

Element: Community Facilities

The Community Facilities element examines infrastructure, property, buildings, and spaces that are owned, maintained and operated for the benefit of the general public. The City of Folly Beach must ensure that its community facilities keep pace with redevelopment inside the City limits. It must also provide the services demanded by new visitors as a result of growth outside of its boundaries. Ideally, the City of Folly Beach will have a well documented, well maintained water and sewer system, provide adequate parks and recreational facilities, ensure that services for its youth are well organized and coordinated with other public and private entities, and provide adequate police and fire services.

City Owned Buildings

The City owns and operates several buildings including City Hall, Public Safety Headquarters, the Community Center, and the water plant. These structures represent a significant portion of the City's capital assets. They also represent significant ongoing expenses for depreciation and maintenance. Maintaining and properly caring for city owned structures is essential to extending their lifespan and reducing operational costs.

- *City Hall.* City Hall was completed in 1997. In the nineteen years since, the building has served its purpose well. However, it is beginning to show its age both functionally and structurally. There is evidence of water intrusion around several windows. The City has requested funding for an analysis to determine an action plan for removing and replacing the exterior stucco covering. On a functional level, the arrangement of offices limits the accommodation of new staff and there are no meeting rooms in City Hall for the public other than Council Chambers, although additional space is available in the Public Safety Training Room. City Hall is elevated to current FEMA flood standards.

Five Year Update: Since 2015 the City has applied for and received grants to strengthen City Hall with the goal of greater resistance to natural hazards. A complete reroof was completed in 2017 and the entire West Cooper frontage was renovated to install hurricane rated windows. In 2018, City Council funded the design and engineering for an interior renovation that will rearrange and modernize the office areas in City Hall. The planning phase of this project has been awarded and is underway.

- *Public Safety.* The Public Safety Headquarters was completed in 2011. There are no major structural or functional issues with the facility. The Public Safety Headquarters is flood proofed to meet current FEMA flood standards.

Five Year Update: The City has initiated and settled a claim against the builders and architects of the Public Safety Headquarters based on repeated water intrusion into the building.

- *Community Center.* The Community Center currently serves a dual purpose. It is partly operated as a branch of the Charleston County Library System and is also used to host community events and meetings by various Folly Beach groups. It was significantly remodeled less than a decade ago. A major overhaul of the adjacent public garden was performed in 2013. This project replaced an existing koi pond with a simulated dry river bed and other xeriscaping. The community center is not elevated above Base Flood Elevation.

Five Year Update: Work has started to create a dedicated space in the Community Center to showcase items related to Folly's history. The collection of the items was initiated after the 2015 Comprehensive Plan and is ongoing. Significant contributions to date include the original desk used by Folly's first Mayor and a Civil War cannon ball that was discovered on the north end of the island.

- *Water Plant.* The water plant is the operational base for the Public Works Department. It is also used as a general storage facility for the City. The building needs a new roof, but is otherwise structurally sound. It is not elevated above Base Flood Elevation.

Five Year Update: In 2016-2017 the water plant was renovated with a new roof and an interior upfit to create a more comfortable work area for the City's public works crews as well as an on site office for the Utilities Supervisor who was previously based in City Hall.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Public recreational facilities on Folly Beach are provided by the City of Folly Beach and the Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission (CCPRC).

The CCPRC operates the Folly Beach County Park, the Folly Beach Fishing Pier, and the Folly Beach Boat Landing. CCPRC also owns the former Coast Guard Station property and several lots on East Arctic. These holdings make CCPRC the largest landowner on Folly Beach.

- *Folly Beach County Park.* In 2013 the park was subject to extreme erosion which resulted in closure and a complete loss of parking, office, and restroom facilities. Since then, CCPRC has completed construction of a groin and renourishment project which rebuilt the beach and parking areas. The park has begun replacing the picnic, office and other support structures that were washed away.

Five Year Update: Construction on a full replacement of the shelters and other accessory structures at the park began in early 2019.

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- *Folly Beach Fishing Pier.* In 2013 CCPRC completed a major renovation project which replaced and strengthened the pilings that support the 1,000 foot long pier. This facility has now been returned to full operating capacity.

Five Year Update: Charleston County Parks has announced that the existing wooden pier will be completely replaced by a new concrete structure beginning late 2019 or early 2020. Work will be completed in stages allowing the restaurant, gift shop, and other landward amenities to remain open during the approximately 2 year long project.

