



# Comprehensive Plan

Ordinance # 54-19  
Adopted unanimously by Horry County Council  
December 10, 2019

Horry County  
South Carolina

# IMAGINE 2040

Your County. Your Voice. Our Future.



# **IMAGINE** *2040* **VISION STATEMENT**

*"Horry County will sustain and enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by fostering healthy and safe communities, preserving our natural assets and rural heritage, encouraging business growth and economic diversification, and providing services and public facilities that will protect and strengthen our future."*



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# SPECIAL THANKS



## SPECIAL THANKS

Horry County would like to thank the following persons, who have generously committed their time, knowledge and dedication to the people of Horry County, for which this Comprehensive Plan serves as a guideline for the future. The following people have been involved with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and/or are members of Planning Commission and County Councilmen:

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District 2	Bill Howard
District 3	Dennis DiSabato
District 4	Gary Loftus
District 5	Tyler Servant
District 6	Cam Crawford
District 7	Orton Bellamy
District 8	Johnny Vaught
District 9	W. Paul Prince
District 10	Danny Hardee
District 11	Al Allen

Additional thanks to Horry County Planning staff, the staff from participating jurisdictions, including the elected and appointed representatives from those jurisdictions, and the people of Horry County.

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City of Loris  
City of Myrtle Beach  
City of North Myrtle Beach  
Town of Atlantic Beach  
Town of Aynor  
Town of Briarcliffe Acres  
Town of Surfside Beach  
Brunswick County  
Columbus County  
Georgetown County  
Marion County

## REGIONAL PLANNING GROUPS

Grand Strand Area Transportation Study  
Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Horry County is rapidly changing. Our beautiful beaches, warm climate, and low taxes have attracted vacationers and retirees to make Horry County their permanent or seasonal home. In light of the growth that is occurring, Horry County is taking proactive steps to plan for the future. The **IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the principles of sustainable development, focuses on community design and character, maximizes and efficiently expands public infrastructure together with services, and brings people closer to job centers, while encouraging thoughtful development and redevelopment.**

Horry County's population and housing stock have more than doubled over the past 30 years. In 2018, the US Census identified the County as part of the 2nd fastest growing Metropolitan Statistical Area in the nation for the third year in a row. By 2040, our year-round population is expected to nearly double again, reaching up to 584,500 permanent residents. If residential growth patterns continue as they have over the last few decades, more than **200,000 of the 275,000 anticipated new residents are likely to make unincorporated Horry County their home.** 45% of that growth could be accommodated in unincorporated properties that have already been zoned for major residential developments; however, Horry County and the municipalities within it will need to plan for at least another 63,000 units. Long-term trends reveal that on average 210 new homes are constructed and 650 new residents relocate to Horry County monthly. These numbers were far exceeded in 2017, as more than 4,200 new single family homes were constructed and an estimated 11,800

**+ 275,000  
New People**

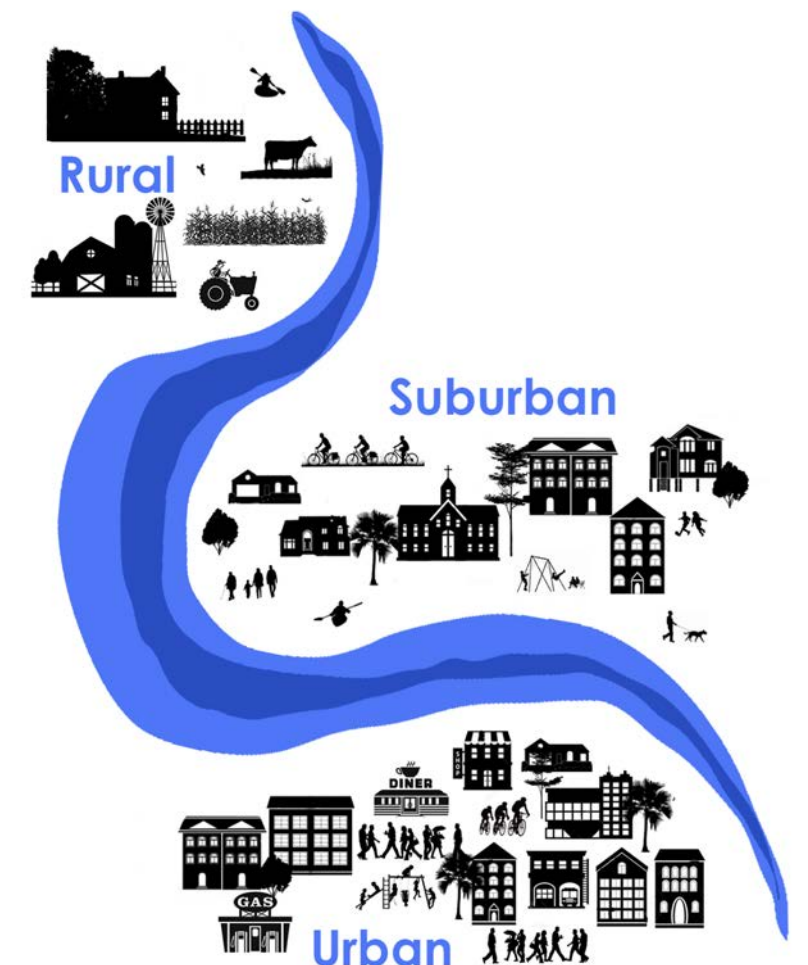


**+ 116,000  
New Housing Units  
By 2040**

people moved to Horry County. Increased housing demand and a lack of available supply, compounded by a shortage in construction workers and materials following the Recession, has resulted in higher home sale prices and a shortage of affordable housing. From 2012 to 2018, the average single-family home price jumped from \$154,500 to \$238,000, exceeding sales prices prior to the economic downturn. The increase in home prices has forced working residents to live further away from their jobs, having an adverse impact on the cost of living and quality of life for our largely tourism based workforce. Conversely, retirees relocating to Horry County are often purchasing more expensive homes closer to the beach. These residents often have a higher expectation of service provided by the County compared to those living in rural areas.

While Horry County will inevitably continue to attract new residents, the lack of diversity in the age of our population, coupled with strained infrastructure and services, presents a challenge to economic growth. Seniors aged 55 and older make up 37% of our population in comparison to 28.9% statewide and 27% nationally. This segment of Horry County's population is growing more rapidly than other segments. In fact, little-to-no growth is occurring in the 20-29 year old age bracket, and slow growth is occurring for those 30-54 years old. With more than 18% of our residents living below the poverty level, it is evident that Horry County needs to diversify our economy and expand the number of wage earners and entrepreneurs. **The County must offer a variety of housing types to attract a diverse range of income earners, age groups, and family types to stay or relocate here.** These efforts are necessary to stabilize our economy and our communities, which will have positive secondary impacts on public safety and housing security.

In recent years, new development has consumed more than 53 square miles of land. As large tracts of land for residential subdivisions near urban centers have become scarcer and as housing costs have been driven up, more people are beginning to locate further away from city centers and other significant centers of community activity. New subdivisions, many of which were approved for development over a decade ago, are emerging along major corridors outside of established suburban and urban cores. Residential growth without nearby commercial and employment centers strains the local tax base, congests roadways, increases public safety response times, overcrowds schools, and limits the ability to equitably provide recreation and other desired public facilities and services.





Planning can be a challenging task to undertake in a County of our size with such a wide range of development intensity between urban and rural communities. **Existing residents have placed an emphasis on the need for infill development and redevelopment to minimize the cost for additional infrastructure and public services.** They have expressed the need for job centers and economic growth. They have also indicated the desire to preserve the landscape and lifestyle of our rural communities. All of these factors, along with public safety, natural hazards, and community health were considered when developing the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan and are embodied in the vision of this plan.

## IMAGINE<sup>2040</sup>

### VISION STATEMENT

"Horry County will sustain and enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by fostering healthy and safe communities, preserving our natural assets and rural heritage, encouraging business growth and economic diversification, and providing services and public facilities that will protect and strengthen our future."

The location and form in which growth occurs will have a strong bearing on the quality of life for our existing and future residents and the experience of our visitors. In order to preserve a way of life for our rural residents and cultivate

a sense of place in our suburban and urban areas of the County, there must be a change in how density is perceived. **Strategically placed density in already highly developed areas must be considered, as it will ultimately reduce the cost to upgrade infrastructure and the cost of services, attract businesses and young professionals, offer a mixture of housing options, improve health through walkability, and foster character and a sense of place.** Allowing for increased density and infill development in urban and suburban areas will have a positive impact on our economy, especially if it repurposes failing commercial areas and former shopping malls.

In some areas of the County, such as golf course communities, redevelopment may be more challenging, as public safety, stormwater, and separation and buffering of differing uses must be considered in the rezoning and development review process. **By allowing for growth to occur in areas where infrastructure and services are already available, it will also reduce the demand for greenfield development in rural areas of the County; thus preserving rural lifestyles, farmland, and important natural resources that help retain floodwaters.** Recent floods have revealed the vulnerabilities of our residents, economy, roads, and stormwater infrastructure, but it has also revealed our County's resilience to adversity.

This plan will allow Horry County to take a proactive role in determining the fate of our communities, economy, roads and infrastructure, services, and quality of life. The IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee and staff thoroughly reviewed the changing conditions of the County and gathered public input to develop this plan, the heart of which can be defined by the Vision, Future Land Use Map, and the Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. Not only does it address recommended

land uses, it exceeds state planning criteria by including an additional chapter on Public Safety. It also provides a foundation for the development of future planning initiatives, such as:

- Comprehensive Road Improvement Plan;
- Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan;
- Parks and Open Space Plan;
- Greenways & Blueways Master Plan;
- Beach Management Plan;
- Historic Preservation Plan;
- updates to the Garden City and Little River area plans; and
- additional neighborhood and area plans.

In order to successfully implement this plan, there will need to be changes to County regulations that will support variation in design, density, and development practices, making quality development more practical. **The plan will need to be supported through policy and land use decisions.** It will require strategic updates to the zoning ordinance, land development regulations, and rezoning review criteria to ensure that development and infill results in quality design that does not adversely impact existing communities, provides a greater sense of place, expands housing options and affordability, ensures safe and healthy communities, and supports economic growth. Ultimately, this plan provides a roadmap for the future of Horry County, exemplifying the ability of the Independent Republic to define its own destiny and continue to be an attractive place for people to live, work, and play.



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

Horry County is under intense development pressure. Population projections predict an increase to more than half-a-million residents in Horry County by 2040. Future development, services, and infrastructure must be thoughtfully planned. The IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan can best be described as a framework for the County's future. It will directly inform current and future decisions. ***The purpose of the Horry County IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan is to enable government officials and citizens to effectively manage natural, cultural, economic and fiscal resources in light of growth, change and an inexact future.*** IMAGINE 2040 defines the County's biggest assets and challenges for the future while making recommendations about the type and character of development appropriate in different areas of the County.

The goals, objectives and strategies in this document are aimed at promoting safe and healthy communities that preserve and build on the County's unique sense of place; and promoting sustainable economic opportunities that allow all County residents to thrive and prosper. IMAGINE 2040 identifies ways to maximize the County's strengths and improve weaknesses. It is a vital document because it contains guidance for the development of the County over the next 10 to 20 years. The Plan provides this guidance by outlining recommendations and implementation strategies which are supported by data and technical analysis developed through a public review process. This plan is a living document. In addition to a statutorily required five-year review, it will be continually monitored and updated to respond to changing conditions and best available information.

## AUTHORITY OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

In 1994, the County was granted the authority by the State

of South Carolina to prepare and maintain a comprehensive plan through the South Carolina Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act (S.C. Code Title 6, Chapter 29). The Act consolidated formerly separate legislative acts regarding the local authority to create comprehensive plans. The comprehensive plan is adopted by ordinance as a means to guide public policy, forming the legal basis for any future land use ordinances, including rezoning requests. In order for local land use regulations to be valid, they must be adopted in accordance with a locally adopted plan. That plan is based upon and includes appropriate studies of the location and the extent of present and anticipated population, social, economic and environmental resources, and the current issues and concerns of the community.

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

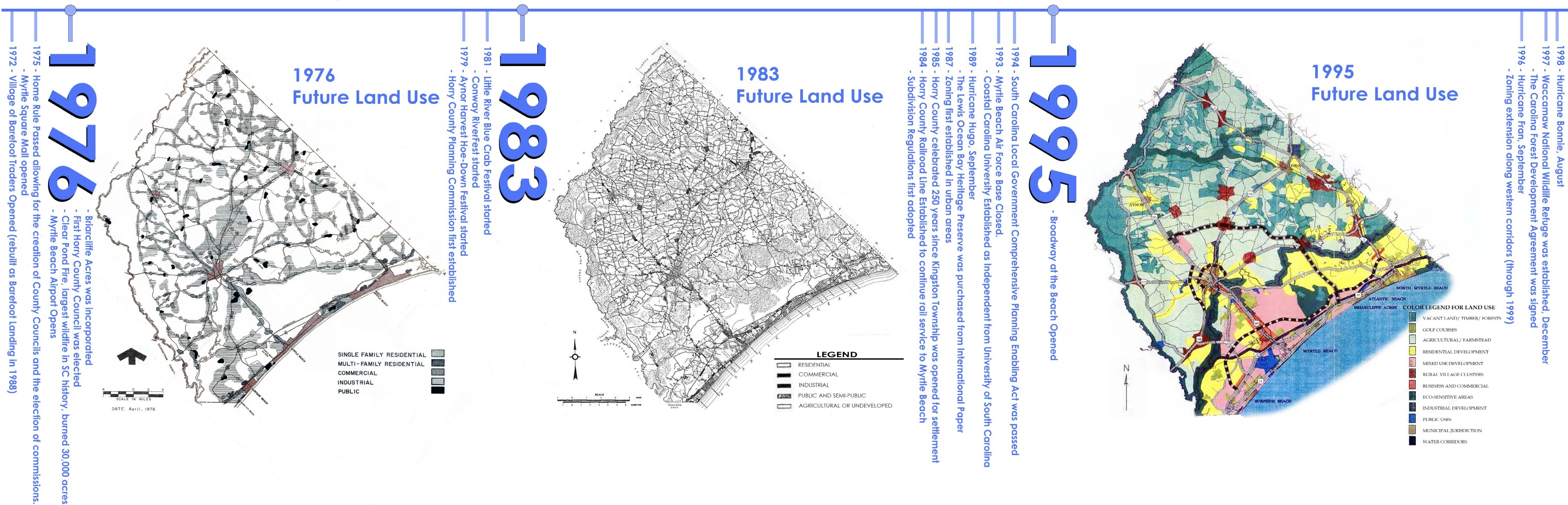
The IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan will guide public decision-making affecting the quality of life in Horry County through the year 2040. The Plan identifies the community's vision for the future. **The vision** articulates the essential components of the quality of life in Horry County, as identified by the community, and serves as the touchstone for the Plan. The various elements of the Plan are designed to accomplish this vision by articulating goals for the future regarding the pattern, quality, and intensity of land uses, the provision of public facilities and services, economic development, availability of housing, and preservation of natural and cultural resources. The Plan also establishes strategies or actions and implementation tools to enable the County to achieve the vision set out in this Plan. The components of the Plan focus on real actions the County can achieve given the appropriate time and resources. The strategies in the Plan are tied together in a comprehensive manner and are executed through both the land use and priority investment chapters.

*"It is the function and duty of the local planning commission... to undertake a continuing planning program for the physical, social, and economic growth, development and redevelopment of the area within its jurisdiction. The plans and programs must be designed to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, prosperity, or the general welfare as well as the efficiency and economy of its area of jurisdiction. Specific planning elements must be based upon careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of existing conditions and probable future development and include recommended means of implementation."*

*-South Carolina Local Government Planning Enabling Act of 1994*



## History of Planning in Horry County



Horry County has a long history of land use planning. The County established zoning for the urbanizing areas in 1987 and later adopted zoning for the entire County in 2002. This document builds on comprehensive and regional planning efforts conducted over the last 40 years. Horry County's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1976, with subsequent plans being adopted in 1983, 1995, 1999, and 2008. IMAGINE 2040 relies upon those previous efforts and the many neighborhood and area plans that have been developed in recent years to guide quality growth.

### PLANNING AND REGULATORY HISTORY

The history of land use planning in Horry County has evolved over the last few decade. The **1976 Land Use Plan** was the first land use plan adopted in Horry County. This plan was intended to provide a framework for the growth and development of the County with recommendations for which areas of the county should be reserved for specific types of development and preservation. The 1976 plan divided the County into 14 planning districts,

for which a detailed analysis of existing conditions and future potential was outlined.

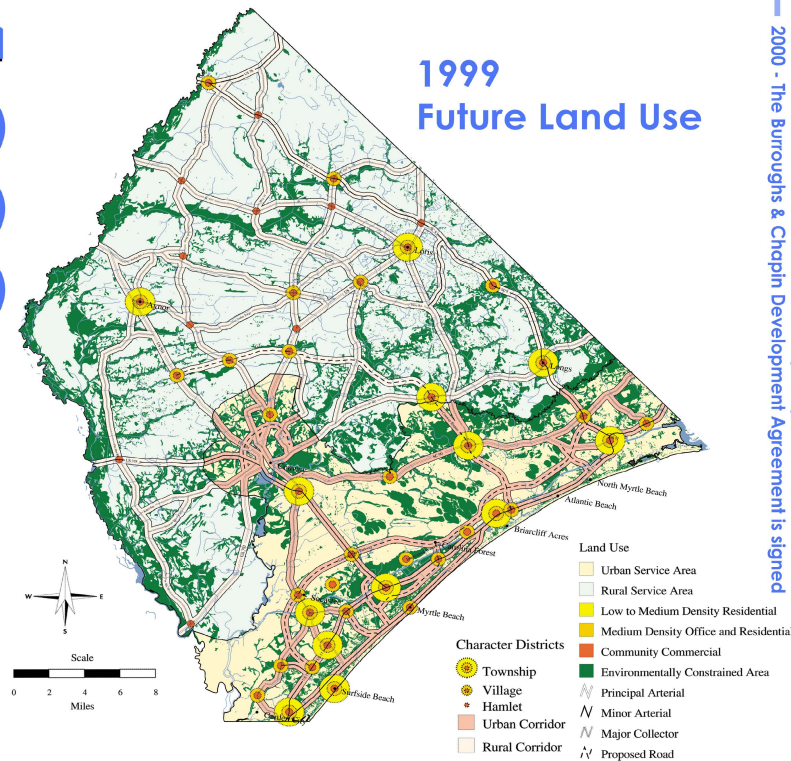
The 1976 Future Land Use Plan was followed by the **1983 Land Use Plan**. Dividing the County into eight planning districts, this Plan outlined critical areas of concern in each district as well as outlining the current residential growth in each district. The 1983 Plan contained an even more detailed analysis of existing land uses and their future potential. This Plan was





## 1999

- Hurricane Floyd, September
- The Zoning Ordinance of Horry County was adopted
- The Zoning Board of Appeals was Established

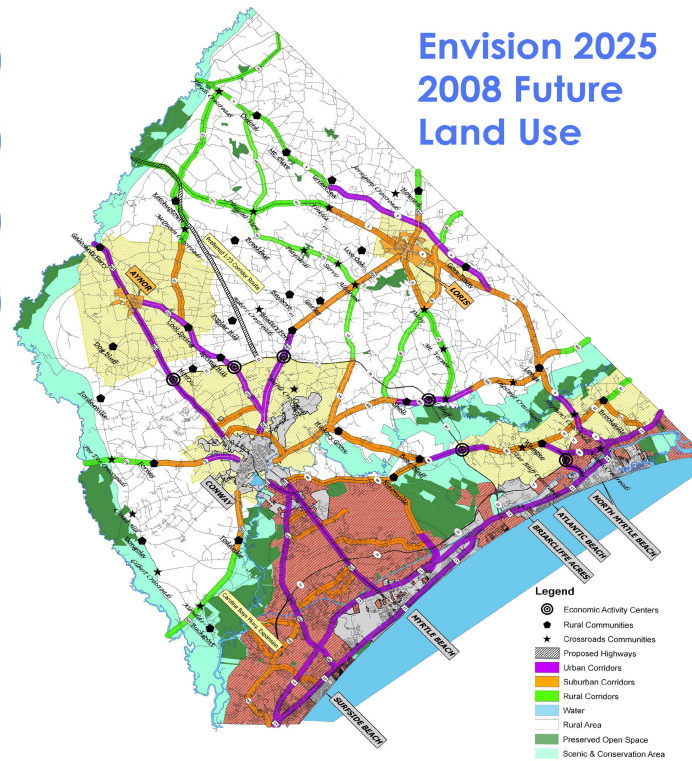


1999  
Future Land Use

## 2008

- Market Commons opened

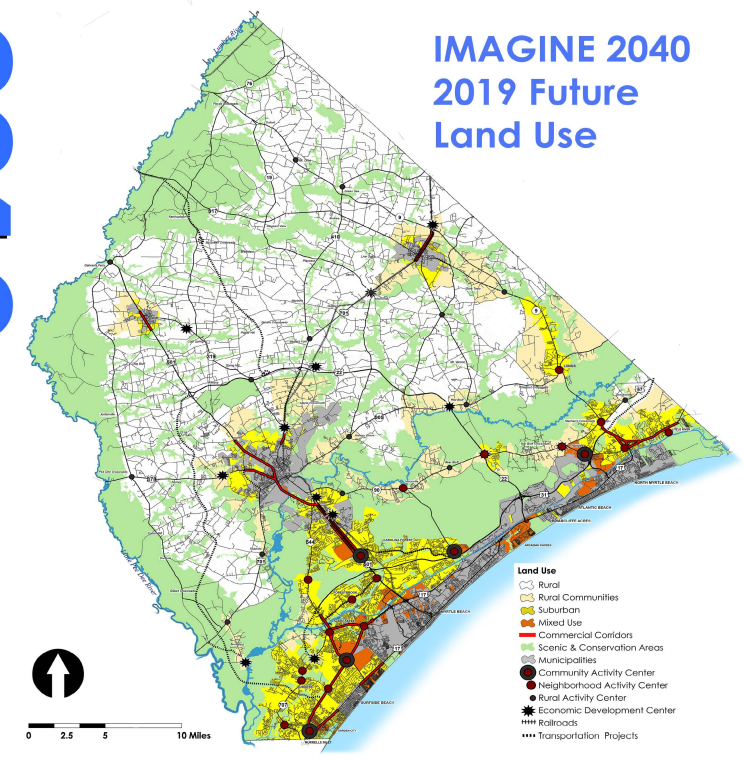
- 2007 - Horry County re-titles all residential zoning classifications
- 2007 - PDD (Planned Development Districts) and TND (Traditional Neighborhood Districts) established
- 2005 - Horry County Council adopts an ordinance establishing 24 new commercial and agricultural zoning districts for future rezoning requests
- 2004 - Hurricane Charlie made second landfall in North Myrtle Beach, August
- 2004 - Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Established
- 2002 - SC-31/Carolina Bays Parkway Opened
- 2001 - Coastal Grande Mall Opens
- 2001 - The entirety of Horry County was officially zoned under the 1999 Zoning Ordinance
- 2001 - Burroughs & Chapin launch Grand Dunes after beginning redevelopment in 1988
- 2000 - Land Development Regulations adopted
- 2000 - Establishment of the Parks and Open Space Board
- 2000 - The Burroughs & Chapin Development Agreement is signed



Envision 2025  
2008 Future  
Land Use

## 2019

- 2018 - International Drive opened, connecting Carolina Forest to Hwy-90
- 2018 - Carolina Forest Development Agreement ended
- 2016 - Hurricane Matthew
- 2015 - Tropical Storm Ana, May
- 2015 - Hurricane Joaquin and the 1,000-year flood, October
- 2009 - April 22, 2nd Largest Wildfire in South Carolina History burns 19,600 acres in Horry County
- 2010 - Keep Horry County Beautiful Established



IMAGINE 2040  
2019 Future  
Land Use

the first to include a Future Land Use Map and future land use designations as well as outlines for potential policy guidance.

The **1995 Comprehensive Plan** was the first truly comprehensive plan written for Horry County. Just four years later, the **1999 Comprehensive Plan** was adopted. The first of the "modern" Comprehensive Plans, this Plan followed a similar format to IMAGINE 2040, including the population, economic, natural resources, cultural resources, community facilities,

housing, and land use chapters. This was the first Plan to outline goals and implementation strategies.

The latest Comprehensive Plan, **Envision 2025**, again follows a similar format to IMAGINE 2040 in that it contains many of the same chapters (with the exception of the Transportation and Priority Investment Chapters which were new additions mandated by the State of South Carolina, and the Public Safety Chapter which is an addition determined necessary by the IMAGINE 2040 Committee). The Land Use Chapter

from Envision 2025 followed a corridor strategy which highlighted urban, suburban, and rural roadways as well as urban, transitional, and rural areas for future types and intensities of development. An important component of Envision 2025 was the designated Economic Activity Centers, many of which have transitioned into the IMAGINE 2040 Future Land Use Map.



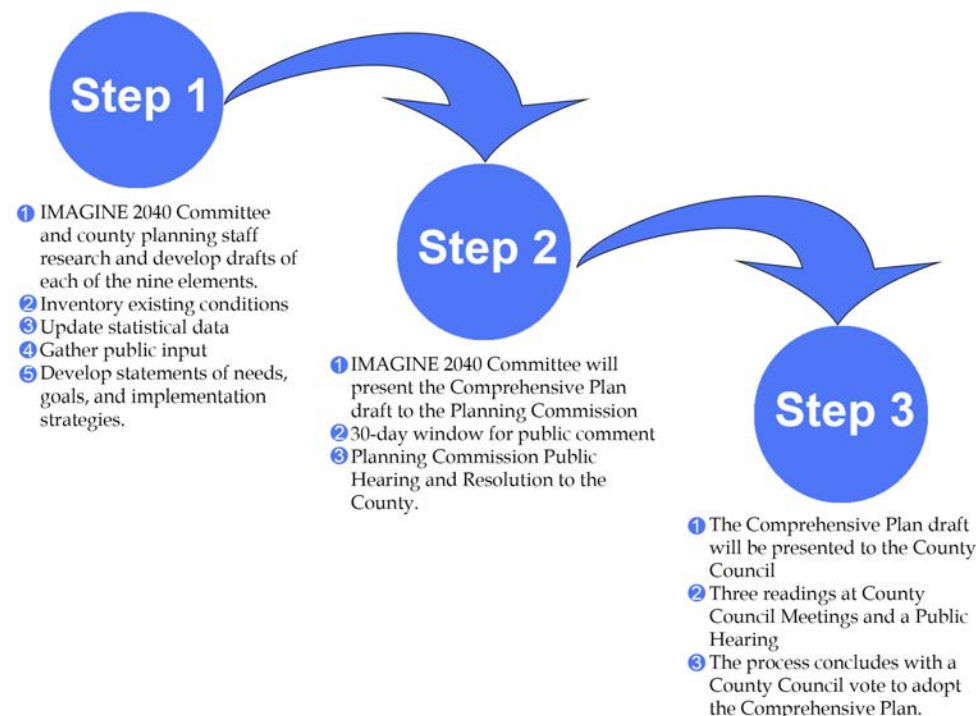
## THE PROCESS

Creating this Comprehensive Plan was a three-step process during which planning staff and IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee Members conducted a thorough inventory of existing conditions, updated statistical information, researched, and drafted each of the twelve chapters. Multiple opportunities for public comment were provided throughout the process. A timeline (shown below) and process graphic (shown to the right) explain this in greater detail.

## IMAGINE 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

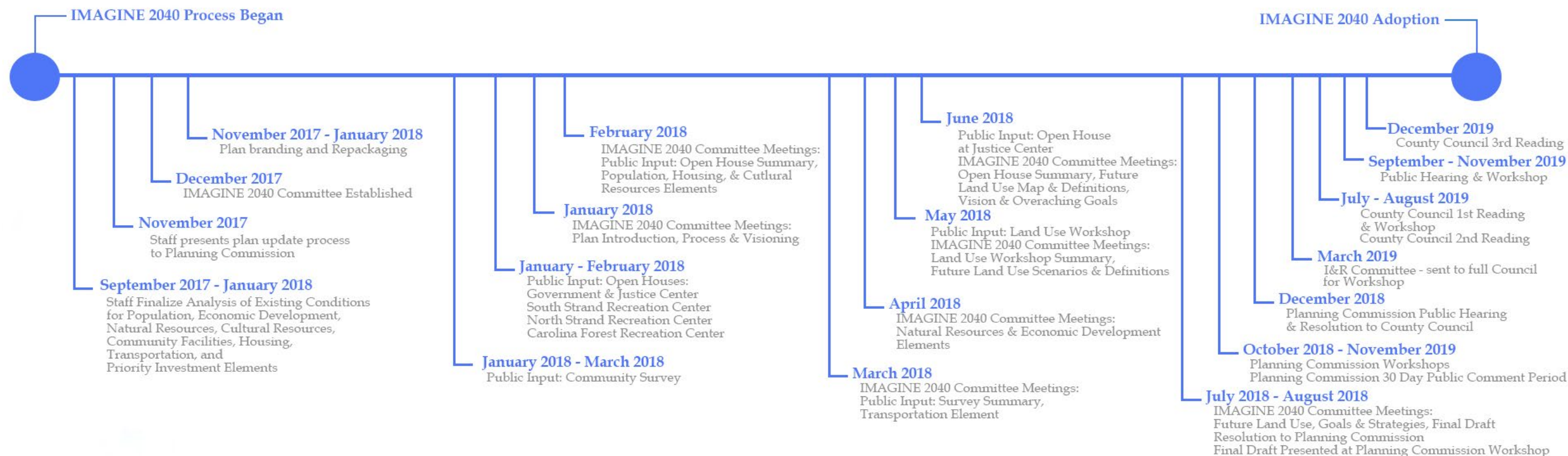
The IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee was established by the Planning Commission in December 2017. The fourteen-person committee was comprised of a variety of expertise, including real estate, economic development, environmental, agricultural professionals, and community

## Comprehensive Planning Process



volunteers. The Steering Committee met eleven times spread over six months. Each meeting was open to the public and advertised on the County Meetings Calendar. Meeting topics included specific examinations of each of the twelve chapters. Meetings were held on the following dates:

January 11th, 3:00-4:30pm  
 February 22nd, 4:30-6:00pm  
 March 29th, 4:30-6:00pm  
 April 19th, 4:30-6:00pm  
 April 26th, 4:30-6:00pm  
 May 31st, 4:30-6:00pm  
 June 28th, 4:30-6:00pm  
 July 12th, 4:30-6:00pm  
 July 26th, 11:00am-3:00pm  
 August 16th, 4:30-6:00pm







## PUBLIC INPUT

Public participation and community involvement is an important component in the comprehensive planning process. The Public Input Summary details all of the key public participation findings.

