSCWT helped spearhead South Carolina's first wind turbine connected to the electric grid at Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park in North Myrtle Beach with help from a grant from the South Carolina Energy Office. Two more turbines have since gone up at the city's Oceanfront Park at 1st Avenue South and the Russell Burgess Coastal Reserve in Cherry Grove. These three turbines serve as demonstration projects to help further public awareness and knowledge about wind. The city has approved three additional oceanfront sites for future turbines including 39th Avenue South. Through a partnership with Plug-In Carolina, an electric charging station was installed at 6th Avenue South to allow free electric car charging.



▲ Photo of North Myrtle Beach's wind turbine in Cherry Grove Oceanfront Park.

STATE REGULATIONS

Local Comprehensive Beach Management Plans

In 1976, the South Carolina legislature adopted the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Act. This law established the South Carolina Coastal Council (SCCC) and charged it with management and permitting activities for the state's coastal areas. This law was amended in 1988 to require all coastal communities to prepare a local Comprehensive Beach Management Plan. In 1990, significant changes were made to the activities the SCCC could allow in coastal zones, and requirements for the local beach management plan were strengthened. All coastal communities were required to prepare a comprehensive beachfront management plan based on SCCC guidelines by July 1, 1991.

Since the original legislation was passed, the SCCC was dissolved, and beachfront management planning was assigned to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management (SCDHEC-OCRM). North Myrtle Beach adopted their first plan on June 18, 1992, with a five-year update cycle. The North Myrtle Beach beachfront management plan was last updated on August 29, 2014.

Beachfront Setback Area

The State of South Carolina established a 40-year retreat policy from eroding beaches as part of the Beachfront Management Act. SCDHEC-OCRM, as steward of the state's coastal resources, is responsible for implementing this policy. The implementation is derived from a baseline established by SCDHEC-OCRM which runs parallel to the shoreline on oceanfront beaches. The baseline is evaluated and redrawn by SCDHEC-OCRM every eight to ten years and, as directed by the Beachfront Management Act, stretches of beach are divided into standard erosion zones and inlet erosion zones based on their physical characteristics and proximity to inlets. The second part of implementing the retreat policy at the state level is the setback line. The setback line is a boundary established by SCDHEC-OCRM that is landward of the established baseline at a distance equal to forty times the average erosion rate, and not less than twenty feet landward of the baseline.

North Myrtle Beach developed a 40-year retreat strategy to help implement this shift in property line setbacks. The city adopted ordinances establishing the types of rebuilding allowed within the setback zones when structures are damaged. The long-term strategy is to maintain or produce a beach for recreation, enhance the dune system along the coast to protect against storm surge, and to determine adequate setbacks for the protection of privacy property. As new development occurs, SCDHEC-OCRM enforces the 40-year retreat strategy.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

8.1 Protect and preserve the city's natural resources to the greatest extent practical.

8.1.1 Coordinate with other government entities in the management of water resources.

8.1.2 Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands in the City of North Myrtle Beach.

8.1.3 Provide for a sustainable form of development with a high quality of life for its residents.

8.1.4 Minimize potentially harmful environmental and ecologic impacts of development, to the maximum extent practicable, through land development regulations.

8.1.5 Use development review process to ensure that development plans are approved in floodplain areas only in accordance with established state building codes and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards.

8.1.6 The city should include requirements within the Land Development Regulations to provide measures, so air pollution does not exceed established state or county standards.

8.1.7 Encourage development that promotes the use of transportation alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, such as mass transit, carpooling, ride-sharing, or use of alternatively fueled commercial vehicles.



▲ Russell Burgess Coastal Preserve boardwalk completed in 2009.



▲ Heritage Shores Nature Preserve entrance.



▲ The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway viewed at Barefoot Landing.



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9

THE WAY WE PROSPER

A group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are shaking hands in a circle. The focus is on the hands and forearms, with the background blurred. The scene conveys a sense of unity, agreement, and community.

Communities with tourism based economies have been leaders in understanding the link between livability and economic development.

Until recently, community sustainability and livability issues were often not included in the economic development and growth strategies recommendations of many plans. In some cases, the two ideas were considered to be in conflict. However, sustainable development that embodies the interdependencies among environmental, social, quality of life, and economic issues and policies has proven invaluable as a catalyst for business investment.

Communities with tourism-based economies have been leaders in understanding the link between livability and economic development. Sustainable tourism depends upon maintaining and enhancing the quality of life and sense of place of the host community to provide a high quality of experience for visitors and residents equally and maintain the quality of the natural and built environments.

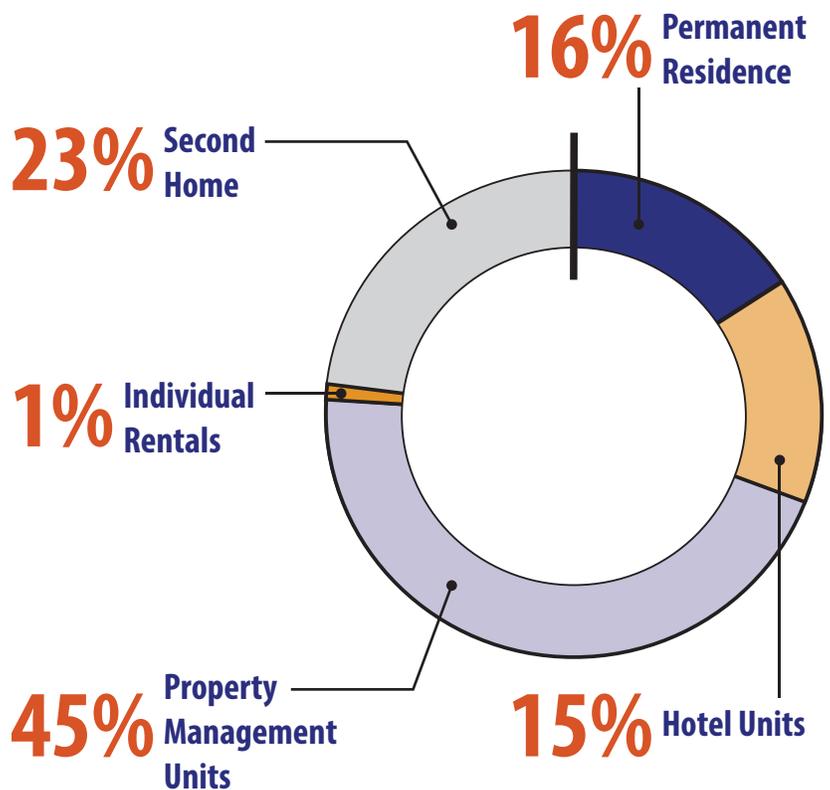
For visitors and local residents “Sense of place,” is achieved when a place is deemed to be memorable, unique, sought after, and valued. A unique natural environment can play a key role defining a place; in other locations, connections to the past strengthen cultural continuity and create local character. As our community grows and changes, it is important to protect our culture and natural environment. Development of land defines a community’s distinct built form to identify and influence our city’s sense of place. (Where do we put it? How do we arrange it? What does it look like?)

Every day in America, people make decisions about where to live, invest, vacation, and retire based on the physical expression of community form. Thus a community’s image, character, and sense of place directly correlate to a community’s economic well-being.

As a resort community, the city’s economic engine is fueled by tourism; accommodations, attractions, golf, and real estate are the primary components. The Chamber of Commerce promotes North Myrtle Beach as both a resort destination and a business location.

The pace of tourism has fluctuated. The tourism economy saw a decrease beginning with September 11, 2001 that continued through the Great Recession (Dec 2007 – June 2009). Tourism began to pick up beginning in 2010 and has continued to steadily rise. It is anticipated that North Myrtle Beach will continue to capture a portion of tourist activities.

It is important to determine strategies to keep the existing tourism base while expanding market share to maintain the health of this industry. The best way to frame this strategy is to understand how the economic base works and to be prepared to upgrade facilities to remain competitive and meet future challenges.



▲ Chart of the percent of population by housing type. It shows that most properties in North Myrtle Beach are condos owned by large property management companies as tourist rental units. The next largest percentage of the population is second home owners, the third is permanent residents, the fourth is hotel units, and the smallest population percentage is individuals who rent their homes or units.

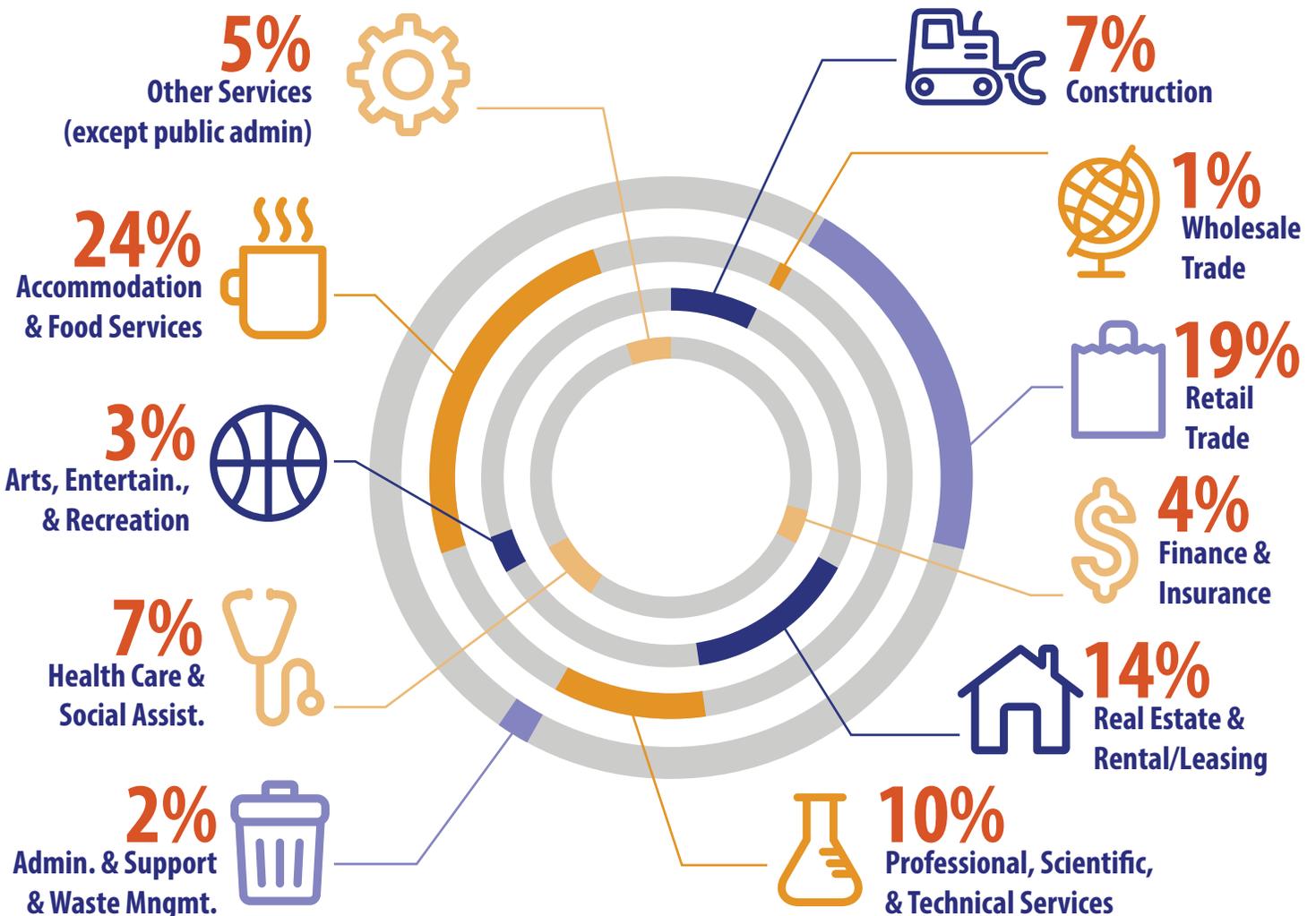
MEASURING THE ECONOMY

The city's economic base can be measured by a number of indicators; type and number of businesses located in the city, employment, and labor force characteristics are the most typically used measurements. Because this is a resort community, real estate valuation and capital investment are also useful metrics. Using this data, the local economy can be compared to

the regional economy or to the economy of other coastal resort communities. Trend analysis of historic data can be used for predicting future growth, but only with an understanding that its predictive capability is limited by the assumption that past economic conditions will continue into the future.

▼ *Business types in North Myrtle Beach according to the 2012 US Census Bureau's Survey of Business Owners. This chart shows the percentage of the ten business types that makeup the labor force, plus a category for "other services except public administration". The largest business type is Accommodation and Food Services with 24% and the smallest business type is wholesale trade at 1%.*

Types of Business

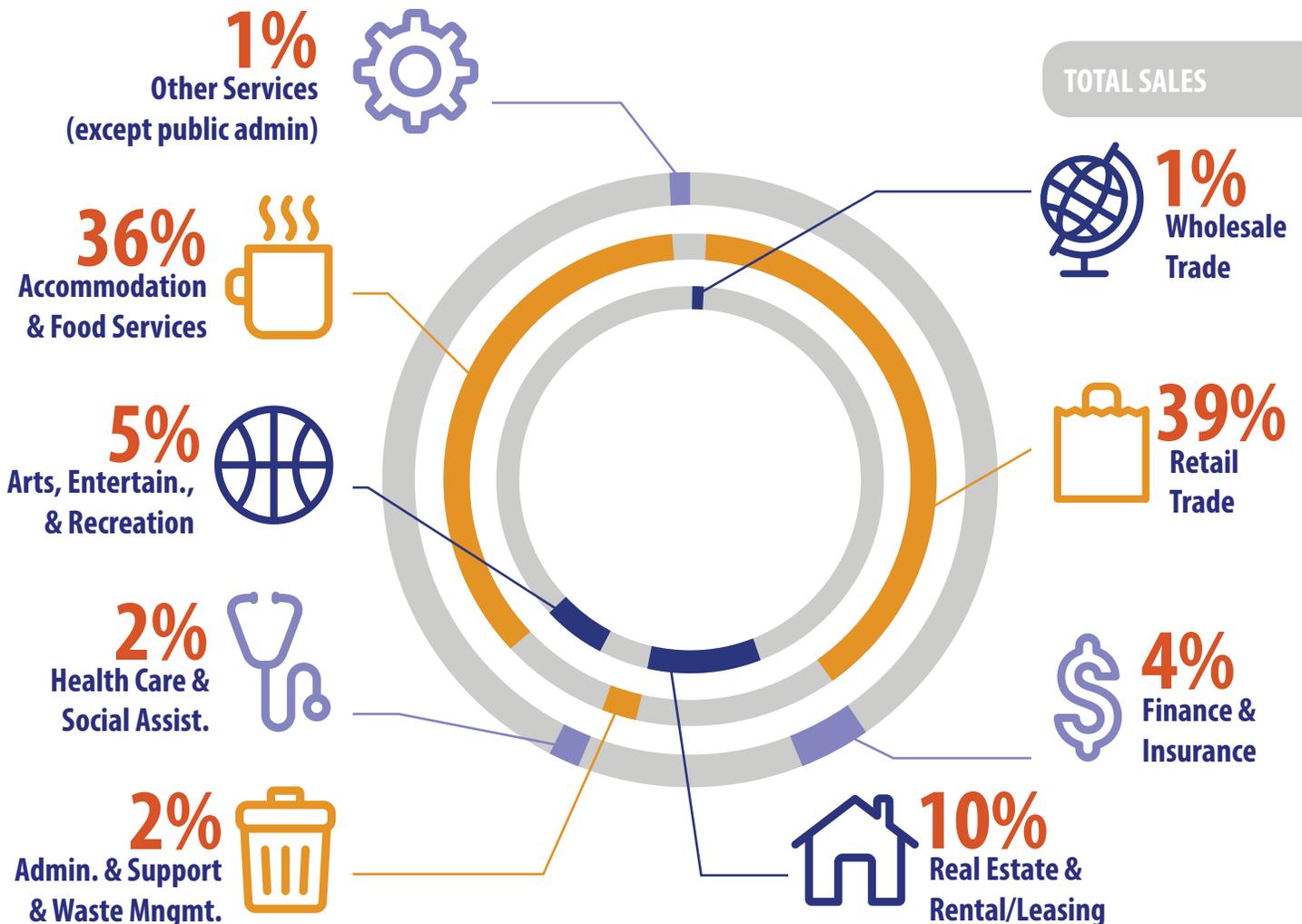


COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

Based on the US Census Bureau 2012 Survey of Business Owners, there were 2,286 businesses located in the city at that time. Accommodation and food services made up the largest percentage of firms with paid employees at 24%, followed closely by retail trade at 19%, real estate and rental and leasing at 14%, and professional, scientific, and technical services at 10%. Retail trade was the single largest revenue producer and made up 39% of sales receipts in 2012. Accommodation and food services receipts followed at 36%, and receipts from real estate and rental and leasing were 10% of the total.

