

Protecting Natural Resources

10 Needs: Land Use 1; Economics 2; Natural Resources 7

Needs

1) Property in Folly Beach includes beach front, marsh and wetland environments, and historically important lands and structures which must be protected through sensitive development. **(Land Use)**

Goal: Eliminate existing encroachments on sensitive water fronts, marshes, wetlands, and riparian areas while encouraging environmentally sensitive development to protect the environments that define the beauty of Folly Beach. [Marsh Management Plan \(2019\)](#), [Dune Management Plan \(2018\)](#) [Moratorium ordinances: DMA, marsh setbacks, buffers, marsh island zoning, new septic rules \(2019\)](#).

Implementation: Vigorous enforcement of ordinances such as setbacks, sand dune disturbance, and impervious surfaces. [Incorporate recognized Green Building Practices into the Folly Beach Building Code \(Committee created, no adoption\)](#). [Created new as built survey requirements \(2016,2019\)](#). [Adopted model flood code ordinance changes \(2017\)](#).

2) The City must develop and fund long term strategies to combat beach erosion including alternatives to renourishment in anticipation of the end of the current agreement with the Army Corp's of Engineers.

(Economics)

Goal: Research and evaluate alternatives to renourishment while implementing a systematic method of building beach preservation funds to assure the availability of the City's portion of costs for future beach renourishments or alternative methods of erosion management.

Implementation: Budget so that funds will be available for potential renourishment projects taking place every six (6) years (or as needed) while also setting aside money for property acquisition Work with the Sea Grant Consortium and other competent authorities to conduct a survey of current best practices for shoreline management and a review of current legal issues related to beach preservation. Includes goal number 4 regarding seawalls. [Groin rehabilitation complete from 8th to 14th Street East in conjunction with complete renourishment \(2018\)](#). [Dune Management Plan Complete \(2018\)](#). [New Feasibility Study/evaluation of renourishment project parameters begun](#). [Sea Level Change Adaptation Report completed and adopted \(2017\)](#). [City dedicates 1 million per year to beach fund](#). [Coastal Science Consultant since 2016](#). [Successfully lobbied for creation of dedicated PRT program for State funding for beach renourishment \(2017\)](#).

3) The [2015 Economic Impact Study](#) identified a need to further document and study the number and frequency of beach visitations. This information could be crucial when the city approaches the Army Corps of Engineers and other Federal and State officials to secure future funding. **(Economics)**

Goal: Develop and implement a city program to collect and analyze data to systematically estimate quarterly and annual beach visitations.

Implementation: Task the Folly Beach Tourism and Visitor Promotion Committee with devising a method to more accurately measure quarterly and annual beach visitation statistics.

4) [Severe erosion and the structures built to combat erosion limit access to the beach](#). [The City currently has limited policies in place to limit erosion control structures built behind the Baseline](#). [Shore-parallel hard structures, such as sea walls, exacerbate beachfront erosion and inhibit natural dune building; thus, public access](#)

and critical turtle nesting access are both reduced. As a net result of seawall-induced beach erosion, a critical local and state economic generator is also reduced. **(Natural Resources)**.

Goal: Reduce the effects of erosion by allowing the beach to migrate more naturally.

Implementation: Consider regulations regarding the rebuilding of seawalls that are damaged. 2019 amended seawall ordinance allows seawalls and creates new minimum height and back fill provisions.

5) The City must protect the dune system from erosion and also development. The dunes are the first line of defense against erosion. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Prevent the destruction and degradation of the dune system to protect the integrity of the renourishment project.

Implementation: Create buffer zones on top of setbacks to require planting sea oats and/or sand fencing during development and redevelopment. Create a management plan for the dune areas. Banned boats on beach. Dune Management Plan Complete (2018). New dune building requirements in DMA (2019). New planting requirements in place (2019).

6) Folly Beach is home to wildlife that needs to be protected from pressures related to development and increased crowding on the beaches and waterways. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Increase efforts to protect wildlife.

Implementation: Enforce sea turtle lighting ordinances by working with lighting issues related to large oceanfront parcels such as the Tides and Oceanfront Villas. Annual meeting held by Folly Green with condo associations beginning in 2017. Develop an educational program to increase public awareness of wildlife issues. Worked with US Fish and Wildlife to design, fund, and place 4 new seabird education signs at high traffic walkovers. Create development standards that focus on maintaining natural habitat. New critical line setback is also dedicated as an undisturbed buffer (2018). Plastics ban (2016).