Public input for the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan was gathered via four main methods:

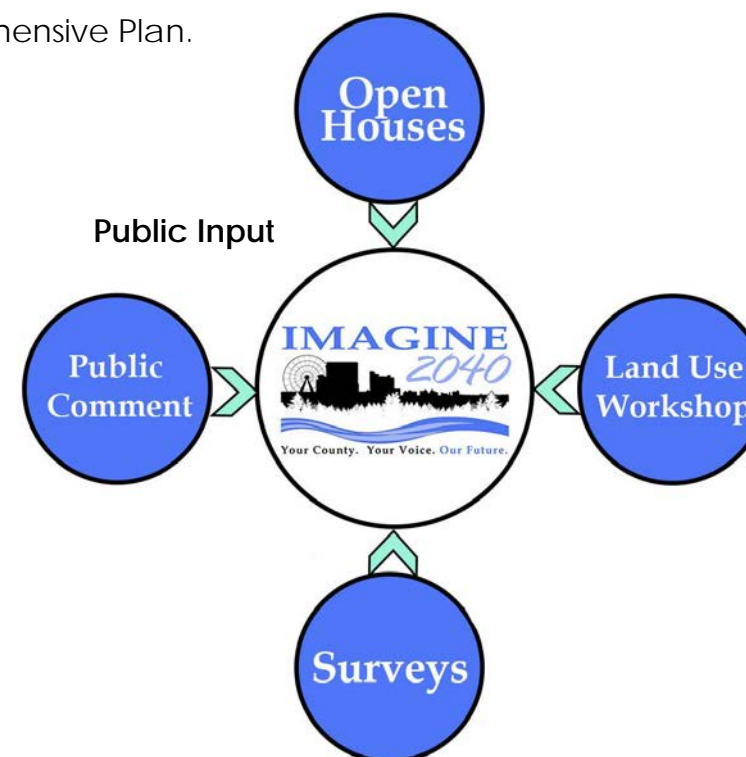
**1. Public Meetings.** Open houses were held at four locations over the course of a two week period at the beginning of the rewriting process. A fifth open house was held in June to summarize findings and the draft Plan chapters. Open houses were held on the following dates:

January 25th, 2018 5:00-6:30pm  
January 29th, 2018 5:00-6:30pm  
January 31st, 2018 3:00-4:30pm  
February 5th, 2018 5:00-6:30pm  
June 14th, 2018 5:00-6:30pm



January 25th Open House at the Government and Justice Center in Conway, SC  
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning

**2. Online and Paper Surveys.** A 27 question online survey addressed topics of general demographics, visioning, land use, visual preferences, redevelopment, as well as future needs and concerns. A paper version of the survey was produced and was available at the Planning and Zoning Office, public open houses, and various community groups to distribute. Data gathered from the National Citizens Survey (NCS) was used to influence the IMAGINE 2040 survey. Targeted advertising was used to distribute the survey link. The NCS was also used to influence the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan.



**3. Public Comments.** The public was encouraged to submit comments throughout the planning process. Comment forms were available at each of the Open Houses and Steering Committee Meetings. In addition, the public had the opportunity to provide comments via a Land Use Mapping Workshop that took place in May. The public was encouraged to email additional comments to [IMAGINE2040@horrycounty.org](mailto:IMAGINE2040@horrycounty.org), call and speak directly with a planner, or mail comments to the Planning Department.

**4. Land Use Mapping Workshop.** With the assistance of staff, the Committee oversaw the Land Use Mapping Workshop with invited attendees from a various institutions, corporations, industries, agencies, local governments, and the public. Approximately 143 potential participants were invited via email and/or letter. Of those 143, 104 participants RSVP'ed their intended attendance before the event. There were approximately 119 total attendees, not including staff and facilitators. Many IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee Members were also in attendance. Attendees were broken into groups, each representative of a wide array of disciplines, and given instructions for mapping future land uses. Groups were asked to map a variety of future development types as well as determine potential locations for needed community services and facilities. Attendees of the Land Use Mapping Workshop were asked to identify locations where they desired future residential, commercial, industrial, downtown districts, conservation, recreational uses, and commu-



May 10th Land Use Mapping Workshop at the Government and Justice Center in Conway, SC  
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning



nity services and facilities. Participants were grouped at 11 tables to consider future land use patterns and the potential land implications of growth in unincorporated Horry County. Maps included current land uses as well as approved housing developments and numbers for estimated to-be-built multi-family and single-family units in each approved development.

### Public Engagement

Equally important to encouraging and receiving public input was maintaining open communication and keeping the public informed about the current status of the comprehensive planning process. An email-update list was created via a surveymonkey.com sign-up form for those interested in staying updated. Social media posts advertising the open houses, IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee Meetings, distributing the survey link, and email update sign-up were frequently posted on the Horry County Planning and Zoning Facebook page.

Press releases with links to the online survey and information about the open houses were released in December and January. Social media posts were frequently released advertising the survey and open houses. Fliers were distributed at County owned properties including libraries and recreation centers throughout the County. Post card fliers were mailed to over 400 local churches advertising the open houses and survey. An advertisement was run on the Government Information Channel. The survey and open houses were also advertised on the Horry County Government web-page as well as at various other public functions and community group meetings.

Please see the separate Public Input Summary document for additional analysis and findings from the public input opportunities.

Another aspect of maintaining open communication was the creation and maintenance of the IMAGINE 2040 webpage. The webpage link was shared multiple times throughout the process on social media pages, in community groups, and contained links to the County Meeting Calendar and Survey. Along with email, the webpage served as the primary avenue to share updates and the status of the Plan.

### ADOPTION AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

The draft IMAGINE 2040 was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on December 6, 2018. The Planning Commission held two workshops in addition to the public hearing and 30-day public comment period. The following were the meeting dates:

October 4th, 2018 5:30-7:00pm Draft distribution  
October 25th, 2018 4:30-6:30pm Workshop  
November 29th, 2018 3:00-4:30pm Workshop  
December 6th, 2018 5:30-7:00pm Public Hearing

After recommendation by the IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee and the Planning Commission, the Plan was presented to Horry County Council on the following dates:

July 29, 2019 Workshop First Reading  
August 13, 2019 Second Reading  
September 3, 2019 Public Hearing  
November 21, 2019 Workshop  
December 10, 2019 3rd Reading and Adoption

### GUIDE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Plan is a guide for public decision-making. Specifically, the County's elected and appointed officials should use the Plan to evaluate future proposals or policy changes to ensure consistent decisions are made. Furthermore, the Plan provides

guidance to land owners and developers on what is appropriate development in the County. This Plan contains a few terms that are used to describe the various policy recommendations:

**Vision:** the comprehensive, overarching statement of the desired future of the County. The ultimate set of ideals to which the County should aspire.

**Goal:** a statement of desired end-state or target. Tied very closely to the vision statement and focused on a specific element of the Plan. Provides particular guidance for where the County should be in the future, and sets the tone for the individual strategies for each chapter.

**Objective:** a recommended course of action or task the County or its designated agency could undertake in pursuit of a Goal and the Vision. Provides focused and achievable guidance on specific topics under the Plan element headings. Ties the implementation of the Plan to the Goals and Vision.

**Strategy:** specific courses of action to achieve a specific Objective.

The Plan is provided as a comprehensive guide for the County but specific recommendations may apply more in one circumstance than another. The Plan dedicates a chapter section to each element that includes background and conclusions that informed the development of the goals, objectives, and strategies.





## THE VISION

The vision for IMAGINE 2040 touches on all of the major topics examined by the Committee as well as those highlighted through public input. The vision for Horry County is as follows:

*“Horry County will sustain and enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by fostering healthy and safe communities, preserving our natural assets and rural heritage, encouraging business growth and economic diversification, and providing services and public facilities that will protect and strengthen our future.”*

## OVERARCHING GOALS OF THE PLAN

The guiding principles of the Plan enhance and promote the vision. The principles are the overarching goals of the Plan and are as follows:

### Community Character

*‘Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.’*

### Rural Preservation

*‘Preserve rural areas and lifestyles, along with natural resources and assets, through land use decisions and policies.’*

### Revitalization, Redevelopment, and Infill

*‘Encourage and support community revitalization, redevelopment, and infill development that stabilizes and improves property values, promotes additional reinvestment, and enhances quality of life for our residents.’*

### Healthy, Livable Communities

*‘Foster the development of healthy, livable communities in which residents and visitors alike have access to a variety of housing and transportation options, facilities and services, culture and arts, and recreational and natural assets.’*

### Safe Communities

*‘Protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors by providing adequate public safety facilities and services, enforcing and improving regulations, and minimizing incompatible land uses.’*

### Community Facilities and Services

*‘Coordinate growth and infrastructure improvements to efficiently and equitably meet the public facility and service needs of our existing and future populations.’*

### Mobility and Transportation

*‘Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.’*

### Environmental Sustainability

*‘Encourage and incentivize sustainable development activities that minimize and mitigate the impact on the natural environment and avoid adverse impacts on existing development.’*

### Economic Growth

*‘Develop a more diversified and resilient economy that supports the recruitment and retention of businesses, encourages new investments, capitalizes and expands upon our existing niches, and ultimately results in greater economic stability of our residents and local businesses.’*

### Community Engagement

*‘Create an environment in which residents, businesses, and other stakeholders are engaging and informed of planning efforts, regulatory changes, infrastructure projects, and volunteer and partnership opportunities.’*

## PLAN ELEMENTS

Comprehensive Plans in South Carolina are required to have a minimum of nine elements – population, land use, natural resources, cultural resources, transportation, economic development, affordable housing, community facilities, and priority investment. In addition to these required nine elements, IMAGINE 2040 includes a public safety chapter.

**The Population Chapter** analyzes historic and current population, demographic trends, and provides reasonable projections of future population growth. This includes the number, size, and characteristics of households, education levels, income characteristics, race, ethnicity, sex, and age distribution. Each of the following chapters of this plan utilize these projections to help shape their recommendations.

## Population



- Historic trends and projections
- Number, size, and characteristics of households
- Education levels and trends
- Income characteristics and trends
- Race, ethnicity, sex, and age distribution and statistics.

**The Cultural Resources Chapter** focuses on preserving and enhancing the County's cultural resources. This includes historic sites and structures, beach culture, agricultural heritage, the visual and performing arts community, cultural and outdoor facilities; special events, venues and festivals; historic places and buildings; cultural groups, societies and organizations; unique areas of natural, scenic or archaeological value; and various educational, religious or entertainment offerings.

## Cultural Resources



- Cultural and outdoor facilities
- Special events, venues, and festivals
- Historic places and buildings;
- Cultural groups, societies and organizations;
- Educational, religious or entertainment offerings.

**The Natural Resources Chapter** examines the physical environment of Horry County and discusses the need to balance development with ecosystem concerns that will provide healthy functioning landscapes and water features for future generations. The following informational topics are analyzed soil types; wetlands; coastal resources; agriculture; forest land; plant and animal habitats; floodplains; scenic areas; and air and water quality.

## Natural Resources



- Soil types
- Wetlands
- Coastal resources
- Agriculture and forested land
- Plant and animal habitats
- Floodplains

**The Housing Chapter** includes an analysis of the location, type, age, condition, tenure, and affordability of housing. It also includes an analysis of the regulatory environment to determine unnecessary barriers to the provision of affordable housing.

## Housing



- Analysis of the location, type, age, condition, tenure, and affordability of housing
- Analysis of the regulatory environment
- Analysis of affordable housing

**The Community Facilities Chapter** provides an assessment of existing conditions, projects future needs based on projected population growth, and provides recommendations on how to implement and fund these proposals. It analyzes existing and future needs for water supply, waste water treatment, solid waste collection and disposal, medical services, general government facilities, education facilities, parks, and libraries.

## Community Facilities



- Water supply, waste water treatment
- Solid waste collection and disposal
- Medical services
- General government facilities
- Education facilities
- Parks and libraries





**The Public Safety Chapter** provides an assessment of existing services by Police, Fire and Rescue, Animal Control, and Emergency Management. It highlights existing needs, projects future needs based on population and development trends, and provides recommendations on how to better serve the people of Horry County in the future.

## Public Safety



- Police
- Fire
- Rescue
- Animal Control
- Emergency Management

**The Priority Investment Chapter** ties the capital improvement needs identified in other chapter to forecasted revenues for the next ten years. It is, in essence, a ten-year Capital Improvements Plan that is meant to guide the County's five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and annual budgeting processes.

## Priority Investments



- 10-year Capital Improvements Plan
- Guides the five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
- Guides annual budgeting processes.

**The Transportation Chapter** offers strategies to maximize the efficiency of the County's road network while promoting policies for alternative transportation choices to reduce dependency on automobiles. It provides an analysis of the County's existing road network while assessing existing deficiencies, and outlining future needs.

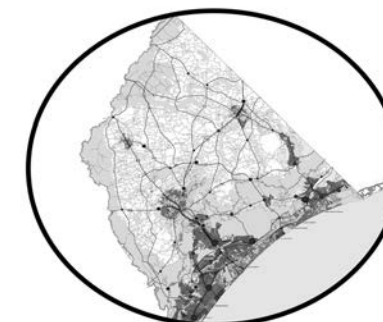
## Transportation



- Analysis of the County's existing road network
- Assesses existing deficiencies
- Projects Future needs

**The Land Use Chapter** outlines policies that build on the recommendations of previous plans, land development studies, and public input. The recommendations within this element are critical to providing Horry County direction. This chapter provides an analysis of existing development patterns, recent planning, plan implementation efforts, a vision for future land use, and growth management policies.

## Land Use



- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of recent planning
- Analysis of plan implementation efforts
- Creates a vision for future land use and growth management policies

**The Economic Development Chapter** promotes diverse, resilient economic policies that encourage quality job creation which allow citizens to remain in Horry County in employment that requires knowledge, talent, training, and compensates with higher-paying jobs. This chapter provides an analysis of the current economic condition while focusing on how to build on the County's existing assets along with diversifying its economic base.

## Economic Development



- Analysis of the current economic condition
- Focuses on how to build on existing assets
- Encourages diversifying the economic base

### PLAN AMENDMENTS, REVIEWS, AND UPDATES

In accordance with the provisions of the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission must review the Comprehensive Plan at least every 5 years, and update the Plan when appropriate, or at least every 10 years. Beyond the required 5-year review, Planning Commission and County Council may opt to update the Plan or components of it if there are significant changes in the economy, development trends, or the completion of major infrastructure projects. All area, community, and neighborhood plans, in addition to specialty plans like the Historic Preservation Plan, Parks and Open Space Plan, and Beach Management Plan shall be adopted as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

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# CHAPTER 2: POPULATION



## INTRODUCTION

The population chapter examines population trends and describes the demographic composition of Horry County residents. Population growth and composition influences land use decisions, determines housing and infrastructure needs, and impacts the local economy. As Horry County's population continues to grow, an increased demand for public safety, community services, and facilities will also increase, as well as the desire for cultural resources along with access to natural spaces. Studying a community's population is fundamental to any comprehensive plan. Horry County will need to continue to monitor the permanent and short-term population into the future to inform decision-making.

## POPULATION GROWTH

According to 2015 population estimates, Horry County has approximately 309,199 permanent residents. The County has experienced rapid growth since the 1970s, adding over 250,000 permanent residents since that time. In just the last 15 years, there has seen an influx of over 100,000 residents. The County has one of the highest population growth rates in the State and is now the fourth most populous county in South Carolina, behind Greenville, Richland, and Charleston counties respectively.

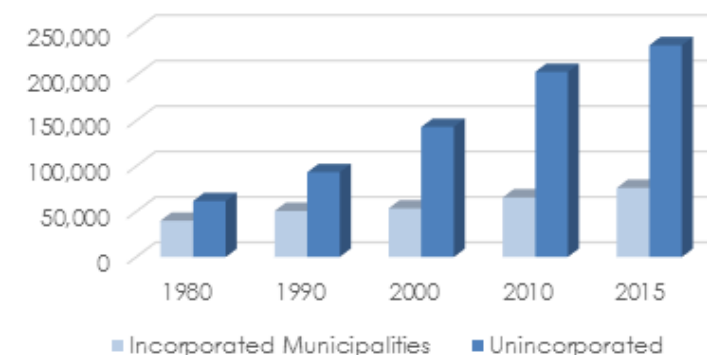
The 2015 total population estimate reflects a 14.8% increase or 39,908 more people since 2010. This reflects growth that occurred even during a major economic downturn. These numbers are only expected to escalate. The population is projected to grow to 584,500 by 2040. While the projections were refined by the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments and Horry County Planning and Zoning, population growth is occurring faster than anticipated. It is important to note that the 2020 population projections are already being surpassed that were developed in 2017 by the South

Carolina Budget and Control Board. Note that these population numbers and projections do not account for seasonal population, including snowbirds that live in the area for the cooler months and tourist and seasonal work population during the summer months. These estimates will need to be revisited after the release of the 2020 Census.

## MUNICIPAL GROWTH

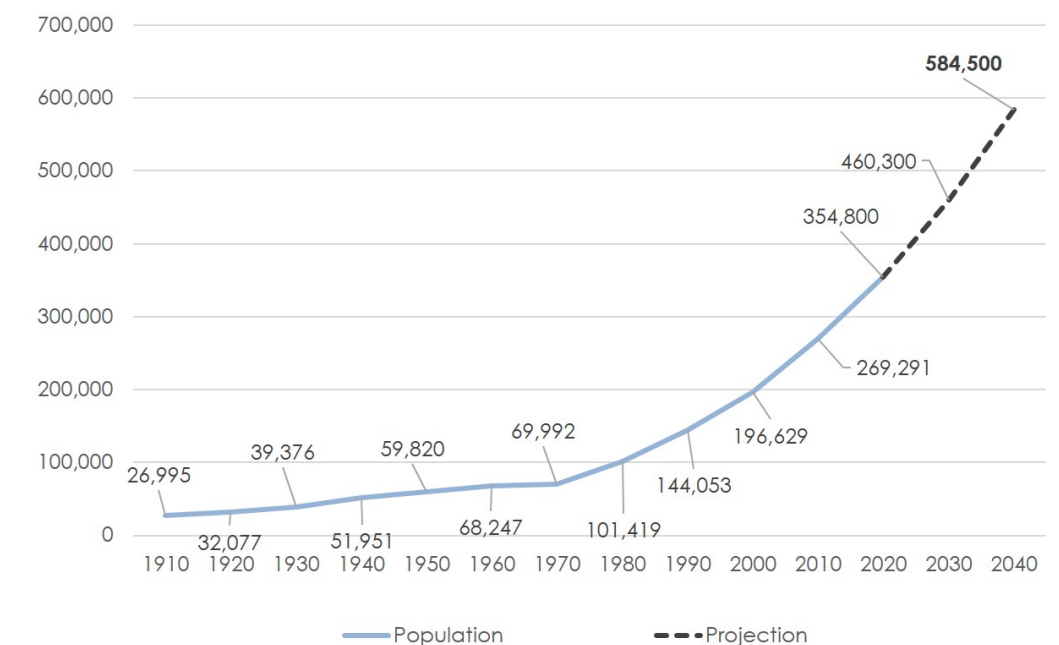
Over the last three decades, all municipalities, with the exceptions of Atlantic Beach, Aynor, and Surfside Beach, have gained population; however, unincorporated areas have accounted for most of the growth in recent years. As of 2015, there were 76,118 people that lived in area municipalities, while 233,081 lived in unincorporated Horry County, making up 75.7% of the total County population.

## Incorporated vs. Unincorporated Population Growth, 1980-2015



Source: American Community Survey, 2011- 2015

## Population Growth in Horry County, 1910-2040



Sources: Historic population – Census. Projections - SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office and Research, and Horry County Planning & Zoning.

## Municipal Population Growth, 1980-2015

Municipalities	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
Atlantic Beach	289	446	351	334	384
Aynor	643	470	587	560	667
Briarcliffe Acres	338	552	470	457	529
Conway	10,240	9,819	11,788	17,103	21,053
Loris	2,193	2,067	2,079	2,396	2,591
Myrtle Beach	19,702	24,848	22,759	27,109	31,035
North Myrtle Beach	3,960	8,636	10,974	13,752	15,579
Surfside	2,522	3,845	4,425	3,837	4,280
<b>Municipal Population</b>	<b>39,887</b>	<b>50,683</b>	<b>53,433</b>	<b>65,548</b>	<b>76,118</b>
<b>Unincorporated Population</b>	<b>61,532</b>	<b>93,370</b>	<b>143,196</b>	<b>203,743</b>	<b>233,081</b>
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>101,419</b>	<b>144,053</b>	<b>196,629</b>	<b>269,291</b>	<b>309,199</b>
<b>Municipal Population as Percent of County</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>35.2%</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>

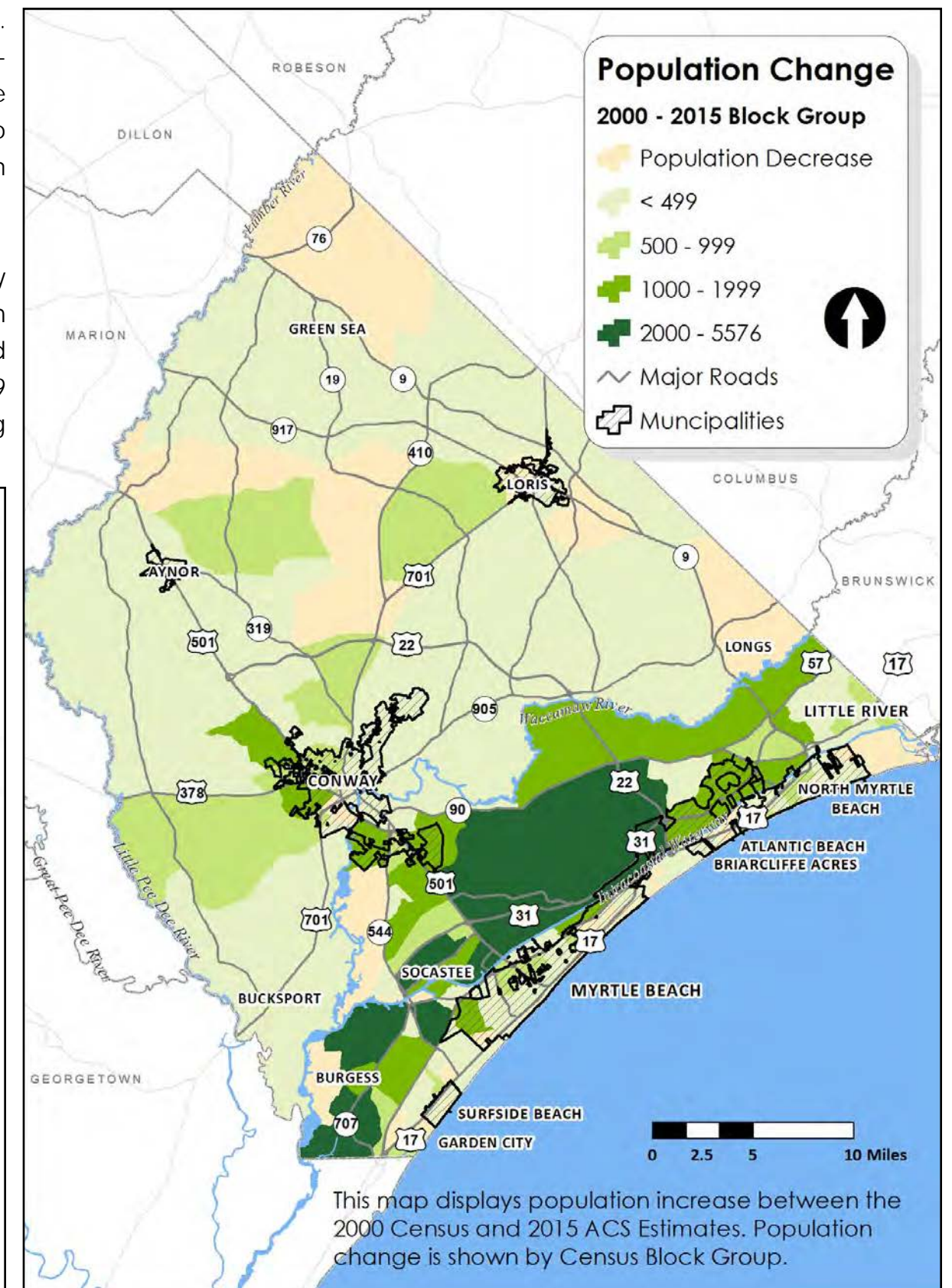
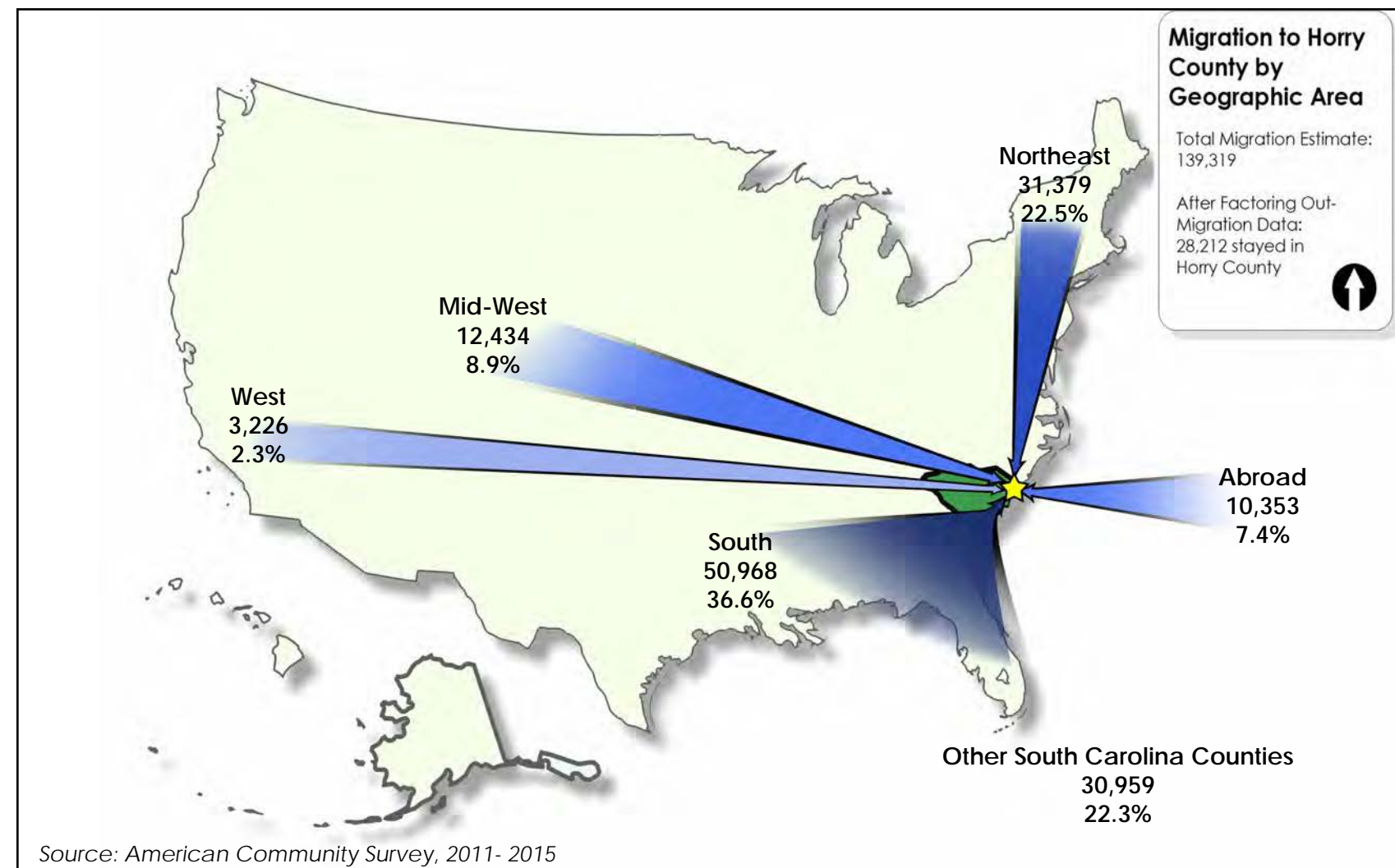
US Census 1980-2010; American Community Survey 2015 Estimates (ID #B01003)



## POPULATION CHANGE

Historically, Horry County's population has primarily resided along the beach front and near area waterways. Since the 2000 Census, Horry County's population has grown further away from the beach, along major highway corridors. Burgess, Socastee, Forestbrook, and Carolina Forest have seen the most growth. Conway, Little River, and the Hwy 90 corridor have also seen considerable population growth. These areas are expected to see an increase in development into the future, as many new subdivisions have been preliminarily approved in these growth areas, but remain to be constructed.

Population growth from 2011-2015 was mainly being driven by individuals that were relocating to Horry County from neighboring Southern States (50,968 people), other counties in South Carolina (30,959 people), and from the Northeast (31,379 people). Since 2010, an estimated 139,319 people moved to Horry County. It is estimated that for domestic migration roughly 36 out of every 1,000 residents and for international migration roughly 369 out of every 1000 residents remain in Horry County (US Census Bureau, migration rates calculated by Governing July 2017).