US Highway 17, which channels 40,000 automobile trips per day in the off-season, and nearly 70,000 in peak-season, is the premier site for retail and food services; Ocean Boulevard is the primary location for accommodations and real estate. Barefoot Landing, a festival shopping experience, offers a variety of entertainment activities such as Alligator Adventure, House of Blues, and Alabama Theater with restaurants and shops in an outdoor and naturalized setting along the Intracoastal Waterway. The principal access corridors to the beach—Main Street, Sea Mountain Highway, 17th Avenue South, 37th Avenue South, and 48th Avenue South—are secondary growth areas.

▼ Total sales, receipts, or value of shipments of firms with paid employees. This chart shows the top nine values.



LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS

The U.S. Census Bureau provides labor and employment data for the city’s permanent population. However, this data does not necessarily reflect the characteristics of employment by businesses within the city. The most recent source of job data for city businesses is the 2012 Economic Census. An economic census is taken every five years and includes resident and non-resident employment.

Over half of the city’s work-eligible population is in the labor force. Most workers drive alone to work and have a commute that averages 19.7 minutes. The top occupation was management, business, science, and arts occupations followed by

service occupations, and sales and office occupations. According to the 2010 census, the median household income was \$45,780 in the city. The median earnings for full-time, year-round workers in the city was \$30,189 for males and \$22,119 for females.

In 2010, most of the workforce was employed in service establishments, followed by arts and entertainment, then retail. Most sectors increased with the exception of public administration.

	# of Establishments	Sales, Shipment, or Revenue (\$1,000)	Annual Payroll (\$1,000)	# of Employees
CONSTRUCTION	172	46,206	5	C
WHOLESALE TRADE	45	9,755	396	12
RETAIL TRADE	258	387,234	39,316	1,785
FINANCE & INSURANCE	147	42,814	7,682	196
REAL ESTATE & RENTAL/LEASING	510	121,963	16,990	700
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, & TECH. SERVICES	288	5	5	B
ADMIN. & SUPPORT & WASTE MANAGEMENT	136	21,499	12,660	588
HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	84	18,571	8,541	289
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, & RECREATION	116	50,805	14,398	777
ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD SERVICES	172	340,159	74,785	3,599
OTHER SERVICES (EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION)	288	14,336	4,989	294

► Employment in 2012 for the top economic sectors.

	1980	1990	2000	2010
AGRICULTURE/ FORESTRY/MINING	44	44	23	27
TRANSPORTATION, WAREHOUSING, PUBLIC UTILITIES	74	106	162	182
RETAIL/WHOLESALE	528	1,534	1,111	1,149
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	65	133	146	104
REAL ESTATE, BANKING, & INSURANCE	172	370	563	731
SERVICES	409	835	2,229	1,761
MANUFACTURING	157	392	232	246
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT	275	676	509	1,347
CONSTRUCTION	165	403	566	728
TOTALS	172	4,394	5,541	6,275

▲ Resident employment over time; reflects growth in the population.

ATTRACTING & RETAINING

In 2008, the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Horry County stated that one of the major obstacles for many local areas working to diversify an economy and achieve higher wages was the availability and quality of the local workforce. For Horry County it was estimated in the 2010 census that the labor force participation rate was 64.4%.

Examples of top five employment options:



▲ Retail (Boulineau's Ace Hardware)



▲ Marketing (Elliott Beach Rentals)



▲ Government (City of North Myrtle Beach)



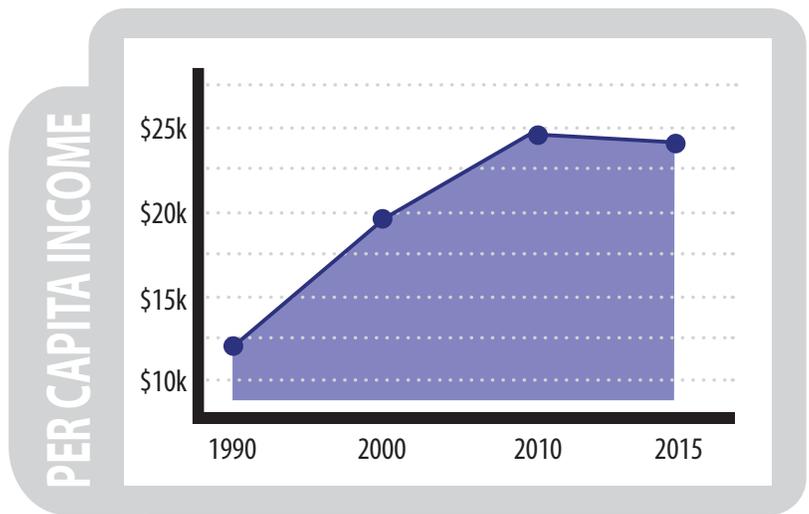
▲ Arts & Entertainment (House of Blues)



▲ Resorts (Avista)

INVESTMENT TRENDS

There are several other indicators that can be used to measure the stability of the local economy. In a resort economy where two-thirds of the housing is second home or investment property, average housing price is a measure of economic vitality. Capital investment, the amount of money that private development is willing to put into a community, can also be used as an indicator of construction trends, new jobs, and confidence in a community's economic stability. These indicators can be tracked over time as a method of predicting future trends.



▲ Horry County per capita income (Horry County Envision 2025 Population Projections and US Census Bureau: 1989-\$12,385; 1999-\$19,949; 2009-\$24,790; and 2015-\$24,094.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT

In recent years, the two largest redeveloped sites in North Myrtle Beach have been North Beach Plantation, located at the site of the former Barefoot RV Resort Park, and Seabrook Plantation/Coastal North Town Center/Robber’s Roost Neighborhood, located at the site of the former Robber’s Roost golf course. Community redevelopment efforts in the City of North Myrtle Beach should work to identify all possible sources for both private and public investment.

There are several possible vehicles for public improvement funding to spur development or redevelopment of an area. Tax increment financing captures anticipated increases in

tax revenue that result from redevelopment. Municipal improvement districts allow for financing of certain localized improvements such as public utilities and storm drainage by assessing property within the district. Impact fees are allowed for certain improvements such as stormwater drainage and sewage disposal. Community development designation can be used to redevelop blighted areas through acquisition, demolition, and resale. As we move forward, private/public partnerships with the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce and private stakeholders will continue to play an important role in future redevelopment.



▲ Street view image of 48th Avenue South at North Beach Plantation



▲ Aerial photo from 2005 showing the trailer park



▲ Aerial photo from 2014 showing the new North Beach Plantation



▲ Street view image of US Highway 17 and Seabrook Plantation Way



▲ Aerial photo from 2009 of the former Robber's Roost Golf Course



▲ Aerial photo from 2017 showing Coastal North and the Robber's Roost neighborhood

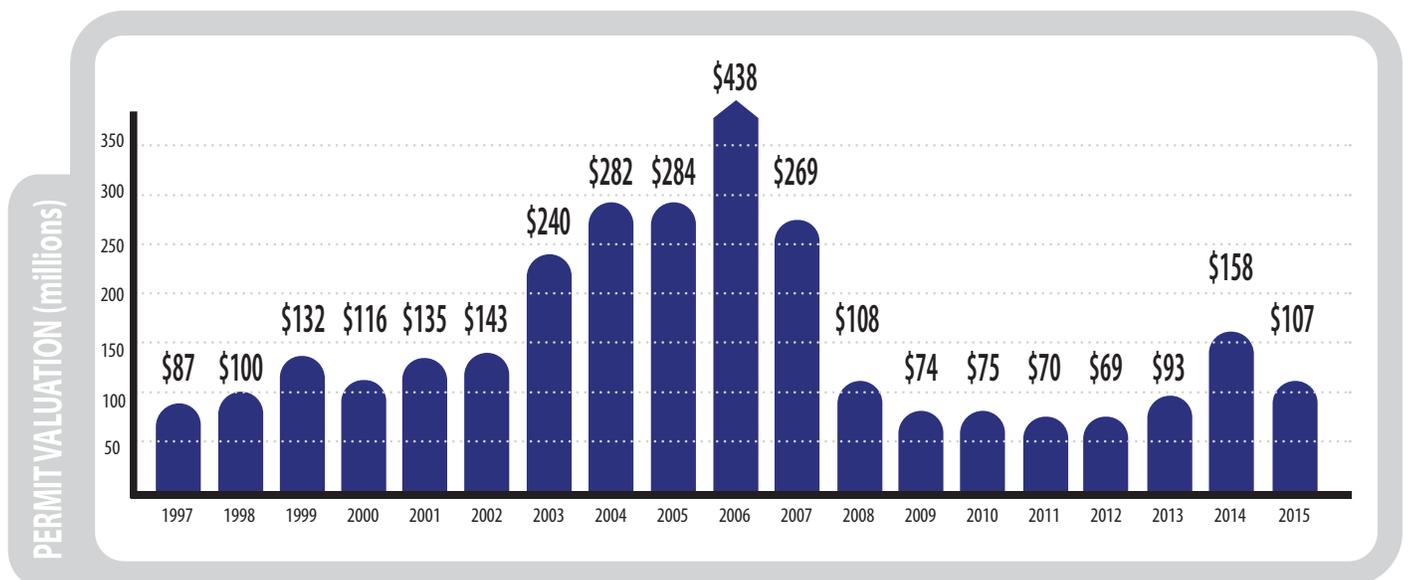
PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Capital investment is represented by the cost of new construction in residential, commercial, and public sectors. Such investment represents economic growth from new construction jobs and new permanent jobs for the businesses being built. Redevelopment allows for removal of dilapidated structures, and replacement with structures that meet new building and other codes. In December 2007, the United States slipped into a major recession affecting banks, mortgage brokers, and decimating real estate markets.

Between 1997 and 2005, the City of North Myrtle Beach experienced a steady increase in permit valuation with a major construction boom in 2006. In 2006, building valuations were \$438 million dollars; most of the building permits were multi-family and hotel/motel construction.

In 2007, there was a 61% decrease in permit valuation due to the recession. For 2007-2009, the city issued about the same number of permits, but the valuations were less.

In looking at trends in permit valuations, it helps to look at composite factors—type of unit and value per type of unit—in order to determine which factors most influence economic development. For example, the relatively low valuation for 2008-2009 was due in part to the low number of multifamily units and hotel/motel units being constructed. All types of construction were affected by the economic downturn, except for commercial. The lack of decrease in commercial valuation could be explained by the fact that sometimes it is a lagging indicator of a recessionary cycle.



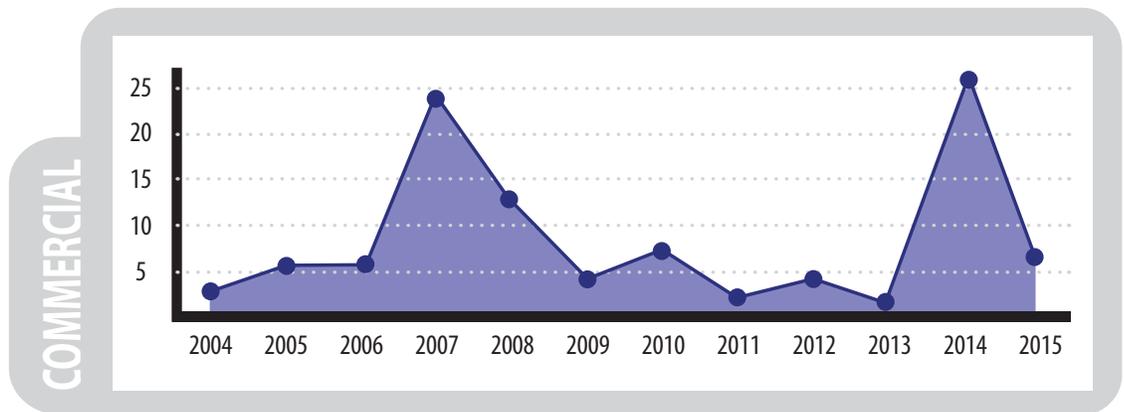
▲ This chart shows the permit valuations in the millions from 1997–2015. The amount of money earned from permits peaked in 2006, before the recession, and bottomed out in 2012.

In 2009, 1 and 2 family structures and commercial permits were strong, but still below the highs seen in the mid-2000s. Looking at the figures, an interesting thing happened—2006 was a boom year for all residential construction, but the commercial boom lagged one year behind.

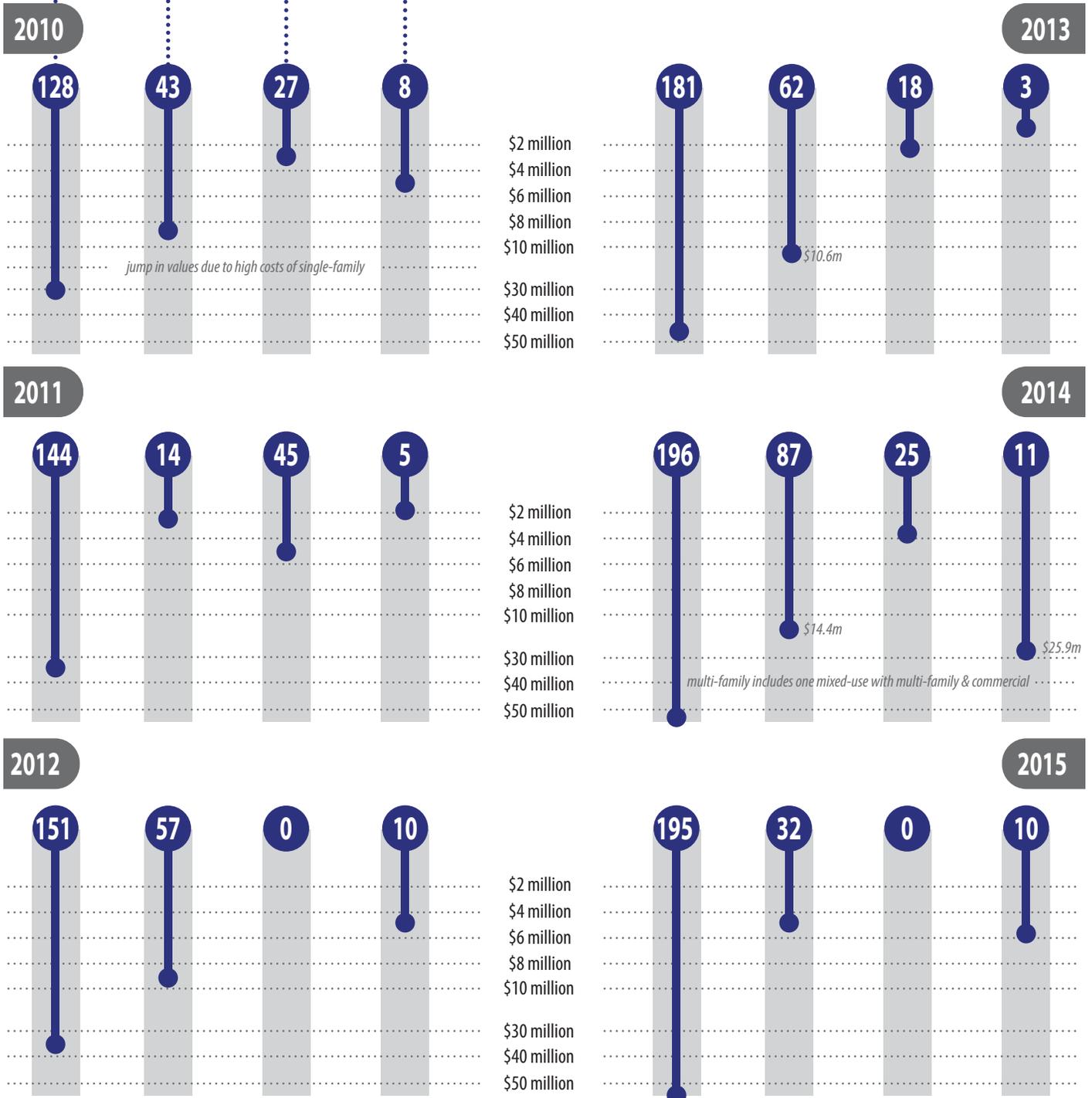
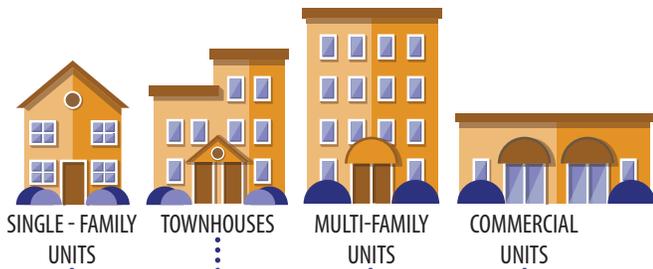
Between July 2010 and July 2015, the City of North Myrtle Beach permitted 1,045 new residential units according to the North Myrtle Beach Building Department: down slightly from the 1,094 permitted between 2004 and 2009. However, for the most part new construction and the accompanying value has been steady over the last six years. The rate of single-family home construction in North Myrtle Beach has grown from 128 units in 2010 to 195 units in 2015, with the total value over the six years equaling almost \$252 million. The amount of new townhouses, multi-family units, and commercial units has fluctuated over the last six years, but still created over \$108 million in construction value. The total valuation, which includes all new construction, permits, repairs, alterations, etc., in 2010 was \$75 million; this increased to \$107 million in 2015.