7) The Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission owns very large parcels on either end of the island. The City should coordinate with the PRC to maximize protection of these parcels. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Increased coordination with CCRPC in managing and planning for County owned property in the City of Folly Beach.

Implementation: Meet with CCPRC to determine potential conflicts with existing Master Plans and Folly Beach Planning efforts. Work with CCPRC to implement its long range plan for the Coast Guard station to develop the property as a passive access, educational facility. Reassess the amount of yearly financial contribution from CCPRC to the City. Coordination with PRC for redevelopment of Pier (2019).

8) The City must engage more fully with the river and other sensitive areas to balance access with protection. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Increase access to the river for nonmotorized boating, and restrict waterfront development. Kayak launch areas for Folly River and Folly Creek designed, DOT approved, and funded. Working with CCPRC to finalize plans for maintenance and coordinate construction. Applied for and received an LWCF Grant for ½ cost of restoring the Folly River Park Dock (2018). Shorebird Park and Shadowrace park created to offer views of river and marsh.

Implementation: Create buffer zones on top of setbacks to require planting vegetation during development and redevelopment. Create kayak accesses in the footprints of the old bridges. [2019 15' buffer passed.](#)

9) The City's tree regulations have been amended from over restrictive to perhaps overly permissive. A better balance must be found. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Protect trees on Folly Beach with concise, easily understandable, and complete standards.

Implementation: Planning Commission review of tree ordinance revisions to include reinstating tree coverage regulations.-[Tree protection revisions \(2016, 2017\)](#). [Worked to save trees at Post Office \(2018\)](#).

10) Undeveloped, environmentally sensitive lands in the marsh behind Folly Island are not protected from intense development. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: Protect marsh islands from inappropriately intense development.

Implementation: Create a new lower density zoning classification for Long Island. Work with Charleston County to insure that marsh islands out of Folly's jurisdiction are regulated. [Created new marsh island zoning \(2019\)](#). [Rezoned Black Island \(2019\)](#). [Required letters of coordination for marsh islands from OCRM and Charleston County \(2019\)](#). [Prohibited commercial docks in CN zoning \(2019\)](#).

Protecting Community Character

12 Needs: Land Use 1; Economics 2; Transportation 2; Cultural Resources 2; Housing 3; Population 2

Needs

1) Ultra short term rentals (less than one week) are proliferating in the residential districts of the City. **(Land Use)**

Goal: Regulate business activities that may affect the livability of both commercial and residential areas and increase efforts to identify rentals operating outside of current requirements.

Implementation: Review ordinances for rentals and consider limiting and regulating this type of activity. [Short term rental compliance software in place for 2018 license management](#). [City opted in to the Fairness in Lodging Act data sharing program with the State Department of Revenue \(2018\)](#) [Prohibited renting RV's \(2017\)](#)

2) Folly Beach is a seasonal destination and revenue falls as the weather cools, negatively impacting local businesses. **(Economics)**

Goal: Make Folly Beach an attractive, year-round destination for residents, locals, and visitors.

Implementation: Add a seasonal component to the Folly Beach marketing program to specifically target off-season visitors based on year-round availability of activities, and creative off-season benefits, etc. Also add an off-season local marketing component in cooperation with Folly Association of Businesses to attract residents and nearby locals to patronize Folly Beach businesses.

3) There are currently no known metrics to measure the effectiveness of our local marketing program. **(Economics)**

Goal: Work with the TVPC to re-evaluate the current marketing program for Folly Beach and revise as needed to maximize positive returns. Consider concentrating marketing efforts regionally to increase off-season visitations and business.

Implementation: Work with marketing professionals and city stakeholders to develop metrics for analyzing the effectiveness of our current marketing program and determine appropriate improvements to attain the stated, desired goals.

4) Increased demand for parking has led to the proliferation of paid parking lots. These lots limit the amount of commercial land available for other uses and detract from the streetscape and neighborhood character. **(Transportation)**

Goal: Commercial parking lots should be regulated to minimize visual impacts, and the location of new commercial parking lots should be studied.

Implementation: Develop requirements such as buffers and other visual screening for commercial lots that are similar to the requirements for other commercial uses. Limit the location of new lots to the areas closest to Center Street.