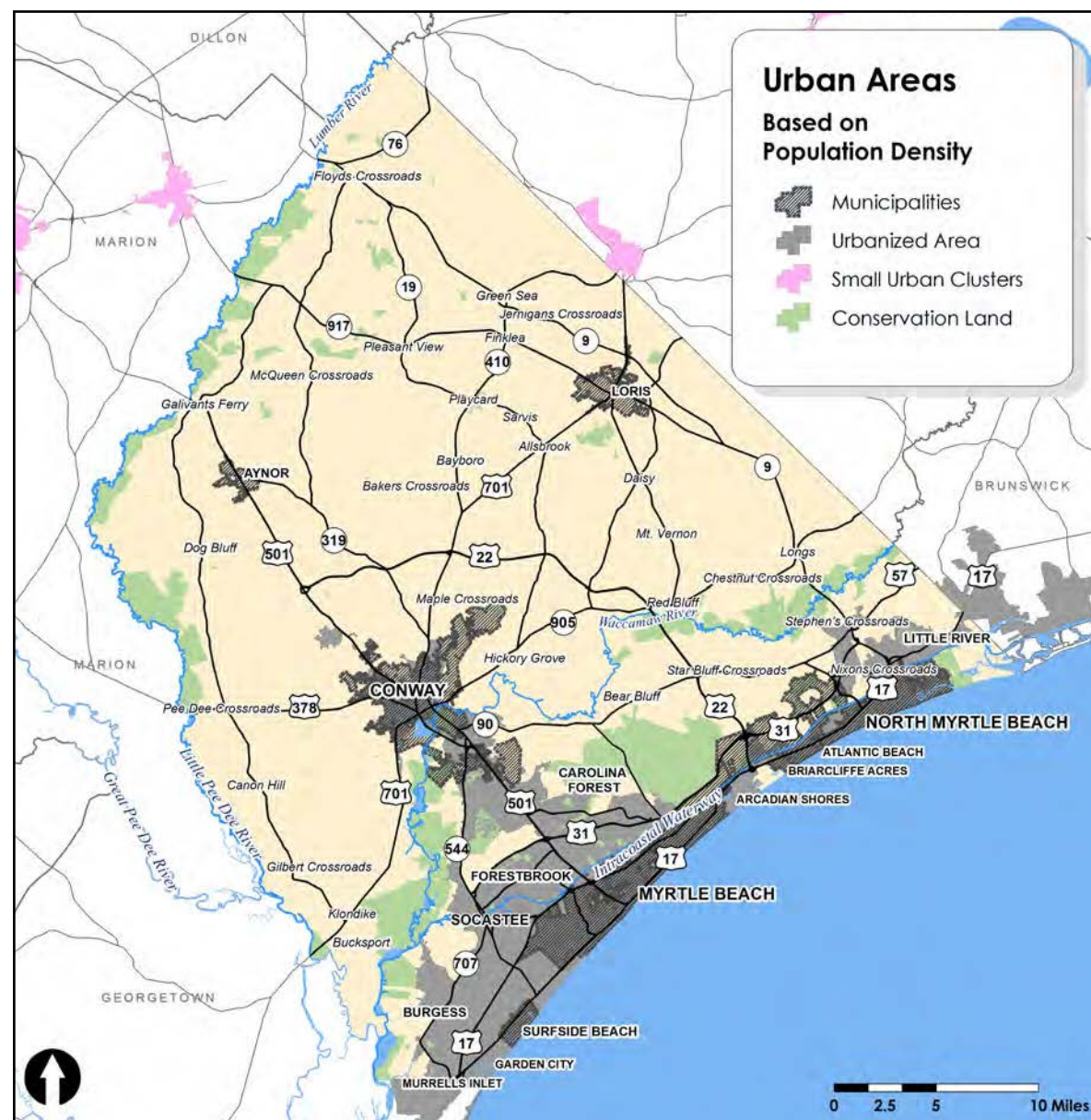




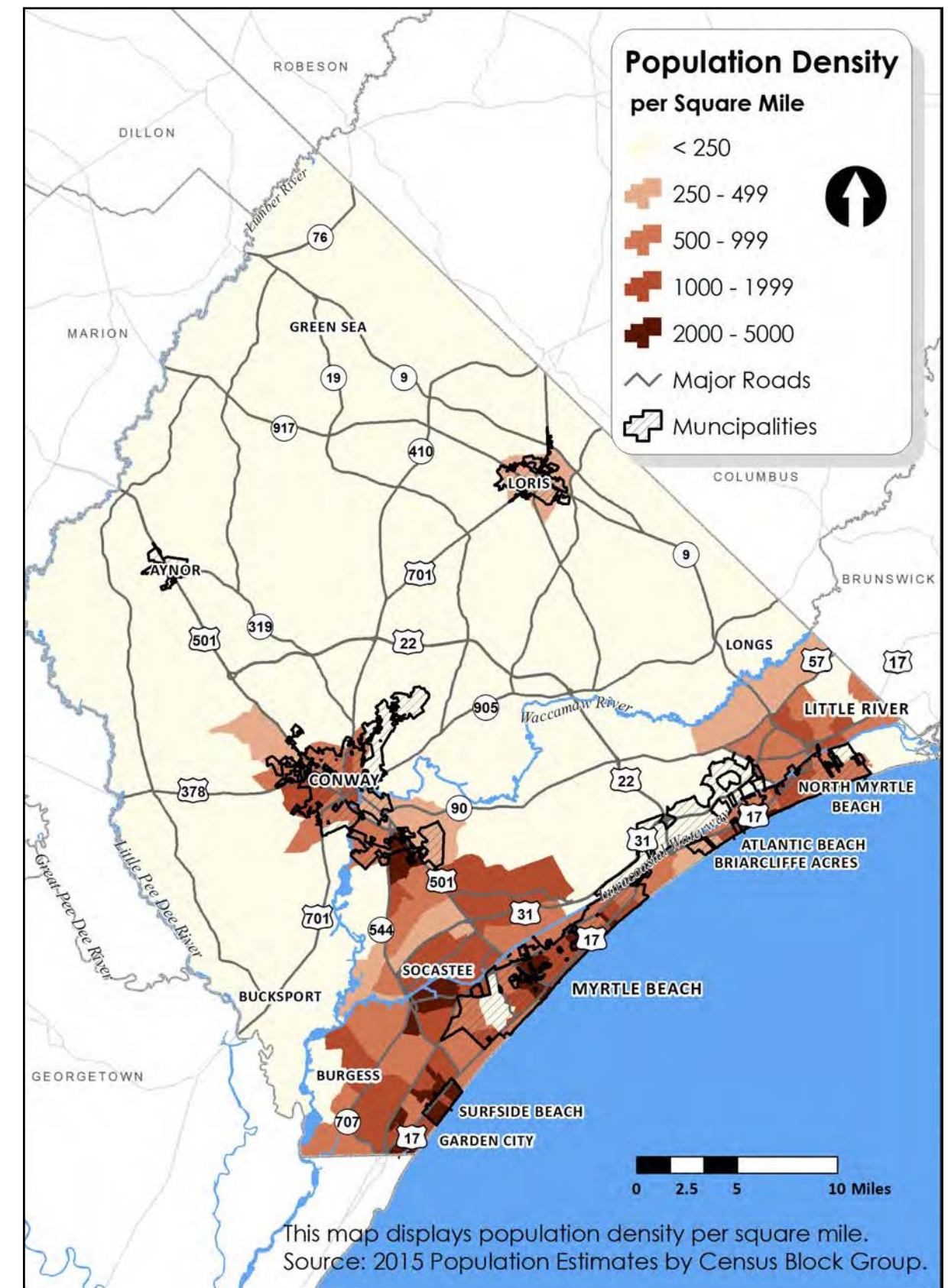
## POPULATION DENSITY

New residents are largely moving into the areas east of the Waccamaw River to be close to the beach. This is due, in part, to those area's proximity to job centers, housing opportunities, and zoning regulations.

The map below delineates areas of high population density and urban land use resulting in a representation of the "urban footprint." There are two types of urban areas: 1- urbanized areas that contain 50,000 or more people; and 2- small urban clusters that contain at least 2,500 people, but fewer than 50,000 people.



Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015





## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

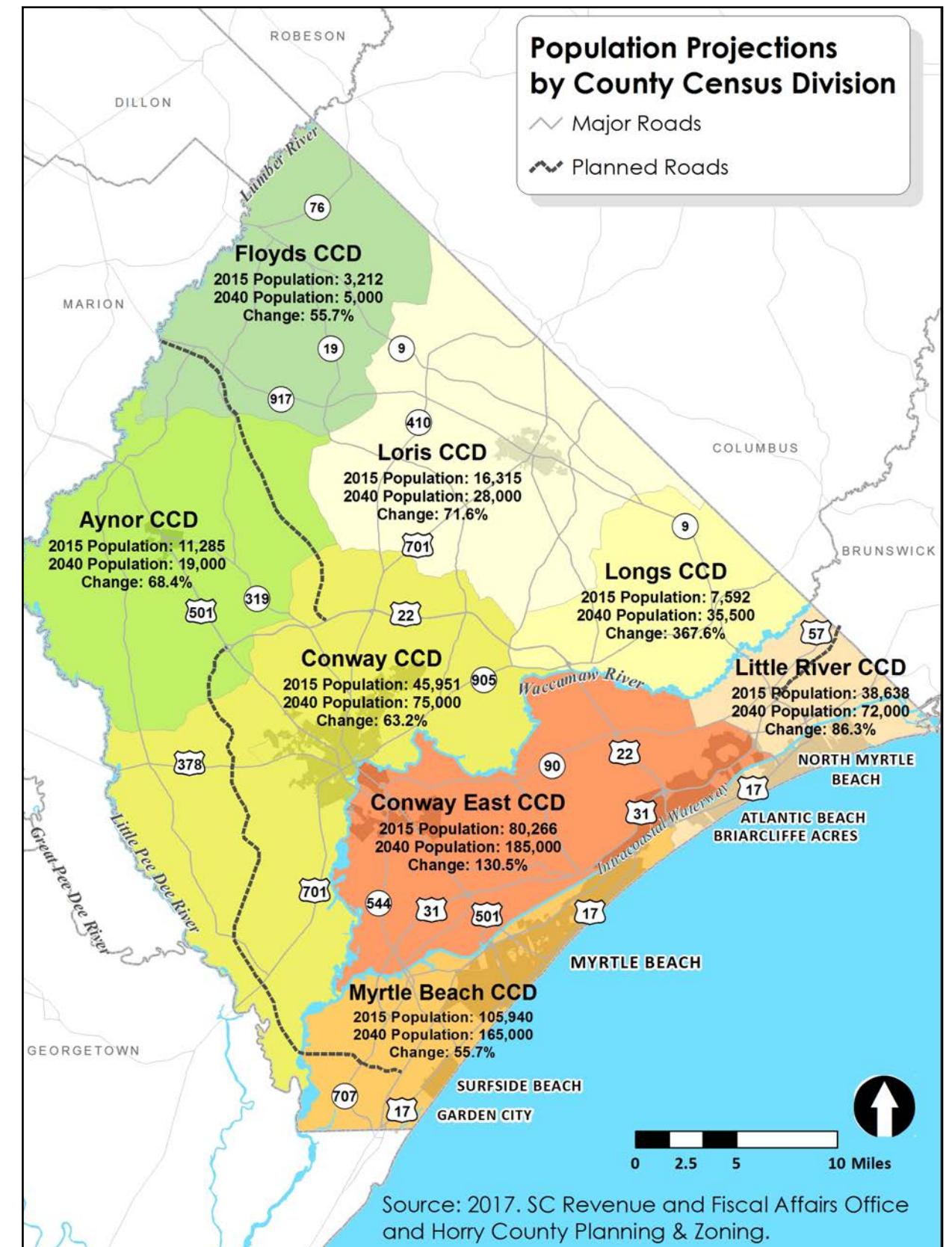
Population projections enable the County to take present action to accommodate future conditions. Projections can help determine the demand for future facilities and services. Making plans in a rapidly changing, high growth area such as Horry County is difficult. Population projections through 2035 were derived from the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office. The 2040 projections and distribution of growth throughout the County was further refined by Horry County Planning and Zoning. Estimates show that the Myrtle Beach CCD (County Census Division) and Floyds CCD will grow the least, both with 55.7% increases or roughly 59,060 and 1,788 people respectively). The Conway CCD will grow the second least with a 63.2% increase or roughly 29,049 people). The highest population growth rates are projected to be Conway East CCD with 130.5% or roughly 104,734 more people) and the Longs CCD with a 367.6% increase (or roughly 27,908 more people). By far, the greatest number of residents will live in Conway East and Myrtle Beach CCDs, accounting for roughly 60% of the population by 2040.

These estimates were developed in 2017 and will need to be revisited when the 2020 Census data is available. If seasonal population is included, these numbers easily reach over 1/2 million on any given day during peak tourist season.

Population Projections, 1970-2040

County Census Division	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	Anticipated Growth After 2015					
							2020	2030	2040	Total Increase	% Growth	Annual Growth Rate
Aynor	5,634	7,190	6,844	8,908	10,052	11,285	13,000	16,000	19,000	7,715	68.4%	2.73%
Conway	18,665	23,868	26,881	33,575	39,715	45,951	50,300	61,000	75,000	29,049	63.2%	2.53%
Conway East	3,419	8,546	17,552	31,639	65,364	80,266	100,000	143,000	185,000	104,734	130.5%	5.22%
Floyds Crossroads	3,420	3,771	2,964	3,195	3,301	3,212	3,500	4,300	5,000	1,788	55.7%	2.23%
Little River	4,960	8,781	17,988	26,315	33,652	38,638	43,000	55,000	72,000	33,362	86.3%	3.45%
Longs	2,788	3,299	3,371	5,625	6,645	7,592	13,000	22,000	35,500	27,908	367.6%	14.70%
Loris	9,895	11,137	11,290	13,785	15,878	16,315	19,000	23,000	28,000	11,685	71.6%	2.86%
Myrtle Beach	21,211	34,827	58,410	73,587	94,684	105,940	113,000	136,000	165,000	59,060	55.7%	2.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,992</b>	<b>101,419</b>	<b>145,300</b>	<b>196,629</b>	<b>269,291</b>	<b>309,199</b>	<b>354,800</b>	<b>460,300</b>	<b>584,500</b>	<b>275,301</b>	<b>89.0%</b>	<b>3.56%</b>

Source: 2017, SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office and Horry County Planning & Zoning.  
Numbers highlighted in yellow were provided by the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, while 2040 projections and the breakdown by County Census Division, shown in orange, were developed by Horry County Planning & Zoning.



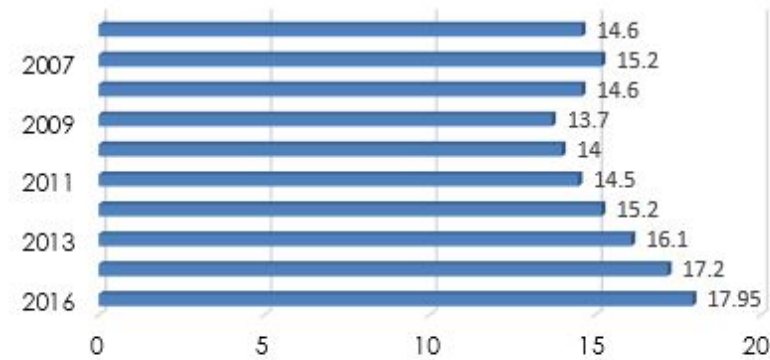




SEASONAL POPULATION

According to the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, approximately 17.95 million tourists visited the Grand Strand area in 2016. The chart below illustrates that 2016 was an all-time high for the number of visitors to the Myrtle Beach area with numbers steadily increasing since 2009. Also noted from the graph is the decrease in visitors following the recession in 2008. It is important to note that these numbers include visitors for the entire Strand (including the South Strand, which includes parts of Georgetown County), not just those who visited Horry County (Myrtle Beach 2016 Economic Impact Study, 2017).

Estimated Number of Visitors (in millions)



Source: D.K. Shifflet & Associates for Statistical Abstract for the the Myrtle Beach Area, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

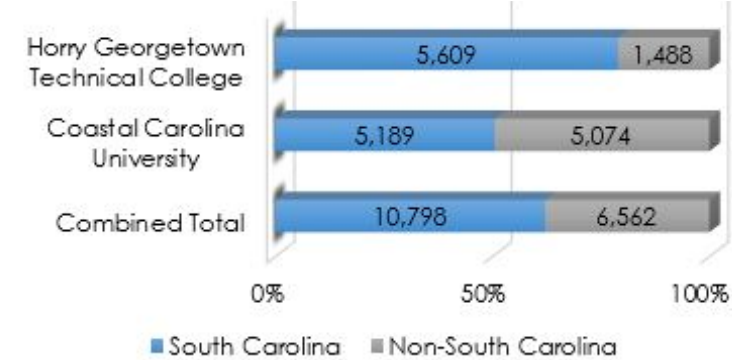
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce survey shows that most visitors originate from within a one day car drive. North Carolina alone provides 15% of visitors, while 55% come from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia (Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce Conversion Study, 2013). The primary travel party type to Myrtle Beach is families at 61% and the average length of stay along the Grand Strand was six days for leisure travelers and three days for business travelers. Further, approximately 85% of visitors were under the age of 65, with 50% between the ages of 35 and 54.

Horry County's Solid Waste Authority (SWA) calculates the equivalent full-time tourist population for a six day stay to be roughly 96.51% of the resident population (Horry County Solid Waste Management Plan, 2018). Using the same calculation method, the full-time tourist population in 2040 will be roughly 564,100 people. Adding the projected full-time tourist population to the full-time resident population projection for 2040 shows a population of roughly 1.15 million people.

ACADEMIC STUDENT POPULATION

In addition to the tourists that visit the area each year, Coastal Carolina University (CCU) and Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) have been experiencing a growing student population. The traditional academic year starts at the end of August and continues until the beginning of May. For academic year 2016-2017, CCU and HGTC had a combined total enrollment of 19,828 students.

Student Enrollment in Horry County by Geographic Origin



Source: Coastal Carolina University, 2016

Typically, students reside in Horry County during the academic year. Of all undergraduate students (9,747) at CCU during fall semester 2016, 49% were out-of-state residents. Of all graduate students (732) at CCU, 21% were out-of-state residents (CCU, 2016). Comparatively, 16.6% of HGTC's students are not originally from South Carolina (HGTC, 2016).

CCU will continue to have an impact on Horry County. Their Master Plan indicates a target enrollment of 12,500 students in 2021. Coastal Carolina Alumni data indicates that the number of CCU graduates with valid County addresses, who graduated between 2000 and 2017, is 6,622.

HGTC has three locations: Georgetown, Conway, and Myrtle Beach. With a combined offering of over 80 associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs, HGTC is the fourth largest of 16 technical colleges in South Carolina.

POPULATION GROWTH FINDINGS

Between 2000 and 2015, the population of Horry County has grown more than twice the growth rate of South Carolina. Population projections anticipate that this high growth rate is expected to continue over next several decades. By 2040, Horry County is projected to add yet another 275,000 people to its current population, nearly doubling in year round residents.

As population density increases in urban and suburban areas, services and facilities will need to expand to meet growing demand. Horry County will also need to continue to address the needs of seasonal and academic student populations.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population composition is an important part of the this chapter because it takes into account special populations with unique needs. Sex, race, ethnicity, age, household composition, education, income and poverty together help describe residents.

AGE AND SEX

Consistent with the National trend, baby boomers make up

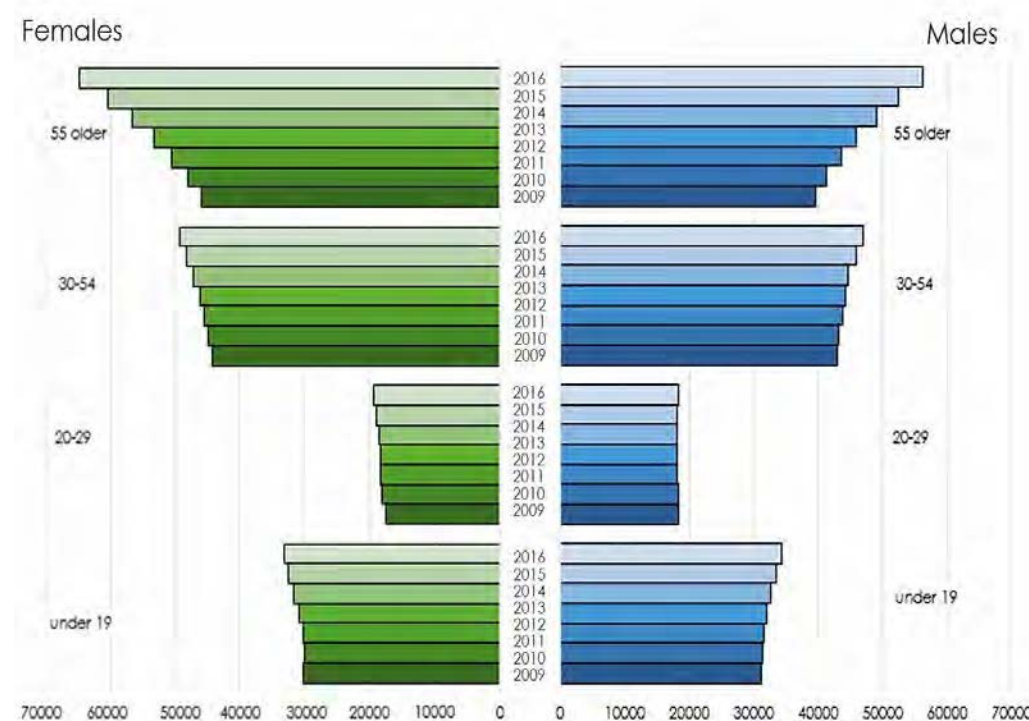


a large portion of the population. Using the 2016 population estimates published by The United States Census Bureau, the proportion of people ages 55 and older in Horry County is roughly 37%, compared to the South Carolina average of 28.9% and the national average of 27%. Similarly to the national average, Horry County has roughly 2% more females age 55 and older compared to males. Interestingly, the death rate is higher than the birth rate in Horry County. For every four births there are roughly five deaths.

Interestingly, Horry County's population of 20-29 year olds has remained relatively stagnant. This could be due to the fluctuation of student population, the desire for college age young adults to move elsewhere for higher education, and the Census' difficulty in capturing college students unless local to Horry County. In addition, the sharp contrast in population between 20-29 year olds and 30-54 year olds could be due to people moving back to the area after completing college or influx of non-locals moving into the area.

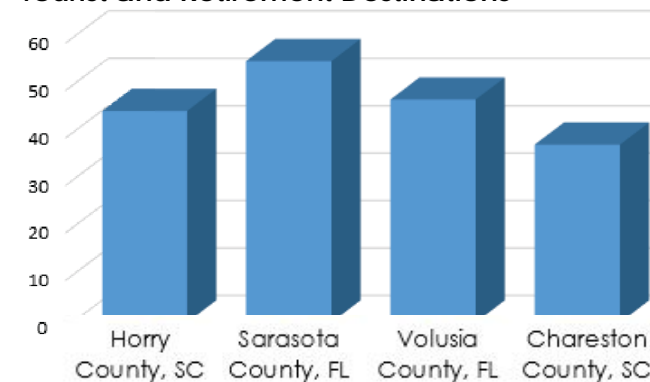
In 2011, the County's ages 55 and older population exceeded its ages 30 to 54 population. Compared to other high tourist and retirement destinations, Horry County's median age is slightly lower than Florida destinations and slightly higher than other South Carolina destinations. The map to the right illustrates the elderly population density which accounts for people ages 65 years and older. These areas are consistent with development trends (see Land Use Chapter). Many retirees live in these areas due to their proximity to tourist amenities, service facilities, and the beach.

## Change in Age and Sex Composition from 2010 to 2016

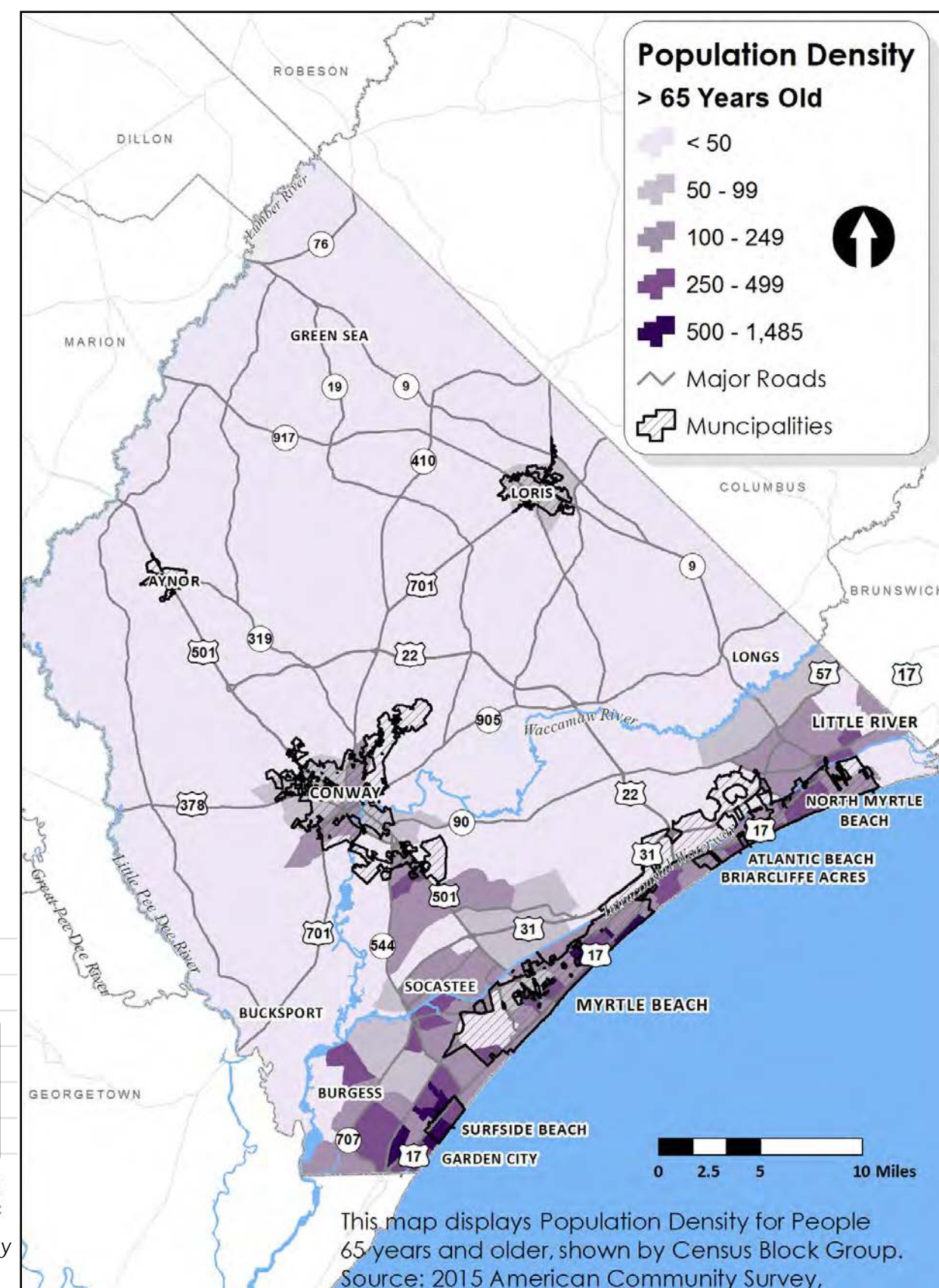


Source: American Community Survey, 2010 - 2016

## Median Age Comparison to Other Tourist and Retirement Destinations



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey







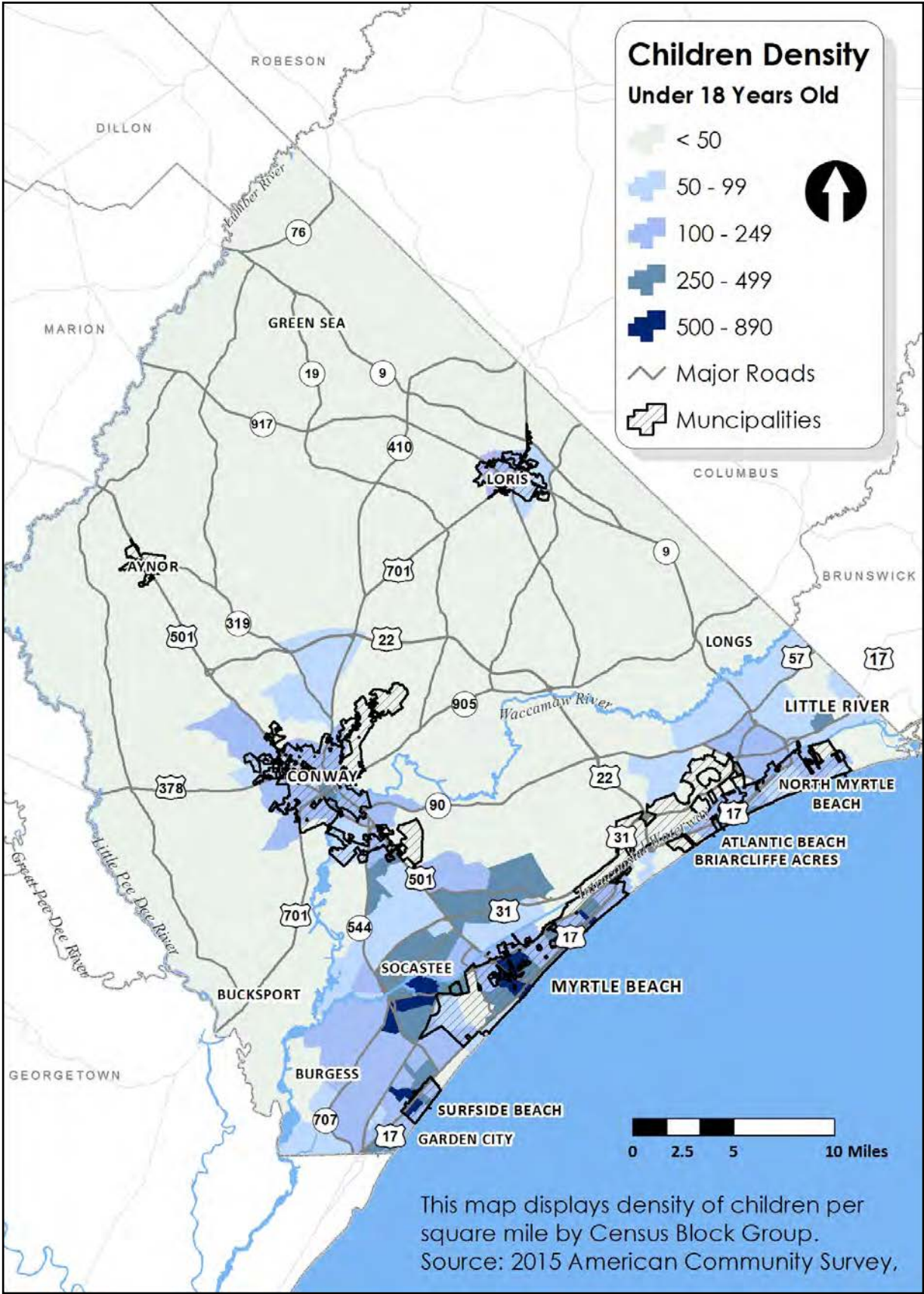
Age Distribution in Horry County, 2010 to 2015

Age	0 - 19	20 - 29	30 - 54	55 +	Total
2010	61,650	35,927	87,404	85,538	270,519
2011	61,626	36,483	88,059	89,258	275,426
2012	62,018	36,555	89,273	94,123	281,969
2013	63,074	36,557	90,451	99,228	289,310
2014	64,425	36,885	91,809	105,676	298,795
2015	66,006	37,173	94,003	112,689	309,871

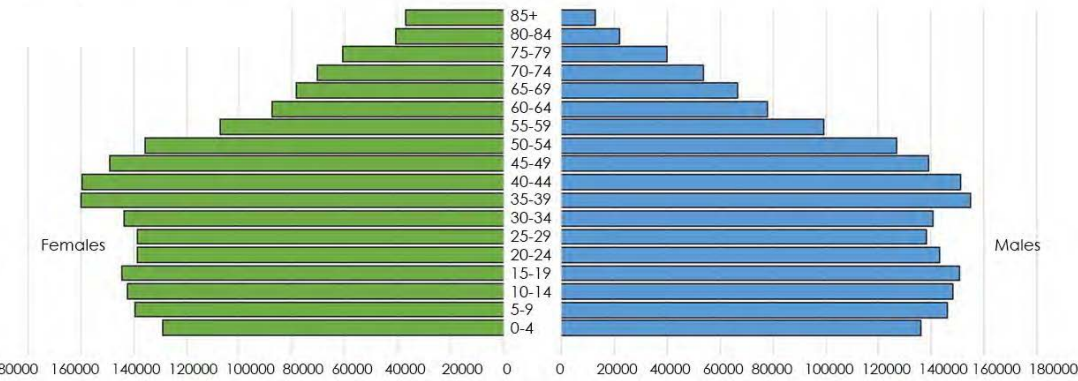
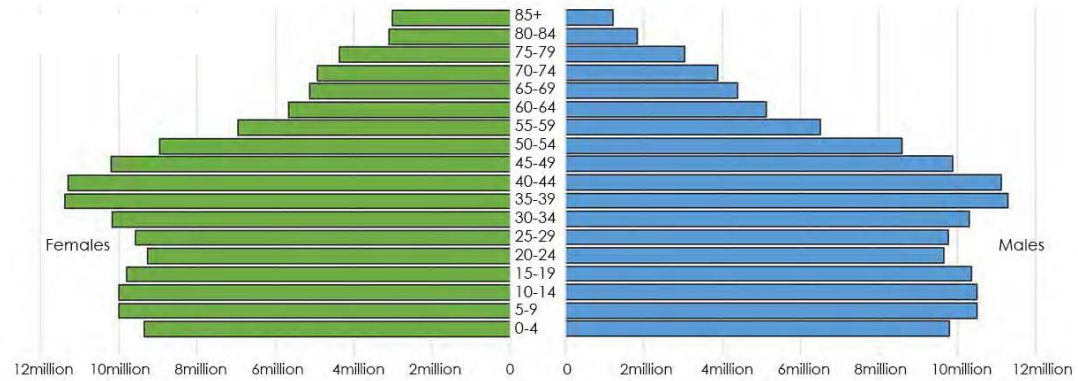
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

The map to the right illustrates the density of children under the age of 18. Mapping density such as this helps determine where services (such as schools and playgrounds) are needed. A notable trend, male children ages 19 and under out number female children. This is consistent to the national average. Areas that have higher children densities are also consistent with development trends (see Land Use Chapter). These areas are in greater demand and can place a higher demand on services and facilities. These statistics help Horry County predict and supply needed services for children, families, and seniors.