Since the total valuation mirrors hotel and multifamily construction, conditions affecting such development will affect capital investment in the city. Factors influencing the number of multifamily units constructed may be external, such as changes in lending practices, interest rates, or availability of construction loans.

To project investment out five years, three different trend analyses were performed on the permit valuation data: Linear regression, polynomial regression, and moving averages analysis were used. The moving averages and formulaic predictions had slightly different results ranging from \$100 million to \$350 million in 2008. Of the two, the polynomial trend is perhaps more accurate. Neither analysis allows for modification due to changing conditions, such as reductions in tourism or changes in investment strategies. The moving average describes current trends and cannot predict fluctuations beyond the next five-year projection period. The moving averages analysis is useful for showing what the trend looks like on average; no individual reporting period is given greater weight.



► The graphic on the right shows the number of newly constructed buildings and the accompanying construction values, organized in columns by building type. Each chart represents a new year from 2010-2015, from top left with 2010 down and over until reaching the graph in the bottom right for 2015. The first number in each graph is the number of single-family homes, the second number shows townhouses, the third shows multi-family units, and the last numbers represent commercial units. The length of the purple lines correspond with the construction values. Please note: Construction values are shown in increments of \$2 million until the value reaches \$10 million, then the value increases to \$30 million and continues in \$10 million increments. Additionally, in 2014 there is one mixed-use building (residential with commercial) included in the multi-family unit column.



HOUSING PRICES

A second indicator of health of the real estate and hospitality/tourism sectors is housing price trends. According to Zillow, home values in South Carolina have increased 4.3% since 2014 and are expected to rise an additional 3.3% over the next year. The South Carolina real estate market anticipates continued, steady growth.

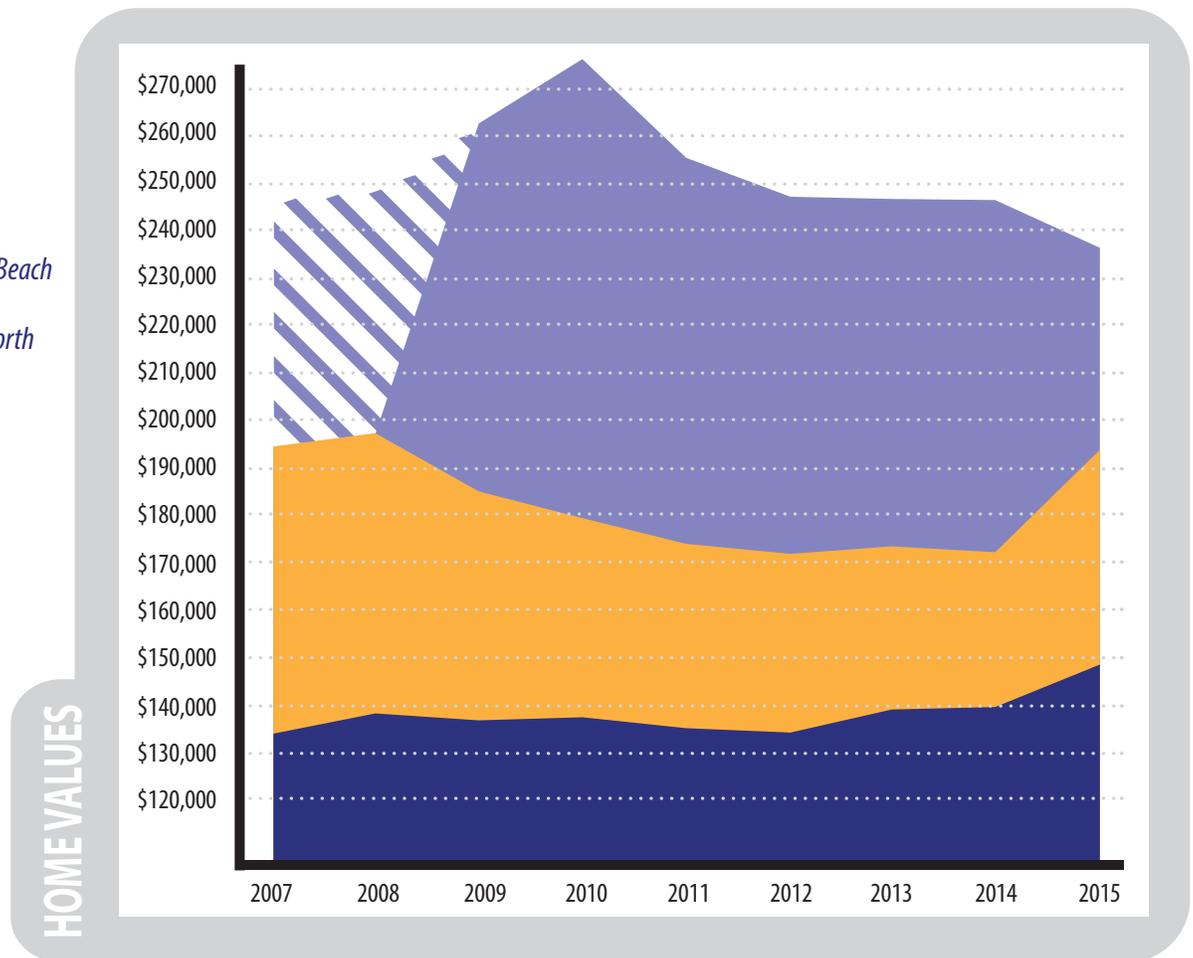
According to the 2014 U.S. Census Bureau's, American Community Survey, the median home value in South Carolina is \$137,600; \$157,700 in Horry County; and \$248,800 within North Myrtle Beach. The median list price per square foot in the city is \$164; this

number is higher than that of the Myrtle Beach (\$126) and the state of South Carolina (\$113). Market trends show a slow increase in the median listing prices with a current average of \$249,000 according to Realtor.com.

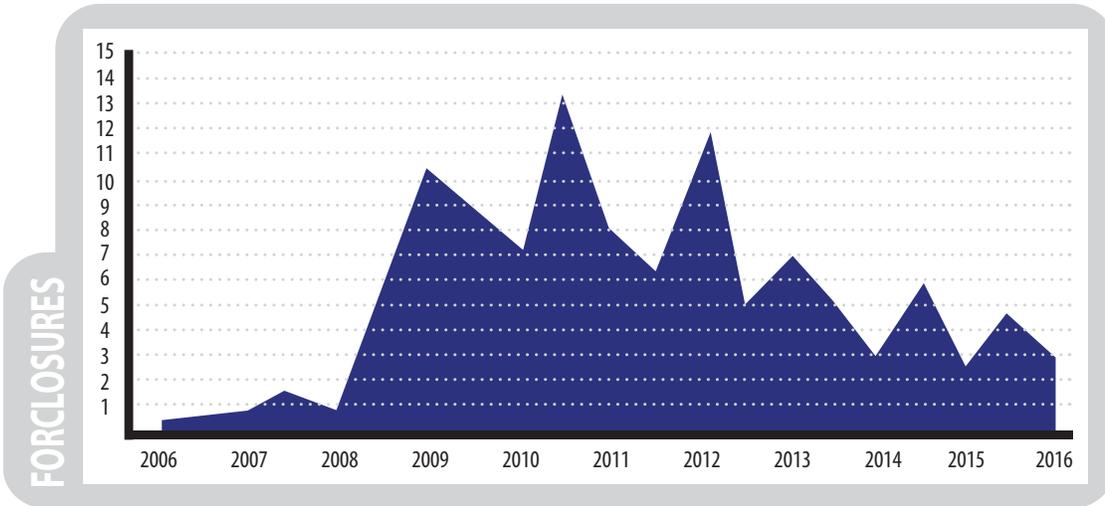
Zillow states that, "Foreclosures will be a factor impacting home values in the next several years. In North Myrtle Beach 2.7 homes are foreclosed (per 10,000). This is greater than the national value of 0.9." Home ownership rates have dropped which has led to a large shortage of rental properties and an increase in rental rates.

LEGEND

- USA
- SC
- North Myrtle Beach
- No data for North Myrtle Beach 2007-2008



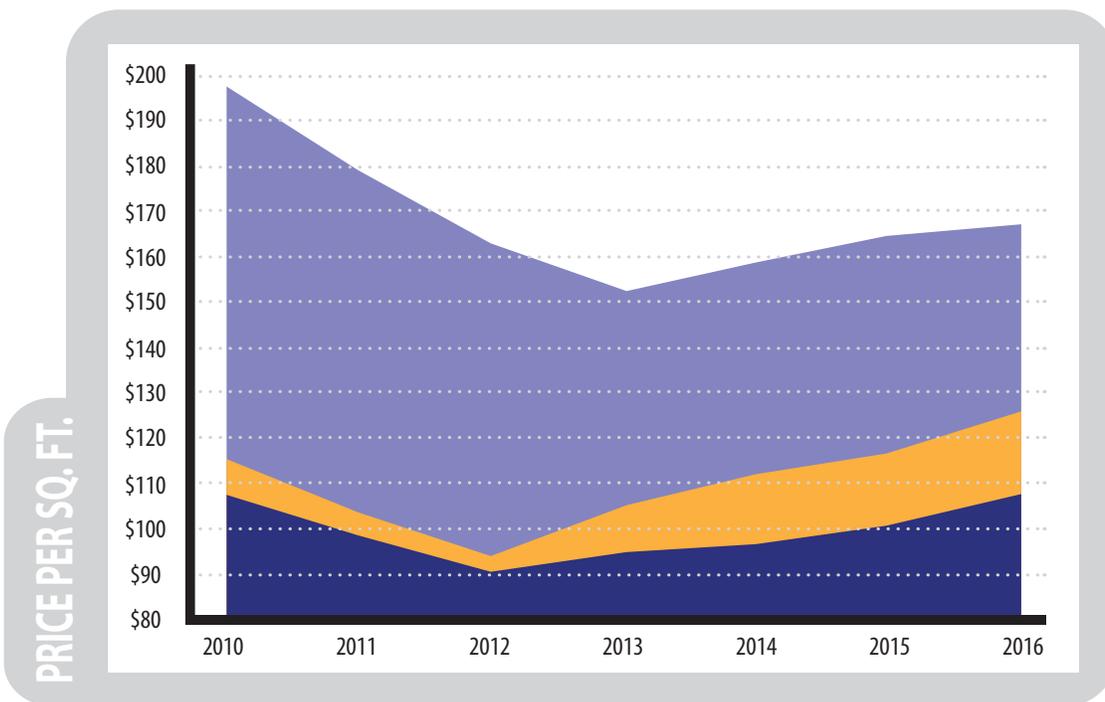
▲ Comparison chart of median home values in the United States, South Carolina, and North Myrtle Beach (2014).



Foreclosure rates in North Myrtle Beach from 2006 to 2016. The rate peaked in the middle of 2010 and was the lowest in 2006.

Foreclosures will be a factor impacting home values in the next several years. In North Myrtle Beach 2.7 homes are foreclosed (per 10,000). This is greater than the national value of 0.9.

- Zillow



Comparison chart of median list price per square foot for the United States, South Carolina, and North Myrtle Beach (2014).

LEGEND

- USA
- SC
- North Myrtle Beach

ECONOMIC SECTORS

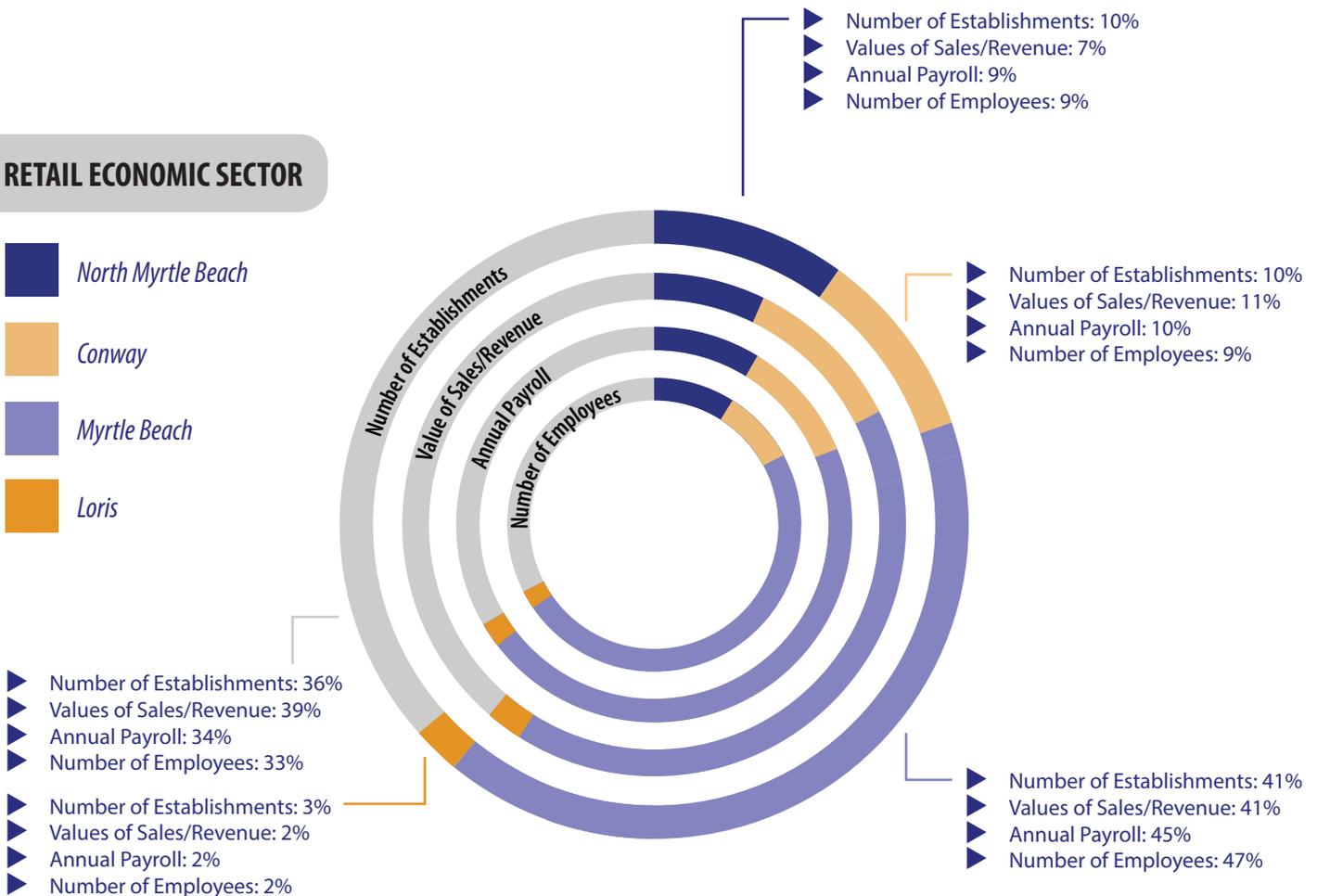
In comparison to the other cities within Horry County, North Myrtle Beach does less business in retail sales than would be expected for a tourist population of this size. Although the city accommodates approximately one-third of the seasonal population, retail sales make up less than 10% of the total retail sales in the county. Retail sales from Myrtle Beach make up the majority of county revenue. Although accommodations and food service revenue in 2012 made up 22% of the county revenues, Myrtle Beach grabs 51% of the market. The lag in market share in these two sectors is seen as a nightly exodus of tourists heading south on US Highway

17 to Broadway at the Beach, the Market Common, Restaurant Row, and other destination attractions outside of the city's jurisdiction.