5) Parking requirements in the zoning code for the Downtown Commercial district stifle growth and prevent changes in use because of lack of land for required parking. **(Transportation)**

Goal: Amend the ordinances for DC parking.

Implementation: Remove or lessen the requirement for businesses to provide parking in the DC District. Businesses in the district were historically not required to provide on street parking. (Parking requirements reintroduced in the DC District for residential and tourist accommodations uses 2018)

6) There are several sites of local, state, and national importance in the City that need to be preserved and protected, and could be marketed for tourism. **(Cultural Resources)**

Goal: The City should offer continual municipal support of preserving our historic landmarks and older commercial and residential structures that contribute to the history of Folly Beach. Protected the Porgy House with a landscape buffer from the rear along the opened portion of West Cooper.

Implementation: Consider using A-Tax funds or other sources to make annual financial commitments to local groups and organizations whose efforts are directed towards maintaining Folly landmarks.

7) There are very limited offerings for Folly Beach-related tours and tour operators. **(Cultural Resources)**

Goal: The City should continue support of existing tours (boat, kayak, etc) but also development tools for bike, walking, and vehicle tourism with special attention to offseason opportunities.

Implementation: Create a database of existing historic sites, scenic views, places of interest, trails, and other attractions. Place this information on a map/brochure that can be distributed online and to the public.

8) The wide variety of housing styles in the City is in danger of being lost as new development maximizes zoning allowances. **(Housing)**

Goal: New development should be encouraged to embrace a wider variety of architectural forms, elements, and materials. If possible, older structures should be referenced or incorporated into new buildings. Existing home relocated from site of new restaurant at 106 East Ashley. New Inn at 87 Center Street designed to

reference Atlantic House. Allowed properties zoned for multiple units to build detached units. Increased demolition fees for historic structures (2018).

Implementation: Create incentives for the use of existing structures and vernacular design in new construction. Encourage owners of older homes to elevate vs. demolish. Develop and publish an inventory of typical forms, materials, and elements to be used as reference for new construction. Design/Best Practice/Preservation incentives not taken up by Council.

9) Affordable home prices and rents remain elusive. **(Housing)**

Goal: The City should examine its zoning ordinances and make changes needed to allow for the construction of units that could be sold or rented for a wider variety of price ranges.

Implementation: Allow auxiliary residential units, small houses or rooms attached or unattached to the main structures. These units would be restricted from being used for short term rental and subject to other conditions-(This concept has been reviewed and did not move forward)

10) Short term rentals are vital to the economy of Folly Beach, but sometimes create challenges for the community. **(Housing)**

Goal: The City should continue to actively address proper licensing of rentals and document short term rental issues by monitoring calls to Public Safety, SC DHEC, or other departments rentals to determine the impacts of these uses.

Implementation: Conduct an annual review of rental related issues. Develop a map of short term rentals. City offers rental verification (2016). Rental registration doubled. Rental Ordinance revisions completed (2018) with occupancy limits, event limits, nuisance penalties.

11) The City has a marketing program for tourists, but no similar program to attract future residents or businesses. **(Population)**

Goal: The TVPC is limited by law to only marketing for tourism. The City should take an active role in marketing itself to potential new residents and businesses.

Implementation: Develop a marketing brochure to post on the City's website and distribute to rental agencies and units to promote the City as a residential choice.

12) The existing program for marketing to tourists primarily focuses on summer tourism which results in overburdening the City during the high season. **(Population)**

Goal: The TVPC should adjust its tourism marketing plan to attract visitors in the winter rather than during the crowded summer months.

Implementation: Enact the recommendations in the *2015 Strategic Communications Plan* created by the Tourism and Visitor's Promotion Committee.

Enhancing Public Services

16 Needs: Economics 2; Natural Resources 1; Transportation 3; Community Facilities 5; Cultural Resources 1; Housing 1; Population 3

Needs

1) It is vital that the distribution of accommodation tax fund be used for maximum benefit. **(Economics)**

Goal: Continue periodic reviews of local accommodations tax fund distribution to assure the maximum benefit for the City.

Implementation: Review the application process for city “A-tax” funds. Monitor the performance and evaluate the impact of distributed funds. Assure that “A-tax” funds are being used to support goals deemed important to the city and residents as outlined in the *2015 Comprehensive Plan*.

