



(Five Year Update 1/14/2020)

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Plan Statement

The Comprehensive Plan will drive consistent decision-making that allows Folly Beach to preserve natural resources, protect community character, and improve public services.

Introduction

The *2015 Comprehensive Plan* and the included *Five Year Update* will guide growth and development in the City of Folly Beach ~~for the next ten years until 2025~~. The *updated* document contains both long range and short term recommendations based on a review of current conditions and public input. It is a complete rewrite of the *2005 Comprehensive Plan* and *2010 Comprehensive Plan Update*. Together with previous versions, the plan traces the evolution of the ideas presented *in the City's first Comprehensive Plan (1998 Comprehensive Plan)* which was adopted as required by the *South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994*. The *Planning Enabling Act* requires that a comprehensive plan be adopted before any municipality can regulate development activity through zoning, subdivision regulations, floodplain regulation, wetland protection, historic preservation, or any other type of regulation concerning development activity. The plan must then be updated every 5 years and rewritten every 10 years.

The *Comprehensive Plan: 2015* is the primary tool for translating the Plan Statement into policy and procedure. It ~~will~~ provides:

- guidance for the future based on existing and projected conditions, best practices in planning, and the Plan Statement.
- specific recommendations to turn abstract goals into concrete results.
- a future land use map which informs citizens, elected officials, city staff, and developers of the type, location, and scale of new development expected over the next decade.
- a basis to create consistency between other plans and policy documents.
- protection of the community's character and improvement of the community's quality of life.
- strategies, alternatives, and solutions to address community issues and weaknesses.
- a strong legal basis for future decisions.

The Planning Process

Development of the comprehensive plan, *as well as the mid life cycle Five Year Update*, is divided into three primary areas:

- 1) *Inventory of Existing Conditions*. The inventory of existing conditions includes analysis of data and identification of trends in specific subject areas. It provides a snapshot of the current state of affairs and is used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a community. *The Five Year Update notes developments that have occurred after the original plan was adopted in 2015.*



- 2) *Public Participation*. Development of the plan hinges on both formal and informal public participation. Input is gathered from surveys, testimony at public meetings, and postings on social media.
- 3) *Statement of Needs and Goals and Implementation Strategies*. The statement of needs and goals serves as a visioning exercise and is meant to guide the direction of the **community's planning efforts until 2025 for the next decade**. It also includes implementation strategies which are meant to be specific, actionable items for staff, the Planning Commission, and elected officials to complete in order to bring about desired outcomes. **The Five Year Update includes a review of the goals established in the original plan, prioritization of unfinished work, and new goals established during the update process.**

Comprehensive Plan Elements

The *Planning Enabling Act* requires that the comprehensive plan deal specifically with nine subject areas. These subject areas address both the physical and intangible resources of the community.

- 1) The *Population* element includes demographic information related to historic trends and projections; number, size, and characteristics of households; income characteristics and trends; race, sex, age, and other information.
- 2) The *Economic* element includes information about the labor force and an economic analysis and discussion of the major revenue sources for the City of Folly Beach.
- 3) The *Natural Resources* element includes information about plant and animal habitats, unique park and recreation areas, unique scenic views and sites, wetlands, and any other information related to the natural environment of the area.
- 4) The *Cultural Resources* element serves to identify the existing cultural resources of the community, establish the character and uniqueness of historic areas, and project the future needs of the population.
- 5) The *Community Facilities* element includes information on water supply, treatment, and distribution; sewage system and waste water treatment; solid waste collection and disposal; fire protection; emergency medical services; general government facilities; educational facilities; libraries and other cultural facilities; and public safety and emergency preparedness.
- 6) The *Land Use* element reviews and evaluates development characteristics in the City. It considers existing and future land use by categories including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, public, parks, open space, and vacant or undeveloped land.
- 7) The *Housing* element contains housing data related to the number of units, type of units, age of housing, and occupancy of units. It also includes a housing affordability assessment which reviews opportunities for and impediments to affordable housing in the community.
- 8) The *Transportation* element considers transportation facilities including major road improvements, new road construction, parking, and planning for pedestrians and bicycles.



9) The *Priority Investment* element requires an analysis of projected federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years and recommends possible coordination of town projects with available funds.

Relationships

The *City of Folly Beach Comprehensive Plan: 2015* and the **Five Year Update** build on previous planning efforts and aim to bring consistency to decision making in many different areas. The **updated plan** incorporates elements from:

1) *2015 Local Comprehensive Beach Management Plan*, a summary of issues related to beach management including current challenges, future planning, funding, managing for competing uses, and long term beach restoration alternatives.

2) *2014 Parks and Recreation Five Year Plan*, a summary of existing park facilities and identification of future parks and recreation needs, potential sites, and funding.

3) *2015 Economic Impact Study*, an analysis of the economic impact of Folly Beach. Specifically the value of the beachfront as an economic engine for the City and State. Review of taxes and employment generated in the community.

4) *2015 Center Street Task Force*, a recommendation for traffic pattern alternatives for Center Street as well as beautification projects.

5) *2013 Action Plan for Mid Block Rights of Way*, a comprehensive inventory of all mid block rights of way on the island with recommendations for each section.

6) *2015 Folly Road Corridor Study*, an engineering, traffic, and land use study for the entire Folly Road Corridor from the Wappoo Bridge to Folly Beach.

7) *2015 Strategic Communications Plan*, a document developed by the Tourism and Visitor's Promotion Committee to serve as blueprint for marketing efforts related to the use of State Accommodations Tax money to promote Folly Beach as a tourism destination.

8) **The 2017 Sea Level Rise Adaption Strategy Report**, which documents the effects of sea level rise on the City and its operations as well as adaptation strategies to minimize those effects.

9) **The 2018 Dune Management Plan**, which builds on the City's Beach Management efforts by identifying actions needed to create and maintain a continuous vertical barrier along the beachfront. The dune system serves as a vital first line of defense.

10) **The 2018 Folly Beach Five Year Strategic Plan**, which guides the budgeting process for medium term operational goals. **The Five Year Strategic Plan** is developed by City Council and updated annually.

10) **The 2019 Marsh Management Plan**. TBD once adopted this summer



Conclusion

The *Comprehensive Plan 2015, as amended during the Five Year Update*, is a roadmap for the future. It provides a foundation for day to day, incremental decisions made by staff and elected officials that will create a final result representing a unified vision for Folly Beach. It ties together discussions of development regulations, budgeting, beach management, traffic planning, sustainability, and livability issues. All new regulations should be consistent with the goals laid out in the comprehensive plan to ensure that development and redevelopment comply with the stated goals of the community.