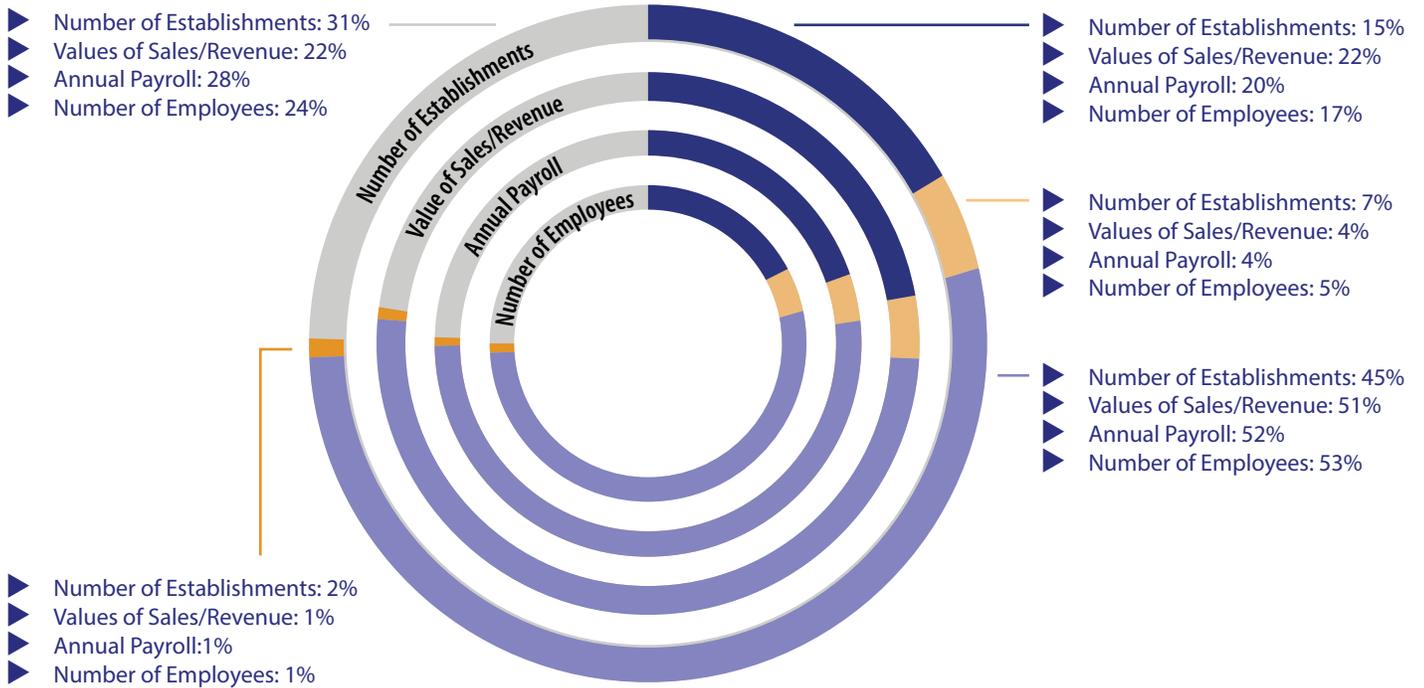
Real Estate in North Myrtle Beach accounts for nearly 16% of the sales and revenue in Horry County. North Myrtle Beach is consistent in regards to revenues, payrolls, and number of employees all comprising between 15% and 17% of the county. Myrtle Beach remains the top producer with 36% of the establishments, 50% of the revenue, 51% of the annual payroll, and 50% of the employees.

RETAIL ECONOMIC SECTOR

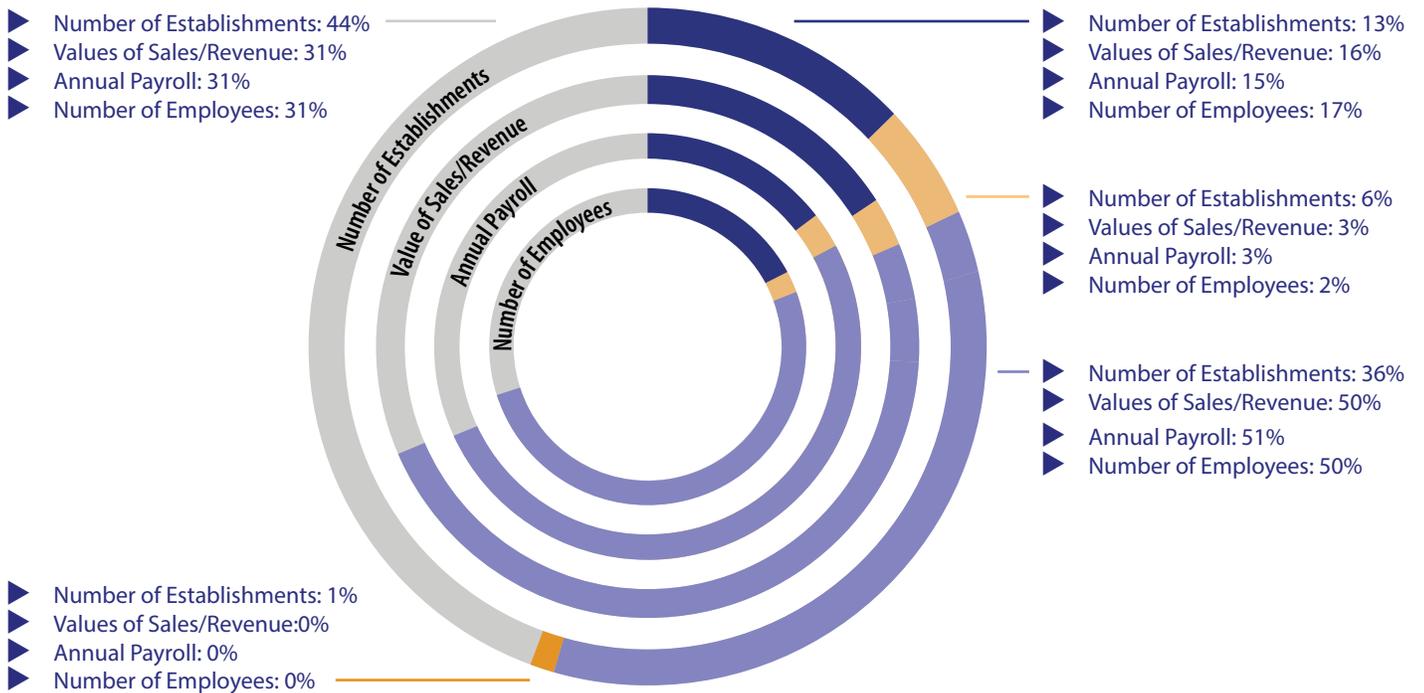
- North Myrtle Beach
- Conway
- Myrtle Beach
- Loris



ACCOMMODATIONS & FOOD SERVICE ECONOMIC SECTOR



REAL ESTATE ECONOMIC SECTOR

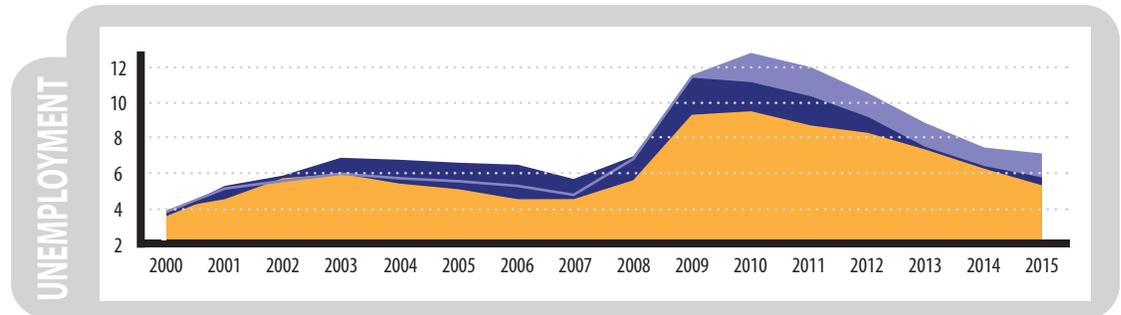


REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

While unemployment rates were low in both the city and region in 2000, those rates doubled by 2008 due to the national economic recession; from 2000 to 2008, unemployment in the region rose from 3.82% to 7.20%. Beginning with the Great Recession in 2008, the Myrtle Beach-Conway-Georgetown metropolitan statistical area saw a peak unemployment rate of 12.3% in 2010. Since then, the city’s unemployment rate has steadily decreased; the 2015 rate was 7.1%.

LEGEND

- USA
- SC
- North Myrtle Beach



▲ Comparison chart of unemployment rates from the United States, South Carolina, and North Myrtle Beach.

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, & Tourism maintains data about the economic impact of travel and tourism in our state. The chart below shows the impact of domestic travel in South Carolina for the top three coastal counties in the state.

	Horry	Charleston	Beaufort
EXPENDITURES (\$ millions)	\$3,924.10	\$2,224.81	\$1,251.53
PAYROLL (\$ millions)	\$733.00	\$434.86	\$237.59
EMPLOYMENT (thousands)	40.20	22.86	13.53
STATE TAX RECEIPTS (\$ millions)	\$244.40	\$130.57	\$75.70
LOCAL TAX RECEIPTS (\$ millions)	\$147.40	\$73.44	\$37.18

► Chart showing the impact of travel in South Carolina for the top three coastal counties.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

9.1 Attract high quality jobs and positive economic activity.

9.1.1 Issues and conflicts that inhibit economic growth and neighborhood development should be addressed to provide a healthy economic base.

9.1.2 Provide training, incentives, and incubator facilities to foster new and small businesses.

9.2 Prioritize infill and redevelopment in downtown North Myrtle Beach.

9.2.1 Strengthen Main Street as a local and regional destination for specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, employment, culture, and the arts.

9.2.2 Revise zoning and land use patterns to support mixed-use infill development.

9.2.3 Provide incentives that make infill redevelopment attractive to a broad range of individuals. Target key infill residential opportunities including small lot and row homes, apartments and condominiums, and live/work loft space.

9.2.4 Pursue an aggressive program to recruit quality development and consider incentives to attract these uses.

9.2.5 Use utility extension policies to discourage the inappropriate expansion of utilities to undeveloped areas.

9.2.6 Provide incentives to renovate existing buildings in and around Main Street and other town centers (i.e. façade grants or amortization of impact fees).

9.3 Identify targeted businesses and investment in North Myrtle Beach.

9.3.1 Work with the regional economic development organizations, such as the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Council (MBREDC) and local chambers of commerce to develop strategies to attract and retain entrepreneurs and local business.



LEGEND

- New, infill development*
- Existing buildings*
- New, shared parking lots behind development*

◀ *Infill and redevelopment opportunities identified on Main Street.*



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10

THE WAY WE IMPLEMENT

“Long range planning does not deal with future decisions, but with the future of present decisions.”

- Peter F. Drucker



In accordance with § 6-29-510 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the city is required to include as part of its comprehensive plan a, “Priority investment element that analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools. The recommendation of those projects for public expenditure must be done through

coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.”

The following list summarizes the priorities of the community as identified by citizens, planners, and officials. The project list should be referenced while this plan is being implemented.

Also included in this chapter are strategies for the implementation of this plan and how it should be used as a tool in planning efforts over the next five years.

▲ *Overhead view of North Myrtle Beach looking southward.*

GOALS & STRATEGIES

10.1 Create strategies to implement the growth and development goals for public and private investment.

10.1.1 Update the plan every 5 years.

The plan shall be updated every 5 years to ensure that it stays relevant and to add goals and strategies that may emerge.

10.1.2 Explore new institutional arrangements.

Where appropriate, new institutional arrangements to facilitate multi-jurisdictional cooperation on funding issues should be explored.

10.1.3 Develop an overall funding strategy and selection of revenue sources to address the capital and any possible operating funding gap.

The following factors should guide the selection of revenue sources to address the capital and operating funding gap:

- Revenue Potential: Whether the tool can generate substantial sums of monies to fund capital infrastructure;
- Geographic Application: Whether the tool can be applied across the region;
- Legislative Authorization: Whether the tool requires legislative authorization;
- Technical/Administrative Ease: The ease of administering the tool; and
- Public Acceptability: How citizens will accept the tool.

PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROJECTS

Transportation Projects for the City of North Myrtle Beach								
Project Type	Project Name	From	To	Description	Time Frame	Funding Sources	\$	Total Cost
New Construction	New Waterway Bridge	US Highway 17	Champions Boulevard	Construct connector between US 17 and Champions Blvd between 17th & 21st Ave.	Long-term	Non-Traditional	\$\$\$	\$31,100,000.00
New Construction	Champions Boulevard Extension	Current Terminus	Long Bay Road	New West of Waterway Parkway; 2 lanes divided with multipurpose path on 5 lane ROW	Short-term	GSATS with developer participation	\$\$	\$7,500,000.00
New Construction	Champions Boulevard Connector	Long Bay Road	Water Tower Road	New connecting road with multipurpose path connecting Waterlilly to Watertower Road.	Mid-term	GSATS with developer participation	\$\$	\$8,000,000.00
New Construction	Madison Connector	Madison Drive	Poinsett Street	Connect Madison Drive to Poinsett Street	Long-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$600,000.00
New Construction	Sandridge Loop Extension			Connect Sandridge Loop to Bournetrail-Water Lilly Rd	Mid-term	GSATS with developer participation	\$\$	\$8,000,000.00
New Construction	Wiley Connector	US Highway 17	Wiley Drive	Extend 30th Avenue South to Wiley Drive	Long-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$1,000,000.00
New Construction	Outrigger/Hilton Drive Connector	15th Avenue South	27th Avenue South	Connect Outrigger Road with Hilton Drive near 27th Avenue South	Long-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$1,750,000.00
New Construction & Widening	US Highway 17 Bridges			Widen US 17 Bridges in North Myrtle Beach and Little River; Interchange and bridge improvements at SC 9, SC 90, and Sea Mountain Highway; additional grade separation at SC 9	Mid-term	Non-Traditional	\$\$\$	\$25,000,000.00
New Construction, Paving, & Widening	Edge Parkway to Sandridge Road Connector	Robert Edge Parkway	Sandridge Road	Connect Sandridge Rd to Edge Parkway signal	Mid-term	GSATS with developer participation	\$\$\$	\$12,000,000.00
Widening	Little River Neck Road			Widen Little River Neck Road to 3 lanes with multipurpose path; construct roundabout north of Hill St.	Short-term	GSATS	\$\$\$	\$12,000,000.00
Widening	US Highway 17 in Windy Hill - Phase 2			Widen for dual left at intersections; 2nd phase of current improvements	Short-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$9,000,000.00
Widening	2nd Avenue North			Widening to 3 lanes, with bike lane, and multipurpose path.	Mid-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$3,000,000.00

Transportation Projects for the City of North Myrtle Beach (continued)								
Project Type	Project Name	From	To	Description	Time Frame	Funding Sources	\$	Total Cost
Widening	Champions Boulevard			Widen Water Tower Road, Champions Blvd from SC31 Interchange to Edge Parkway and SC90	Long-term	GSATS	\$\$\$	
Widening	South Ocean Boulevard Widening	17th Avenue South	28th Avenue South	Improving to a 3-lane cross-section in Crescent Beach	Short-term		\$\$	\$4,500,000.00
Widening	11th Avenue North Widening	Golfview Drive	US Highway 17	Street and Intersection Improvements	Short-term	City of NMB with developer participation	\$\$	\$2,500,000.00
Interchange Improvements	Robert Edge Parkway - SC 31 Interchange			Edge Parkway - SC 31 interchange ramp improvements	Long-term	GSATS	\$\$	\$6,000,000.00
Intersection Improvements	US Highway 17 Intersection Improvements	Citywide				GSATS	\$	
Repaving	Street Resurfacing	Citywide			Annually		\$\$	\$2,000,000.00 per year
Pedestrian Improvements	Sidewalk/ Bicycle Path	Citywide			Annually		\$	\$150,000.00 per year

Parks & Recreation				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Enhance Off-season Uses of North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex	NMB Sports Park	Short-term	\$	\$25,000.00
Enhance Pedestrian Connectivity at Sports Park	NMB Sports Park	Short-term	\$	\$95,000.00
Fitness Center Building Addition	NMB Aquatic & Fitness Center	Short-term	\$	\$660,000.00
Park Maintenance Building	NMB Sports Park	Short-term	\$	\$350,000.00
Update Parks & Rec Master Plan	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	\$150,000.00

Storm - Water				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
18th Avenue Outfall	Crescent Beach	Short-term	\$\$\$	\$12,000,000.00
Citywide drainage improvements	Citywide	Annually	\$	\$500,000.00/year
6 future ocean outfalls planned	Citywide	Short-Long-term	\$\$\$	

Overhead Wired Utilities				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Ocean Blvd	Citywide	Annually	\$\$	\$2-4 million/year
US Highway 17	Citywide	Annually	\$\$	\$2-4 million/year
Solid Waste Facility				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Transfer station improvements		Short-term	\$	\$650,000
Public Safety				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Construct Fire Station #6	Parkway Group PDD	Mid-term/As Development Warrants	\$\$	
Water/Sewer CIP				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
White Point Water Tank	Windy Hill	Short-term	\$\$	\$2,500,000.00
North GSWSA water line connection		Short-term	\$\$	\$2,500,000.00
Elevated Water Tank	Little River Neck Road	Short-term	\$\$	\$2,500,000.00
Water/sewer system replacement		Annually	\$\$	\$3 million/year
WWTP capacity upgrade		Short-term	\$\$\$	\$8,000,000.00
Beaches				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Beach renourishment	Citywide	Short-Long-term	\$\$\$	
Update the Beachfront Management Plan every 5 years	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Citywide				
Project Name	Location	Time Frame	\$	Total Cost
Main St Improvements Hillside to Ocean Blvd	Ocean Drive	Short-term	\$\$	\$600,000.00
Oceanfront boardwalk 5th S to 5th N	Ocean Drive	Short-term	\$\$	\$2,000,000.00
Upgrade and redesign NMB boat ramp	Ocean Drive	Short-term	\$	\$200,000.00
Master plan for city campus	Ocean Drive	2019-2020	\$	\$50,000.00
Wayfinding Master Plan Update	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Tree Planting Master Plan Update	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Cultural Facility Center	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Golf cart Master Plan	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Updated Seasonal Population Study	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	
Electric Charging Station Master Plan	Citywide	Mid-term	\$	

Legend \$ = \$0-1,000,000 \$\$ = \$1,000,000-10,000,000 \$\$\$ = \$10,000,000+

COMPREHENSIVE GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOALS	STRATEGIES	HOW WE FUNCTION: COMMUNITY FACILITIES
2.1		Provide for a variety of facilities and resources that expand and enhance the community's cultural and educational offerings.
2.2		Maintain criteria, regulations, and procedures that allow for the siting of essential public facilities as well as government and community facilities.
	2.2.1	Work Cooperatively with Horry County, the state and/or other cities to site essential public facilities and to promote intergovernmental partnerships to reduce overall costs and maximum use.
	2.2.2	Consider the following when locating essential public facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility to the people served; • Protection of neighborhoods; • Preservation of natural resources; • The cost effectiveness of service delivery • Location near transit and mixed use centers; and • Goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.
2.3		Ensure a system of parks, trails and open spaces adequate for a wide variety of active and passive leisure pursuits, contributing to the quality of life within the City of North Myrtle Beach.
	2.3.1	Update the Parks and Open Space Master Plan to identify the location of parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities based on the future growth of North Myrtle Beach.
	2.3.2	Open spaces should be interconnected to facilitate activities, such as walking and bicycling, and to create ease of access to and from recreation sites.
	2.3.3	Seek to establish connections to sidewalks, bike lanes, greenways, and other recreational thoroughfares of surrounding communities.
	2.3.4	Strategies should be developed to connect the North Myrtle Beach Park and Sports Complex and Central Park to Main Street in North Myrtle Beach.
	2.3.5	Require new residential developments to provide land for neighborhood or pocket parks or other amenities.
	2.3.6	Plan, develop, and operate diverse recreation activities for citizens of all ages.
	2.3.7	Continue to collaborate with Horry County School District to co-locate and jointly use park, recreation, and school facilities to facilitate transit use and bicycle and pedestrian access.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	THE HISTORY: CULTURAL/HISTORIC RESOURCES
3.1		Protect the historic resources that are important to North Myrtle Beach.
	3.1.1	Identify, and to the maximum extent practical, preserve historic buildings and sites.
	3.1.2	Existing community events and programs should be supported and expanded where possible.
3.2		Provide a variety of facilities that enhance the community's cultural and educational offerings.
	3.2.1	Support the continued operation of the historical museum in order to retain, document, and collect the area's history.
	3.2.2	Continue to support cultural and community events, such as the Music on Main concert series, within the Main Street area and look for opportunities to expand events to the 17th and/or 37th Avenue South areas.