2) The City has limited reserve funds for its long term needs. **(Economics)**

Goal: Assure that city permits, licenses, parking fees, and other sources of revenue are adequate to fund necessary city functions. Re-examine contributions from various revenue sources to assure that contributions meet or exceed the cost of required city services and allow for the city’s funding of its part of future matching grants. Commitment to roll over property payments to reserves to fund long term capital plan (reassigned Folly River Park payment to fund City Hall improvements, fire truck. Increased minimum general fund balance to 2 million. Made rules for excess revenues to reserve a portion for long term needs and fund certain projects from remaining funds.

Implementation: Review all sources of revenue to ensure that fees and charges are at competitive rates. Create and fund reserve accounts for items identified as priorities. Rental Registration fee doubled (2018). Business License sticker fee created (2016)

3) Water quality is threatened by lack of stormwater facility maintenance and construction. **(Natural Resources)**

Goal: To reduce potential and actual pollution of ground and surface water.

Implementation: Map all drainage facilities on the island, establish regular monitoring to ensure proper functioning, -improve existing drainage systems and components, and work with Charleston County and DOT to identify and construct new drainage infrastructure where needed. Numerous projects with Charleston County. Secured property for 9th Street West drainage property. Designed 4th Street East project. Overall drainage mapping project identified in Sea Level Adaptation report.

4) There are only partial inventories of parking spaces island wide, and known parking spaces are not actively maintained. **(Transportation)**

Goal: Create a program to manage on street parking on the island.

Implementation: **Inventory and define all parking spaces.** Open existing spaces to facilitate parking, focusing on the first 3 blocks from Center Street and along Ashley and Arctic. Investigate the future use of paid on street parking in the right of way. Use Public Works to maintain ROW parking. Enforce DOT and City prohibitions against private no parking signs. Created program for residential no parking signs and driveway signs (2016). New paid parking area on Arctic Avenue.

5) Commercial Parking lots are not adequately regulated in terms of attractiveness or efficiency. **(Transportation)**

Goal: Ensure that commercial parking lots are attractive, well maintained, and user friendly.

Implementation: Enact landscaping and screening ordinances for commercial parking lots. Monitor parking lots to remove encroachments into the right of way.

6) Traffic volumes on the island are increasing and creating dangerous situations for cyclists and pedestrians. **(Transportation)**

Goal: Improve traffic flow and make Folly safer for all users including cyclists and pedestrians. Center Street redesign completed. 25mph limit. Slow Down Folly citizen initiative. Pedestrian pathway plan in development with priority for 2nd Streets East/West.

Implementation: Pursue public transportation options through a partnership with CARTA, including a special route during festivals and other special events- Work with neighboring jurisdictions to implement the Folly Road Corridor Study. Worked with JI, CC, and Charleston City for James Island complete streets application for multiuse path in phases from Ellis Creek to Sol Legare. Create alternate pathways for pedestrians. Enhance road shoulders to allow for use by pedestrians. Study the conversion of Arctic Avenue to one lane. Explore financing options for sidewalks. Created new commercial loading zones and hours of delivery (2016) Task Public Works with cleaning intersections for visibility. Pursue an island wide 25mph speed limit. 4 way stops on Second Street. Lower Speed limit.

7) The City wants to provide safe places for children to play, increase opportunities for walking by the water and other water based recreation, provide additional picnic areas, and create well maintained areas in which to exercise and relax. **(Community Facilities)**

Goal: Full implementation of the 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan as well as maintenance and improvement of existing recreation facilities. Shorebird Park, Shadow Race Park, Wave Watch Restrooms, Community Garden. new exercise equipment at Folly River Park

Implementation: Continue annual budget allocations for Parks and Recreation to build facilities described in 5 Year Plan. Review options for the provision of seasonal restroom facilities along the beachfront.

8) At present there is no updated map or inventory of the water and sewer infrastructure. There are vulnerabilities that need to be assessed as well as limited reserves for replacement. **(Community Facilities)**

Goal: Continued funding for future water/sewer system infrastructure replacement reserves. Locating, mapping, and evaluating the existing water/sewer lines. Mapping continues for water system. Two water main replacement projects completed

Implementation: Make yearly contributions to appropriate reserve accounts for water and sewer. Work with Sea Grant Consortium on mapping infrastructure as part of an overall resiliency effort. Hire an outside engineering firm to assess the system and develop a depreciation schedule. Involve the Utilities Advisory Board with infrastructure planning.