- *Folly Beach Boat Landing.* The Folly Beach Boat Landing is currently operating at full capacity. Although it is adjacent to the bridge replacement project, there was no major interruption in service. The removal of the old Folly River Bridge created additional space for public use adjacent to the existing boat ramps. CCPRC, in conjunction with the City of Folly Beach, is pursuing a plan to turn this additional space into a passive launch area for kayaks, stand up paddle boards, and canoes.

Five Year Update: The City obtained partial funding for the creation of the Folly River kayak launch. The design and construction was turned over to CCPRC and is still in progress.

- *East Arctic Properties.* CCPRC owns two oceanfront lots and two second row lots at the corner of East Arctic and 2nd Street East. These four lots total approximately one acre. They are currently undeveloped and serve as overflow parking for CCPRC employees. CCPRC has not yet developed a master plan for this property.
- *Coast Guard Station.* This large property comprises the entire northern end of Folly Island. It is currently open to the public but has not been developed as a park facility. A master plan from 2007 calls for maintaining the site as a passive sanctuary for sea birds and protected species. Parking at the site is limited and the primary access is for bikes and pedestrians only. The property is the best place for viewing the historic Morris Island Light house.

Five Year Update: The property was designated as the Lighthouse Inlet Preserve. After the loss of the Folly Boat, the roadways of the Preserve have become a new attraction for graffiti and messages.

The City of Folly Beach also operates parks and playgrounds on the island. Currently the City is responsible for Ocean Park at 3rd Street West, the Folly River Park, the Folly Bark Park, **Shadowrace Park, Shorebird Park**, Wave Watch and Pirates Cove Playgrounds, and tennis and basketball courts.

- *Ocean Park.* Ocean Park is approximately ¼ acre and consists mostly of parking for beach access. It has an ADA compliant beach walkover and restroom facilities. The restrooms were completely renovated in 2013 with the aid of a Coastal Access

Improvement Grant. The original landscaping has become overgrown and is beginning to revert to a natural state.

- *Folly River Park.* The Folly River Park is approximately 1 acre in size. It features a central lawn, crabbing dock, gazebo, restrooms, and sheds for vending of fruits and vegetables. The park is well maintained and heavily used. It is rented frequently for private events and also used in conjunction with many of the festivals and events held throughout the year.

Five Year Update: The Folly River Park Dock has been closed since 2017 due to structural issues. The City has applied for and received federal funds to rebuild the dock. Work is scheduled to commence in the fall of 2019.

- *Folly Bark Park.* The Folly Bark Park was developed in 2012 with a grant from the Charleston Greenbelt Program. The park is approximately ¼ acre in size and consists of a fenced central lawn. A water fountain is provided for pets.
- *Wave Watch and Pirates Cove.* These two playgrounds are located at 5th Street West and 510 East Erie respectively. They provide picnic tables and play structures. They are available by reservation for private functions as well as for daily use by the public.
- *Tennis/Basketball Courts.* Directly next to Pirates Cove Park, the City maintains one tennis court and 2 half-sized basketball courts. There is a public restroom on site. **Five Year Update: In 2019 the tennis and basketball courts were closed for a complete removal and replacement of the court surfacing. This project was partially funded through grants received from the South Carolina Parks and Recreation Development program.**
- *Folly Skate Park.* This is the newest park facility on Folly Beach. It consists of several ramps for skateboarding and is located on the back half of the basketball courts. The Skate Park was funded by a grant from the South Carolina Department of Parks and Recreation. **Five Year Update: The Folly Skate Park was dismantled in 2018 after complaints about usage and vandalism. No replacement site has been identified.**
- *Washout Facilities.* In 2015, the City completed construction of an ADA compliant restroom and changing station located at the East end of the island just past the Washout. The changing station is located in an unopened right of way between 1563 and 1565 East Ashley.

In 2013, the Folly Beach Parks and Recreation Committee began to take a more active role in planning for future parks and open spaces on Folly Beach. Their work culminated in the *City of Folly Beach Park and*