	3.2.3	Coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Department to assist with enhancing or improving beach recreation facilities and activities.
	3.2.4	Coordinate with the Public Works Department to assist with enhancing Intracoastal Waterway recreation facilities and activities, i.e. marsh boardwalk.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	THE WAY WE GROW: FUTURE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (LAND USE)
5.1		Encourage high quality mixed-use districts (neighborhood activity centers) consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, office, civic and common open space land uses supported by alternative modes of transportation.
	5.1.1	Neighborhoods are the fundamental unit of development and will be supported by neighborhood or village centers within walking or biking distance.
	5.1.2	Encourage mixed-use projects that contain a variety of uses, and provide necessary supporting public and community facilities.
	5.1.3	Locate mixed use centers on likely future transit corridors and include multi-modal facilities.
	5.1.4	Direct higher density development towards new and existing village centers as well as along US Highway 17.
	5.1.5	Encourage infill development and the redevelopment of aging commercial areas to develop at higher densities and to create mixed-use, walkable centers (Incentivize).
	5.1.6	Pro-actively rezone designated activity centers (commercial) to permit higher densities and require mixed-use.
	5.1.7	Ensure architecture, landscape design, and site planning of mixed-use projects will be of the highest quality; emphasize a pedestrian orientation and safe, convenient access between uses.
	5.1.8	Ensure that adequate parks and/or other public spaces are incorporated within mixed-use projects and areas to allow for social interaction and community activities.
5.2		Reinforce the original main streets of Cherry Grove, Ocean Drive, Crescent Beach and Windy Hill as the “hearts” of the community.
	5.2.1	Strengthen the identity and character of Main Street, Sea Mountain Highway, 17th Avenue South, and 37th Avenue South by preserving the historic character of the community, while allowing for new structures that are architecturally compatible with, and complementary to, the existing urban fabric.
5.3		Encourage pedestrian-scaled, mixed-use development in each focus area.
	5.3.1	Provide incentives, such as higher density and flexible parking requirements to attract quality development.
	5.3.2	Complete small area plans for each focus area that accommodate future infill and redevelopment with a supportive public realm and mobility network.
	5.3.3	Include specific policies for the focus areas in other planning documents.
	5.3.4	Improve street design on key corridors in North Myrtle Beach, in particular the main streets of the original beaches, in order to create a sense of arrival at key gateways to reinforce the city’s natural, cultural, and historic characteristics.
	5.3.5	Consider the development of a public improvements plan to implement the streetscape and gateway design concepts for Main Street, 37th Avenue South, 17th Avenue South, and Sea Mountain Highway.
5.4		Establish annexation and growth strategies for the City of North Myrtle Beach.
	5.4.1	Establish a future growth strategy and identify areas for future annexation.
	5.4.2	The city should actively pursue annexations of parcels of land that are currently “donut holes” in order to achieve orderly growth while developing a more cohesive and less fragmented city boundary.

	5.4.3	<p>No annexation application shall be recommended by the planning department or the planning commission, or granted by the city council unless a determination has been made that the request is in compliance with all of the following standards related to the annexation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consideration of whether the proposed petition for annexation will have a favorable or unfavorable effect on the city's budget; • Whether the proposed annexation will have a negative effect on established levels of service established for public facilities and services and indicate how and when city services will be provided; • Whether the annexation may result in circumstances that are inconsistent with the city's comprehensive plan; • Whether the boundary of the real property to be annexed is reasonably compact and contiguous to the boundary of the corporate city limits; and • Whether the petition is consistent with Title 5, Chapter 3 of the <i>South Carolina Code of Laws</i>.
5.5		Promote Main Street as an attractive, vibrant, historic, pedestrian-oriented shopping, dining and entertainment district for residents and visitors.
	5.5.1	Consider the adoption of design guidelines for Main Street in order to foster a sense of place to attract residents and visitors.
	5.5.2	Establish a central "Main Street" character through attention to site and building design, land use mix, housing opportunities, and enhanced streetscape improvements.
	5.5.3	Establish a main street façade grant program to encourage the reinvestment and redevelopment of existing buildings/structures along the main street corridor.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	THE WAY WE TRAVEL: TRANSPORTATION
6.1		Continue to foster and implement the city's Complete Streets initiative.
	6.1.1	The widening or construction of new roadways should be sensitive to surrounding land uses.
	6.1.2	The design of each street shall enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.
6.2		Increase connectivity between neighborhoods and mixed use areas of the city including civic facilities.
	6.2.1	Encourage linkage in and around mixed-use areas using a multi-modal circulation network, particularly transit, pedestrian sidewalks/paths, and bicycle and trail systems.
	6.2.2	Encourage connections to Main Street, City Hall, and the Park and Sports Complex.
6.3		Prioritize pedestrians and cyclists where it is appropriate.
	6.3.1	The city shall ensure encourage the safe movement of bicycles and pedestrians and other non-motorized vehicular transportation through the establishment and maintenance of bicycle paths or multi-use greenways within the community.
	6.3.2	The city shall design, locate, and prioritize bicycle lanes and sidewalks or multi-use paths that serve to connect schools, hospitals or medical care facilities, parks and open space areas, beach access locations, commercial activity corridors, and employment centers.
	6.3.3	Design of pedestrian and sidewalk facilities should take into consideration the surrounding environment and ensure the safety of non-motorized travelers and encourage increased use of these systems.
	6.3.4	The city shall require new development and redevelopment to provide for sidewalks, bicycle access, and bicycle parking facilities.

	6.3.5	Bicycle lanes shall be provided wherever turn lanes are constructed and in conjunction with all street resurfacing or reconstruction of local streets. Bike lanes shall be designed at widths that provide cyclists adequate space to operate their bicycles with an acceptable level of comfort.
6.4		Encourage use of light electric neighborhood vehicles.
	6.4.1	The city should develop a golf cart plan to manage golf cart use in the city, address associated problems, and safely accommodate the increasingly-used transportation mode.
6.5		Create attractive centers that best address and prioritize enhancements along the city’s mixed use and commercial corridors.
	6.5.1	Enhance and expand on the city’s signage guidelines to reduce visual clutter.
	6.5.2	Expand the city’s utility burial program to reduce visual congestion and support the area’s natural beauty.
	6.5.3	Develop architectural standards that provide a base-line architectural material treatment along the city’s strategic commercial routes.
6.6		Expand public transit opportunities.
	6.6.1	Work with regional transit providers, Coast RTA, to explore opportunities for enhancement or creation of service within city limits.
	6.6.2	Integrate transit facilities and transit routes within new development where practical.
6.7		Provide parking management solutions that reduce the reliance on the automobile within the city, in particular Main Street.
	6.7.1	Provide a sufficient supply of parking for the Main Street and other town centers with respect to land uses, avoid an oversupply of parking, and make better and more effective use of the existing parking supply resources.
	6.7.2	Shared parking policies should be implemented on Main Street and at other town and activity centers. Develop a coordinated, area-wide approach to parking on Main Street and at other town and activity centers that is based on sharing parking resources and a “park-once” strategy.
	6.7.3	Encourage shared access between adjacent developments.
	6.7.4	Retain existing and develop new on-street parking on Main Street and at other town and activity centers to provide convenient short-term parking for visitors. Focus on providing convenient visitor parking in the central area of Main Street as a priority.
	6.7.5	Encourage the use of the new fee-in-lieu of parking program recently passed by city council allowing for the purchase of required parking (\$25,000 a space) in lieu of providing it within the Main Street Activity Center Overlay for those properties located in the Parking Investment Boundary.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	WHERE WE LIVE: HOUSING
7.1		Provide for a more varied housing stock to attract and retain a more diverse population.
	7.1.1	Promote mixed income neighborhoods throughout North Myrtle Beach and near employment centers and transit facilities, to account for the housing needs of the broadest spectrum of residents possible.
	7.1.2	Revise zoning regulations to incentivize a variety and balance of housing types, including, but not limited to: Multi-family units, apartments, townhomes, quadplexes, duplexes and accessory units that appeal to families, young professionals, seniors and visitors.
	7.1.3	Ensure that residential development is located near activities and facilities that cater to North Myrtle Beach residents’ needs across the span of generations (i.e. schools, churches, sports, and recreational facilities and programs, health facilities, etc.).

GOALS	STRATEGIES	HOW WE SUSTAIN: NATURAL RESOURCES
8.1		Protect and preserve the city’s natural resources to the greatest extent practical.
	8.1.1	Coordinate with other government entities in the management of water resources.
	8.1.2	Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands in the City of North Myrtle Beach.
	8.1.3	Provide for a sustainable form of development with a high quality of life for its residents.
	8.1.4	Minimize potentially harmful environmental and ecologic impacts of development, to the maximum extent practicable, through land development regulations.
	8.1.5	Use development review process to ensure that development plans are approved in floodplain areas only in accordance with established state building codes and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) standards.
	8.1.6	The city should include requirements within the Land Development Regulations to provide measures, so air pollution does not exceed established state or county standards.
	8.1.7	Encourage development that promotes the use of transportation alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, such as mass transit, carpooling, ride-sharing, or use of alternatively fueled commercial vehicles.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	THE WAY WE PROSPER: ECONOMIC
9.1		Attract high quality jobs and positive economic activity.
	9.1.1	Issues and conflicts that inhibit economic growth and neighborhood development should be addressed to provide a healthy economic base.
	9.1.2	Provide training, incentives, and incubator facilities to foster new and small businesses.
9.2		Prioritize infill and redevelopment in downtown North Myrtle Beach.
	9.2.1	Strengthen Main Street as a local and regional destination for specialty shopping, dining, nightlife, employment, culture, and the arts.
	9.2.2	Revise zoning and land use patterns to support mixed-use infill development.
	9.2.3	Provide incentives that make infill redevelopment attractive to a broad range of individuals. Target key infill residential opportunities including small lot and row homes, apartments and condominiums, and live/work loft space.
	9.2.4	Pursue an aggressive program to recruit quality development and consider incentives to attract these uses.
	9.2.5	Use utility extension policies to discourage the inappropriate expansion of utilities to undeveloped areas.
	9.2.6	Provide incentives to renovate existing buildings in and around Main Street and other town centers (i.e. façade grants or amortization of impact fees).
9.3		Identify targeted businesses and investment in North Myrtle Beach.
	9.3.1	Work with the regional economic development organizations, such as the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Council (MBREDC) and local chambers of commerce to develop strategies to attract and retain entrepreneurs and local business.
GOALS	STRATEGIES	THE WAY WE IMPLEMENT
10.1		Create strategies to implement the growth and development goals for public and private investment.
	10.1.1	Update the plan every 5 years.
	10.1.2	Explore new institutional arrangements.
	10.1.3	Develop an overall funding strategy and selection of revenue sources to address the capital and any possible operating funding gap.

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Visioning Process

A

APPENDIX

The initial public engagement process for the North Myrtle Beach Comprehensive Plan was conducted by Seamon Whiteside and Urban Edge Studio. The final report from that engagement is attached on the following pages.

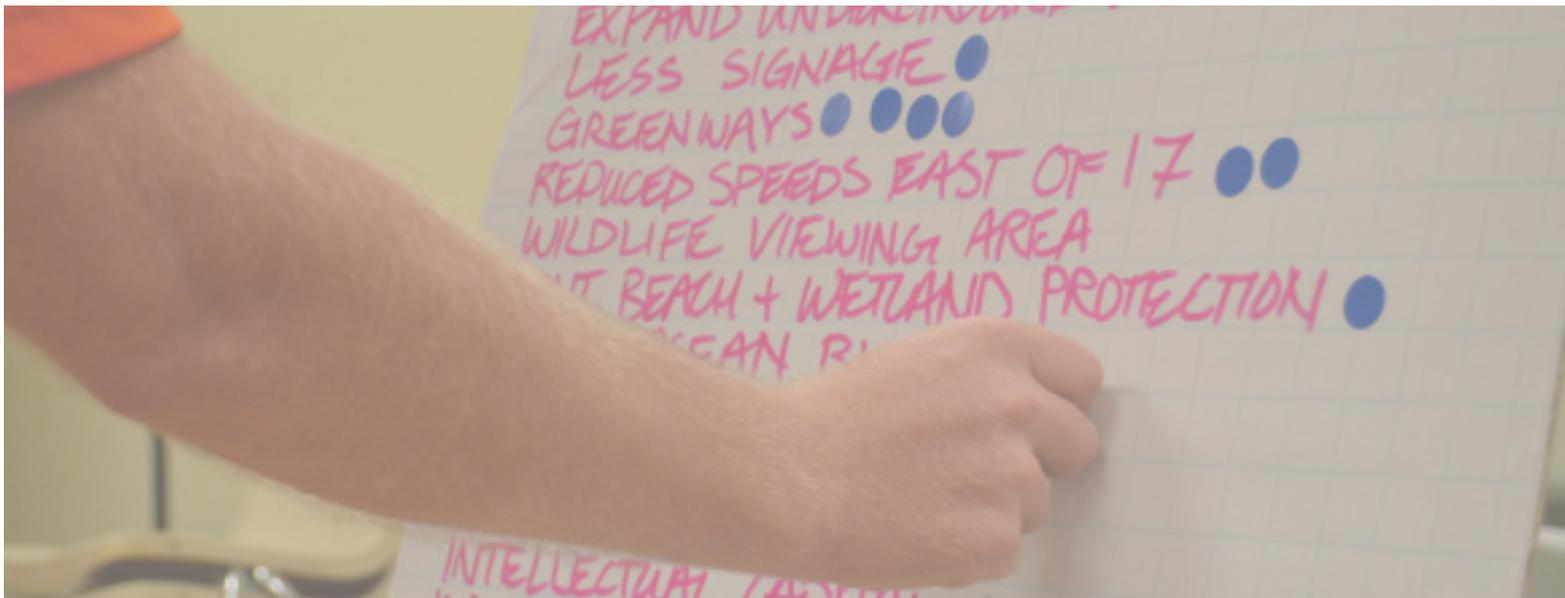
North Myrtle Beach can never forget the role tourism plays in their past, present, and future. However, there are opportunities to improve the quality of life for permanent residents while simultaneously improving the experience of the typical tourist. The leadership and citizens of North Myrtle Beach need to decide what they want to be, as a community, and then work with single minded clarity to achieve that goal. The Comprehensive Plan can be a great tool in the process of achieving that goal.





NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

VISIONING PROCESS



“Men came together in cities in order to live; they remain together in order to live the good life.”

Lewis Mumford

“North Myrtle Beach will be a thriving community that appeals to families, seniors, and visitors. The City will have discernable centers and edges with a beautiful public realm and connected streets that safely accommodate automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit.”