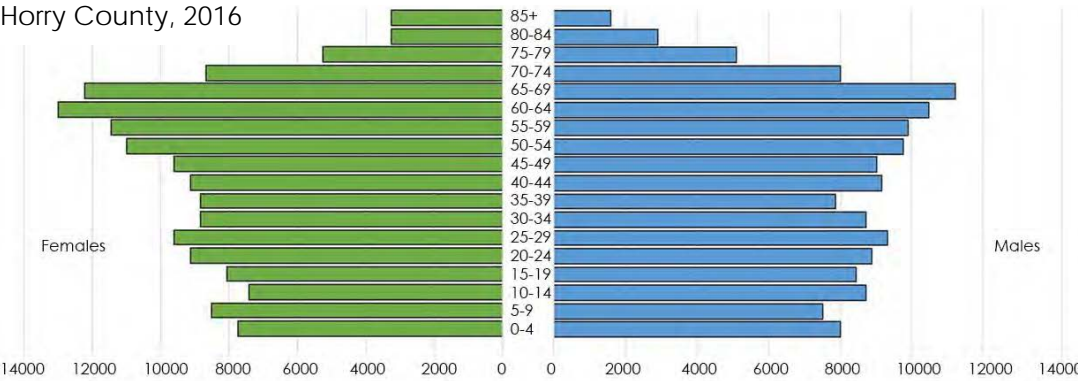
According to estimations based on average life expectancy, the overall population of the “Baby Boomer” generation, born roughly between 1945-1965, will greatly diminish between 2033 and 2048. While this will potentially impact the State and country significantly, it is expected to have less of an impact on Horry County. This is mostly due to the continued probability that Horry County will remain a retirement destination for future generations.



Population Composition by Age and Sex



Horry County, 2016



Source: American Community Survey, 2010 - 2016



## RACE

Horry County's racial diversity remained relatively the same between 1990 and 2015, with minor fluctuations in composition. The white population percentage has been slowly decreasing (note that the population is rising, but the percentage is decreasing), but remains close to 80%. Similarly, the Black or African American population percentage has been steadily decreasing from approximately 17% to roughly 13%. Hispanic or Latino populations have been steadily increasing from under 1% in 1990 to 6.1% in 2015. Starting with the Census in 2000, respondents for the first time were given the choice of selecting one or more race categories to indicate their racial identities. Persons who responded to the category "Two or More Races" have slowly increased from 2,105 persons, or 1.1% of the population in 2000, to 4,574 persons or 1.5% of the Horry County populace in 2015. Some of the decrease in White and Black or African American identified races could be attributed to the inclusion of the "Two or More Races" and "Other" categories as well as the increase in "Hispanic or Latino" category.

The map to the right illustrates areas of high minority population density. In other words, areas where minority populations live in close proximity to each other. The highest density minority populations can be found primarily in the City of Conway, the City of Myrtle Beach, and in Socastee. Other dense minority populations can be found in Burgess, Carolina Forest, the area surrounding Conway, Longs, Loris, and North Myrtle Beach.

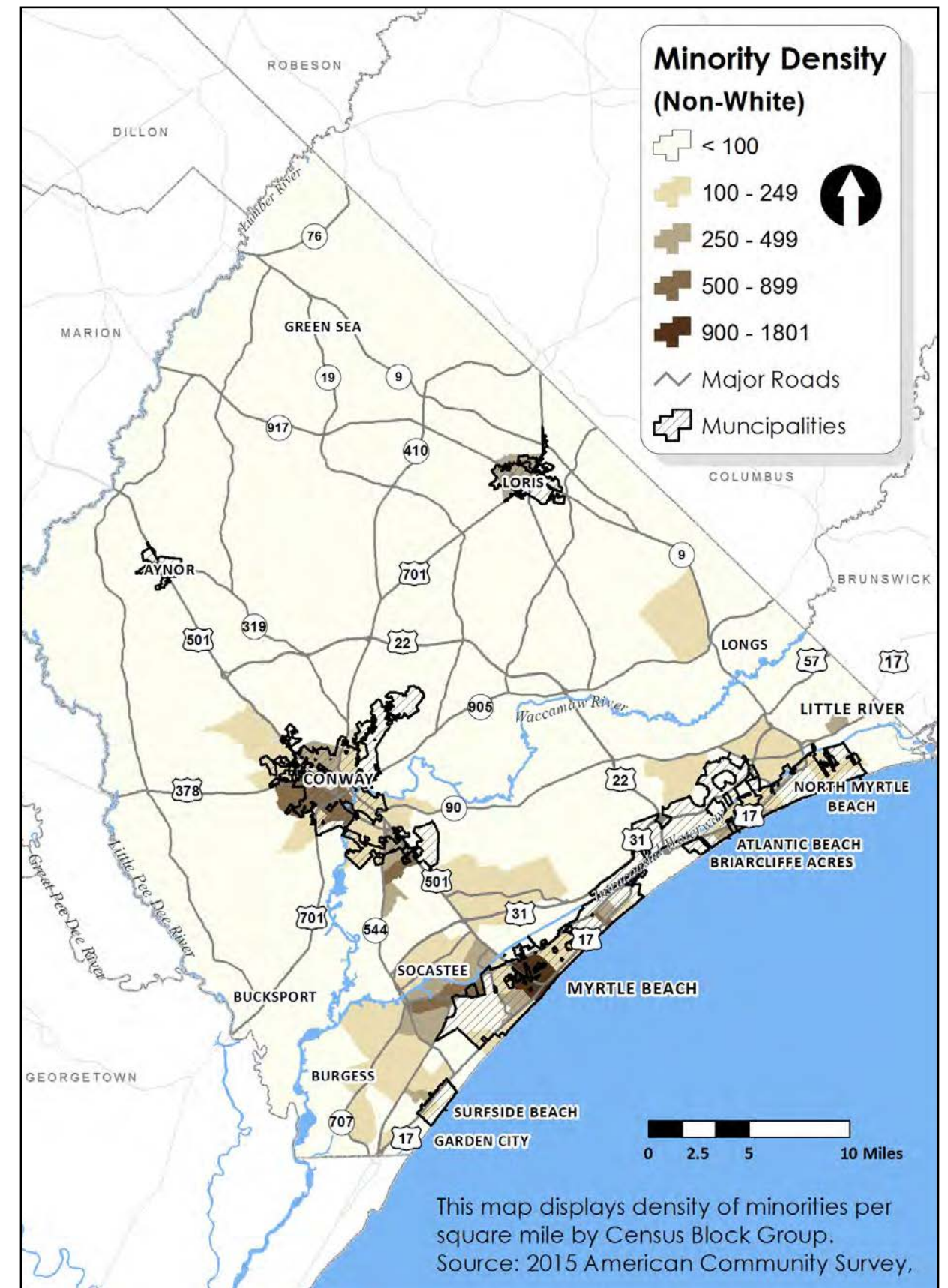
Racial Composition of Horry County, 1990 to 2015

Race	1990	%	2000	%	2010	%	2015	%
White	117,098	81.3	159,363	81.1	200,920	79.8	223,819	77.0
Black or African American	25,160	17.5	30,468	15.5	35,510	13.7	39,099	13.4
Hispanic or Latino	1,259	0.9	5,057	2.6	14,430	5.6	17,639	6.1
Other	1,507	1.03	4,693	2.4	4,685	1.8	5,757	1.9
Two or More Races	N/A	N/A	2,105	1.1	2,722	2.0	4,574	1.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey and Demographic Estimates 1990 - 2015

## HOUSEHOLDS

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a "Family Household" as a category that has at least one member related to the householder either by birth, marriage, or adoption. Contrary, "Non-Family Households" consist of people either living alone or households in which members do not have any natural or marital kinship to the householder.

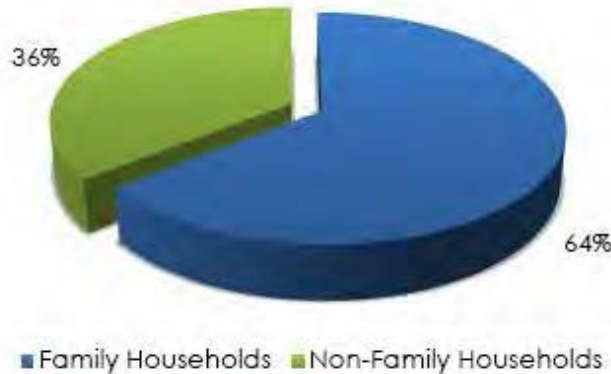






The household composition of South Carolina compared to the neighboring states of North Carolina and Georgia is consistent across the various categories. South Carolina has fewer total housing units than the other two states, at 1,815,094, with Georgia and North Carolina both over three million total housing units. In the category of "with children under 18," South Carolina (30.7%) is slightly below North Carolina (31.5%) and Georgia (34.8%).

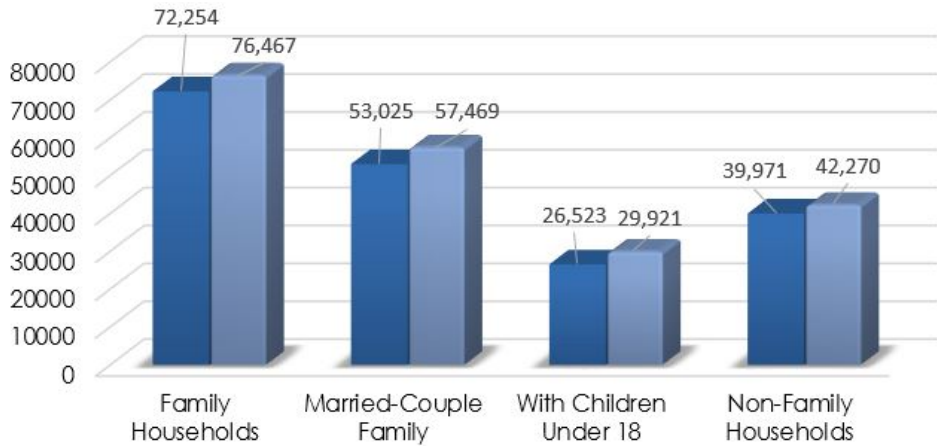
Percentage of Family and Non-Family Households, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

South Carolina, and specifically Horry County, also have household compositions consistent with national averages. In 2015, 64.4 %, or 76,467 Horry County residents were living within family households, while 35.6% (42,270) were living in non-family households either alone or with partners of any unmarried relationship. Over the last forty-five years, the number of traditional family households has been steadily declining. Married couple (husband-wife) households have been losing their overall share at a parallel rate. The U.S. estimate for family households is 66.8%, compared to the Horry County estimate for family households of 64.4%. Horry County is just over the national average of 33.2% for non-family households at 35.6% (ACS, 2011-2015). The chart on the top right illustrates the household composition of Horry County in 2010 and 2015 respectively.

Household Composition of Horry County, 2010 and 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015, Occupancy Characteristics

The average household size grew from 2.37 to 2.43 between 2010 and 2016, a strong indication that family sizes and non-traditional households are growing in our area (see chart below). Little River and the Myrtle Beach CCDs average less than 2.3 people per household, while all other areas of the County on average range from 2.53 to 2.72 people per household. This is reflective of where retirees live versus families with children. The overall County average household size is 2.37.

Household Size According to CCD

	Average	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied
Aynor CCD	2.72	2.7	2.76
Conway CCD	2.66	2.58	2.85
Conway East CCD	2.6	2.49	2.84
Floyds Crossroads CCD	2.53	2.53	2.53
Little River CCD	2.11	2.1	2.15
Longs CCD	2.53	2.36	3.22
Loris CCD	2.59	2.51	2.87
Myrtle Beach CCD	2.3	2.21	2.48

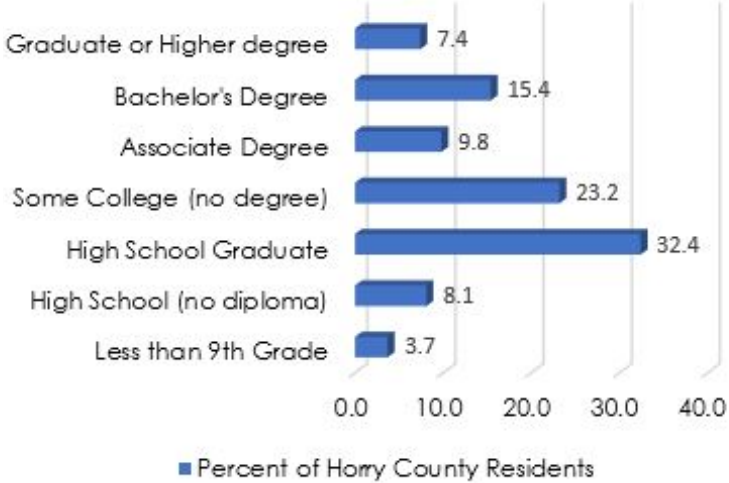
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

EDUCATION

In comparison to national education attainment numbers, Horry County fares better in high school attainment but low in educational attainment for 25 years and older with at least a Bachelor's degree. As illustrated previously, the population of 20-29 year olds in Horry County has remained consistent while other age brackets have steadily increased. Much of this consistency could be due to students graduating high school and moving away to find work or to seek higher education.

The chart below describes the educational attainment of Horry County. Over roughly 88.5% of Horry County residents 25 years and older have received at least a high school diploma or its equivalent compared to the national average of 86.7%. In comparison, 22.8% of the population of 25 years and over possessed a bachelor's degree or higher in 2015, compared to the national average of 29.8%.

Educational Attainment in Horry County, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015, Educational Attainment

Horry County reported in 2016 that they had a 81.1% graduation rate. The graduation rate is based on the percentage of students enrolled in 9th grade four years earlier, meaning roughly 18.9% of students drop out, were held back, moved



away, or failed to complete the full diploma after 4 years. In 2016, Horry County Schools officials reported that 78% of those that graduated planned to attend college.

## INCOME

This section analyzes income on a county and regional level. The greater Grand Strand and Pee Dee regions expand over state and county boundaries and also include Brunswick and Columbus counties in North Carolina. Income levels in Horry County have increased substantially from 1989 to 2015. While this seems optimistic, in reality most of this increase is due to inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer price index, the dollar experienced an average inflation rate of 2.41% per year. Prices in 2015 are 81.3% higher than prices in 1990. In other words, \$24,959 in the year 1990 is equivalent in purchasing power to \$45,261.72 in 2015, a difference of \$20,302.72 over 25 years. This means that the purchasing power of the median income has actually decreased by 4.4%.

In 2015, the median household income in Horry County was \$43,299, slightly lower than the state average of \$45,483. Although Horry County has been gaining overall population, the median incomes of households still remain below the state average.

### Regional Household Income Comparison

County	1989	1999	2009	2015
Dillon	18,365	26,630	27,588	28,938
Florence	24,264	35,144	41,142	42,080
Georgetown	23,981	35,312	42,283	42,835
<b>Horry</b>	<b>24,959</b>	<b>36,470</b>	<b>42,642</b>	<b>43,299</b>
Marion	17,825	26,526	29,626	29,874
Williamsburg	18,409	24,214	25,948	28,297
South Carolina	26,256	37,082	43,572	45,483
Brunswick, NC	23,480	35,880	44,321	46,859
Columbus, NC	18,468	26,805	32,283	39,949
North Carolina	N/A	46,335	45,069	46,868

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

A more precise way of analyzing and comparing local with regional and state income patterns is on a per capita basis. Whereas the "Median Household Income" represents a middle value that results in two evenly distributed income groups, one below and one above the median value per household, the "Per Capita Income" reflects the average obtained by dividing the entire income of Horry County by its total population. Consequently, within a more diverse society it represents a more suitable variable.

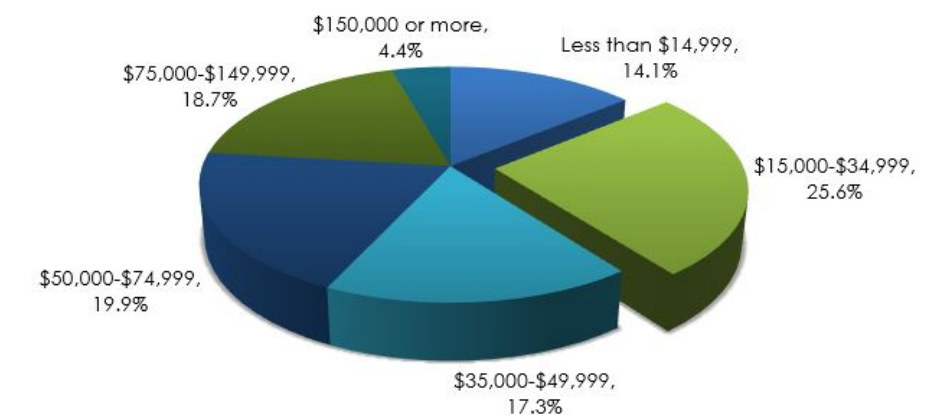
In both 1999 (\$19,949) and 2009 (\$24,790), Horry County had the highest per capita income in the six-county area of northeastern South Carolina; however in 2015 (\$24,094), Horry County had the third highest. The County's per capita income dropped by \$696 from 2009 to 2015, placing it below the state's per capita income of \$24,604. Some of this change can be attributed to the economic downturn during that same time period. With much of the economy and jobs reliant on the housing and tourism industries in Horry County, the downturn had a significant impact on housing prices and production, as well as tourism (see section on Seasonal Population) thereby resulting in lower income and fewer jobs in those industries.

### Regional Household Per Capita Income

County	1989	1999	2009	2015
Dillon	8,077	13,272	14,074	14,736
Florence	11,007	17,876	21,538	22,877
Georgetown	11,084	19,805	24,147	25,216
<b>Horry</b>	<b>12,385</b>	<b>19,949</b>	<b>24,790</b>	<b>24,094</b>
Marion	8,185	13,878	15,892	17,553
Williamsburg	7,632	12,794	14,636	16,344
South Carolina	11,897	18,795	23,196	24,604
Brunswick, NC	11,688	19,857	25,993	27,586
Columbus, NC	9,134	14,415	18,189	19,814
North Carolina	N/A	20,307	24,547	25,920

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015, Median Household Income

### Median Household Income Distribution, 2015



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

Income distribution is reflected in the pie chart above. Amongst all household income brackets in 2015, those between \$35,000 and \$74,999, the group considered Middle to Upper Middle Class, were most represented at 37.2%. Yet, 39.7% of households in Horry County made less than \$35,000, and 14.1% made less than \$14,999 per year in 2015. 4.4% of households made incomes of more than \$150,000 in 2015.

Another element of income to note is the pay disparity between sexes. The chart below illustrates the average incomes of both sexes for various educational attainment levels in Horry County. It is important to note that while no data on racial income disparities is available for Horry County, nationally, and in South Carolina, there are income disparities between races.

### Median Earnings Based on Educational Attainment and Sex

Educational Attainment	Males	Females
Less than High School	20,453	14,883
High School Graduate	26,926	18,932
Some College or Associates Degree	30,738	23,911
Bachelor's Degree	43,300	35,497
Graduate or Professional Degree	54,253	47,182

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015





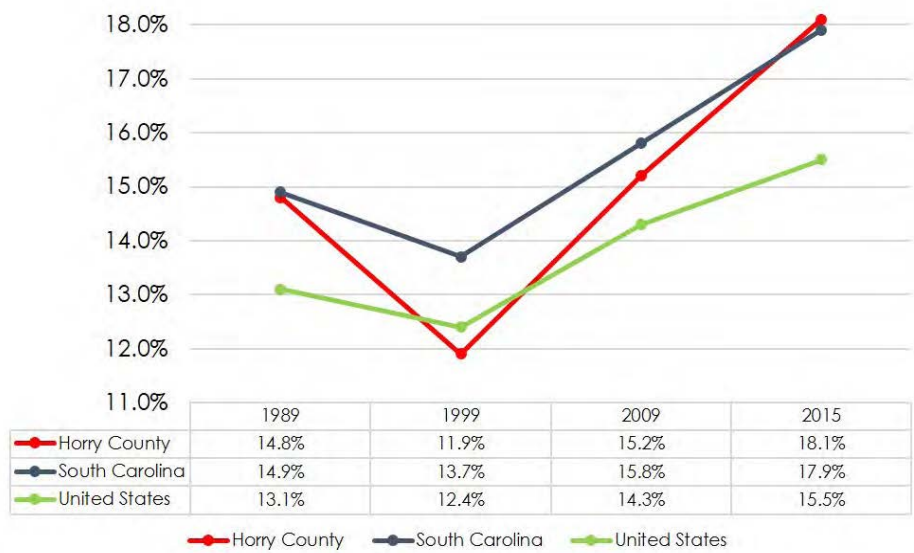
POVERTY

The percent of the population living below the poverty level in the United States is 15.5%. South Carolina 17.9%) and Horry County 18.1%) both have higher poverty rates than the national average. South Carolina is ranked 15th in the US for the highest percentage of the population below the poverty level, and Horry County is ranked 34th in South Carolina for percentage of population below the poverty level. In 2015, the official poverty threshold for a family of four in South Carolina was \$24,250.

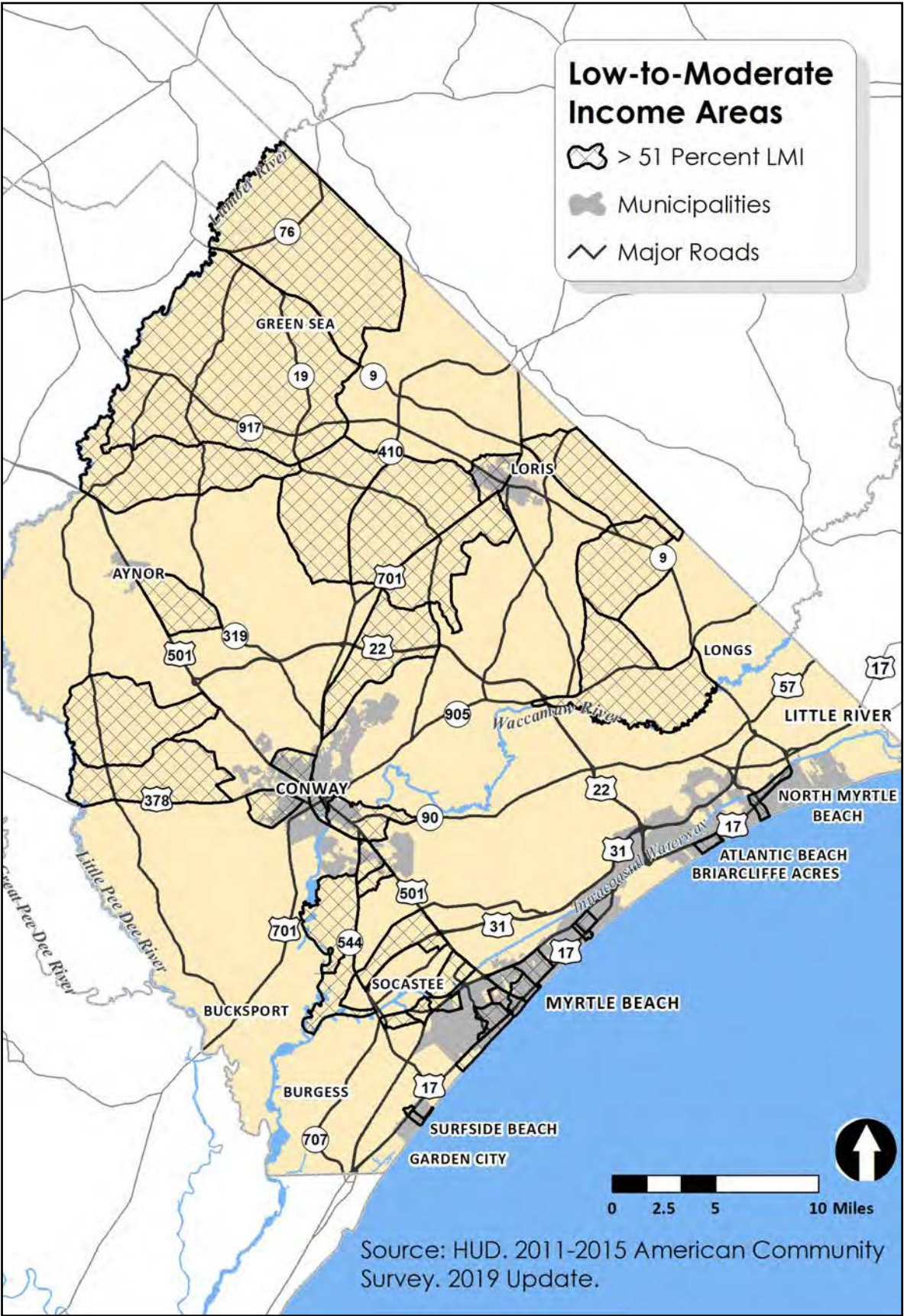
The number of all people living below the poverty level in Horry County in 2015 was 51,988 persons or 18.1% of the overall population. The relative percentage of people living below the poverty level in Horry County is the least within all the surrounding counties except Brunswick County, North Carolina with a smaller value of 16.3%. Horry County's Poverty Level is just over the percent of the population below poverty level for South Carolina 17.9%) and North Carolina (17.4%).

6.3% of Horry County residents below the poverty level worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months, 41.5% worked less than full-time, year-round in the past 12 months, and 36.9% did not work. As the amount of residents below poverty level increases, in particular the number of residents unemployed below the poverty level, the amount of expendable money by residents decreases. Thus leading to negative economic impacts for the County. It is important to note that many social services allocated by the state allow families to qualify even if they do not fall below the poverty level. For example, in order for the children of a family of four to qualify for full Medicaid the family must make less than \$32,319. Poverty is not solely an urban issue. This largely impacts rural communities with limited access to jobs. This fact is well illustrated in the map to the right, which shows large low to moderate income areas throughout rural Horry County, Socastee, and within the cities of Conway and Loris.

Percent of Population Below Poverty Level for Horry County and South Carolina, 1989-2015



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015



Source: HUD. 2011-2015 American Community Survey. 2019 Update.

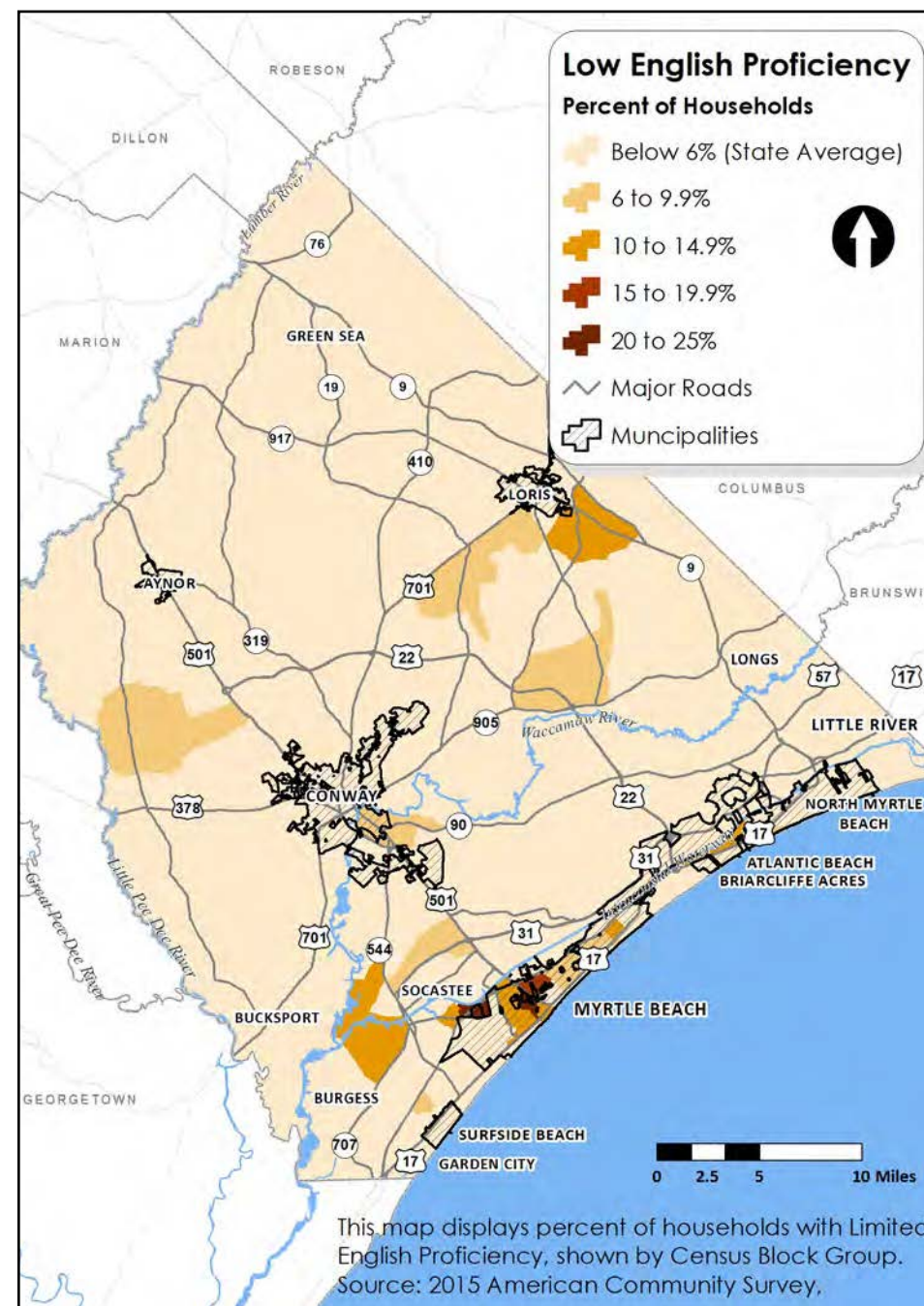


## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

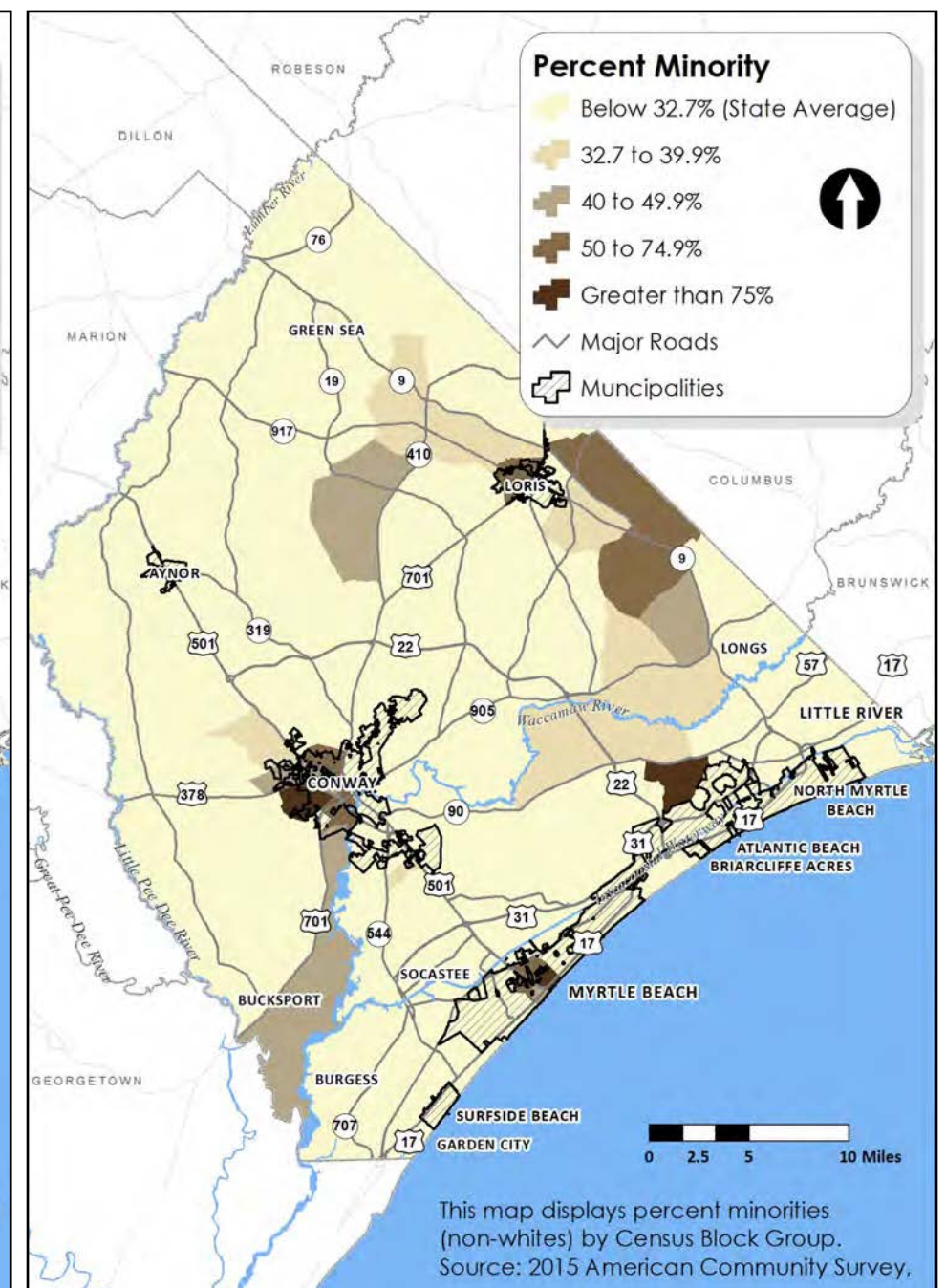
One of the most important elements of analyzing population data is recognizing trends and overlaps. In order to prevent discriminatory negative public health, or environmental effects on vulnerable and minority populations, Horry County must first determine where these populations are concentrated and where these discriminatory impacts are likely to exist. It is important to note that these areas are not framed in negative terms and should not be considered an obstacle for potential growth. Minority and vulnerable populations want vibrant businesses that add to their economic base without harming their individual health and well-being. In addition, they have similar needs in terms of community character and quality of life standards.