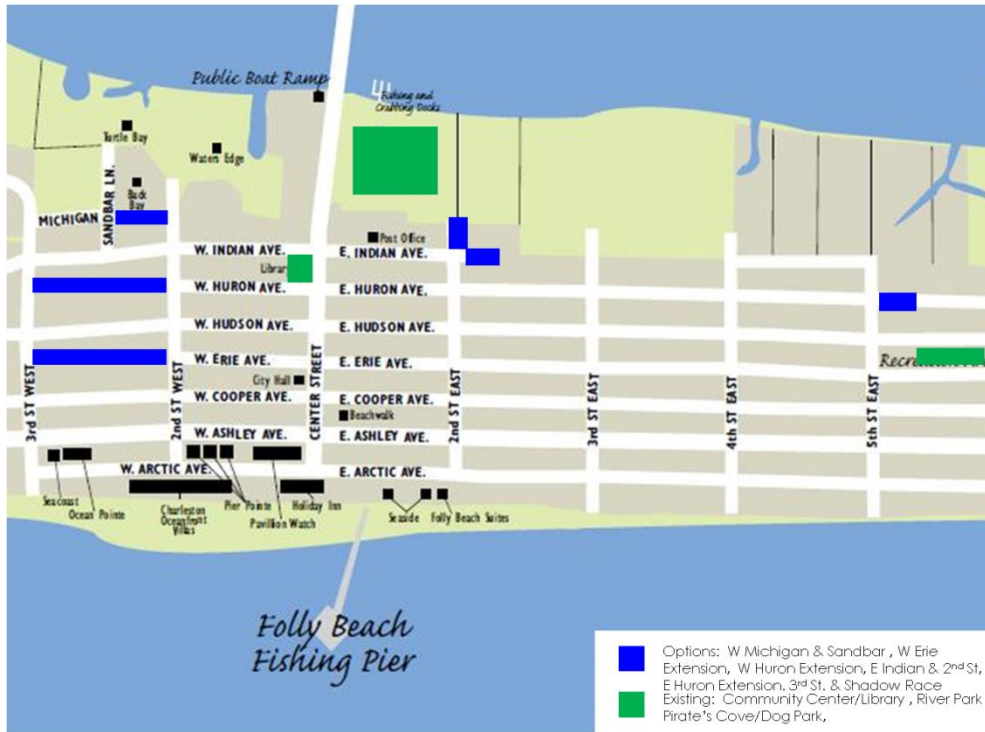
Recreation Five Year Plan which was adopted by Council in 2014. The plan calls for funding and creating multiple new park sites as well as enhancements to existing facilities. New park sites are primarily envisioned as pocket parks located in unopened right-of-ways with visual access to the marsh or the ocean. The first recommendations of the plan to be funded for the 2014 Fiscal Year were the installation of benches along the Erie Canal and construction of a pocket park in the right-of-way at 1585 East Ashley. The City has applied for state funding to aid in the development of this site.

Five Year Update: The Parks and Recreation Committee has made much progress since the adoption of the *2015 Comprehensive Plan*. They have created new pocket parks (Shorebird Park on East Ashley and Shadow Race Park on Shadow Race Lane) as well as renovated existing parks (Wave Watch playground restrooms and Ocean Park landscaping).

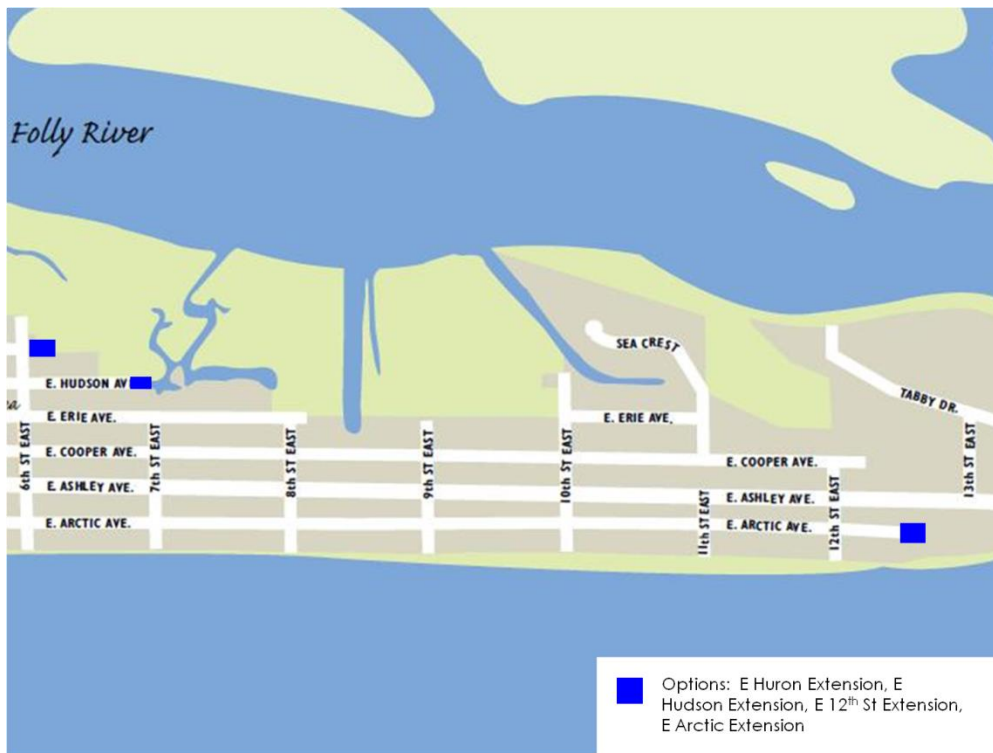
Map 3: PARKS FACILITIES WEST END



Map 4: PARKS FACILITIES ISLAND CORE



Map 5: PARKS FACILITIES EAST END



Map 6: PARKS FACILITIES BEYOND WASHOUT



Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for water and sewer service, solid waste collection, and stormwater management. Providing these services is one of the primary responsibilities of City government.