“In seeking visual order, cities are able to choose among three broad alternatives, two of which are hopeless and one of which is hopeful.

They can aim for areas of homogeneity which look homogeneous, and get results depressing and disorienting.

They can aim for areas of homogeneity which try not to look homogeneous, and get results of vulgarity and dishonesty.

Or they can aim for areas of great diversity and, because real differences are thereby expressed, can get results which, at worst, are merely interesting, and at best delightful.”

Jane Jacobs

June 22, 2015

Mr. James Wood, AICP,
Director of Planning & Development
City of North Myrtle Beach
1018 Second Avenue South
North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582

RE: North Myrtle Beach Visioning Process

Mr. Wood,

We are pleased to submit this final report for the Visioning Process for the City of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. North Myrtle Beach is a unique place in South Carolina. The City is tied closely to the ocean and the beach, and the tourism that it attracts. But it is also a place for families, for retirees, and young professionals.

Over the past several weeks we have gotten to know your community very well. We have met with your leadership and dozens of citizens. We have walked your streets, eaten at your restaurants, and shopped in your stores.

This report documents that process and makes some broad recommendations of things that we feel should be considered in the next phase, which is to amend the Comprehensive Plan, and by extension various ordinances and zoning designations.

Through multiple stakeholder and citizen meetings we have found some of the things that people love about the community and some of the things where there is room for improvement. We feel strongly in this type of citizen participation and we learned things about your City we could never have learned without the knowledge, passion, commitment, and wisdom of both the City's leaders and its ordinary citizens. It is this valuable input that makes up the bulk of our work. So, in a sense this is YOUR vision for North Myrtle Beach. We just took what we learned, synthesized it, and put it on paper.

We wish the City the best as they forge ahead with a new Vision and hopefully renewed optimism about the future of the Community.

Regards,



William T. Eubanks, FASLA, LEED AP
Creative Director, Urban Edge Studio of SW+

CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

Visioning Process



City Council

Mayor Marilyn Hatley
Councilman J.O. Baldwin, Crescent Beach
Councilman Bob Cavanaugh, At Large
Councilman Fred Coyne, Cherry Grove
Councilwoman Nicole Fontana, Windy Hill
Councilman Hank Thomas, At Large
Councilman Terry White, Ocean Drive

North Myrtle Beach Staff

Mike Mahaney, City Manager
James Wood, AICP, Director of Planning & Development
Aaron Rucker, AICP, Principal Planner
Sean Hoelscher, AICP, Senior Planner
Dawn E. Snider, Planner

Planning Commission

Juddie Bacot
Ty Bellamy
Harry Bruton
Havery Eisner
Katrina Jones
Rob Kayton
H.G. Worley Jr.

Urban Edge Studio of SW+

Bill Eubanks, FASLA, LEED AP, Creative Director
Ian Duncan, PLA, Landscape Architect
Lia Tomczak, Associate ASLA, Urban Designer
Michael Cain, Associate ASLA, Urban Designer
Taylor Critcher, Urban Designer
Julia Kim, Intern (UGA student)

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“Always design a thing by considering it in its next larger context - a chair in a room, a room in a house, a house in an environment, an environment in a city plan.”

Eliel Saarinen

PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan

The City of North Myrtle Beach has a Comprehensive Plan and this Visioning Process will inform the scheduled update of that plan. Comprehensive Plans are mandated by the State of South Carolina. The following is taken from Title 6 - Local Government - Provisions Applicable to Special Purpose Districts and Other Political Subdivisions:

CHAPTER 29: South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994
ARTICLE 3: Local Planning - The Comprehensive Planning Process

SECTION 6-29-510. Planning process; elements; comprehensive plan.

(A) The local planning commission shall develop and maintain a planning process which will result in the systematic preparation and continual re-evaluation and updating of those elements considered critical, necessary, and desirable to guide the development and redevelopment of its area of jurisdiction.

What is a Vision Statement?

“Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not. The question is not whether your part of the world is going to change. The question is how.”

Edward T. McMahon



What is a Vision Statement and how does it differ from a Goal Statement or a Mission Statement?

A Vision Statement:

Defines the optimal desired future state - the mental picture - of what an organization wants to achieve over time;

Provides guidance and inspiration as to what an organization is focused on achieving in five, ten, or more years;

Functions as the “north star” - it is what all employees understand their work every day ultimately contributes towards accomplishing over the long term; and, is written succinctly in an inspirational manner that makes it easy for all employees to repeat it at any given time.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/smartwork/201004/vision-and-mission-whats-the-difference-and-why-does-it-matter>

The Process:

Urban Edge Studio believes firmly in a participatory planning process and has crafted a unique process, known as the UES process, to address the importance of citizen input. The three phases of the process: Understand, Explore, and Solve are briefly explained as follows:

Understand (Pre-Charrette Phase)

This is where we began to understand the character of the place as well as its culture, history, and values.

Explore (Charrette Phase)

This is where we sought involvement from citizens and stakeholders to gain their insight and historical and cultural perspective on the "place".

Solve (Post-Charrette Phase)

This is where we took what we had learned from the public, filtered it and synthesized it. Here are our recommendations.



At Urban Edge Studio we believe that good urban design consists of two very important tasks:

- 1) Find a way to preserve and protect everything that really matters.
- 2) Develop the vision and tools needed to replace the stuff that doesn't matter with things that will.

If a City follows these two simple guidelines they will become, or remain, a place with a very high quality of life. They will be a City for other Cities to emulate. To ignore these rules, they run the risk of not only losing the places in the community that really matter but to continue building things that nobody will love. And when you really get down to brass tacks, the success of a city can be gauged by how much people (both residents and visitors) love it.

So, part of our task for this project was to find out what people love about their community and what needs to be replaced with things people can love.

Simply stated, our approach is one of blending sustainability and vitality. Our recommendations must lead to a lasting, positive effect on the health of the community. We also believe that our solutions and recommendations are better when they are drawn from the community, not imposed on it. We also understand that while there may be several possible solutions for any given issue there are only one or two solutions that are truly simple, honest, and unique. These are the great solutions. These are the solutions we seek.

For this project, we employed a series of stakeholder meetings and citizen workshops to gather information and ideas. The findings presented herein are all issues and ideas that emerged during those sessions. We applaud the citizens of North Myrtle Beach for being engaged in this process and caring about their community.



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS:

Monday, May 18th

Stakeholder Meeting One

Representative Greg Duckworth, ASLA
South Carolina House of Representatives
District 104, Horry County

Stakeholder Meeting Two

Mayor Marilyn Hatley
City Manager Mike Mahaney



Tuesday, May 19th

Public Workshop One

Tidewater HOA

Public Workshop Two

Barefoot Resort HOA

Wednesday, May 20th

Public Workshop Three

Windy Hill and Crescent Beach

Public Workshop Four

Ocean Drive and Cherry Grove



Tuesday, May 26th

Stakeholder Meeting Three

Horry County Planning Staff
North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce
Horry County Department of Airports

Stakeholder Meeting Four

North Myrtle Beach Planning Commission
North Myrtle Beach Planning Staff



PUBLIC POLICY



AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTS

American Society of Landscape Architects

URBAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The American Society of Landscape Architects advocates the sustainable development of our urban environments through responsible social, economic, and ecological practices. Development should be guided by a comprehensive planning and management vision for interconnected green space, a multi-modal transportation system, and mixed-use development.

ASLA urges public and private collaboration to create livable communities that protect historic, cultural, and environmental resources. ASLA supports sustainable site planning and construction techniques that reduce pollution and enhance balance between built and natural systems.



“Any town that doesn’t have sidewalks, doesn’t love its children”

Margaret Mead

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Participants in each meeting were asked to list things that they felt the City needed. This could be interpreted as either something the City needed more of or less of, as was applicable. Responses were recorded on a flip chart.

The participants were then allowed to “vote” with dots as to the needs that they felt were most important. Based on the voting process, the following list presents the Top Ten of that exercise. The first eight were needs that received three or more votes in the public workshops. The last two needs were the top ranking issues in the two smaller stakeholder meetings. The team has taken some liberties in aggregating responses that were identical or almost so.

Top Ten Community Needs

- 1) Visually Improve Hwy. 17
- 2) Economic Development
- 3) Town Center
- 4) Greenways
- 5) Bike Paths and Bike Lanes
- 6) More Trees / Greenery / Greenspace
- 7) Pedestrian Only Main Street
- 8) Continual Beach & Wetland Protection
- 9) Less Visual Clutter (Planning Commission)
- 10) County Overlay (Chamber of Commerce)

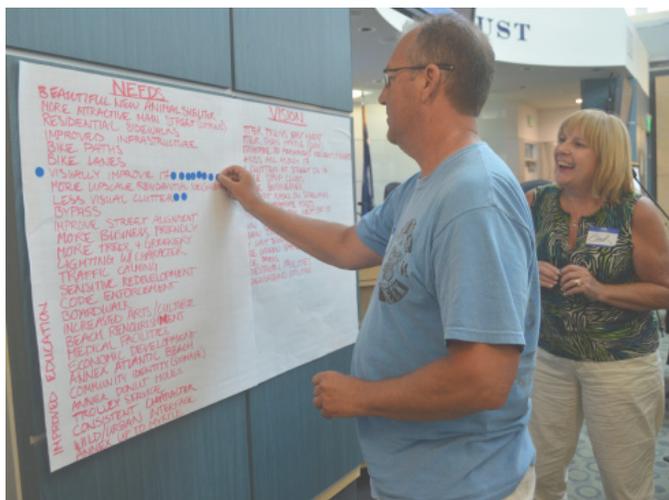


The following needs were recorded on the flip charts and received at least one vote as being a priority:

- Community Identity (signage)
- Golf Cart Management/ Lanes
- More Active Parks
- 1% Tourism Dev. Fee
- Remember the “Beach”
- Improved Infrastructure
- Sensitive Redevelopment
- Medical Facilities
- Annex Up to Myrtle Beach
- Pedestrian-Friendly Areas
- More Beach Showers
- Expand Underground Utilities
- Reduce Speeds East of 17
- Industrial Park
- Streets More Attractive
- More Sidewalks
- Public Parking
- Address Density
- Economic Diversity
- Light Industry
- Connectivity
- Beautiful New Animal Shelter
- More Attractive Main Street (Complete)
- Residential Sidewalks
- Increased Arts & Culture
- Wild/ Urban Interface
- Less Junk Shops/ T-Shirt Shops
- Intellectual Capital
- More Family Activities
- Allow Mixed Use
- Public Gathering Places
- Too Much Residential

The following needs were recorded on the flip charts but received no votes as a priority:

- More Upscale Residential Neighborhoods
- Bypass
- Improve Street Alignment
- More Business Friendly
- Lighting with Character
- Traffic Calming
- Code Enforcement
- Boardwalk
- Beach Renourishment
- Annex Atlantic Beach
- Trolley Service
- Consistent Character
- Improved Education
- ADA Accessibility
- Interstate Access
- Wildlife Viewing Area
- Open Ocean Blvd
- More Passive Parks
- Street Maintenance
- Residential/ Commercial Interface
- Local Businesses
- Feel Vibrant
- Sense of Community
- Less “Senior” Development
- Major Attractions



VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

In each of the sessions the participants were asked to “vote” on a series of images in a Visual Preference Survey.

There were four boards, with twelve images each, representing existing conditions in the North Myrtle Beach area. This was a total of 48 images. For clarification, not all images depicted things within the City limits. Some were in Horry County or adjacent municipalities, although most visitors and even some residents would not be aware that the places were not part of North Myrtle Beach. Images included resort, commercial, and residential images. Participants were each given five green and five red dots. Green represented the five images they liked most. Red represented the five images they liked least.



There were also three boards of images from other places, predominantly coastal communities in the United States, with twelve images each. This was a total of 36 images. These included various land use types including resort, commercial, and residential. Participants were each given five lime green and five orange dots. Lime green represented the five images they liked most. Orange represented the five images they liked least.

The team compiled the total votes each image received. Following are the Top Five in each category: Existing Conditions, Top 5 Good and Bad and Other Places, Top 5 Good and Bad.

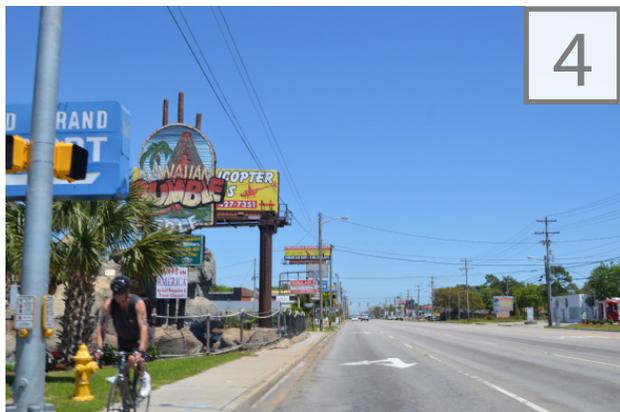
These images begin to tell a story of what residents appreciate in terms of style, materiality, mass, and scale. The team did notice that it was sometimes difficult for some residents to separate what a building and its site looked like from what its current land use might be.



EXISTING CONDITIONS: TOP 5 GOOD



EXISTING CONDITIONS: TOP 5 BAD



VISUAL PREFERENCE: TOP 5 GOOD



VISUAL PREFERENCE: TOP 5 BAD



CITIZEN WORK SESSIONS

The citizens in each session were divided into small workgroups, typically five to eight people to a group, for the purpose of exploring physical planning and design solutions. Each workgroup was facilitated by one of the team members. Each group appointed a scribe, to take notes, and a spokesperson, who presented their ideas to the main group.

The citizens explored alternative planning ideas such as new development opportunities, economic development potential, parks and open space, Main Street revitalization, improvements to street networks, and annexation opportunities.

The exercise was valuable to the team to see what issues became most important and how citizens perceived various approaches to solving them. The exercise was also important for the citizens as they were able to see how complex some of the issues were and how comprehensive some of the solutions would have to be to affect real change.

The major issues and themes exposed during this exercise are included within the breakdown of the Vision Statement, elsewhere in this report, and the recommendations.



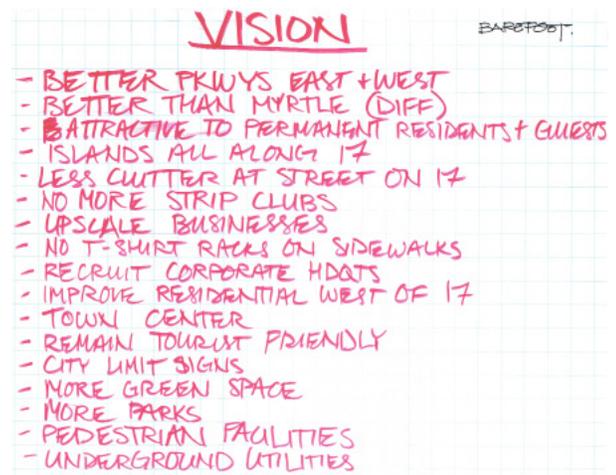
COMMON THEMES RELATED TO COMMUNITY VISION

During the workshops, the team asked citizens and stakeholders for issues and opportunities that can influence the future of the City.