Looking at the following maps, it is obvious that there is a correlation between the percent minority map (to the far right) and the low-to-moderate income map (previous page). The areas highlighted are places that have greater percentages of minorities than the state average. Knowing where low-to-moderate income areas are can help with prioritizing public program, housing, and infrastructure improvements. It is also an important qualifying factor for many grant applications.

Limited English proficiency (map to the middle right) refers to anyone above the age of 5 who reported speaking English less than “very well,” as classified by the U.S. Census Bureau. Nationwide, the Limited English population represented 8% of the total U.S. population ages 5 and older. In South Carolina, this number is less than 6% of the population. In Horry County, it was less than 2.2% of all households (2,514 households) in 2015. Despite these numbers being low, there are areas of the County that have a greater percentage of households with low English proficiency than state averages.



Horry County Planning and Zoning utilizes the EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) to review rezoning cases (<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>). While this tool informs staff of population and environmental concerns based off of national averages, Planning and Zoning staff also work to identify when areas exceed state



percentages. The trends in this population data need to be continually analyzed and monitored by staff. Findings should be taken into account for rezonings, potential residential development, mining, outdoor shooting or other public nuisance activities, and economic development.

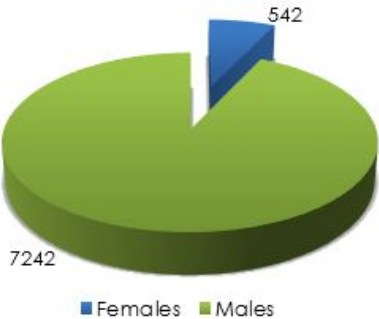




VETERANS

Horry County is the home to roughly 27,341 veterans according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. This accounts for roughly 25,435 males and 1,906 females. Horry County Veterans Affairs reports that only 7,784 veterans in the County receive Veteran Benefits, of those roughly 93% are male.

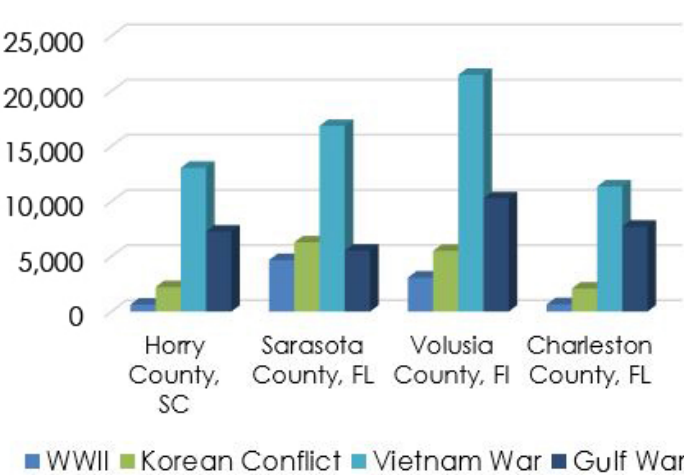
Veteran Benefits by Sex



Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

The highest number of veterans served in the Vietnam era and the second highest in the Gulf War, roughly 12,153 and 4,017 respectively. When compared to similar southern tourist and retirement destinations, Horry County has statistically more veterans than other SC destinations, but fewer than FL destinations.

Number of Veteran Residents Comparison



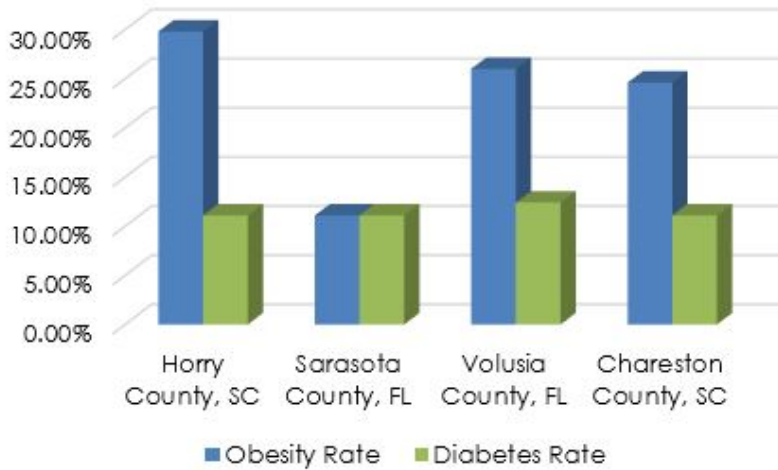
Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

HEALTH

Obesity

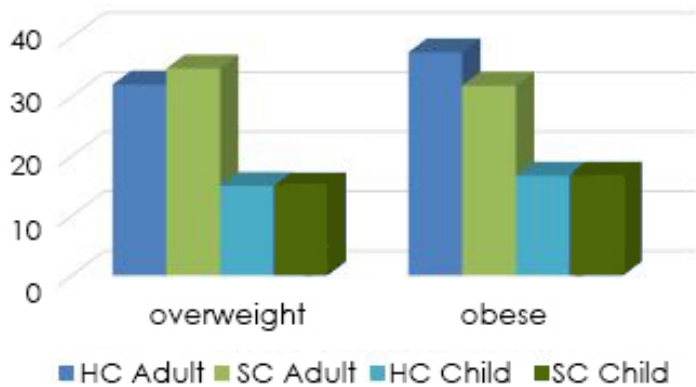
In 2013, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control found that on average 32% of adults (age 18 and older) in Horry County were overweight, while 37.4% were obese. Comparatively, the SC averages were 34.7% and 31.8% respectively. This means that while Horry County has fewer adults who are overweight, there are approximately 3% more obese compared to the entire state. Children's overweight and obese percentages were comparable to state averages.

Obesity and Diabetes Rate Comparisons



Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

Percentage of Overweight and Obese Residents in Horry County and South Carolina



Source: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2013 Horry County Obesity Fact Sheet

The availability of parks and access to natural spaces has been proven to have a positive influence on physical and mental health. Community design with the availability of open spaces and recreation areas strongly influence people's level of physical activity, which directly correlates to weight. Individuals that live in walkable communities spend more time doing physical activities than those that live in neighborhoods that are not walkable.

In addition, living close to parks and other recreational facilities consistently correlates to higher activity levels for adults and youth, resulting in lower obesity rates (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2016). Designing walkable communities with access to outdoor spaces is important to consider with future development, as the rates of obesity have risen dramatically since the 1970s. Providing access to recreation and natural spaces will have a positive influence on the physical health of residents and visitors of the County.

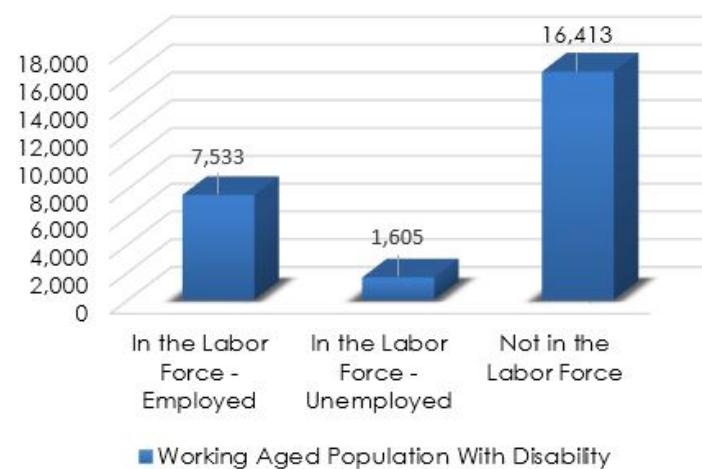
Mental Health

While there are many physical health benefits of living near and utilizing recreational assets, the mental health benefits of spending time in nature does not always require the same physical activity. Scenic views, such as the beach or waterways, are known to have restorative and mental health benefits (Lothian, 2010). For so many people, this is why they vacation at the beach and eventually retire here. Numerous studies document the positive impacts that recreation can have on mental health, from reducing depression and relieving stress, to improving quality of life in a variety of ways, to helping people to feel better about both their surroundings and themselves. Increased happiness and respect for the natural environment can also result in an increased sense of community pride.

## Disability

In 2015, there were 47,339 people, or 16.4% of the total population, in Horry County with a disability. This is compared to 12.4% in the US and 14.4% in South Carolina. The majority of residents with a disability are 65 years of age and older (75.5%). This can be explained by the increase in the elderly population in the County over the past 25 years. Further, 31.7% of veterans in Horry County are with a disability.

### Employment Status by Disability Status



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015

The chart above illustrates the employment status of the Horry County population with a disability. Of the disabled population, 16,413 or 35% were not in the labor force as of 2015. As the number of residents not in the labor force increases, the amount of money expendable by residents decreases and the amount expended on social services increases.

Nationwide, 1 in every 59 children has been identified with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Nearly one-fifth of all Americans – more than 56 million men, women, and children -- have a physical, sensory or intellectual disability and 38.3 million have a severe disability (US Census, 2010). People with disabilities constitute the nation's largest minority group. There are over 4,000 individuals with Autism and intellectual

disabilities in Horry County (Medicaid Secondary Data Study Conducted by SOS and Dr. Stephen Firsing of CCU).

## CONCLUSIONS

Continued monitoring of population trends is necessary. This information should be utilized to inform public service needs. It can also be used to evaluate impact of government decisions on specific communities.

Analyzing the latest demographic data by age groups, it becomes apparent that Horry County's population is growing with the most increase happening during retirement ages. This fact, combined with population projections, indicates that the County will need to take a special focus on providing services. While still providing for the needs of school-age children, Horry County must position itself to provide physical and social support to older residents. The aging population will seek recreational and human service facilities that are readily accessible from their homes; many may desire smaller housing units close to shopping and community services with fewer lawn maintenance needs.

As areas between the Waccamaw River and coast become more densely populated, it will become increasingly important to monitor and predict the needs of residents in the Burgess, Forestbrook, Socastee, Carolina Forest, and Little River areas. Safety services, parks and recreational services and facilities, housing, and land use will all need to reflect the growing and changing needs of these populations. As household demographics change, so will their housing needs.

In addition, as population continues to steadily rise, it will become ever-more important for Horry County officials and staff to continually improve development and zoning regu-

lations to reflect increasing needs of long term residents as well as seasonal and academic populations.

Horry County should coordinate with Coastal Carolina University and Horry Georgetown Technical College to encourage and promote long-term retention of young professional and post high school educated populations. In addition, addressing and mitigating the potential causes of income gaps between males, females and races should be of priority.

Continuing to monitor and improve environmental justice issues is also critical in Horry County. Planning and Zoning staff must continue to work to identify when areas exceed state percentages and take this information into account for rezonings and potential development.

Decisions made by the County government will need to reflect the changing needs of this more diverse and growing population, particularly those needs regarding income, age and ethnicity.



# CHAPTER 3: CULTURAL RESOURCES



## INTRODUCTION

From shag dancing to folk art, Horry County celebrates its culture in a variety of ways. The County is fortunate to be steeped in history and culture. Managing cultural resources means preserving history and heritage, public art, music, and physical spaces devoted to cultural activities, such as churches, museums, libraries and art galleries. Planning for the future of cultural resources is of the utmost importance because preserving the individual character and significance of each of these places and practices contributes to the overall community essence of the County.

The Cultural Resources chapter catalogs and analyzes various cultural resources including facilities, special events, festivals, and cultural groups. As the population continues to grow, it will become necessary to protect and promote the irreplaceable heritage of Horry County and its people, as well as sustaining and enhancing the functions provided by the various cultural facilities and organizations that exist.

## HISTORY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

While several Indigenous peoples inhabited this area centuries before European settlers, Horry County's relative isolation geographically from inland South Carolina has greatly influenced its development and settlement. Isolation for Horry County's early population was exacerbated by the border of the County to the south and west by the Little Pee Dee River, the east by the Atlantic Ocean, and bisection by the Waccamaw River. In addition to this, it is dominated by natural wetlands and swampy conditions. None-the-less, several Native American tribes and European settlements established themselves, and with innovations in agriculture, technology and industry Horry County began to grow in population.

## AMERICAN INDIANS

Historically, Horry County's original inhabitants were several small American Indian tribes including the Pee Dees, Chicora, Sirans, Cape Fears, and Waccamaws. It is estimated that in the early 1600s there were approximately 30 individual tribes existing in South Carolina (SCIWAY, 2018). While very little remains of these tribes, many of the geographic and natural resources retain American Indian names, paying homage to the Indigenous roots of the region.

Two tribes remain and actively work to preserve American Indian culture in Horry County. **The Waccamaw Indian People** were the first tribe recognized by the state of South Carolina in 2005. In February 2018, their estimated membership was roughly 450 (SouthStrandNews, 2018). Early settlement maps date the Waccamaw Indian People back to the early Dimery Settlement which was located in what is now the Dog Bluff area. They were skilled in animal domestication and often had deer, ducks, geese, and chickens. In communal and private gardens, the Waccamaw farmed and harvested corn, pumpkins, kidney and lima beans, squash, melons, and tobacco (Waccamaw Indian People of Conway, 2018). In 2004, the tribe received roughly 20 acres of their ancestral homeland near the Dimery Settlement and established the Waccamaw Tribal Grounds.

**The Chicora Indian Tribe**, while not recognized by the State of South Carolina, is one of the oldest tribes that reside in Horry County. Originally located closer to the Horry and Georgetown County lines, the Chicora were known for their river, saltwater marsh, and sea fishing. The Chicora now identify the Hickory Grove area as the Chicora Tribal Grounds where they hold monthly meetings (Chicora Indian People of South Carolina, 2018).



Annual Cultural Arts Festival and Pauwau  
Source: <https://discoversouthcarolina.com/products/27974>

## American Indian Cultural Events

Both the Chicora Indian Tribe and the Waccamaw Indian People participate in the **Annual Cultural Arts Festival and Pauwau** held annually in the fall. This gathering features food vendors, local crafts, handcrafted clothing, and traditional dancing.

## EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Horry County's geographic isolation, diverse natural resources, and landscapes made it a unique place for many who settled here. From second sons of English noblemen to pirates, fishermen, fur traders, to loggers and farmers, the beauty and wealth of the land has attracted people ever since its exploration and has spurred the development of settlements throughout the territory.

Early European settlement in the 1600s was limited by the natural swampy conditions and Little Pee Dee River boundary (*Horry County Historic Resources Survey*, 2007). By the early 1700s, European settlement began to concentrate in the Little River area due in part to its location along the King's Highway. It was not until the 1730s, when land grants became available, that widely distributed settling began.



Townships in South Carolina started in 1730 when surveyors employed by England's King George II laid out eleven townships. At that time, the Kings Town Township encompassed much of what is now the City of Conway. In 1769, the Kings Town Township became part of the Georgetown District, where in 1785 it would become known as Kingston County. It was not until 1801 that the Horry District was founded in honor of Peter Horry, a lieutenant colonel in the Revolutionary War, a brigadier general in the S.C. Militia, and later the area's representation to the South Carolina State House.

In the 1820s, Henry Buck of Bucksport, Maine moved to the area to start a timber industry utilizing the area's significant cypress, pine, and hardwood forests. Establishing three mills, one in Bucksport and two in Bucksville, Buck contributed to Horry County's status as one of the five greatest timber-producing districts in South Carolina and Bucksville becoming the third largest port in South Carolina. In April 1875, the largest wooden ship, the Henrietta, built in South Carolina was built at Bucksville, also known as Middle Mill, bringing further fame to the area.



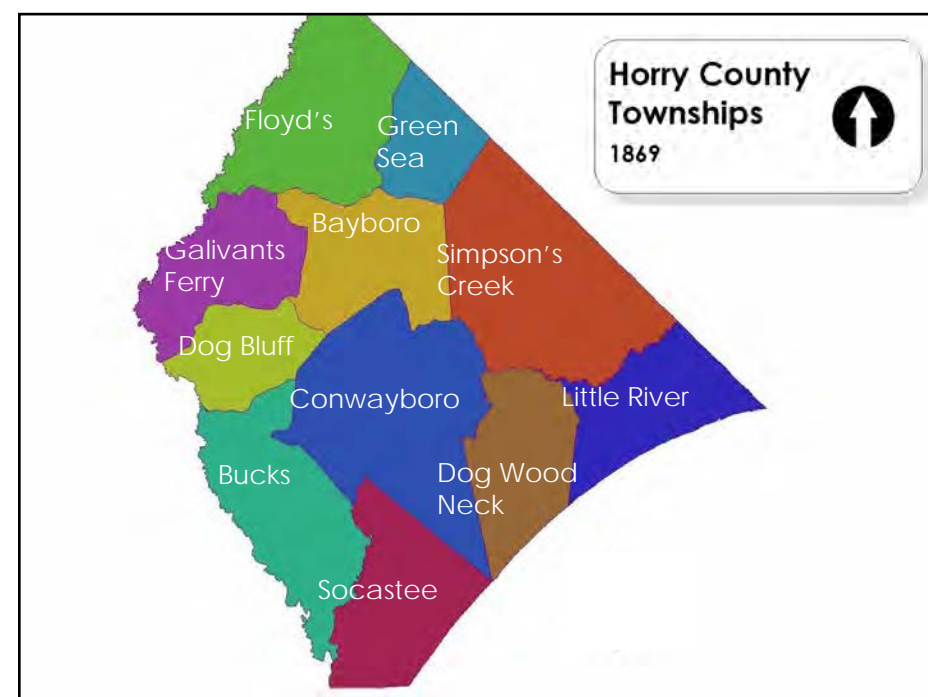
*The Henrietta, built in Bucksville, spent 19 years on the Pacific Ocean before being destroyed in a Typhon near Japan in 1894.*

Source: Horry County Museum

## THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

In 1852, Horry County's became known as the "Independent Republic" stemming from its physical, economic, and political isolation before the Civil War. This isolation likely saved it from the battles and destruction that befell Charleston and Columbia (South Strand News, 2018). However, salt was an important commodity and the County had salt works locations in Myrtle Beach, Murrells Inlet, and Little River. All were destroyed by Union Soldiers, which was a blow to the Confederate cause. Horry County also supplied turpentine, pitch, naval stores, and meat (Ted Gragg, 2018).

In 1868, Horry District was renamed Horry County. In 1869, by order of the South Carolina General Assembly, Horry County was divided into ten townships. Within each of these townships, other communities formed, many preceding the 1869 township creations. Many of these community, township and place names remain on modern day maps. And many Horry County citizens still identify their communities and hometowns by these cultural namesakes.



Although the County was spared from severe destruction, the post-Civil War years were nonetheless difficult. Due to outbreaks of diseases and generally ailing economy the economic situation was depressed.



*Train Service on Main Street in Conway*

Source: Horry County Museum

The economic turmoil led to the closure of most of the naval shipyards along the Waccamaw River, and had a negative effect on local employment and income. This was somewhat compensated by the growing popularity and suitability of planting tobacco along with the arrival of the railroad into Conway in 1887 and to the beach in 1901, which provided welcomed relief.



*Historic Tobacco Barn; Drying Tobacco*

Source: Horry County Museum





### GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURE

Many early European settlements in the South were built using slave labor. Horry County's relative isolation from the rest of South Carolina during the Civil War era meant that by 1810 the population was only roughly 4,300, of whom approximately 32% were enslaved individuals. This is in stark contrast to the nearly 80% enslaved population in the rice plantation counties of Charleston and Georgetown (*Horry County Historic Resource Survey*, 2007). While Horry County did not have a relatively large enslaved population, there was none-the-less a rich African culture that resonates today. The Gullah culture is a synthesis of African cultures that grew and adapted through the pre- and post- Civil War eras. Mostly of West African decent, the Gullah people developed a creole culture with elements of African languages, cultures and community life. This culture is unique to Southern coastal states because it developed in relative isolation when compared to African cultures in the Northern and inland areas.

### EMERGENCE OF A BEACH COMMUNITY

A short time after the commencement of railroad transportation, the first hotel named "Seaside Inn" opened. That event marked the start of the Grand Strand's growing popularity as a vacation destination, spurring tourist-orientated development all along the seashore.



*The Early "Seaside Inn"*  
Source: Horry County Museum

The growing importance of the automobile as a means of transportation led to increased highway construction, improving accessibility. The opening of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, which originally was planned to enhance homeland security from the sea, indirectly contributed to the growing attractiveness of the area as a vacation destination. The transformation from an agricultural based economy to a tourist driven destination is largely attributed to the advent of personal transportation and accessibility to the area.

### MYRTLE BEACH AIR FORCE BASE

In 1940, the Army Air Corps took over the **Harrelson Municipal Airport** to use as a training facility for pilots. A short time later, the United States Department of War acquired 6,700 acres, including the airport, to establish the **Myrtle Beach General Bombing and Gunnery Range**. Barracks, a hospital, offices, and other facilities totaling 114 buildings accompanied the base. The site remained active until it was returned to the City of Myrtle Beach in 1947.

**The Myrtle Beach Air Force Base** was activated in 1956, when many of the original Range buildings were torn down and modernized. Units from the base participated in the Cold War, the Berlin Crisis, the Cuban Missile Crisis and Operation Desert Storm. The base was closed in 1993 following the National Defense Authorization Act in 1991.

### HISTORY MUSEUMS

In an effort to educate the public about Horry County history and preserve historic structures, a handful of public and private entities have established museums dedicated to Horry County's unique history.

**The Horry County Museum** was established in 1979 to preserve the materials and objects relating to the history, pre-history and natural history of the County. The museum serves over 31,000 visitors each year through permanent exhibits, special events and a myriad of educational programs for school children. The museum relocated from a 6,500 sq ft facility to the historic Burroughs School at 805 Main Street in Conway, in November of 2013. The new location contains 28,000 sq ft and allows for additional permanent exhibits. The site also includes a 600-seat auditorium which hosts educational programs geared to larger audiences, and provides the community with an additional gathering place for cultural and social events.



*The Burroughs School Building, now The Horry County Museum*  
Source: The Horry County Museum

**The South Carolina Hall of Fame**, dedicated in 1973, was created by the State Legislature to recognize and honor past and present South Carolinians who have made a substantial impact on the State's progress and heritage. Nominations are taken from the State's ten districts. Each district nominates one contemporary and one deceased nominee. Recipients have a variety of backgrounds from artists



to athletes; preservationists to statesmen and educators to scientists. **The Myrtle Beach Convention Center** is home to the Hall of Fame. A full list on inductees is provided at <http://www.theofficialschalloffame.com/>



*The South Carolina Hall of Fame*  
Source: <http://www.theofficialschalloffame.com/>

**The North Myrtle Beach Museum** opened on April 7th, 2013 in the former North Myrtle Beach Library building. The Museum features both a long-term gallery highlighting various aspects of the region's history and a changing gallery offering short-term exhibits of regional interest. The exhibits in the museum showcase the North Myrtle Beach area's history including early beginnings, natural history, beach culture, shag dance, and leisure activities.

**The Historic Myrtle Beach Colored School Museum and Education Center** tells the story of the Myrtle Beach Colored School, a 1932 four-room segregated school that served African-American students in Myrtle Beach for over 20 years. The museum holds artifacts from the school and period, as well as a reference library of African American history. The building also houses adult education programs and continuing education classes.

**The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor** runs from Wilmington, North Carolina to Jacksonville, Florida. It was created to recognize the important contributions made to American culture and history by Gullah Geechee African Americans. It was also designated in an effort to help local and state governments as well as public and private entities, interpret Gullah Geechee folklore, arts, crafts and music.

**The Myrtle Beach Air Force Base Museums** are a series of indoor and outdoor museums of the former Myrtle Beach Air Force Base. 163 signs throughout the Market Commons district give the history of the former base from 1939-1993. Planes are on display at Warbird Park that once flew out of the base. The museum exhibits with Myrtle Beach Air Force Base memorabilia at the Base Recreation Center, Crabtree Gym and the Wall of Service which honor the men and women, civilian and military, that once served at the Air Force Base.



*Warbird Park*  
Source: <http://www.warbirdpark.com/>

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION

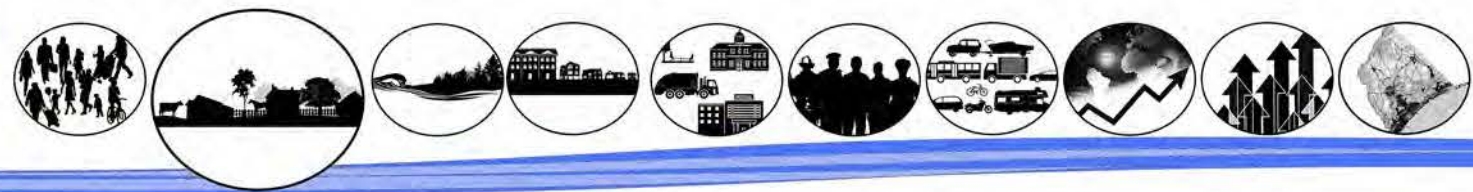
**The Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation** is empowered with the task of preserving the local buildings, communities, and places of Horry County. These irreplaceable assets are protected by the creation of a list of designated individual properties, sites, landmarks, and historic preservation districts. Currently, there are 260 properties, four trees and one garden on Horry County's Historical Register along with two historic districts. However, according to the 2007 Historical Survey there are over 2,600 properties that have the potential to be designated as historic. By protecting these properties, the County seeks to safeguard its cultural and social connections, promote the use and conservation of our resources, encourage a general harmony of style, improve property values and strengthen the local economy. Research, in general, has shown that a historic designation is connected with higher property values. For more information please see **Horry County's Historic Preservation Plan**.

## EVENTS

There are many events in unincorporated Horry County and the incorporated areas that are historically significant. The diversity of events speaks to the diversity of heritages and cultures in the County. The **Horry County Museums Quilt Gala** in Conway and Annual **Pauwau** in Aynor both help celebrate unique cultural crafts. The events that emphasize the history and spirit of Horry County's people are important.

**The Horry County Gullah Geechee Heritage Committee** orchestrates an annual **Gullah Geechee Heritage Film Festival**. This festival highlights an eclectic selection of national and international short films. It also helps to promote the annual **Gullah Geechee Heritage Festival**, a three-day celebration of Gullah Geechee culture featuring round table and panel discussions, a traditional marketplace, festivities with chil-





dren’s games and vendors, and a Gospel Explosion and worship service.

One historical event that takes place is the **Galivants Ferry Stump Speaking**. This event is home to a Democratic political rally held every two years since 1876. Numerous important candidates have stumped in Galivants Ferry including Former Vice-President Joe Biden. The site of the Stump is included in the Galivants Ferry National Register Historic District and is vitally important to cultural heritage.



Galivants Ferry Stump Speaking  
Source: Dr. Ryan

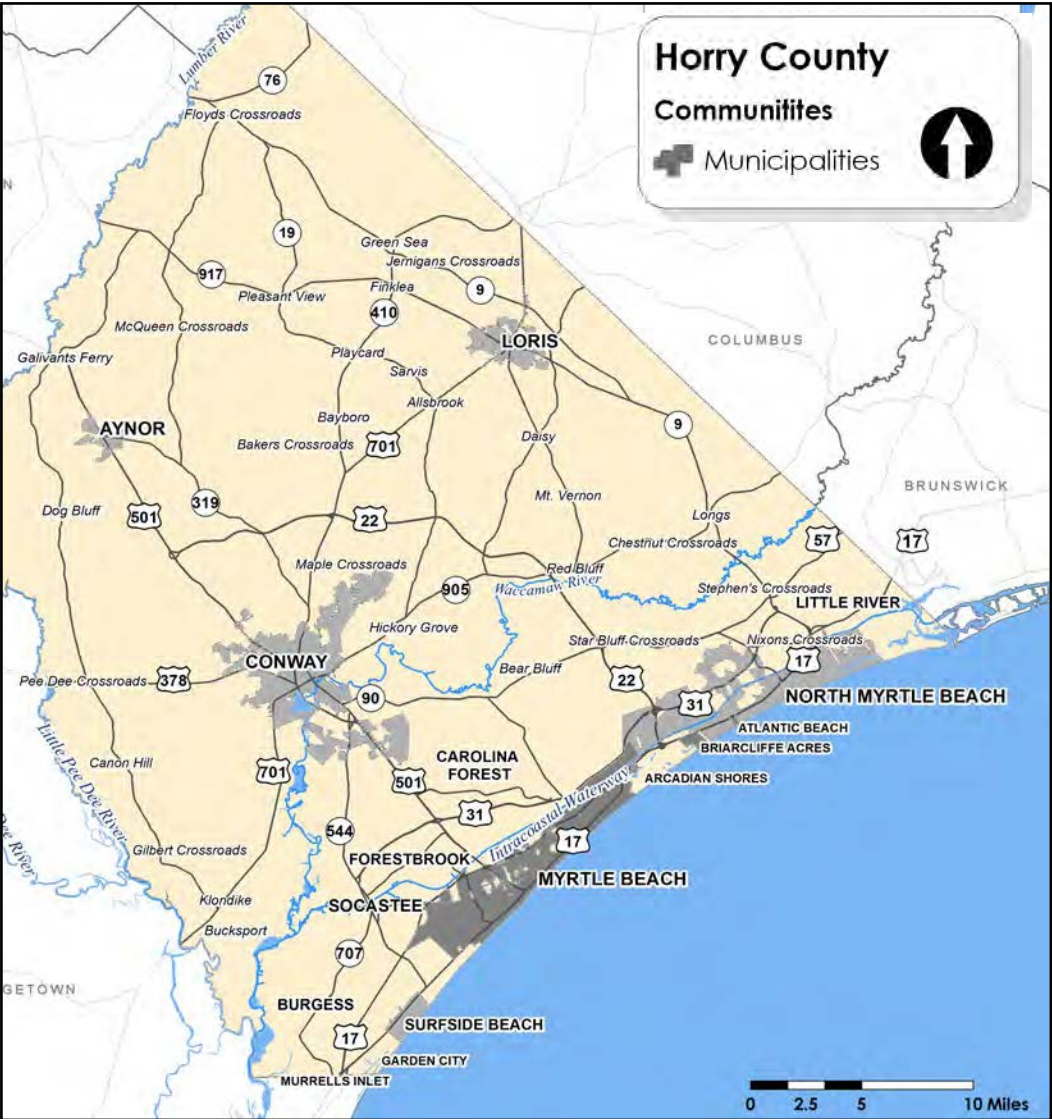
In addition, communities throughout Horry County host numerous veteran related festivities including events on Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans Day.