Five Year Update: in 2016 the City reorganized the Public Works Department by separating the water and sewer services into a separate Utilities Department. Although the water/sewer utility is a separate business entity from the City it had previously been overseen by the Public Works Director.

Water

The City buys its water from Charleston Water System. Although Charleston Water is responsible for the water delivery system up to the Folly River, the City is responsible for water infrastructure on the island. In recent years the system has experienced an increasing number of breaks and interruptions in service because most of the pipes in the system are reaching the end of their service lifespan. The City has limited reserves in place for replacing the water distribution system. Additionally, lack of documentation for pipe locations, size, and age makes managing the system difficult.

The City has taken action to remedy these problems. In 2014 Council approved a rate study that reworked the rate structure for water and sewer billing. The new rates encourage water conservation and also build in an allowance accumulating of a reserve account for repairs and replacement. Additionally, the City is working with the South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium to update and field verify the location and size of existing water pipes. This project should translate information from outdated paper files to a computer based GIS management system.

Five Year Update: The mapping of the water system has been completed with the ages, sizes, and location of all pipes identified. The City is now developing funding strategies for needed replacements.

Sewer

Sanitary sewer service on the island has had no major expansion since the construction of the Sunset Point subdivision in the 1990's. Currently, expansion of the sewer system is prohibited beyond the central commercial district without a vote of Council. Although a handful of lots outside this area have received approval to tie into the system, the customer base remains small and the rates high. The sewer infrastructure faces the same problems as the water infrastructure. In 2014 there was one major failure of the sewer system. There is currently only a limited replacement or repair reserve. Comprehensive accounting of the location and condition of the system is in the beginning stages.

Stormwater and drainage

Stormwater management on the island is split between the City, Charleston County, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Most of the ditches and other drainage structures are maintained by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). Stormwater outfalls along Center Street are owned by the City and maintained by Charleston County Stormwater. In 2013 and 2014 multiple heavy rain events led to significant flooding and failure of stormwater removal systems. The City has been working extensively with both Charleston County and the SCDOT to perform backlogged maintenance and system improvements. The City received \$50,000 in Transportation Sales Tax funding for a drainage study to cover the areas between 2nd and 5th Street East. The City also completed projects at 10th Street East and 4th Street West and is working with Charleston County on a drainage project to relieve flooding along 9th Street West. The City is also in talks with the Sea Grant Consortium to provide mapping of the natural drainage basins on Folly Beach. Currently there is no treatment of stormwater runoff from the island.

Five Year Update: The City has completed numerous projects to improve drainage including: 9th Street West clearing and repair of cross line and outfall; 310 West Hudson flap gate valve installation; 2nd Street West tide valve replacement; 3rd Street West tide valve replacement; East Indian 5th block East shoulder improvement and drainage swale and cross line installation; East Ashley 4th block East ditch and crossline improvements started Quarterly Stormwaters Partners meetings with state and county representatives.

Solid Waste Management

In addition to regularly scheduled, twice weekly garbage collection, the City provides additional trash collection on summer weekends and major holidays. Biweekly curbside recycling is provided by Charleston County. The City is beginning to place more emphasis on recycling and related activities. An ordinance passed in 2014 now requires that some types of events on City property provide recycling containers. Also, an agreement was reached with Charleston County to provide large recycling containers at beachfront parking lots and some multifamily dwellings that are serviced every week. A third major development was the county wide roll out of single stream recycling. This service allows residents to place all recyclable materials into one container without sorting. This has resulted in a large increase in participation. In the summer of 2015 the City participated in a weekly recycling trial that had positive results. The City currently provides no on island facilities for recycling cooking oil or composting food

waste. The City also places no additional regulations on high volume businesses for either recycling or solid waste management. A new garbage truck was purchased in 2013, but there is currently no reserve account replacing the existing 2 trucks.