9) Youth services are not widely advertised or coordinated with local nonprofits, agencies, and organizations. **(Community Facilities)**

Goal: Centralizing information about youth services and programs offered by the City as well as other public and private entities. This information is useful to both residents and visitors.

Implementation: Add a youth services page to City website. Youth Services page live on website. Parks and Rec developing new consolidated portal.

10) There is a continuing need for opening and maintaining mid block rights of way. **(Community Facilities)**

Goal: Continued funding and implementation of the mid block rights of way program.

Implementation: Create an “adopt-a-right-of-way” program to encourage residents/businesses/non-profits to take responsibility for specific sections of the mid block easements.

11) The island remains mostly dependent on onsite septic systems for waste management. **(Community Facilities)**

Goal: Coordination with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control regarding septic system monitoring and regulation.

Implementation: Consider ordinances to require regular pumping and inspections of septic tanks that service rental properties. Explore alternate strategies related to waste management to reduce reliance on septic systems. City has partnered with Sea Grant Consortium and Nags Head to apply for a grant to study the cost/benefits of septic tank adaptation strategies related to sea level rise (2018).

12) There is no public collection, exhibition, or facility dedicated to Folly Beach’s history. **(Cultural Resources)**

Goal: The City should work to create a Folly Beach Museum or reading room.

Implementation: Start a central drop-off and collection center at City Hall or the Community Center to gather literature, memorabilia, etc. As the creation grows, task a City Hall intern with archiving and developing a plan for display. Ongoing effort to create Folly museum. New display area added to community Center (2019)

13) Many residents and property owners are unclear on or unaware of the impacts of changes to federal legislation which result in increased insurance premiums for most property owners on Folly Beach. **(Housing)**

Goal: The City should increase communication with property owners about potential changes to flood insurance and wind and hail programs. Community meetings held to review preliminary flood maps, website updated to reflect new FEMA info, outreach to repetitive loss properties

Implementation: Hold an annual town hall meeting or public work session devoted to insurance issues. A meeting summary should also be sent to out of town property owners.

14) The City must provide services to accommodate an increasing number of visitors as a result of population increases in the tri county region. **(Population)**

Goal: Provide adequate public safety and other services to handle daily, transient population levels. Increased parking and beach patrol funding. New records management program funded in 2017.

Implementation: Create a database of calls to Public Safety to track seasonal increases in volume. This database can be used to justify funding levels as well as the adjustment of services such as beach and parking patrols.

15) The City does not offer a wide variety of government sponsored/provided social and recreational programming. **(Population)**

Goal: Partner with outside agencies to promote programming available through other local governments, non-profits, and social organizations. Added community yoga classes and Spanish lessons (2016)

Implementation: Dedicate space on the City’s website for a centralized database of local programs and activities. Expanded the franchise ordinance to allow for surf lessons, stand up paddleboard lessons, and

yoga lessons on the beach (2015). City hosted Family Fun Night and National Night Out beginning in 2017.
Charleston Performing Arts Program for Christmas (2016)

16) The City has no regular process for communicating important issues to nonresident property owners.
(Population)

Goal: Increased dialogue between the City and out of town property owners.

Implementation: Conduct at least one annual outreach, such as the *State of the City*, to property owners.
City now mails three annual communications: Licensing letter, State of the City, Fairness in Lodging Notice

- Joined the Rethink Folly Road Memorandum of Agreement. Project is long term implementation of Rethink Folly Road recommendations. Grant funding received for first phase of multiuse path, project coordinator hired as full time staff (2016-present).
- Opposed the development of The Lively on James Island to prevent a 400 unit apartment complex (2016).
- Amended allowable construction hours to start one hour later 8am (2016).
- Restricted the dates for runs and races that require City resources and increased fees (2016).
- Restricted formula businesses (2018).
- In 2016 the City rejected a request to rezone 114 East Indian to commercial to prevent development of a dedicated wedding event hall.
- 2016 participation in the FEMA Highwater Mark initiative to place flood markers throughout the City (2016)
- Special Events Ordinances rewritten in 2016 to limit times of year for certain events, create more staff committee screening, and require City resources to be used.
- Center Street Memorial Brick program (2016).