HISTORY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION FINDINGS

Since the mid-1900s, the importance of the tourist industry in Horry County has grown substantially to become the main revenue generator and land use converter. Over the years, the tourist industry has spread geographically all across the County, resulting in commercial growth along the beach front and suburban residential growth.

As development and population increases, Horry County will need to make a conscious effort to preserve its history and cultural diversity. Educating locals and newcomers about the County’s history and cultural offerings is a critical part of historic and cultural preservation. This can be achieved by preserving the historic name-sakes of the unique communities and sites throughout the County.

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
Horry County Museum Quilt Gala	Conway	February-March
Socastee Heritage Festival	Socastee	April
Galivants Ferry Stump Political Rally	Galivants Ferry	April
Conway Riverfest	Conway	June/ July
Horry County Museum Tobacco Heritage Festival	Conway	August
Gullah Geechee Heritage Festival	Little River	August
Sons of Italy Italian Fest	Myrtle Beach	September
Irish/Italian/International Festival	North Myrtle Beach	October
Farm Harvest Day	L.W. Paul Living Farm	October
Conway Ghost Walk: Tales of the Low-Country	Conway	October
Gullah Geechee Film Festival	Little River	October
Syrup Day	L.W. Paul Living Farm	November
Annual Cultural Arts Festival and Pauwau	Aynor	November



Horry County Communities, many based on historic place names and townships



## RURAL CULTURE

In Horry County, rural areas account for far more land mass than the suburban and urban areas. They also contain a vastly different traditional and cultural aesthetic. Many rural communities have a culture based primarily on farming and other agricultural related activities. Events such as the Aynor Harvest Hoe-Down and the Loris Bog-Off personify this culture. Numerous family farms have been in the same families for more than 100 years, qualifying them for South Carolina Century Farm status, a state recognition program.

## AGRICULTURE

For decades, **Road-side Markets** have greeted tourists as they've entered the County and bid them farewell as they left. Much like the Sweetgrass Basket makers in Charleston County, the stands that line Highways 9, 17 and 501 are a part of the beach experience for nearly all tourists that arrive by automobile. This beach experience is an important mainstay of the rural cultural heritage.



1940s Horry County Roadside Market  
Source: The Horry County Museum

Trends in agriculture and forestry have altered the built cultural landscape in the rural areas perhaps more than anywhere else. The naval stores industry involved the cutting and draining of pine sap from long-leaf pines. After the ship building industry, which relied on these naval stores waned, so did the timber industry.

The County was at one time one of the largest producers of lumber in the South. The boom in the lumber industry all but eliminated the long leaf pine from the County. These former forests were converted to tobacco fields. Horry County was one of the largest producers of tobacco in the South and continues to lead South Carolina in tobacco production. As the tobacco industry has waned, new crops like soybeans, peanuts, and wheat have taken its place. Even cotton has seen a resurgence in recent years.



Horry County Tobacco Barns  
Source: Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation

Each successive trend has left its mark on both the built and cultural landscape. Tobacco barns still dot farms throughout Horry County, however many of these are falling into disrepair and neglect. Each of these industries required full

participation from every family member involved in farming operations. This participation fostered deep traditions within families including music, food, religion, and work ethic. As populations that have historically participated in agriculture age, the continuance of farming in Horry County is threatened.

## Century Farms

The goal of this state-wide program is to honor pioneer farms in South Carolina. Families who have owned and farmed the same land for at least 100 years are eligible for this designation. This program was opened up to Horry County in 1976, and by 2017 eighteen farms have been designated as Century Farms. This means that the County has the fourth highest number of Century Farms in South Carolina. This number continues to grow as more farms within the County continue to achieve this designation. By recognizing the value of agricultural lands in Horry County, we are also preserving our agricultural heritage.

## Agritourism

Agritourism is a growing activity in Horry County and nationally. The County recognized this and passed an Agritourism Ordinance in 2016. This Ordinance was written to allow agritourism activities such as you-pick, farm-to-table, special events, etc... on working farms. Agritourism is an accessory use on agricultural land that is designed to diversify the income stream on farming operations, and to support the primary use of agriculture. This is a temporary use on the property, but typically lasts longer than the time periods allowed by current special events permits in Horry County.





The permit is designed to encourage the growth of agritourism while assisting in the preservation of the rich agricultural traditions that exist in the County. By exempting farms from the commercial requirements of landscaping, parking lots, and permanent restroom facilities, it reduces the initial financial risk for the owners and operators wanting to create agritourism activities on their farm for the first time.

### Rural Tourism

**Freewoods Farm** is located in the Burgess Community and plays tribute to African American farming immediately following the end of the Civil War. Freewoods is a 40-acre living farm museum replicating life on small southern family farms owned and/or operated by African Americans between 1865 – 1900. Freewoods Farm provides educational and tourism opportunities for locals and visitors to the area.



Freewoods Farm, making lime  
Source: <http://freewoodsfarm.com/NewFiles/PFTLT.html>

The **LW Paul Living History Farm** is a 17 acre, Horry County Museum facility that educates future generations about traditional farming life in the first half of the twentieth century. Visitors to the Farm have the opportunity to sample the everyday life of an Horry County farm family living during this era and to participate in activities that would have been commonplace. Plowing with mules, making lye soap, grinding grits, blacksmithing, curing meat, preserving vegetables, milking cows, and harvesting crops are only a few hands on activities the Farm has to offer. Events at the Farm change seasonally.



LW Paul Living History Farm  
Source: Horry County Museum

Not only can citizens and visitors visit the living farms and agritourism destination, they can also take **The Art + Ag Tour of Horry County**. This is a free, self-guided tour of designated farms highlighting farmer's markets and local artisans. The SC Ag + Art Tour began in 2012, and Horry County became involved in 2017.

### NATURE: WILDLIFE, HUNTING AND FISHING

Horry County is home to a large population who appreciates the natural amenities that have led to unique recreational opportunities. This "nature culture" depends heavily on the preservation of open natural spaces, clean and accessible waterways, conservation areas, and wildlife management areas for wildlife viewing, boating, swimming, hunting, fishing. Many rural residents also enjoy equestrian activities, the use of ATVs, and dirt bikes. Such rural amusement activities are essential to providing recreation and entertainment in the rural parts of the County.

Horry County has a variety of scenic locations in which to enjoy nature and view wildlife. The **Little Pee Dee River** is designated as a Scenic River and is an ideal location to view wildlife by water. The **Waccamaw River** is another waterway in which to view birds, alligators, beavers, and other wildlife. Even though advisories warn about consumption of fish from these waterways, locals enjoy these waters for swimming and fishing at local boat landings and via private access areas. Further to the south, the **Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge** has a number of locations in which to view threatened bird species, like the Swallow-Tailed Kite and Bald Eagle. **Vereen Memorial Gardens** also provides a great viewing area of tidal marshes in Little River, and of course, the **beach** provides a great location to view a variety of migratory birds. **Waties Island** provides an exclusive wildlife viewing location. While not publicly accessible by car, its beach can be reached by boat.

Hunting is a common sporting activity in rural areas of the County. In 2016, just over 2,800 hunting and sportsman licenses were issued, in addition to over 3,000 combination hunting and fishing licenses (SCDNR). This does not include stand-alone fishing licenses. The hunting of deer, duck,



doves, alligator and bear all require supplemental licenses. Hunting of migratory birds and waterfowl are by far the most popular types of hunting in Horry County. Big game licenses, mainly for deer, are also popular. Hunting typically occurs on private land, in addition to wildlife management areas. While hunting is popular, there are only three outdoor shooting ranges in all of Horry County. Residents in rural communities have expressed concerns over growth and the impact on their ability to safely hunt.

### CHICKEN BOG

Food in the south, and particularly in Horry County, is ingrained in culture. From chicken bog to shrimp and grits, a lot of cultural gatherings begin with food. Although the rice industry was much larger in neighboring Georgetown County, it was still prevalent throughout Horry County during the 1800s and early 1900s. As such, rice replaced bread in the diets of many Horry County citizens during these times. Rice was often served with every meal. Of course, this gave rise to a variety of creative ways to serve rice dishes.



Chicken Bog  
Source: <http://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com>

Today, the most popular rice dish is an Horry County spin of what is called pileau in other areas, **Chicken Bog**. It is a staple in many Horry County citizens' diet today and can be found in many restaurants.

Agriculture has always been a major part of the culture of Horry County. The local farming industry once provided the majority of food for the population. As such, locally grown produce like peanuts, potatoes, and other typical crops became part of the food culture. Collard Greens are grown in the colder seasons and supplement the diets of many citizens today.

### RURAL CULTURAL EVENTS

In addition to the many events that are held annually at the Freewoods and LW Paul Living History Farms, are the Loris Bog-Off and Aynor Harvest Hoe-Down Festivals. Both annual events celebrate the unique rural culture that many long time residents love.

The **Loris Bog-Off Festival** began in 1980 and is a cooking contest surrounding chicken bog. The many recipes presented each year build on the traditional flavors that families have passed down for generations. The festival also includes music, a car show, vendors and fireworks. The **Aynor Harvest Hoe-Down Festival**, which began in 1979, is an annual event that celebrates the autumn harvest complete with arts, crafts, food, music, dancing and a parade.

### RURAL CULTURE FINDINGS

As the emerging suburban areas continue to develop and grow both in population and amenities, it will become increasingly important for the rural district to maintain and preserve the characteristics that make each rural community unique.

Through programs like Century Farms and incentives for Agritourism, Horry County is preserving and recognizing the value of agricultural lands while also preserving our agricultural heritage.

Rural culture depends heavily on the preservation of open natural spaces, clean and accessible waterways, conservation, and wildlife management areas, as well as the preservation of agrarian ways of life. As environmental concerns rise over development in the urban and suburban areas of the County, extra efforts to protect the rural culture amenities will be needed. Encouraging the development and establishment of recognizable community characteristics (or sense of place) in rural areas will also become increasingly important.

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
River Celebration	Conway	January
Waccamaw Conference	Conway	February
Loris Bog-Off Festival	Loris	October
Horry County Fair	Carolina Forest	April
Grand Strand Fishing Rodeo	Myrtle Beach	April- October
Aynor Harvest Hoe-Down Festival	Aynor	September





### BEACH CULTURE

Inarguably, **the Beach** is the greatest cultural attraction offered in the County. The Grand Strand of Horry County contains more than 30 miles of sandy beach front coastline. The tourism centered development of eastern Horry County has spawned its own beach culture, including the birth of beach music and shag dancing. The almost 18 million annual visitors to the County's beaches have created a cultural climate that allows for unique commercially driven and family oriented attractions. Tourists spend hundreds of millions of dollars on entertainment and recreation in the Grand Strand. Influencing the reputation of the area are the countless world-class golf courses with their upscale lodging and residential communities. A mild climate and diverse natural resources offer a multitude of opportunities for many outdoor activities as well as shopping, dining, and other leisure activities.

### ATTRACTIONS

The following cultural attractions represent just a few of the offerings throughout the beach. **Ripley's Aquarium** is an 85,000 square foot aquarium facility located in the Broadway at the Beach complex in Myrtle Beach. The goal of Ripley's is to foster environmental education, conservation and research while providing fun entertainment for visitors of all ages.

The **Myrtle Beach Pavilion** is a locally significant historical property that has been located and relocated, built and rebuilt, used and reused by tourists and residents over generations. Originally constructed as an open-air wooden building beside the Seaside Inn in 1908, the site evolved to eventually be the Myrtle Beach Pavilion Amusement Park where a permanent carnival resided from the 1930s until 2006. Having been a historical landmark and destination for Beach goers for over 70 years, a historical marker stands on the edge of

what is now the 1.2 mile **Myrtle Beach Boardwalk and Promenade**. While no longer located in its original location, this park is survived by a handful of smaller amusement park facilities that continue to thrill beach-goers annually. One park, located at **Broadway at the Beach** carries the Pavilion name-sake.



The Myrtle Beach Pavilion  
Source: Myrtle Beach Remembered

The **OD Pavilion**, originally opened in 1926, is located on the beach front in North Myrtle Beach, houses the **Shag Hall of Fame** and one of the last open air pavilions on the East Coast dedicated to beach music. The OD Pavilion is also home to a free, ticket driven amusement park of the same name, which claims to be the Grand Strand's newest amusement park.

Like the rural road-side markets, **Beach Stores** have been a staple of the tourist oriented attractions for decades. More than 50 beach stores of all varieties dot the coastline selling hermit crabs, t-shirts and beach toys. Each year, newer, bigger and brighter stores are built to attract the tourism market.



The SkyWheel  
Source: <http://skywheel.com/myrtle-beach-media/skywheel-photos/>

**The SkyWheel** is a 187-foot tall ferris wheel located on the Boardwalk in Myrtle Beach. When it opened in May 2011, it was the second-tallest ferris wheel in North America.

### GOLF

**Golf** is a long-standing recreational activity in the Grand Strand. There are roughly 30 golf courses located throughout the County, including the only publicly owned course, Whispering Pines Golf Club, owned by the City of Myrtle Beach. The Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce reported that in 2016 only roughly 12% of visitors to the Myrtle Beach area participated in golf related activities. Due in part to the economic downturn in the early 21st century, the development of golf communities has slowed. It is important to note that golf is typically conceived as an upper-middle class sport. This is because not only does golfing require substantial amounts of time, but also money. The 2013 National Golf Foundation Survey concluded that on average recreational golfers spend between \$1200 and \$2000 annually on golf equipment (National Golf Foundation, 2013). In addition, golfers spend roughly \$4000 annually on golf travel.



According to the 2014 Bureau of Labor Statistics Time Use Survey, American men spend roughly 30 minutes on weekends and holidays participating in sporting activities. Women spend even less, averaging roughly 15 minutes (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Considering an average 18 holes of golf can take upwards of four hours, the disparity is obvious. Retirees spend more time in sport and leisure activities, and the 2013 National Golf Foundation Survey showed that roughly 38% of those that golf were born before 1965 (National Golf Foundation, 2013).



Whispering Pines Golf Club  
Source: <http://www.northmyrtlebeachgolf.com/>

**Miniature Golf** did not originate in Horry County, but some would argue that it was perfected here. Not only are there numerous courses from Little River to Garden City, the Masters' of mini-golf takes place at the self-professed "World's Toughest Mini-Golf" course in North Myrtle Beach, the Hawaiian Rumble.

## Golf Events

Golf represents not only a leisure sport, but a method of fundraising and charity. One might go as far as to call golf a contributor in the "culture of giving". One such event that raises funds annually is the **Horry County Police Golf Classic**. This event raises money on behalf of the Police Department for various charitable activities, such as scholarships and the Back-to-School Backpack Program which provides backpacks and school supplies to local students in need.

Another such event is the annual **Horry County Golf Outing** which raises funds for the **Horry County Special Olympic Games**. These games are held at Pelican's Field and support over 400 athletes in track and field events.

Not only do departments in Horry County government raise funds via golf tournaments, many private and charter schools also utilize the County's golf courses in this manner. Another popular charity event is **Monday After The Masters**. This event is the top Celebrity Pro-Am in the country and is hosted by Hootie & The Blowfish annually in April at Barefoot Resort. Monday After The Masters charity contributions focus on education issues in South Carolina and has raised over \$3M during its lifetime.

## MOTOR SPORTS

In addition to a culture focused on the beach and golf, there is a growing number of citizens and visitors that come to Horry County for its evolving motor sports culture. Seeking the pleasant weather and hospitable tourist amenities, motorcyclists gather three times annually. Also becoming increasingly popular are ATVs and dirt bikes. These recreational activities are not only popular with visitors to the County, but residents are also increasingly involved in long-term riding and building of motor sport activities.

Motor sports includes, but is not limited to; motorcycles, ATVs, dirt bikes, racing, monster trucks, remote controlled cars, motorized boats, and jet skis. Private developers are not the only entities addressing this increasing demand. Motor sports have become so popular that Horry County Parks and Recreation has begun to address the need by incorporating a remote control car racing track at the **Socastee Recreation Park**. In addition, Horry County Schools has chartered the **Palmetto Academy of Learning Motorsports**, a public charter high school that focuses on motor sports, collision technology, and graphics with an emphasis on hands-on experience working with race cars, welding, and bodywork.

## Motor Sports Events

There are a number of annual events that take place each year featuring unique motor sports themes. Three **bike rallies** are held each year along the Grand Strand. A Spring and Fall **Harley Davidson Bike Week** is centralized in Murrells Inlet and North Myrtle Beach. The Harley Davidson event dates as far back as the 1940s. This event features memorial rides for service members and product shows where riders can see the latest and greatest bike customization options.





Harley Davidson Bike Week event in North Myrtle Beach  
Source: <http://www.gotomyrtlebeach.com/>

In the 1960s, a group of African American bikers in Atlantic Beach started their own rally known as **Atlantic Beach Memorial Day BikeFest**. This event has changed names through successive years but continues to be held during the Memorial Day holiday. At its peak, BikeFest attracted as many as 350,000 bikers.

**The Wheels of Yesteryear Museum** opened on September 30th, 2009 in front of the Myrtle Beach Speedway on Highway 501. This privately owned museum showcases one of the Southeast's most impressive collections of vintage American-made automobiles.

Horry County is also fortunate to have the **Myrtle Beach Speedway** which hosts many annual and bi-annual events such as **Monster Trucks Beach Devastation**, a popular event featuring Monster Truck racing and destruction. The Speedway is also home to weekly **NASCAR Whelen All-American Series** races during the Spring and Summer, and also the **NOPI Nationals** in March and July.

### CAMPING

Camping is becoming a popular vacation and retirement choice across the country. It is a long standing way for families to vacation frugally with a focus on family time. Similarly, many retirees seek ways to extend their incomes. This has led to an increase in camping and demand for long term Recreational Vehicle (RV) facilities. Camping has developed into a community culture focused on simplicity. Not only is camping culture increasingly popular among tourists to the area, but also with residents. Visitors and citizens of the County frequently utilize the many private and public camping and RV facilities along the Grand Strand. Many of these facilities utilize popular tourist areas for beach-front camp sites along with easy access to the amenities and excitement of the beach areas. Private campgrounds plan special and thematic events, some centered around holidays, to encourage everyone to utilize their facilities for long weekends and week long vacations.

There are numerous campgrounds in Horry County that cater to visitors with RVs. Such campgrounds are prevalent near Surfside Beach and off of Kings Road. There are nearly 9,000 campsites available in the County, making up a total of 9% of the vacation accommodations in the Grand Strand (Horry County, 2017).



Ocean Lakes Family Campground  
Source: <https://www.oceanlakes.com/>

### SEAFOOD

Local **seafood** is a mainstay in the diets of residents and tourists who visit the many seafood restaurants. Local blue crabs, shrimp, oysters, and fish can be found in specialty markets and restaurants throughout the Grand Strand. Fishing, crabbing and shrimping are also popular ways to catch local seafood without the necessity of purchasing it. While seafood is a mainstay, the fishing industry is small and mainly located in Little River. It is necessary to protect area water quality and marine life to help preserve the fishing industry's vitality. Currently, this small fishing fleet is competing for dock space and has limited capability to expand due to the lack of dock access and competition for tourism related watersports, tours, casino boats and charter fishing.



Locally Caught Blue Crab at the Blue Crab Festival in Little River  
Source: [MyrtleBeachOnline.com](http://MyrtleBeachOnline.com)

### BEACH CULTURE EVENTS

Beach culture events are popular with visitors and locals. Some beach culture events focus on the unique seafoods that coastal South Carolina has to offer. **The Blue Crab Festival** was first held along the waterfront of Little River in 1981. The festival celebrates the blue crab which can be found in the waters of the Little River community. The festival includes food, music, vendors and activities.



**The Shrimp Festival** is another event held in Little River annually. Many events center around utilizing the exceptional weather and the commercial facilities that the urban beach district of the County has to offer. For example, **Myrtle Beach's Hot Summer Nights** takes place on the **Myrtle Beach Boardwalk** and features music and family friendly activities that encourage attendees to visit Boardwalk amenities.

**Beach Boogie, the BBQ Festival** and numerous shag contests held throughout the year celebrate the unique history of dancing in the County.

Other events utilize the urban infrastructure to encourage health and athletics. The **Myrtle Beach Marathon** uses both City and County locations for family fun, 5k, 10k, 1/2 marathon, marathon, and relay runs. Athletic tournaments and competitions occur year round.



Myrtle Beach Marathon  
Source: mb-vacationrentals.com

### BEACH CULTURE FINDINGS

The beach culture offers a wide variety of facilities with amenities that are frequented by both tourists and locals. Tourism not only helps support Horry County economically, but culturally. The urban beach area not only contains a large portion of the cultural facilities, but also a substantial portion of the events. While many of these events and venues are well advertised by private entities, publicly sponsored events rely heavily on word-of-mouth and social media.

Looking into the future, Horry County will need to continue to support beach culture events being held in the incorporated and unincorporated areas. It will also need to ensure that the character of the beach communities is not lost through incompatible development or threatened by rising land costs.

Another important factor in the County's ability to maintain and enhance beach culture and the economy is the threat of hurricanes and other tropical events. The ability of the County to rebuild and continue to provide services to both residents and tourists quickly after a storm is essential.

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
Red Hatters Beach party Weekend	Myrtle Beach	January
Society of Stranders Mid-Winter Break	North Myrtle Beach	January
Myrtle Beach Marathon	Myrtle Beach	February
Run to the Sun Car Show	Myrtle Beach	March
Society of Stranders Spring Safari	North Myrtle Beach	April

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
Monday After The Masters	North Myrtle Beach	April
Harley Davidson Bike Week	Varies	May / October
Atlantic Bike Week	Varies	May
Mayfest on Main	North Myrtle Beach	May
Little River Crab Festival	Little River	May
Native Sons Salt Games	Myrtle Beach	June
Alive After Five	Conway	June- November
Myrtle Beach Hot Summer Nights	Myrtle Beach	June- September
Horry County Police Golf Classic	Varies	June
Horry County Special Olympics Golf Tournament	Varies	June
Monster Truck Devastation	Carolina Forest	Summer
NASCAR All-American Series	Carolina Forest	Weekly Summer
NOPI Nationals	Carolina Forest	March / July
Movies after Dark	Myrtle Beach	June- July
Beach Boogie and BBQ Festival	Myrtle Beach	August
SC's Largest Garage Sale	Myrtle Beach	September
Long Board Classic	Myrtle Beach	September
Society of Stranders Fall Migration	North Myrtle Beach	September
Surfside Beach Annual Family Festival	Surfside	October
Endless Summer Festival	North Myrtle Beach	October
Little River Shrimp Festival	Little River	October
Conway Fall Festival	Conway	October





### ARTS CULTURE

The arts are an integral parts of the County's vitality. Not only can the arts enrich residents daily lives by providing a deeper understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity, but it can also serve as a grounding force in community identity. The 2017 National Citizens Survey identified that roughly 45% of participants felt positively about the County's openness and acceptance of diversity. This number was down from 51% in 2015 (National Citizens Survey, 2017 and 2015). Openness and acceptance towards people of diverse backgrounds ranked lowest in District 7 (27% positive) and District 4 (36% positive), and highest in District 10 (56% positive) and Districts 11 and 3 (both at 55% positive). Providing the opportunity to experience and cultivate an appreciation for the arts is a County aspiration.

The Arts include, but are not limited to, literature arts - including poetry, prose, and drama; the performing arts - including music, dance, and theatre; and the visual arts - including drawing, painting, photography, and sculpting. The Culinary Arts can also be included in this broad arts culture category. The majority of more typical arts culture opportunities are located nearer to the beach and urban areas and are centered around the Coastal Carolina University campus.

**Coastal Carolina University** (CCU) plays a pivotal role in the arts, in addition to producing an array of sporting events, lecture series, and classroom opportunities. CCU faculty and staff create opportunities for their students to produce and experience cultural arts. In turn, the community benefits from student performances, art shows, theater productions and special cultural events on campus. CCU offers an extremely diverse schedule of public cultural events that showcase the creative efforts of their students and present world-class performances and exhibits by professional artists. As Coastal



Coastal Carolina University  
Source: Unknown

Carolina University's student body and acclaim grow, so will their cultural offerings.

CCU also houses the 750-seat **Wheelwright Auditorium**. Built in 1981, with funding from mostly private sources, the theater and music departments of Coastal Carolina use the building throughout the year for student productions and performances. In addition, Wheelwright hosts many University and community events, and houses events from the Long Bay Symphony. The performing arts are also supported privately by groups such as The Carolina Master Chorale, the Atlantic Stage, and at Horry County Schools.

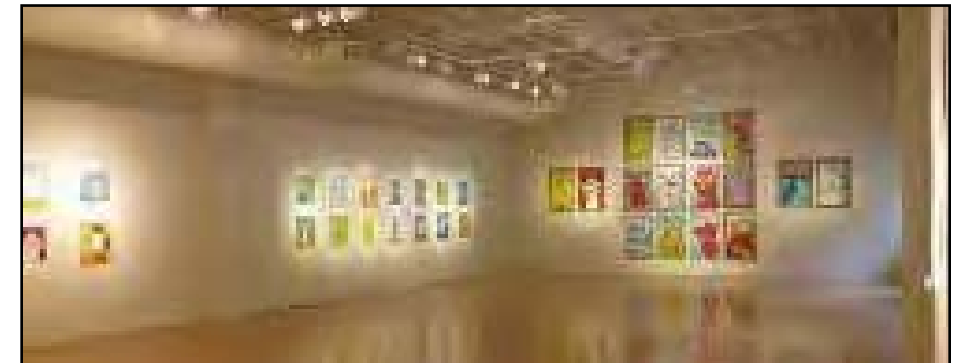
**The Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum** opened its doors in 1997 as a contemporary art museum emphasizing the works of living artists. Housed in the Springmaid Villa, the museum provides a full array of educational opportunities in the visual arts such as classes for children and adults, gallery talks, and other activities. Because of Springmaid Villa's historical significance, efforts to preserve the home led to the creation of the art museum. The home was built in 1924 and was used as a vacation home until 1975. Af-

ter changing ownership the house was left abandoned until 1984 when it was moved to its current location at the former Springmaid Resort Beach (currently called the Double Tree Hilton Resort). Those who sought to preserve the house envisioned a place in the Myrtle Beach area where the visual arts could be explored and showcased.



The Franklin G. Burroughs Museum  
Source: <http://myrtlebeachartmuseum.org/myrtle-beach-art-museum/>

**The Rebecca Bryan Art Gallery** is located in the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards Humanities and Fine Arts Building at Coastal Carolina University, the Rebecca Randall Bryan Art Gallery is a public center for the visual arts. The gallery opened in 2001 and holds 6-8 exhibits each year. The exhibits are open to the public and the gallery is committed to its mission of researching, exhibiting and interpreting objects, activities and documents for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment.



The Rebecca Bryan Art Gallery  
Source: Unknown



**The Theatre of the Republic** (TOR) is a non-profit, non-professional theatre group with a proud history of providing high-quality, affordable theatre to a wide variety of audiences. Founded in 1969, Theatre of the Republic was designated the "Official Theatre of Horry County" by special state legislation in 1975. In 1999, TOR completely restored and moved into the Main Street Theatre. It is now an anchor of the historic district of Conway.



Theatre of the Republic  
Source: [www.theatreoftherepublic.com/](http://www.theatreoftherepublic.com/)

**The Long Bay Symphony** offers diverse and comprehensive programming to the eastern Carolinas region through various entertainment and education opportunities. The Symphony and its education programs serve a diverse audience including minority populations and the disabled.

There are many private groups that promote the arts within Horry County. Among these are the Waccamaw Arts & Crafts Guild, The Round-Table Art Group, Palmetto Studios Arts Alliance, Myrtle Beach Cultural Arts Advisory Committee, CREATE! Conway, and The Conway Cultural Development Corporation. Many local schools also participate in performing and visual arts programs.



The Long Bay Symphony  
Source: Unknown

There are numerous additional venues with music and theater related events including:

- House of Blues
- Legends in Concert
- Carolina Opry
- Alabama Theater
- Medieval Times
- Pirates Voyage
- Crocodile Rocks Dueling Pianos
- Carolina Improv
- GTS Theatre

## ARTS CULTURE EVENTS

Some of the most popular arts culture events revolve around music. **The Carolina County Music Fest** is a three day long annual event that features some of the most popular County Music stars and attracts thousands of tourists each year. **The South Carolina State Bluegrass Festival** takes place in November annually at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center and highlights the top names in Bluegrass music.



Carolina County Music Fest  
Source: <https://carolinacountrymusicfest.com/galleries/photos/ccmf-2017-friday/>

Many other art culture events revolve around visual arts such as **The Annual Art in the Park** which is a multi-week event, typically held in October, featuring photographs, paintings, jewelry, ceramics, and other pieces of fine art at Chapin Park in downtown Myrtle Beach.



The Annual Art in the Park  
Source: <https://allevents.in/myrtle%20beach/5th-annual-art-in-common-spring-festival/1882963175350283>





Perhaps the most popular arts culture events revolve around the Culinary Arts. **Rivertown Wine Around** and the **Conway Chocolate Walk** are two such events which feature local vendors serving rich delicacies and beverages to residents and tourists alike.



Charlie's Place  
Source: <http://myrtlebeachjazzfest.com/portfolio/>

**Crossroads Event Productions / The Myrtle Beach Jazz Festival** is considered a top priority event to help preserve the history of Carver Street. Influential R&B and jazz icons such as Little Richard, Otis Redding, Billie Holiday and Ray Charles have performed there. The man responsible for bringing these artists to Carver St. was legendary Black club owner, Charlie Fitzgerald (second from the right, in the photo). Mr. Fitzgerald owned and operated Charlie's Place, a supper club, that was a staple on Carver St. in the 1930s, '40s and '50s on the "Chitlin Circuit". The "Chitlin Circuit" was a string of performance venues that were deemed safe for Blacks, especially in the south, to perform during segregation.

ARTS CULTURE FINDINGS

Creating opportunities for local artists by promoting art in public places and hosting art culture events, such as film festivals, music and dance events, and culinary arts festivals, will further strengthen Horry County's art culture identity. Not only will this strengthen openness and acceptance of diversity within the County, it will help provide a deeper understanding, tolerance and respect for diversity and can also serve as a grounding force in community identity. Creating arts districts in neighborhoods with large anchoring venues or a group of smaller complementary arts or entertainment facilities could generate spin-off activities, such as guided tours, restaurants and gift shops - all of which are popular economic drivers in Horry County's tourism industry. This could also help bring about revitalization, enhanced sense of place, and identity in these areas.