Some of the things mentioned in the sessions included the following (in no particular order):

Better Parkways East and West
 Better than (Different than) Myrtle Beach
 Attractive to Permanent Residents and Guests
 Islands All Along Highway 17
 Less Clutter on Highway 17
 No More Strip Clubs
 Upscale Businesses
 No T-Shirt Racks on Sidewalks
 Recruit Corporate Headquarters
 Improve Residential West of Highway 17
 Town Center
 Remain Tourist Friendly
 Need City Limit Signs
 More Green Space
 More Parks
 Pedestrian Facilities
 Underground Utilities
 Visually Appealing
 Family Friendly

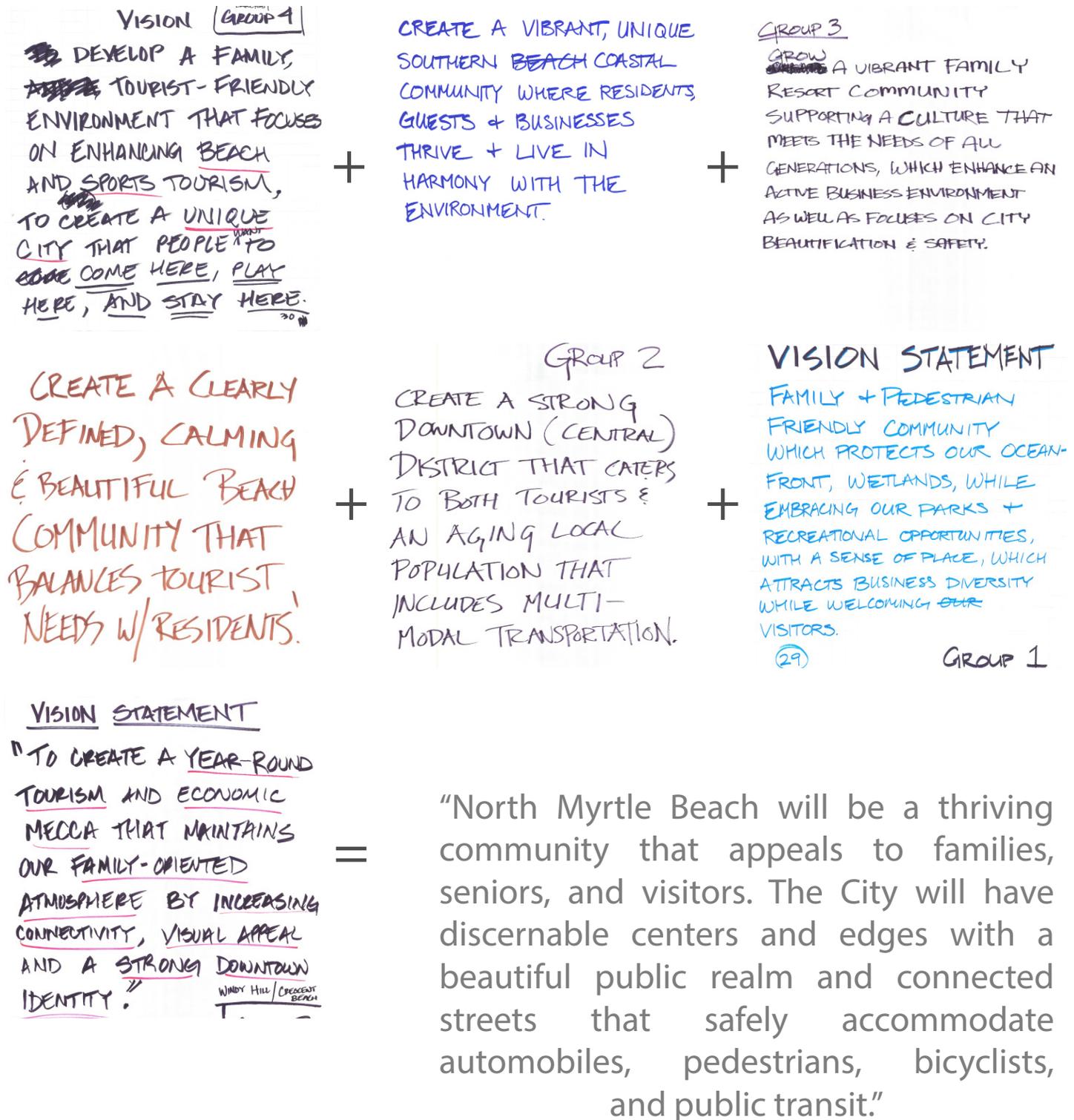
Less Tacky
 More Upscale than Myrtle Beach
 Better Sign Regulations
 Tighter Zoning
 Diversified Economic Development
 More Pocket Parks
 Better Architecture
 Live/Work Development
 Senior Friendly
 Protect Wetlands
 Sidewalks
 Never Forget the Ocean
 Main Street as a Destination
 Move Here to Live Here
 Need Business Incubators



After this portion of each workshop, the team divided each group into small workgroups. Each workgroup was asked to develop Vision Statements for the City. Statements from each individual group were reported back to the entire group in each session. Individual statements for some of the groups are included in the report. It was very apparent that there were several overarching concepts that manifested in various ways. Some of the words or concepts that appeared multiple times included 'community', 'family', 'tourism', 'environment', 'beauty', 'strong', 'attractive', 'unique', and 'vibrant'. Some elements of a desirable place to live included such words as 'businesses', 'downtown', 'parks', 'beach', 'diversification', 'friendly', 'identity', and 'safe'.

THE VISION STATEMENT

After the sessions the team developed a Vision Statement that will guide the Comprehensive Plan amendments. The Vision Statement is as follows:



DRILLING DOWN INTO THE VISION STATEMENT

What is a thriving community?

Great communities are vibrant, thriving communities. For a community to thrive it must, first of all, actually have a sense of community. That means that the people who live there have a sense of belonging, acceptance, and partnership. They work together for the common good in an atmosphere that is inclusive, just, compassionate, and healthy. Second, the community must be sustainable and resilient. That means that places are built in ways that reinforce the intrinsic value and importance of all citizens, are environmentally sensitive, and include land uses that provide for economic and social diversity. In a sense, it becomes a community that can bounce back from both cultural, environmental, and economic strains.

To thrive as a community means that a set of local “eco-social systems” are in place that provide citizens access to food, water, clean air, land, biodiversity, and energy within a network that is equipped to handle emergencies, optimize health, provide education, and enhance community welfare. This community must be typified by effective government, successful businesses, room for growth and redevelopment, functional transportation systems, efficient communication, and ever present beauty.

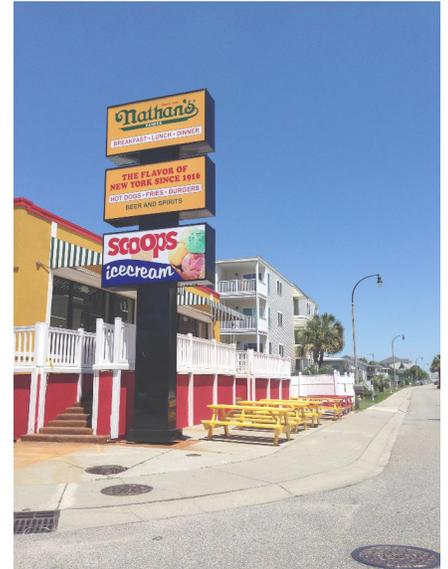
What does it mean to appeal to families?

Great communities are family-oriented. For a community to appeal to families there must be activities and facilities that provide for the needs of people throughout the span of generations. This includes good schools, churches, sports and recreational facilities and programs, adequate health care, safe and walkable streets, access to nature, diverse shopping experiences, family-friendly restaurants, ample job and career growth opportunities, and beautiful parks and open space. It is important to note that the majority of participants in the workshops were seniors. Yet they recognized the vital importance of accommodating families (and young professionals) to have a thriving community. One participant put an even finer point on the issue when he said he wanted people to move to North Myrtle Beach to live, not to die.

What does it mean to appeal to seniors?

Great communities consider all of their citizens, across generational lines. The needs of seniors does not vary greatly from those of families. Access to health care may be slightly more important as well as access to certain recreational and community services. Assisted living or full nursing facilities are usually desired as well.

Generally, if you get a community right for families you get it right for just about everyone. Most of these needs were expressed by the participants who were mostly retired. Several also expressed a desire to be part of a community, not just sequestered in an age restricted community. These people are active and engaged. Incidentally, some had been in North Myrtle Beach for years and some were recent transplants.



What does it mean to appeal to visitors?

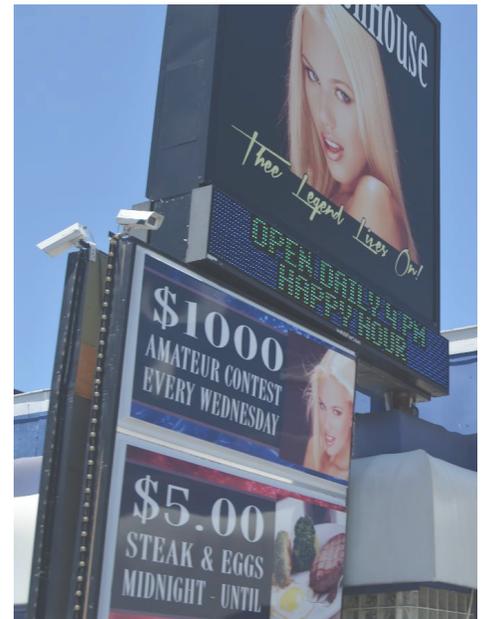
Great communities are memorable communities. North Myrtle Beach, as part of the Grand Strand, is a tourist destination. That fact can't be denied. Several citizens pointed that out in our sessions. We were constantly reminded that we can't forget the beach or the ocean or the importance of that draw to the local economy. But what keeps them coming back? Besides the beach, there is shopping, restaurants, golf, and night life. There is also an experiential component – a vacation there should be memorable. Part of what makes the experience memorable is the unique character of the place. Deciding what that character is going to be is the hard part. Many of the participants spoke to wanting to improve the quality and visual appeal of tourist related businesses and facilities. Some spoke to what they perceive as being “tacky” or “ugly”. It was clear the participants realize the region depends on tourism but wanted to improve the experience for those visitors and, by extension, for themselves as permanent residents.

What do we mean by discernable centers?

Great communities have a “heart” both literally and figuratively. Right now, most people feel that North Myrtle Beach does not have a real ‘center’ or ‘core’ that is the ‘heart’ of the community. There are ‘strips’ along Highway 17 and Ocean Boulevard but not a real downtown. We heard the idea of a strong Main Street or downtown experience expressed by many in the work sessions. This idea is achievable. The existing Main Street seems to be the most appropriate area for this to happen. The idea can be achieved when the Public Realm is given first priority and all infill and redevelopment reinforces the Public Realm. This area must primarily be walkable, with automobiles taking a lower priority. This area must be unique and beautiful with a cohesive streetscape. It must remain unique and not allowed to become over-designed or bland. It must look like it was made to last and that it is loved.

What do we mean by discernable edges?

Great communities have an identifiable edge that is part of their overall image. You know when you get there and you know when you leave. Currently, it is very hard to know if you are in Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Atlantic Beach, or Horry County. Everything blends together with no obvious changes in character, style, or sense of place. It is relatively easy to put up City Limit signs, as some have requested. City Limit signs will tell you when you are coming or going, but do nothing to speak to a sense of place. It is more difficult to cultivate a perceivable sense of place, where you innately know when you are crossing over from one place to another. More than one person in the sessions spoke to the idea of being different than, or better than, Myrtle Beach. This could be a goal as redevelopment and changes to the public realm occur.



What are the elements of a beautiful public realm?

Great communities place a very high value on the public realm. They do this because our streets, parks, plazas and other common open space areas define what is really the city – what belongs to everyone. Our public realm is the place where we get to be citizens and neighbors. This is where we greet our neighbors, brush elbows with our fellow citizens and speak to total strangers.

In most cases, when we refer to the Public Realm we are speaking of our streets. A beautiful public realm is not dominated by clutter and it makes all users feel comfortable, safe, and secure whether they are in a car, on a motor cycle, on a bicycle, or on foot. The City has a “Complete Streets” policy but implementation should be an on-going priority. For example, the City’s Annual Report states there are 150 miles of streets but only 60 miles of sidewalks. That means less than half the streets have sidewalks. Several citizens spoke to the clutter of signs along Highway 17 as well as the lack of what could be termed as “meaningful architecture”. The beautification of Highway 17, bike lanes, and sidewalks ranked high in the various discussion groups.



Great communities think about trees in the public realm. They do this because the urban tree canopy provides shade for the pedestrian and reduces heat build-up from vast paved surfaces. They also provide an element of beauty, provide seasonal change, provide human scale, and can protect pedestrians from adjacent traffic.

“The public realm, as the common world, gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other, so to speak. What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and to separate them.”

Hannah Arendt, sociologist

What do we mean by connected streets?

Great communities strive to create a connected street network. They do this because a web of interconnected streets, with shorter block lengths, is more efficient and provides more choices for routes which translates to easier walking and bicycling and more dispersed (less congested) vehicular traffic.



A well-connected street network can provide better access to services and greater mobility. It can also provide more direct and even shorter routes between various destinations. Often, a connected network of streets considers pedestrians, bikers, and transit riders, in addition to automobiles. With a connected grid, drivers (including emergency vehicles) have more opportunities to switch to different routes and avoid delay when there is congestion, an accident, or construction. With a well-connected grid, it is also possible to make some trips without putting a burden on major arterials. Conversely, poorly-connected streets patterns can concentrate the majority of traffic on the major arterials. A system of compact blocks can also increase the opportunities for walking or bicycling.

For the most part, North Myrtle Beach is built out and the street network is in place. Unfortunately, most of the City has only moderately connected streets with very long block lengths and few sidewalks. As areas redevelop or as new areas are developed a more connected and complete street grid should be given high priority.



North Myrtle Beach



Charleston



Savannah



The street network of North Myrtle Beach compared to other communities. For the most part, North Myrtle Beach is built out and the street network is in place.

How does the City safely accommodate automobiles?

Great communities think about lane widths. They do this because tighter lanes help control the speed of vehicles and reduce the pedestrian crossing distances, resulting in safer streets. When lanes are too wide they encourage higher speeds, regardless of posted speed limits. Narrower streets also help create a comfortable pedestrian scale.

Great communities think about vehicle speeds. They do this because streets are not safe or comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists when cars are whizzing by at excessive speeds. Great communities use both design (including on-street parking) and posted speed limits to tame traffic, as posted speed limits do not work by themselves. Pedestrians and cyclists are much more susceptible to serious injury in high speed areas.

Great communities control street clutter. They do this because less visual clutter from signs and utilities makes the street easier and safer to navigate and more appealing for pedestrian travel. Reducing the clutter from excess signs, utility poles and wires also makes the street more beautiful. The City has worked with Santee Cooper on placing electrical underground and those efforts should be on-going.

How does the City safely accommodate pedestrians?

Great communities provide great sidewalks. They do this because it is important to build streets that make pedestrians feel safe and comfortable so that people will consider walking as a real option. Great sidewalks are often separated from the traffic with planters or verges with street trees or on-street parking to provide a better pedestrian experience. They also need to be wide enough to accommodate everyone.

Great communities consider how people cross the street. They do this because well-designed curb ramps, crosswalks, crossing signals, and refuge areas make crossing the street safer and more comfortable for the pedestrian. Pedestrian crossings can also have a calming effect on traffic.



How does the City safely accommodate bicyclists?

Great communities accommodate bicyclists of all ages and skills. The public placed a high priority on both bike paths (off-street, including multi-use paths) and bike lanes (on-street including dedicated bike lanes and share rows) in the public workshops. Bicycle facilities may include Multi-Use Trails, Protected Bike Lanes, Bike Lanes, Buffered Bike Lanes, Green Bike Lanes, or Sharrows. Bicycle facilities could include Bike Boxes, Wayfinding Signs, HAWK Beacons (High-intensity Activated crossWalk), and Bicycle Parking and Fixit Stands. As has been stated elsewhere, trips on bicycles can reduce vehicle trips and alleviate strain on major arterials.

How does the City safely accommodate public transit?

Great communities plan for different kinds of transportation. They do this because relying solely on the automobile excludes a significant portion of the population from the ability to get around. It also increases the carbon footprint of a community. Besides, more people can be more mobile (and even use less energy) when there are opportunities to walk, bicycle, or ride a streetcar, bus, or train. The public mentioned the idea of improved transit, trolley services, and shuttles. All of these opportunities should be explored.

Although not part of public transit, many citizens expressed a solution for how to deal with golf carts on City streets. This is a transportation alternative. We suggest that this be addressed by either eliminating them or providing for them intentionally with appropriate rules, guidelines, and physical accommodations. This is a safety concern that should be considered in a proactive manner.

Specific Issues that we recommend be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan

- 1) **Main Street or Town Center:** Some type of pedestrian-centric commercial, entertainment, and dining district could give North Myrtle Beach its 'heart'. For this to occur, the City may need to address mixed use development, heights, setbacks, parking, and architectural character is a very specific intentional way to achieve the desired results.
- 2) **Land Use Issues:** An appropriate mix of residential, commercial, civic, and industrial uses needs to be explored to ensure the City stays balanced. The city needs to explore Mixed Use development, redevelopment potential, possible overlay districts, and uses that achieve the goals of being more family-friendly and attractive to seniors while still making visitors feel welcome.
- 3) **Redevelopment Strategies:** Many properties in the City are older, in bad repair, and may have outlived their time of useful service. Many of these are automobile centric, with numerous curb cuts and surface parking areas between the street and the building. The Comprehensive Plan should address redevelopment strategies that include land use, parking, setbacks, access management, and character.



City limits may be developed in the foreseeable future. The City should also develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing these properties in order to ensure cohesive development along their fringe.

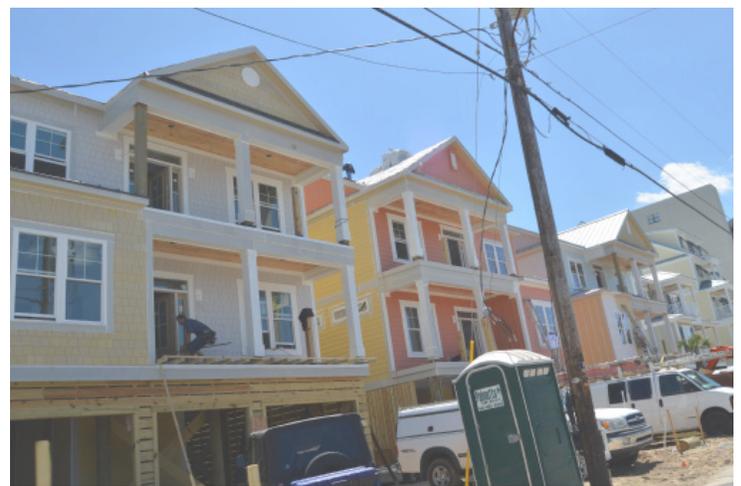
Another issue that may need to be addressed is Atlantic Beach. Should the need to make a decision on the annexation of Atlantic Beach arise, the City needs a strategy and approach for dealing with that issue and all the ramifications of that decision, whatever it may be.