Other Utilities

Electric

South Carolina Electric and Gas provides electric service to the island as well as leasing street and yard lighting. SCE&G is subject to a franchise fee for operating in the City, and a portion of this fund is reserved for special projects within the City. The current balance of this account is roughly \$200,000. Folly Beach increased the franchise fee from 3% to 5% beginning in 2015. This will raise approximately \$50,000 additional dollars annually.

Cable

Cable service is currently provided by Comcast, Dish, and Verizon.

Internet

There are a variety of internet providers on the island including Verizon, Comcast, and Dish. The City provides no municipal wireless coverage.

Public Safety

Folly Beach Police and Fire Departments are combined into a Public Safety Department. In this type of organization, police personnel are cross-trained and certified in fire-fighting, and fire-fighters are cross-trained and certified in policing. Regular staff is supplemented citizen volunteer firefighters as well as firefighters from neighboring jurisdictions working part-time on Folly Beach. The Public Safety Department also maintains a dispatch center, animal services, beach patrol, and parking enforcement.

Police Services

The Police Department employs 16 sworn officers, 1 animal services officer, 2 part time officers, 4 part time ordinance officers, 6 part time seasonal beach patrol, and 6 part time seasonal parking enforcement officials. There is also 1 full time civilian secretary/records clerk.

Fire Services

Folly Beach is a combination department that includes paid, part time, and volunteer firefighters. Volunteer firefighters can operate as support personnel or as emergency responders while 3 full time Fire PSOs are on permanent duty in rotating shifts. As a reflection of the number of visitors to Folly Beach, medical responses now make up 75 - 80% of the department's call volume. The City currently has an ISO classification of 4 and an emergency response time of less than 5 minutes. There is one fire station housing two pumpers, an aerial ladder truck, service unit, beach rescue vehicle, and jet skis used in water rescues.

Emergency Services

Emergency services are provided by the City of Folly Beach, and appropriate County agencies. The City has secured emergency landing sites for medical helicopters at the old Coast Guard Base, the County Park, and the new Folly River bridge.

Court Services

The Folly Beach Municipal Court is staffed by a Clerk of Court, a part time prosecutor, and two part time judges. Court is held once a week to deal with a multitude of issues including traffic tickets and parking tickets.

Schools

There are no schools in the City of Folly Beach. The community is part of the Charleston County School District. Most students on Folly attend either public or private schools on James Island.

Beach Walkovers and Accesses

The increased provision of beach accesses is an ongoing area of interest for Folly Beach. In the last decade, the City renovated 7 walkovers, constructed 3 new walkovers, provided approximately 60 new parking spaces and completed major renovations of our Ocean Park restrooms. The City strives to remain one of the most accessible beach communities on the East Coast. The City maintains approximately 55 beach access points located at the cross streets and in the middle of each block. While most of these accesses have walkovers, several accesses do not. Many of the existing walkovers need maintenance due to the severe erosion prior to the most recent renourishment. In 2014, the City received grants to complete a major overhaul of the 13th Street Walkover and to build a new ADA compatible walkover in the 15th block of East Ashley. Additional grant money was received to construct a second beachfront bathroom facility at the same access. There are currently only two public restroom facilities located at beach access points.

Five Year Update: The City continues to follow a program of renovation and improvement of existing walkovers. The Coastal Access Improvement grants from SCDHEC OCRM funded the majority of the new walkover construction in the City leading up to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan. This program has not been funded since the 2016 funding cycle. Shortly after construction finished on the new ADA walkover and changing stations at 1563 East Ashley the City was sued by neighboring owners. The suit was resolved in the City's favor in 2018 and the changing stations remain in place.

Mid Block Rights of Way

The *2010 Comprehensive Plan Update* carried forward recommendations from the *2005 Comprehensive Plan* improving the mid-block rights-of-way. Although there are some exceptions, these rights-of-way are ten foot wide segments of publicly owned land that are platted generally in the middle of each block and run from the ocean to the rear of the island. Most of the rights-of-way along the beachfront streets are open, accessible, and marked by signage and crosswalks. Most of these oceanfront rights-of-way are complemented by walkovers that allow access to the beach. The condition of the rights-of-way on the back streets varies considerably. Some are overgrown and inaccessible for foot traffic while others have been blocked by owners of adjacent properties. Others are cleared, accessible and offer easy access for pedestrians between streets. In 2013, the Planning Commission and City Council unanimously approved the Action Plan for Mid Block Rights of Way as a comprehensive program to guide the City's long-term management of the rights-of-way. Since completing the plan, the City has cleared mid block rights-of-

way in the 2nd, 7th, and 9th blocks of West Ashley, the entire 1st block on the East Side, and 5th, 6th, and 7th and 10th blocks of East Ashley. The City also opened a path along a closed portion of 3rd Street West.