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
Conway Chocolate Walk	Conway	February
Arts in the Park	Myrtle Beach	April- October
Myrtle Beach Jazz Festival	Myrtle Beach	September
S.C. State Bluegrass Festival	Myrtle Beach	October
Waccamaw Arts and Craft Guild Art Show	Myrtle Beach	May & October
Music on Main	North Myrtle Beach	May- September
Bluegrass on the Waccamaw	Conway	May
Rivertown Music & Craft Beer Festival	Conway	May
Rivertown Wine Around	Conway	June
Carolina County Music Fest	Myrtle Beach	June
Rivertown Dine Around	Conway	September
Live Oak Art Festival	Conway	October
Broadway's Annual Arts and Fall Festival	Myrtle Beach	October
Taste of the Town	Myrtle Beach	October
Wine Festival	Myrtle Beach	October
Carolina Beach Music Awards	Myrtle Beach	November
South Carolina State Blue-grass Festival	Myrtle Beach	November



## FAITH-BASED CULTURE

Religious organizations have a long history in Horry County. With approximately 400 **churches** representing a variety of denominations as well as multiple **synagogues**, **temples** and **mosques**, community faith-based cultures add to the quality of life in Horry County. Church life in the County is not limited to Sunday morning worship services. A variety of church related activities take place during the week and over the summer while children are out of school as well. Recreational outings for youth groups and adults are common in Horry County churches and help to unite both the congregation and the community. Several churches also offer nursery, Parents Morning Off, day-care, and educational programs.

Local cemeteries have also helped to record the history, religion and culture of the County. With approximately 350 cemeteries listed in Horry County's Historical database, many contain burial sites hundreds of years old. Although not a complete list because it is an ongoing project, the cemeteries are listed along with locations and graves on Horry County's webpage.



High Hill Baptist Church  
Source: Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation

## FAITH-BASED CULTURE EVENTS

Many faith-based cultural programs encourage a "culture of giving" asking members to give both their time and money to help special populations within the community. **Beach Church** located just outside of Myrtle Beach carries on a monthly program called **Beach Buddies Parent's Night Out** which serves families of children with special needs. Church volunteers plan and organize an evening of special activities centered around a theme for children with special needs while their parents spend the evening out.

Similarly, **Christ United Methodist Church** holds a **Homeless Outreach** once monthly. This outreach program provides lunch and necessity items such as hygiene bags, blankets, clothing, shoes, and grocery items to upwards of 50-100 homeless. Other churches participate in similar activities monthly.

Many local stay-at-home-moms find a sense of community via **Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)** programs in Myrtle and North Myrtle Beach which are sponsored by area churches. MOPS is an international program which facilitates meetings for mothers of children of kindergarten age and younger. Many churches also hold fall pumpkin festivals, along with Christmas and Easter events. There are also a variety of other holiday events including: Valentines Day, Saint Patrick's Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and New Years.

## FAITH-BASED CULTURE FINDINGS

Horry County's 2017 National Community Survey found that 60% of Horry County residents participate in religious or spiritual activities. This is a higher percentage than the national average. Similarly, 71% of respondents reflected positively on the opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities (National Citizens Survey, 2017).

Looking into the future, Horry County can utilize the participation of its citizens in religious and spiritual events and activities to engage residents in other events and cultural experiences.

Festival/ Event	Location	Time of Year
Gathering of the Green	Conway	March
St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival	Myrtle Beach	March
Cleanup Before the Palms	North Myrtle Beach	Before Easter
McLean Park Easter Egg Hunt	North Myrtle Beach	Easter
Easter Egg Hunt & Children's Festival	Surfside Beach	Easter
Gospel Festival	North Myrtle Beach	October
Myrtle Beach Greek Festival	Myrtle Beach	September
St. Nicholas BBQ Fest	Conway	October
Oktoberfest	Myrtle Beach	October
Dickens Christmas Show and Festival	Myrtle Beach	November
The Snowball Drop	Conway	November
Holiday Open House	Conway	November
Broadway's Tree Lighting and Parade	Myrtle Beach	December
Intracoastal Christmas Regatta	Myrtle Beach	December
Surfside Beach Tree Lighting and Parade	Surfside	December
Rivertown Christmas	Conway	December
North Myrtle Beach Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting	North Myrtle Beach	December
Light up the Night	North Myrtle Beach	December
Ripley's Festival of Trees	Myrtle Beach	December
The Great Christmas Light Show	North Myrtle Beach	December
Holidays on the Boardwalk	Myrtle Beach	December





### CONCLUSIONS

Cultural heritage can provide an automatic sense of unity and belonging within a group. It allows us to better understand previous generations and the history of where we come from. Culture can be exemplified in a place where people experience some aspect of life, whether it is enjoying a play or musical event, taking in a game of golf or visiting a museum. Several of the cultural facilities in our County are tied to history, embedding further the desire the community has to preserve our heritage. Horry County contains a wide variety of facilities that encourage cultural participation, but improvements can and should be made.

Managing cultural resources means preserving the local history and heritage, public art, music, and physical spaces devoted to cultural activities. This includes churches, museums, libraries and art galleries. The Knight Foundation published a study, *Soul of the Community*, in 2010 identifying the key elements that create community attachment in the larger area around Myrtle Beach. It found that social offerings were a key driver in community attachment. The study concluded that this attachment through a unique **sense of place** could be strengthened by enhanced aesthetics, improved offering of cultural learning events, and festivals that would encourage a greater feeling of community openness to diversity.

While some areas of Horry County have a strong sense of place due to their historic significance, many communities lack a significant and unique sense of place. Strengthening the sense of place in communities by creating unique characteristics and significance will aide the County in attracting and retaining transplanted residents.

Both the Burgess and Carolina Forest communities have identified that residents want a **distinct identity**. Some of this

identity can be achieved via more community beautification and branding, developing and amending regulations to enhance district community, the creation of community or area plans that encourage the preservation of community identity, and the enhanced education of residents about the County's unique history and communities.

As the population continues to grow sustaining and improving the functions provided by the various cultural facilities and organizations will be important. Promoting the diversity of character and working to enhance the uniqueness of each community is vital. Increasing participation in existing events, creating additional cultural offerings, and expanding historic preservation will further tie residents to their communities.

Looking into the future, Horry County can enhance cultural offerings by better advertising events. This can be achieved via social media, public broadcast, utilization of news media, and continued persistence. Planning for the future of cultural resources is critical because preserving the individual character and significance of each of these places and practices contributes to the overall community essence of the County.



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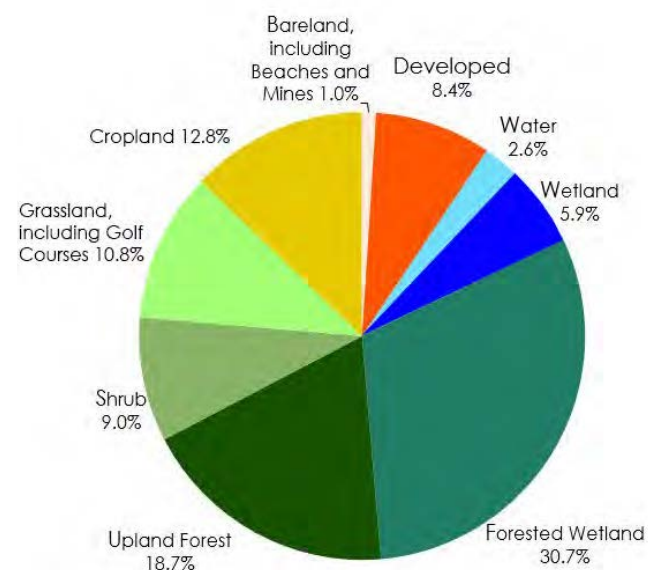
# CHAPTER 4: NATURAL RESOURCES



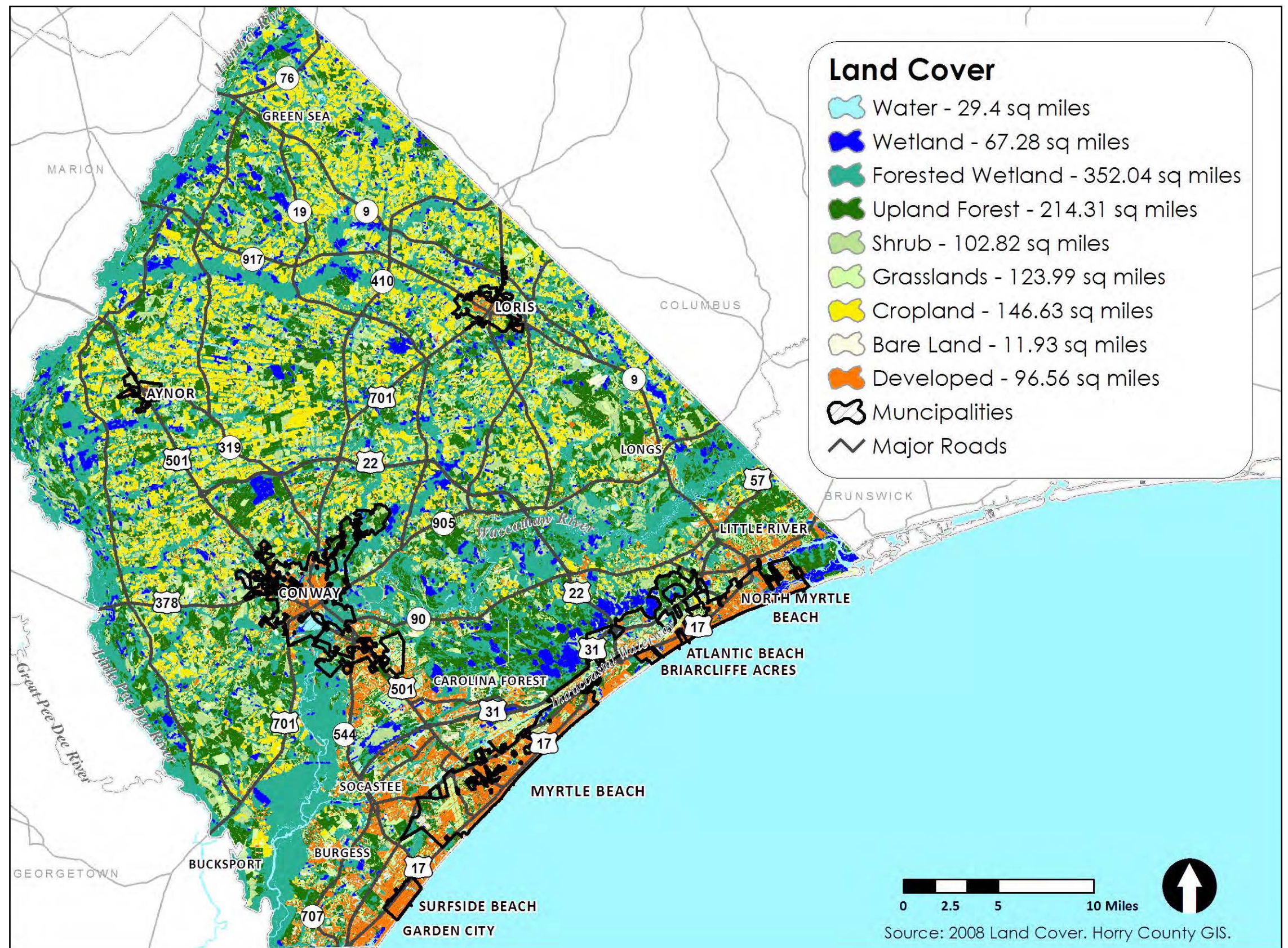
## INTRODUCTION

While Horry County is renowned for its beaches and golf resorts, the majority of the County is characterized by its blackwater rivers, wetlands, forestlands, and farmland. As more people continue to locate to and visit the Grand Strand, it will be more important than ever to ensure that development occurs in a manner that promotes a high quality of life while protecting and enhancing the unique resources. This chapter details the existing and changing conditions of the natural resources in the County.

Land Cover Distribution in Horry County



Source: Horry County GIS, LULC 2008





## ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The natural environment provides a variety of benefits for both wildlife and people. Because most of the benefits of a healthy environment carry no price tags and cannot be bought and sold, changes in their supply and capacity may or may not be readily apparent. As development and resource consumption continues to increase, it is essential for local and global ecosystem services to be identified and monitored and that their value be incorporated into decision-making processes.

The inherent benefits of natural resources include, but are not limited to:

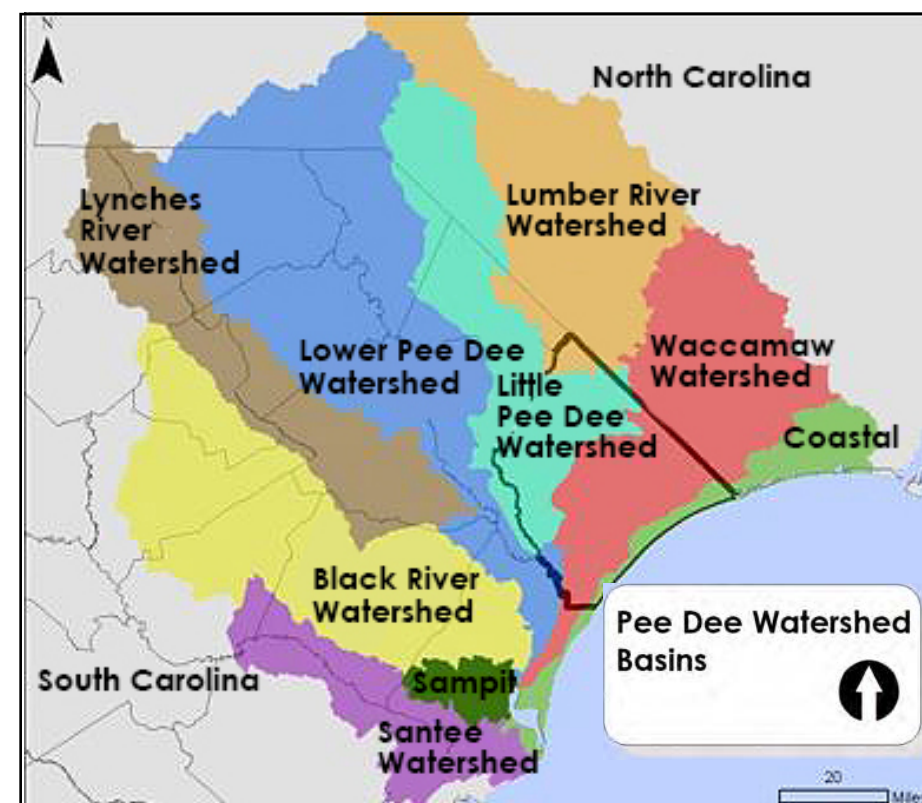
- Water quality protection and enhancement by moderating surface runoff, recharging groundwater supplies, and trapping and removing sediments, nutrients, and chemical pollutants.
- Flood hazard reduction by reducing the velocity of flowing water, absorbing and slowly releasing floodwaters, thereby lowering flood peaks.
- Climate stabilization and moderation of weather extremes, such as floods and drought.
- The regeneration of prime agricultural soils and pollination for the cultivation of crops, grazing of livestock, and harvesting of timber.
- Diverse fauna and landscapes that provide critical breeding, nesting, and feeding habitats for many species of mammals, waterfowl, reptiles, fish and shellfish species.
- Recreational opportunities for bird watchers, hunters, canoeists, anglers, and others.
- Purification of air through forested areas.
- Biological transformation through detoxification and decomposition of waste.

## WATER RESOURCES

Horry County has significant water resources including multiple watersheds, freshwater wetlands and Carolina Bays. The natural resources of Horry County are largely defined by its major waterways, their tributary creeks and expansive floodplains.

### WATERSHEDS AND WATERWAYS

Horry County lies within the Pee Dee River Basin, which incorporates 45 watersheds and some 5.5 million acres within the state of South Carolina (SCDHEC, Pee Dee, 2013). The watersheds in Horry County are dominated by the black waters of the Lumber, Little Pee Dee, Great Pee Dee and Waccamaw Rivers. These slow moving river systems flow through forested swamps where tannin rich, decaying vegetation stains the water dark brown.



Source: Waccamaw Watershed Academy, Coastal Carolina University

Horry County's rivers serve as scenic resources and are a draw for outdoor recreational enthusiasts. The upper reaches of the Waccamaw, Little Pee Dee, and Lumber Rivers are covered in vegetation and are often impassible by motorized boats. Their sandy banks are enjoyed by boaters and campers alike. Further downstream, the rivers widen and merge into one another, the sandy banks disappear, and the waters begin to fluctuate on a tidal cycle as they near Winyah Bay. Eventually, these dark waters disperse into the Atlantic Ocean and darken the waters along our coast.

Bull Creek, the Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers, and the Intracoastal Waterway are the primary sources of drinking water in Horry County, making water quality and protection of these rivers of utmost importance. Extensive development and often over-pumping of the Black Creek aquifer in the 1980s depressed water levels leading to declines of up to 10ft per year. Most utilities and municipalities in Horry County abandoned their water wells from aquifers in the Black Creek Formation and built surface-water facilities due to these declines. Since then, water suppliers in Horry County have relied more heavily on surface water, leading to a large recovery of aquifer levels. More information on water quality and water suppliers can be found in the Community Facilities Chapter.



Kayakers Enjoying the Waccamaw Blue Trail  
Source: <https://www.americanrivers.org/rivers/discover-your-river/blue-trails/>





### State and National River Recognition

In 1989, the South Carolina Rivers Act established the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program to protect the natural and cultural heritage of South Carolina's rivers. Natural and scenic rivers or river segments with "unique or outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic or cultural values" are selected to join this program. In 1990, fourteen miles of the Little Pee Dee River from Highway 378 to the confluence with the Great Pee Dee River was designated as a State Scenic River. In 2002, the governor signed a bill designating 70 miles of the Great Pee Dee as a Scenic River from the Highway 378 Bridge between Florence and Marion Counties to the Highway 17 Bridge at Winyah Bay. Landowners, community leaders, and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources staff are currently developing the Pee Dee Scenic River Management Plan to address key environmental concerns and management practices to implement on lands bordering these scenic rivers.

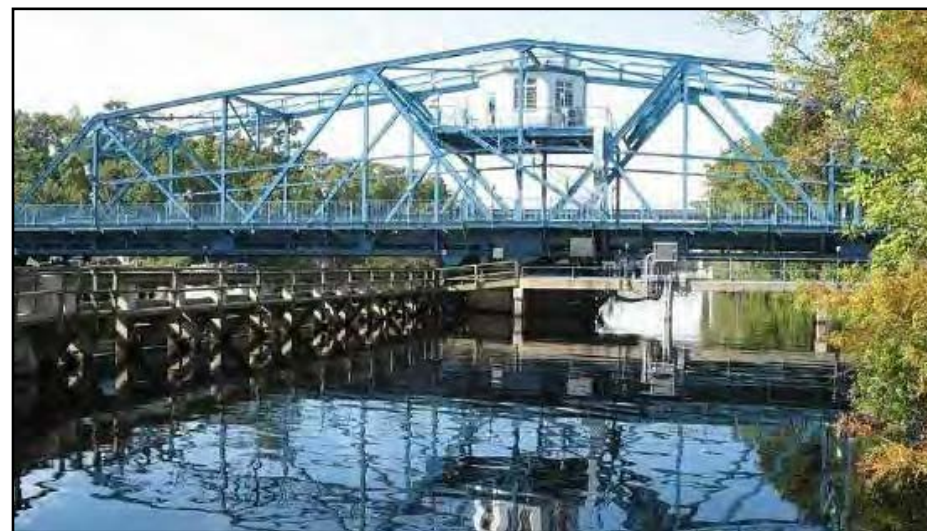
The Waccamaw River is another scenic waterway of historic and ecological importance. The Waccamaw extends 100 miles through the protected bottomland hardwood swamps of the Waccamaw Heritage Preserve and the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge. It also connects the City of Conway to the City of Georgetown. In 2009, it was designated as a National Water Trail by the National Parks Service because of its local and regional significance. The Waccamaw Blue Trail is drawing paddlers and wildlife enthusiasts to the area.

### Intracoastal Waterway

The Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) is a 3,000 mile inland waterway that runs parallel to the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Some sections of the waterway consist of natural inlets, saltwater rivers, bays and sounds, while others are artificial canals. While the Waccamaw River and Little River are natural por-

tions of the ICW, the majority of the ICW in Horry County was constructed by the Army Corps Of Engineers (ACOE) in 1936. Over time, the waterway has become a part of the natural scenery. While the ICW in Horry County is tidally influenced, salt water only influences its northern reach in Little River. The remaining portion of the ICW in the Grand Strand is freshwater until it reaches Winyah Bay in Georgetown County. The artificial portion of the waterway in Horry County mimics the blackwater rivers in the area.

Originally established to provide a safe transportation route and to protect commerce, the ICW now mainly serves as a route for transient boaters and other recreational users. Because the ICW is no longer primarily used for the transportation of goods, it is no longer regularly dredged to sustain its channel, potentially affecting its future navigability.



Socastee Swing Bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway  
Source: Wikipedia

### Fish Consumption Advisories

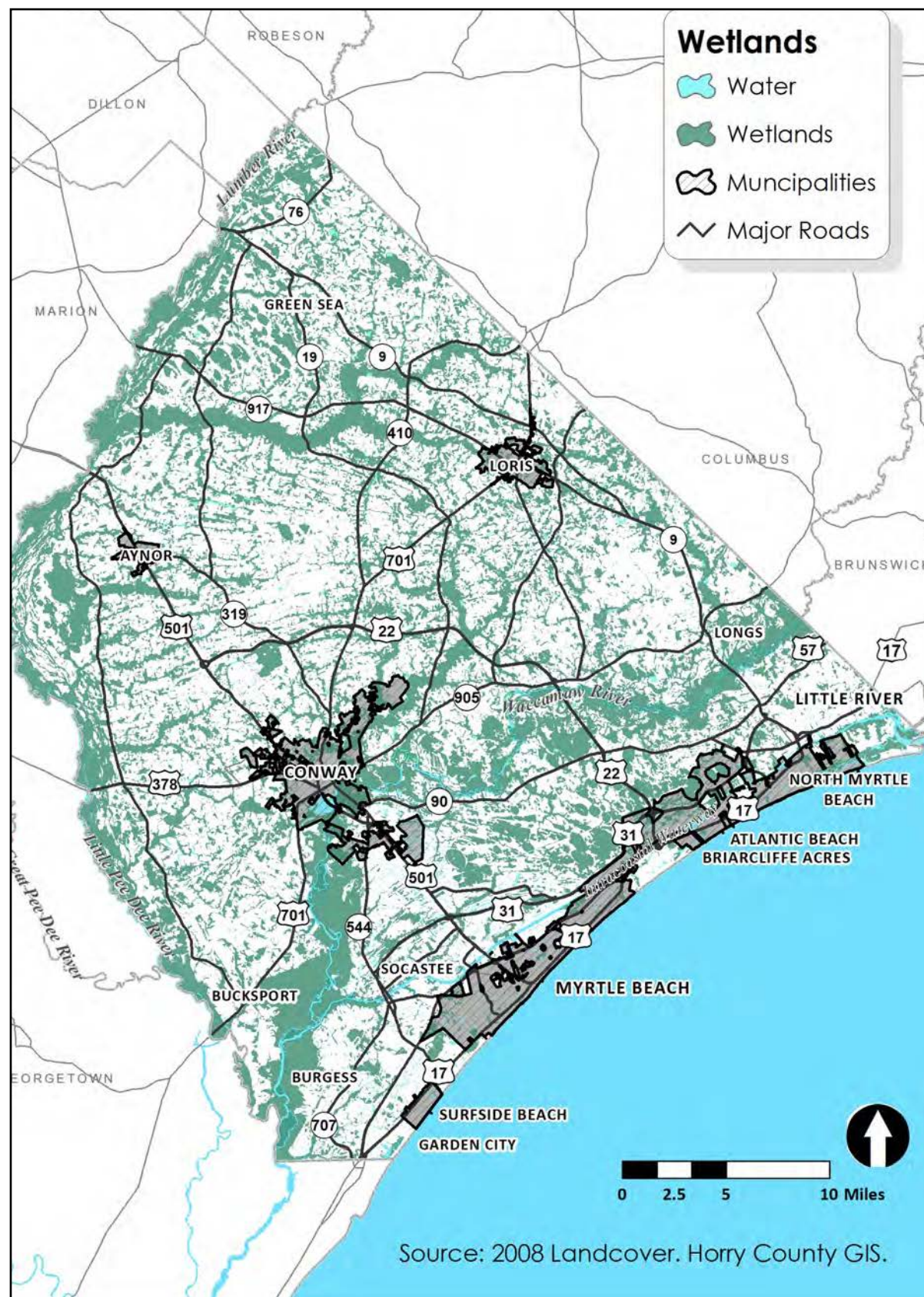
Blackwater rivers are known to have naturally occurring mercury, which can be toxic to people, wildlife and the environment. While naturally found in our air, water and soil, mercury is also released into the environment through numerous human activities from industrial sources that burn coal to improper disposal of mercury-containing products. These toxins build up in the tissue of many types of fish we consume. High levels of mercury can prompt fish consumption advisories. Advisories tell you when you should limit the amount and specific types of fish you eat. Besides mercury, other contaminants, like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and radioisotopes can also prompt an advisory. Fish Consumption Advisories (<https://www.scdhec.gov/library/ML-004042.pdf>) are issued by South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC).

### WETLANDS

Wetlands make up approximately 38% of Horry County, with the majority being freshwater (NOAA Horry County Snapshots, 2018). This represents a net decrease of roughly 5.3% since 1996. Wetlands are a pivotal part of the natural system, supplying tremendous benefits for coastal communities. Even small acreages provide some level of benefit. Wetlands are defined as areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (ACOE, 1987). Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, bottomland forests, Carolina Bays, pine savannahs, and even some ditches.

Wetlands are federally protected by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which protects wetlands from being ditched, diked, filled, polluted, or altered in any other way without a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Silviculture prac-





tices and isolated wetlands are typically exempt from these federal requirements. South Carolina's Pollution Control Act serves as a mechanism to protect isolated wetlands that are not within the Army Corps' jurisdiction. DHEC is the regulatory agency responsible for implementing this act. In addition, they are responsible for regulating wetlands in the coastal zone. Local governments also have the authority to establish regulations that exceed state and federal standards. Horry County requires a wetland delineation letter from the ACOE and protection during construction. Despite growing efforts to preserve wetlands, they continue to be lost at a rapid rate, both from direct conversion and degradation.

## Carolina Bays

Carolina Bays are elliptical-shaped, freshwater wetlands that are only found in the coastal plain of the eastern United States. They are oriented in a northwest-southeast direction, and their origin remains unknown. The Carolina Bay is sometimes called 'pocosin' which is the Indian word for "swamp on a hill." Many have raised sand rims and their interiors are rich with peat. The plants and animals that live in or around these wetlands are dependent upon their seasonal fluctuation in water levels. Many are also reliant upon fire for increased productivity.

Bays can range in size from less than one acre to more than 1,000 acres. According to a SCDNR report, Horry County has 410 Carolina Bays over 2 acres, which is more than any other county in the state (Bennett & Nelson, 1991). Unlike bays found in other counties, those in Horry County are typically small and often overlap one another. The Waccamaw River happens to be the only river in the world to originate and be fed by a Carolina Bay.

Carolina Bays have been heavily impacted by ditching, draining, or ponding for agricultural uses. Activities along the perimeter of these Bays, such as development and sand mining, can have an indirect impact on the biodiversity of these wetlands. Many animals, especially reptiles, are dependent upon these adjacent uplands for a portion of their lives, but these outer rims are not protected by federal and state wetland regulations. Because Carolina Bays are considered a threatened ecosystem, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) has incorporated Lewis Ocean Bay and Cartwheel Bay into their Heritage Preserve Program.



Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve  
Source: Horry County Aerial 2017 Imagery





## BEACHES AND MARSHES

The beach and coastal waters are perhaps the most recognizable and popular of all the natural resources in Horry County. There are over 30 miles of sandy beaches and approximately 2,000 acres of salt marsh in Horry County. It is known as the Grand Strand because it makes up the longest continuous beachfront in South Carolina. Unlike other coastal areas in the state, Horry County's beachfront is joined to the mainland and lacks barrier islands. The beachfront is only periodically interrupted by swashes, which are relic tidal inlets that have enclosed over time, both naturally and because of development. Saltwater estuaries are present only along the most northern and southern coast. Sections of the beachfront offer distinctive and varying atmospheres depending on the type and amount of development. Our beaches and marshes not only support wildlife habitat and recreation, they also serve as the primary draw for tourists and the influx of people moving to the area.

The South Carolina Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) is responsible for the protection and permitting of activities in the Critical Areas of South Carolina's coast, including tidelands, beaches, and dunes. At the local level, Horry County and the municipalities within it, are responsible for providing public access to these coastal re-



Singleton Swash from Sand Dune Club  
Source: CCU, Center for Marine and Wetland Studies

sources and for the development that occurs in these areas. Maintaining these critical resources is part of a cooperative effort between local governments and state and federal agencies.

### Beach Management

The beaches in Horry County experience both erosion and accretion, which is often dependent upon seasonal weather patterns and the impacts of coastal storms. OCRM establishes and periodically reviews the regulatory beachfront baseline and setback construction lines. These lines delineate the extent of OCRM's direct permitting authority for activities within the defined beach and dune critical areas. A critical component of these lines is to control future development and redevelopment within erosion prone areas of the beachfront, protect habitat, and maintain a healthy dune system. In many areas of the Grand Strand, there are no dune systems, as many older resorts were built directly within the dune line or the beachfront and dune system has eroded over time. Protecting the beach and properties are of upmost importance to the economic vitality of the Grand Strand.

Renourishment is a soft stabilization measure to minimize the impact of erosion and maintain a healthy, wide beach and restore dune systems. Renourishment dredges sand onto the active beach from offshore sources. It is typically done every 7 to 9 years along the Grand Strand. In 2017, the Army Corps of Engineers' Reach 3 Project placed more than 900,000 cubic yards of sand from Myrtle Beach State Park to Garden City/Georgetown County (7.5 miles). The Reach 1 & 2 Projects renourished areas along North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach. SC renourishment projects from 1954 through 2017 have placed 48,846,625 cubic yards of sand along SC

beaches for a total expenditure of \$452,946,020. Some borrow pits for sand are no longer viable. As sand harvesting becomes scarcer, the price tag will continue to rise (Paul Gayes 2018). While renourishment maintains the recreational use of the beach, it also sustains the habitat that is necessary for wildlife, such as migratory birds and sea turtles. Preserving habitat, protecting property, and ensuring equitable public access are just a few of the challenges addressed within the Horry County Beachfront Management Plan, which is mandated by OCRM.

The most recent renourishment, with a planned completion in Spring 2019, is along a 1.1 mile section of Arcadian Shores beach just southeast of Shores Drive, starting just west of Singleton Swash and terminating at the Apache Campground Pier. The primary purpose of this project is storm damage reduction.

### Beach Access

There are over 350 public beach access sites along the Grand Strand, 22 of which are maintained and located within the 10 miles of beachfront in unincorporated Horry County. These access sites are critical to sustaining the local economy as they provide beach access for millions of beachgoers each year. Recent storms heavily damaged public access sites throughout the Grand Strand; however, repairs and improvements have been made to ensure safe passage to the beach. While high visitor use and intense development sustain our economy, constant beach activity and usage can impair the natural processes and accretion of sand along the beach.



## Swimming Advisories

Protecting water quality along Horry County's coast is essential to ensure that our waters are safe for recreation and the consumption of fish and shellfish. Since the beginning of the Beach Water Quality monitoring program in 1997, SCDHEC has routinely collected water samples at over 40 locations on Horry County's beaches, many of which are located near swashes. Sampling occurs at least once per week between May 1 and October 1. The samples are tested for enterococci, a fecal indicator bacteria. High enterococcus levels mean there is a greater chance of disease-causing organisms being present in the water, which triggers a swimming advisory for the portion of beach where the sample was taken.