- 5) **Residential Development:** There was much discussion in the workshops and stakeholder meetings about the type, quality, and character of residential development in the City. While a very small minority within the citizens who participated advocated for less density, the majority of citizens saw the advantages of more dense residential development and the unsustainable costs and impacts of sprawl. With housing there should be choices that accommodate different income levels and the different stages of one's life.

- 6) **Complete Streets:** Although the City was one of the first in the region to implement a Complete Streets Policy,

- 4) **Annexation:** There several areas that are surrounded by the City of North Myrtle Beach that are still part of Horry County. These areas, commonly referred to as "doughnut holes", fall under different guidelines and requirements than the surrounding City properties. The City should develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing these properties in order to ensure cohesive development within what is either in the City or perceived as being in the City.

Also, there are edge conditions where parcels outside the



there is still much work to be done in terms of implementation. The Comprehensive Plan should address access management, thoroughfare standards, utilities, stormwater, street trees, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes/paths. Specifically, there should be a strategy for retrofitting existing streets to be “complete” with the addition of sidewalks, bike lanes, etc. Factors outside the public right-of-way that influence this include setbacks, heights, signage, and parking. These issues should be addressed holistically as they impact the public realm.

7) **Architectural Character:** During the sessions, especially related to the discussion surrounding the Visual Preference Survey, the idea of architectural style, character, and quality emerged as an important issue. There was much discussion on design guidelines, materiality, and style. The question of quality came into the discussion as well as many perceived the existing architecture to be “tacky” or seeming to be temporary.



One of the underlying issues was whether or not the City needed staff dedicated to architectural issues or a volunteer board, such as a Design

Review Board (DRB) or Board of Architectural Review (BAR). It is our recommendation that the City develop a strategy for ensuring architectural quality. We are not proponents of dictating style or, to some extent, materiality. However, addressing height, mass, and scale are important. Coupled with that are setbacks, parking, signage, and landscaping. Providing a Board, such as a DRB, also allows for public comment and scrutiny of proposed projects.

8) **Economic Development:** A City can't be allowed to be stagnant. To be stagnant is to begin dying. Economic development is crucial to the on-going success of a community. There was much discussion as to the types of economic development that were most appropriate for North Myrtle Beach. Should the ED be tourism related? Should it be manufacturing? Should it be High Tech? Should it be sports related? This is not really a Comprehensive Plan issue, except in terms of providing sites that have the entitlements or ability to be developed for various ED uses. The City should have a strategy, however, that addresses Economic Development in a holistic way, with cooperation and input from Horry County.

9) **Parks and Open Space:** Open space preservation and conservation is a very important component of any responsible comprehensive plan or land use strategy. This was an issue that was raised often by the citizens as being



a high priority. Depending on the scale, open space may provide multiple benefits such as enhanced water and air quality, improved wildlife habitat, decreased stormwater run-off and the beauty of natural areas, such as scenic vistas or corridors.

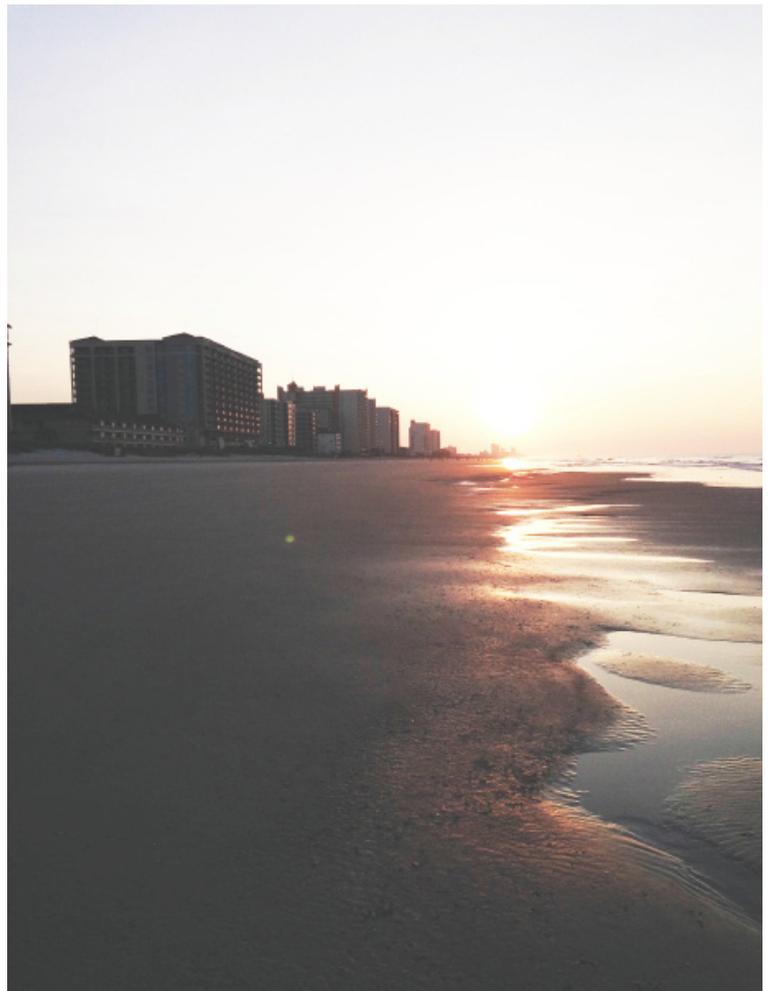
Open Space areas may contain resources that benefit the public health, safety and welfare, as well as provide increased biological diversity and other natural functions and values. In addition, open space can provide additional opportunities for resource protection and active or passive recreation.

It is recommended that the City increase its efforts to preserve open space appropriately – not to block development but to enhance it. It is further recommended that, when possible, open space areas be permanently protected through conservation easements or deed restrictions.

10) Sports and Recreation: The City has done a great job recently with providing more opportunities for recreational activities across all age groups and skill levels. There is a potential for increasing year-round visitors through recreational venues. This could bring tournaments and other year round activities to the City. It is recommended that capitalizing on opportunities for land acquisition and development of recreational facilities keep pace with growth and development in the area and that recreation as an economic development tool be explored in detail.

“Restore human legs as a means of travel. Pedestrians rely on food for fuel and need no special parking facilities.”

Lewis Mumford



“If a city’s streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.”

Jane Jacobs

SUMMARY:

North Myrtle Beach is a very unique community. While it is known more for the beach, for Bike Week, and for its abundance of T-Shirt shops and pancake houses it is also a relatively quiet residential community that many people from all walks of life call home. This is one of the few towns in South Carolina where you aren't surprised to enter a shop through the mouth of a shark.

North Myrtle Beach can never forget the role tourism plays in their past, present, and future. However, there are opportunities to improve the quality of life for permanent residents while simultaneously improving the experience of the typical tourist. The leadership and citizens of North Myrtle Beach need to decide what they want to be, as a community, and then work with single minded clarity to achieve that goal. The Comprehensive Plan can be a great tool in the process of achieving that goal.

In the workshops most of the conversation seemed to focus on the quality and character of the public realm. Some of this was the condition and design of the streets themselves and some of it was the private realm elements that impact the public realm, including architecture, signage, and parking. There would be a significant transformation of the entire community if a systemic change can be brought to bear in the public realm through the Comprehensive Plan.

We have enjoyed working with the staff, leadership, and citizens of this community. We have gotten to know your streets, shops, and restaurants better than we might have otherwise. We see untapped potential but we also see the political and social will to make it happen. In our opinion, North Myrtle Beach is at a tipping point and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for this unique coastal community.



IMAGINE NORTH MYRTLE BEACH

So, in closing let's take the Vision for North Myrtle Beach a step further. Let's imagine something that is a bit more outside the box. Imagine, North Myrtle Beach.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where everyone lives in efficient, safe, beautiful neighborhoods that include shops, restaurants, schools, and parks – all within a five minute walk of every resident.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where you can walk, bicycle, or take public transit to work and where you work in beautiful, efficient, light-filled, carbon-neutral buildings.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where the streets are clean and beautiful and comprise a cherished part of your public realm.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where you can grow your own food in community gardens, interacting with your neighbors; where you can pick fruit from the trees growing in your parks; and where restaurants and families serve meals prepared with fresh, locally grown, organic food that never saw the back of a semi-truck.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where the water is clean; the air is pure; and nature is revered. A place where natural systems and habitat are protected and cultural and natural resources are preserved for all.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach that is resilient – producing more energy than you use; and where reducing waste, reusing, and recycling are second nature.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where the arts are cherished; the creative class is nurtured; and where public art and beauty are ubiquitous and accessible.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where history is respected; the innovations of the future are embraced with enthusiasm; and people from all walks of life live sustainably and in harmony.

Imagine a North Myrtle Beach where the experience of residents, both young and old, and visitors is an equally rich experience with the needs of one not diminishing the experience of the other.

Imagine, North Myrtle Beach. If you don't imagine it now, it will never happen. So imagine it.

Then act on it.



“When your environment is cluttered, the chaos restricts your ability to focus. Clutter makes you distracted and unable to process information as well as you do in an uncluttered, organized, and serene environment.”

Erin Doland



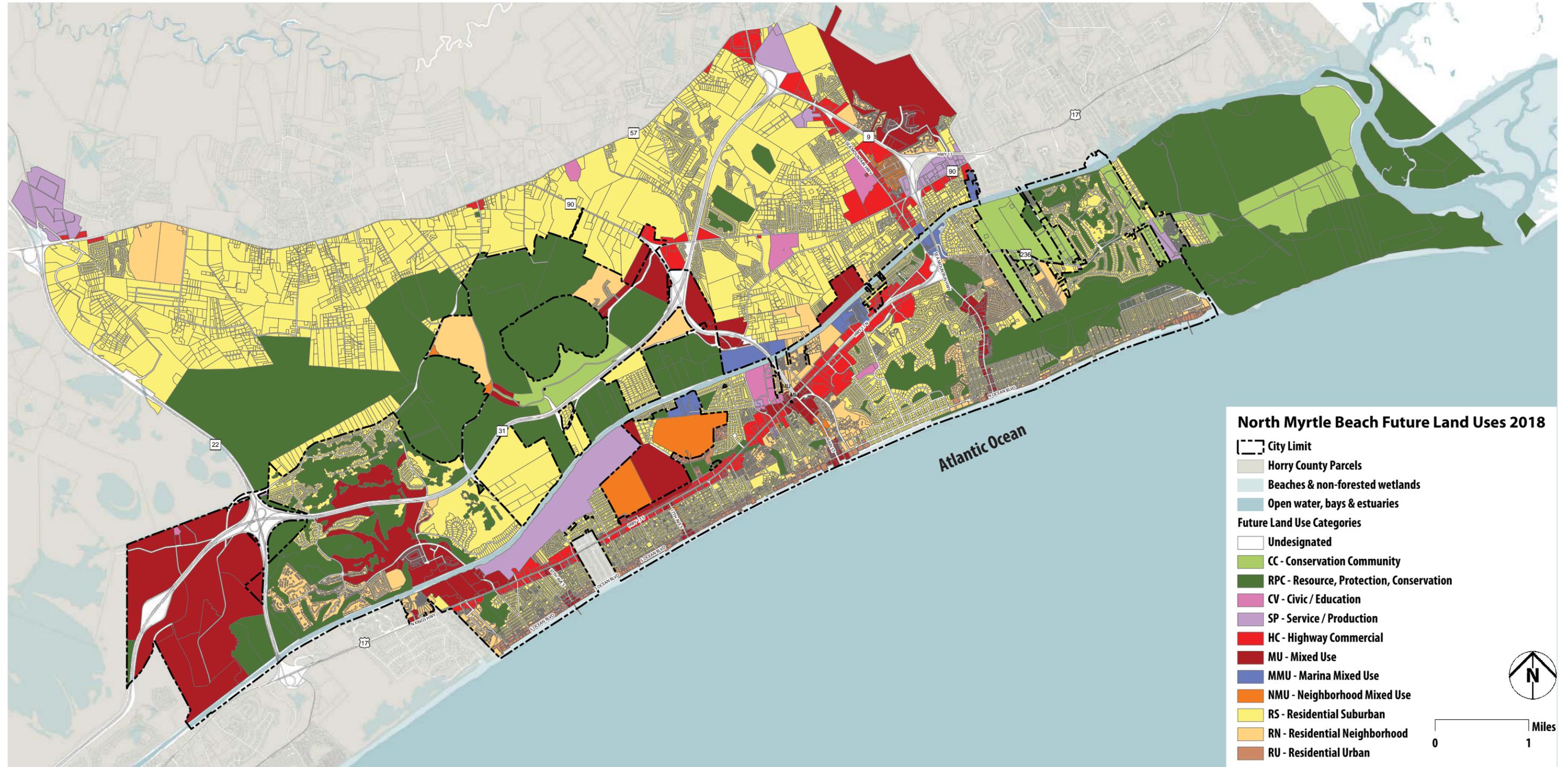


Future Land Use Map
& Compliance Index

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APPENDIX

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FUTURE LAND USE MAP



COMPLIANCE INDEX

Land Use Class	Recommended			Description <i>(More detail on districts on pages 88-95)</i>
	Density	Height	Alternative Zoning Districts* Primary (Secondary)	
Residential Suburban (RS)	5	Not to Exceed 45'	R-1 <i>(R-1A or R-1B)</i>	Define, protect, and provide low density, single-family detached housing; prohibit development that would compromise existing residential characteristics; provide for in-fill and expansion of existing neighborhoods; incorporate property west of the waterway at densities typical of inland development; compatible uses include primarily single-family lots, small farms and farm related uses such as produce stands, and mobile homes on individual lots.
Residential Neighborhood (RN)	5-10	Not to Exceed 60'	R-2, R-2A, or R-3 <i>(R-2B, NC)</i>	Supports a mix of residential uses at medium densities (mostly duplexes, townhomes, and patio homes), as well as multi-family housing up to six stories; also allows infill mixed-use development and neighborhood commercial uses.
Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU)	5-12	Not to Exceed 60'	BC or NC <i>(R-1, R-1A, or R-2)</i>	Intended for neighborhoods serving mixed uses, including commercial and business development in relatively small areas of the community in proximity to residential uses including neighborhoods, resorts, and high-rise residential; maintains a local business environment to serve the permanent population that does not detract from existing residential development; category does not include shopping centers in excess of 50,000 square feet and high-rise construction.
Residential Urban (RU)	11-75	Generally above 60'	RC or R-4 <i>(R-4I)</i>	Allows for high-rise construction; generally includes mid- and high-rise construction above six stories with minimal side and rear yard setbacks; generally encompasses existing high-rise hotel and resort development; above-grade structured parking likely serves these high-density uses.
Mixed-Use (MU)	90	Generally above 30'	HC or RC <i>(NC)</i>	Intended for larger scale mixed-use development at key transportation nodes and gateways in the community that are well positioned for intense mixed-use development given their access to major transportation corridors; supports the creation of walkable areas where users can park once and access live, work, and play services in close proximity.
Highway Commercial (HC)	75	Not to exceed 50'	HC <i>(GC or NC)</i>	Broad-based commercial, office, and business classification; intended to provide commercial opportunities to the traveling public and areas in the community where large-scale commercial projects may take place with minimal impact on contiguous residential development; designed to support local shopping regional shopping centers, and business complexes; accommodates a wide range of business and commercial uses clustered where feasible and located for optimum accessibility; mixed use development may occur over time and is encouraged.
Service and Production (Service)	N/A	Not to exceed 50'	OC or LI	Designed to accommodate industry and business support activities; generally more appropriately sited west of US Highway 17, away from resort facilities and residential use; includes the Grand Strand Airport.
Civic and Education (CV)	N/A	Not to exceed 50'	OC or LI <i>(R-1)</i>	Reserved for all municipal uses including schools, fire stations, police stations, city hall, and religious institutions.
Resource, Protection, & Conservation (RPC)	N/A	Not to exceed 50'	CP <i>(R-1, R-1A, or R-1B)</i>	Intended to preserve and protect scenic and natural resources; provide network of critical open space and non-renewable resources; includes formal parks, informal open spaces, and protecting land directly adjacent to marshes, estuaries, and waterways from intense development.
Marina Mixed-Use (MMU)	5-12	Not to exceed 60'	GC or LI** <i>(R1, R-1A, R-2, R-2A, or R-4)</i>	Defines those areas where marinas and related uses (docks, dock facilities, storage areas, housing, and restaurants or retail where appropriate) would complement existing land use.
Conservation Community (CC)	10-15	Not to exceed 45'	Future zoning district to be created	Intended to provide an alternative type of development that preserves undisturbed natural areas, creates common open spaces, and has a light impact on the environment; ideally applied to undeveloped greenfield land that may be adjacent to sensitive environmental areas like wetlands and waterways.

*PDD Zoning is available in all districts, ** Subject to § 23-120

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