Of the 42 beach monitoring sites in Horry County, 23 have permanent swimming advisory signs posted because of the frequency that the advisories are issued. An advisory means that DHEC advises you NOT to swim within 200 feet of where these signs are posted, especially after a heavy rainfall. Advisories do not mean that the beach is closed. Wading, fishing, and shell collecting do not typically pose a risk except after heavy rainfall events (SCDHEC, 2004). Horry County is the only coastal county in the state with permanent swimming advisories along its beaches. Information on beach swimming advisories can be found at: <https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/beachaccess/>.



Source: SCDHEC

In addition to DHEC beach monitoring, the County, in cooperation with municipalities and Coastal Carolina University's Environmental Quality Lab (CCU EQL), conduct additional beach monitoring. Monitoring at 2nd Ave, Apache, and Cherry Grove Fishing piers look for a combination of environmental conditions, including those that can contribute to fish kills as the result of low oxygen levels. More information on water quality monitoring can be found in the Community Facilities Chapter.

## Salt Marshes

Tidal marshes are highly productive components of the marine food web of coastal waters and estuaries. Many commercially and recreationally important fish and shellfish species depend on these estuaries for all or part of their life cycle for foraging, refuge, and breeding. Marshes also perform a valuable waste treatment function, as dense vegetation filters and traps sediments and pollutants that enter as stormwater run-off from the upland areas. In addition, marsh and dune systems protect adjacent highlands from erosion and storm damage by absorbing and dissipating wave energy.



Little River Marsh View

Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning Staff Picture

Salt marshes can only be found in Murrells Inlet behind Garden City Beach and in the Hog Inlet area on the northern end of the County near Cherry Grove and Little River. Degrading water quality challenges the marshes' ability to sustain consumable oysters, which could impact the local economy and deter the use of these recreational waters. SCDHEC's Shellfish Sanitation Program samples tidal creeks for fecal coliform bacteria to ensure that mollusk and shellfish, and areas from which they are harvested, meet the health and environmental quality standards provided by federal and state regulations for safe consumption. Shellfish harvesting is prohibited in Little River and is restricted near Waties Island, Cherry Grove, Garden City and in the swashes (SCDHEC, Shellfish, 2013). The Murrells Inlet Watershed and Hog Inlet Watershed Plans were recently developed to address water quality challenges in these estuaries.

Beyond water quality, globally increasing levels of carbon dioxide are likely to result in ocean acidification. One impact from acidification is weakened shells of oysters and other shellfish and crustaceans. This could transform entire marine ecosystems and the wildlife as well as people dependent upon shellfish for sustenance. While this is a global phenomenon, it has the potential to have local impacts.

## SURFACE WATER QUALITY

Horry County's waterways are impacted by both source and nonpoint source pollution. Source pollution includes pollution from wastewater facilities, which include discharges from industry, municipal storm sewer and waste water systems, and construction sites; however, the majority of the water quality challenges in the County stem from nonpoint sources (NPS). NPS water pollution generally comes from rain runoff that can transport sediments, pesticides and fertilizers from farms and lawns, motor oil and grease deposited on roads and

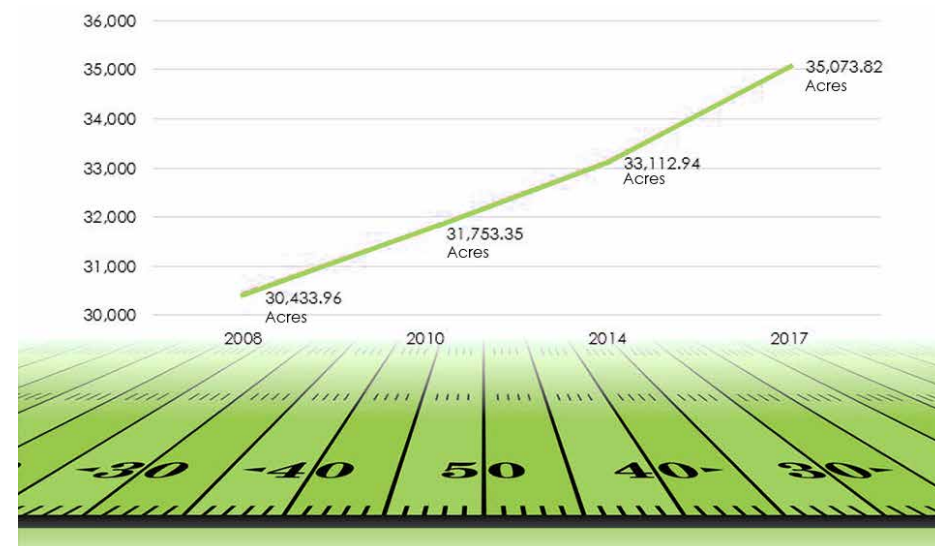




parking lots, or bacteria containing waste from agricultural animal facilities, wildlife, domestic pet waste, malfunctioning septic systems or sanitary sewer system overflows. The rain moves the pollutants across the land to the nearest water body or storm drain where they may impact the water quality in creeks, rivers, lakes, ponds, estuaries and wetlands. NPS pollution may also impact groundwater when it is allowed to seep into aquifers.

Poor water quality results in fish die-offs, interference with or elimination of recreational uses of a water body, closure of shellfish beds and fish consumption advisories, reduced water supply, or taste and odor problems in drinking water, potential human health problems due to contact with bacteria and chemicals in runoff, and increased potential for flooding from water bodies choked with sediment.

## Impervious Surface Analysis



Source: Horry County GIS 2018

Impervious surfaces, such as roads and rooftops, tend to adversely impact water quality, as they reduce the natural infiltration of rainwater runoff. Studies have shown that water quality typically begins to decline as impervious cover reaches 10% of a watershed. Once a watershed is more than 25%

impervious cover, it almost assuredly is degraded (Schueler, 1992 and Holland and Sanger, 2008). Horry County's growth is resulting in more impervious surfaces. Between 2014 and 2017 alone, Horry County's impervious surface increased by more than 1,960 acres, which is equivalent to 1,485 football fields. This means that of Horry County's 803,200 total acres, roughly 35,073.82 are impervious, translating to 4.37%. Beyond conversion of forestland into development, drought and heavy rainfall also impact water quality. When water flows have decreased from drought or upstream withdrawals, pollutants may become more concentrated on the landscape. During the next rainfall, this concentrated pollution is quickly transported off the land to the nearest water body.

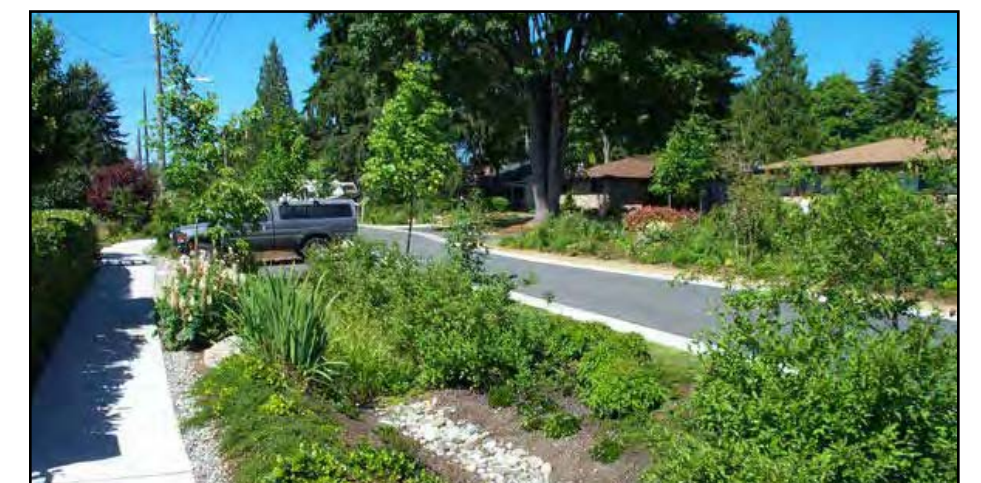
The Clean Water Act establishes the regulatory structure for managing direct point-source discharges and non-point sources of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The Clean Water Act also establishes a framework for several non-regulatory tools to help address water quality concerns at all regulatory levels. The objective of this comprehensive legislation is to restore and maintain the overall quality of the nation's waters to ensure the "protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation in and on the water." At the state level, SCDHEC has established water classifications based upon use and each classification has specific water quality standards that must be met in order to sustain that use. Water quality monitoring is done by SCDHEC on a variable basis depending upon the type of water use and necessary monitoring. High levels of fecal coliform bacteria, enterococcus, mercury, or dissolved oxygen are indicators of poor water quality. If waterbodies experience ongoing water quality problems, then SCDHEC and the local government will develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of pollutants for that water body and identify ways to improve it. An up-to-date list of impaired waterbodies can be found

at: <http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/Water/ImpairedWaters/Overview/>. Horry County works in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, SCDHEC, and the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium to address water quality in our County.

## Low Impact Development

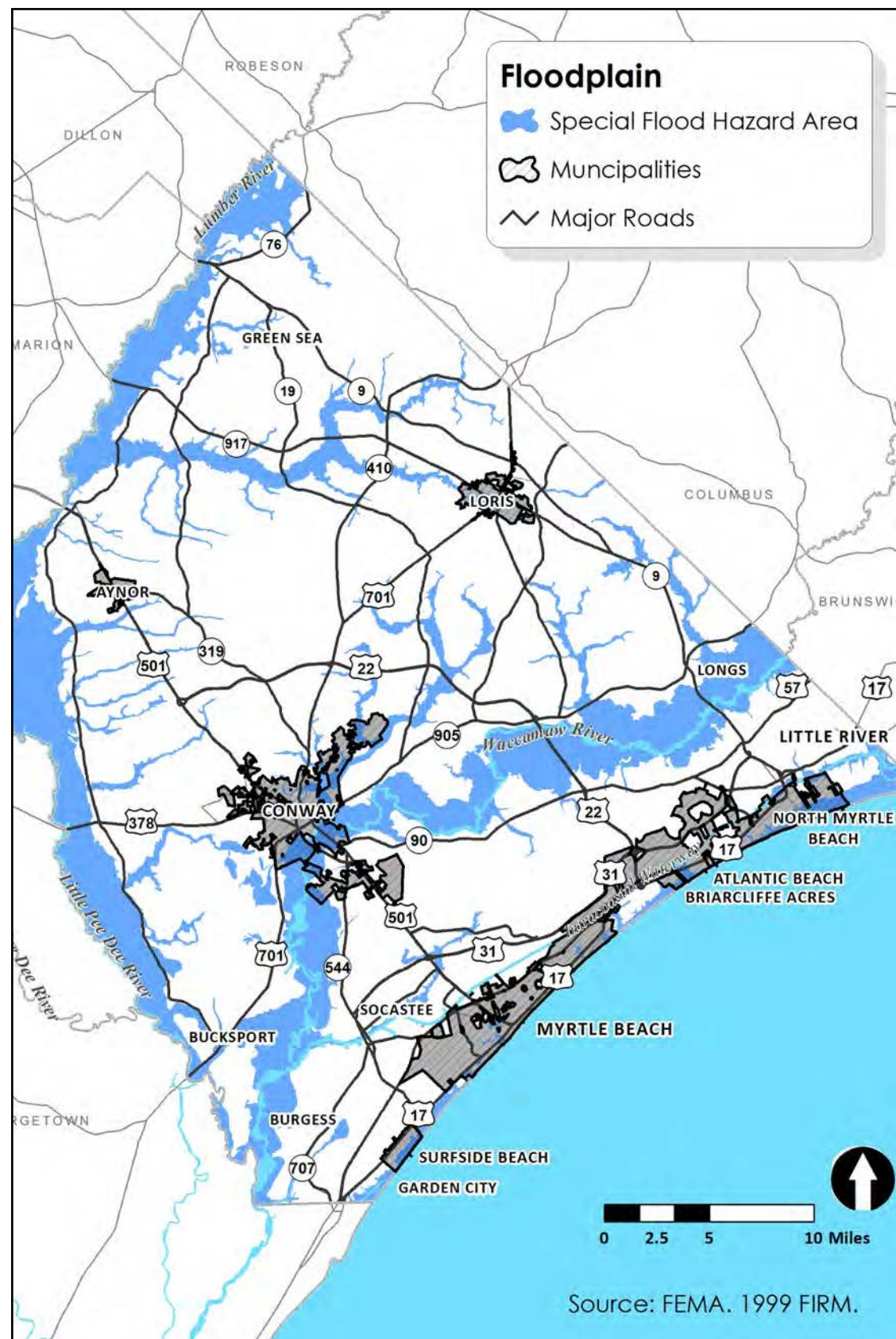
The term low impact development (LID) refers to systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat. At both the site and regional scale, LID practices aim to preserve, restore and create green space using soils, vegetation, and rainwater harvest techniques. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features, minimizing effective imperviousness to create functional and appealing site drainage that treat stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product.

There are many practices that have been used to adhere to these principles such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels and permeable pavements.



Bioswale, Green Stormwater Infrastructure  
Source: The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

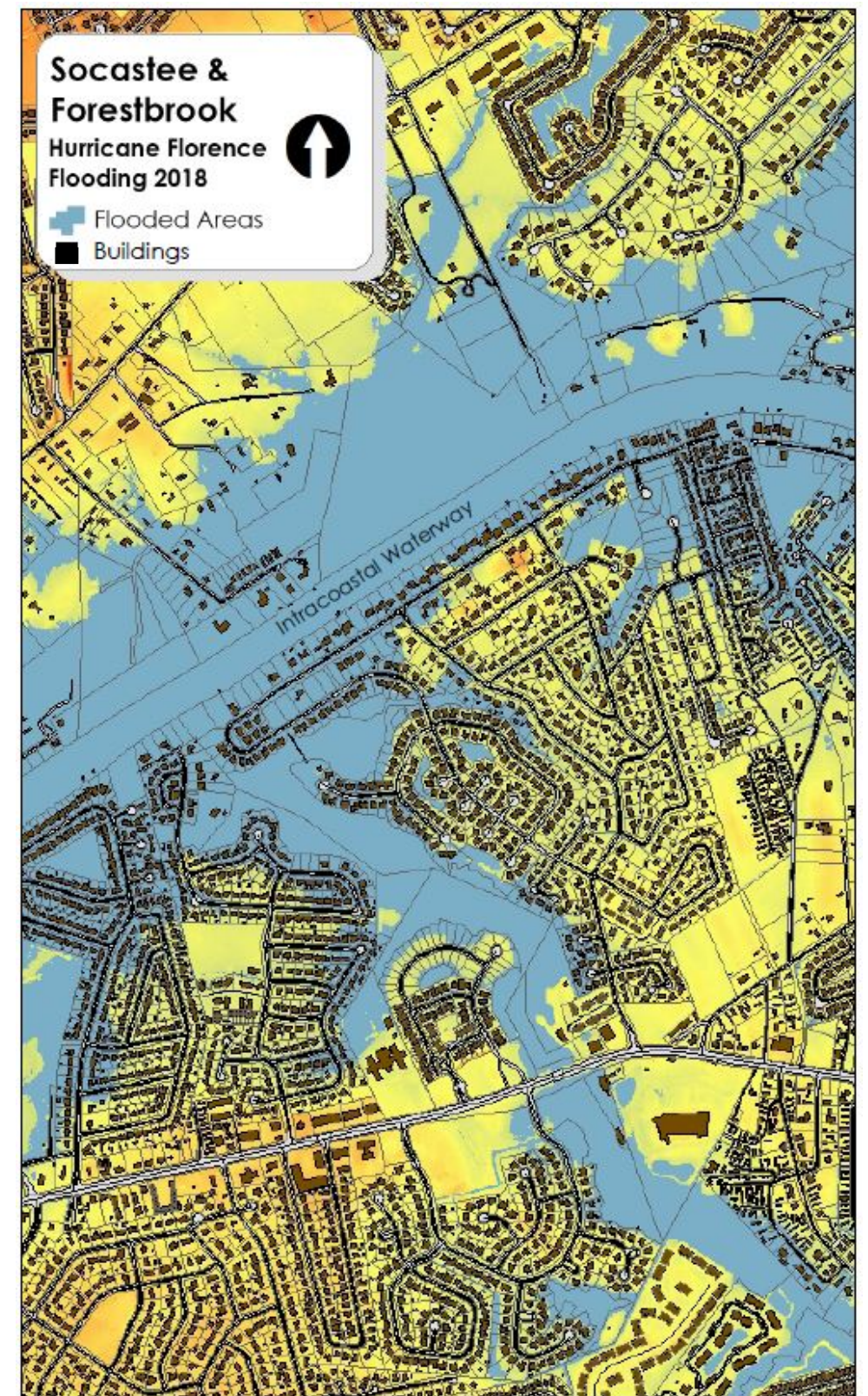




By implementing LID principles and practices, water can be managed in a way that reduces the impact of built areas and promotes the natural movement of water within an ecosystem or watershed. Applied on a broad scale, LID can maintain or restore a watershed's hydrologic and ecological functions (Urban Runoff, 2017).

## FLOODPLAIN

Approximately 24% of Horry County's total land area lies within the 100-year floodplain and is vulnerable to flooding. The floodzone primarily lies along the Waccamaw, Little Pee Dee and Lumber Rivers, where the water levels fluctuate with seasonal rain patterns. Major rain events have caused the greatest amount of flood damage in Horry County, trumping the impact of most storms that have impacted the beach front. In 2015, Hurricane Joaquin caused extensive inland flood damage, as rainfall persisted for multiple days. A year later Hurricane Matthew also caused major flooding for the County, in many places setting new flood height records. Just two years later, the flooding following Hurricane Florence broke Hurricane Matthew's records by approximately 3-4 feet, depending on location, and flooded many homes and roads along the Little Pee Dee River, Waccamaw River, and along the Intracoastal Waterway. Some homes that experienced reoccurring flooding damage, otherwise known as repetitive losses properties, prior to hurricane Matthew, have been removed from these floodprone areas through funding assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Horry County.



Record Breaking Flooding Levels from Hurricane Florence 2018  
Source: Horry County Stormwater

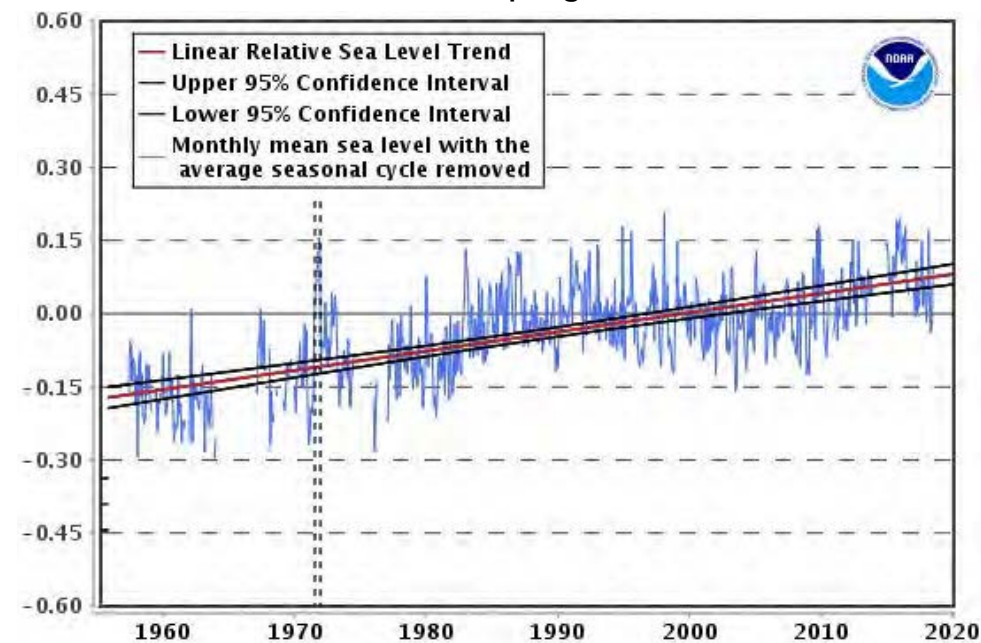




Horry County continues to actively pursue flood mitigation efforts throughout the County. One such way that Horry County is working to address this issue is through improvement of Community Rating System (CRS) scores. The CRS program is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimal National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) requirements. This program reduces the insurance premium rates for policy holders, enhances public safety, reduces damages to property and infrastructure, helps to avoid economic disruption and losses, and protects the environment.

Less than 1% of the County falls within the coastal high hazard area, which includes those areas that could be impacted by wave action in addition to flooding. While the beach front makes up very little of the County's floodplain, it constitutes a majority of the County's land values and tax base. Front row development along the unincorporated Horry County

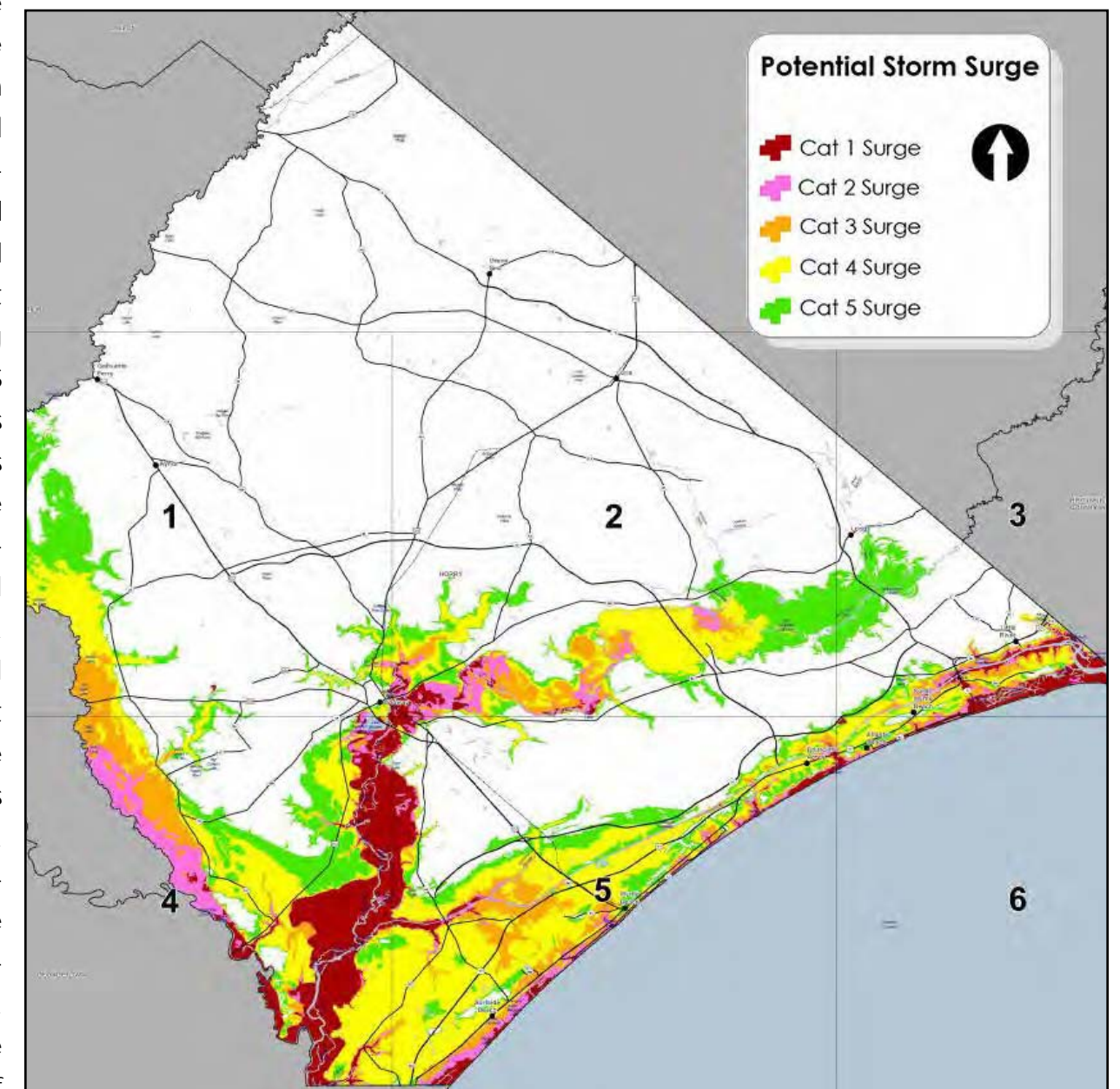
**Historic Relative Sea Level Rise at Springmaid Pier, 1957-2016**



Source: NOAA. Historic Relative Sea Level Trend, Springmaid Pier 1957 to 2016. <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/sltrends.html>

shoreline varies greatly in character and density. Of all the developed portions of the County's coastline, Garden City is most vulnerable to shallow coastal flooding and storm surge inundation. Its low-lying topography, lack of established dune systems, and the fact that it is affected by tidal action on both the beach front and the marsh front make it especially susceptible to flooding. This is particularly true in the one mile reach north of Atlantic Avenue. Structures in this area tend to be large, and many encroach onto the active beach. The Shore Drive area between the City of Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach also has large structures located seaward of the OCRM setback line; however, beach widths are greater there and erosion is not as rapid as it is in Garden City.

Other coastal areas of the County that are extremely susceptible to flood damage and are significant habitats have been restricted from the use of federal flood insurance and other federal financial assistance, as they are part of the Coastal Barrier Resource System (CBRS). A total of 2,520 acres of the Horry County coast have been protected by disincentivizing development. While areas within the CBRS can be developed by private developers and property owners, the property owners are responsible for bearing the brunt of the costs in the event of a flood. In Horry County, there are just a few areas included within the CBRS, including the Meher Baba Spiritual Center, the maritime forest and beach front of Briarcliffe Acres, the inlet at White Point Swash, and Waties Island. While Waties Island has been partly set aside as conserved land through Coastal Carolina University, a large portion of the island remains in private ownership and could be developed through private lenders. This island not only serves as an example of a pristine natural area, it also serves as the gateway to the South Carolina portion of the Intracoastal Waterway.



Source: Horry County Emergency Management



## Flood Resilience

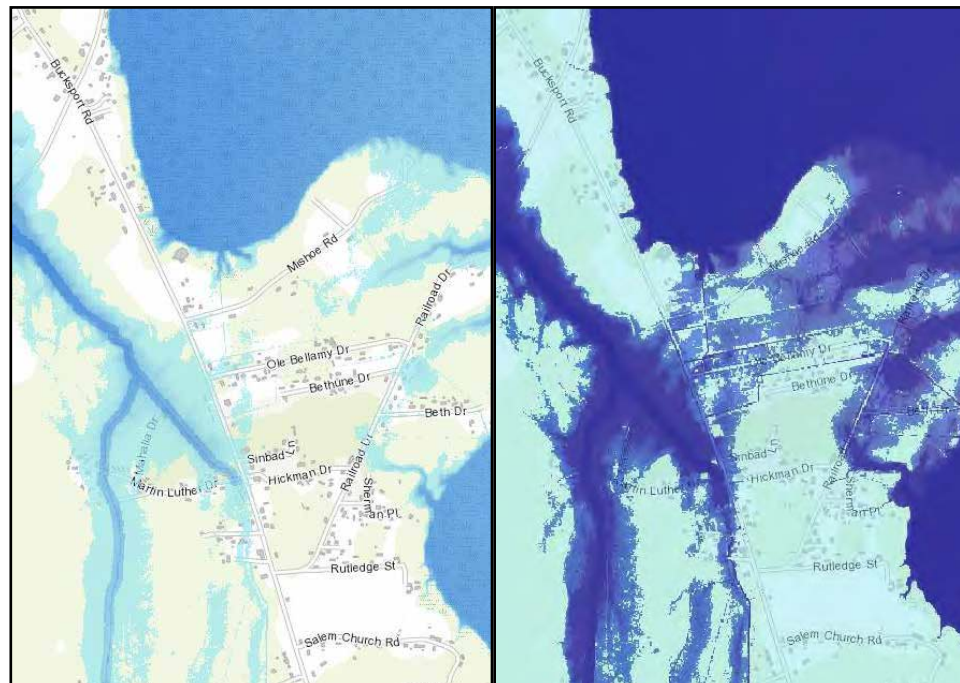
There are many low-lying areas in Horry County that are susceptible to flooding from storms and large rainfall events, but there are also areas that are impacted regularly by extreme high tides. The sea level along Horry County's coast has risen roughly 1.29 feet in the last century. While this equates to approximately 3.94 mm/year, these numbers are anticipated to increase due to global changes.

While there are varying estimates of how much sea levels will rise in the next 100 years, there is no doubt the rising trend will continue. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates a sea level rise of roughly 1 to 6 feet by 2100 for the Grand Strand (<http://coast.noaa.gov/slr>). A rise of 1 to 2 feet could have major impacts to coastal communities, especially those located along the marsh, like Garden City and Cherry Grove.

Consecutive record breaking flooding in 2015, 2016 and 2018 may illustrate results of climate change. In addition, increases in high tide flood events will become more frequent. Increased flooding and flood frequency from rainfall and tidal events, increased erosion, and the increase of runoff are just a few of the challenges that coastal and riverine communities will need to be prepared for. In light of these trends, measures should be taken to reduce vulnerability to flooding and support long-term recovery after a flood. One of the major components of flood resilience is discouraging development within the floodplain and along river corridors. By avoiding increasing the number of communities at risk, while still meeting housing, services, and facilities needs, the County can improve flooding resilience.

## North Coast Resilience Project

Horry County, Georgetown County, and the municipalities



2017 Hurricane Matthew Flooding and 2060 Predicted Flooding Risk of the Bucksport Community  
Source: The Nature Conservancy, Coastal Resilience Project.  
<http://maps.coastalresilience.org/southcarolina/#>



Flooding in Socastee following Hurricane Matthew in 2016  
Source: WPDE

within the Waccamaw Council of Governments have come together with The Nature Conservancy and numerous science and conservation partners to research opportunities to improve flood resilience in the region. Collectively referred to as the North Coast, these communities have witnessed flooding

impacts of recent storms. Participants in the North Coast Resilience project are working proactively to identify measures to reduce the threats and damages of future flood events and to identify, protect, and restore natural infrastructure in this area.

While Horry County may best be known for the beaches of the Grand Strand, the Waccamaw River has experienced extensive and persistent flooding in recent years. During storm events, local rivers and their tributaries swell over their banks, closing roads and flooding neighborhoods. The Nature Conservancy has modeled and mapped current and future flood risk to determine ideal locations to restore habitat and preserve the natural features of the floodplain to best reduce the County's vulnerability. The mapping incorporated information from local stream and tidal gauges, high water marks, deployed sensors, hindcasted water elevations, and post hurricane satellite imagery. The flood areas from recent storms were mapped, followed by mapping potential flood areas for the year 2035 and 2060. This information will be used by The Nature Conservancy and partners to implement restoration projects that will protect and improve the management of lower order streams connected to the Waccamaw River. It is being used by other conservation partners to prioritize land conservation efforts, especially along the Waccamaw River. Beyond this short-term project, the maps are available for planning and public education purposes.

## WATER RESOURCES FINDINGS

Conserving land in the floodplain is important both along the coast and along inland waterways. The protection and conservation of environmental and natural resources becomes increasingly important with growth pressures. Undeveloped, forested land provides an area to slow down and absorb floodwaters. Wetlands act as an essential natural water infil-





tration system. Dune systems and wetlands also serve as protection against floodwaters. By protecting these natural assets, Horry County can simultaneously protect its citizens, properties, and tax base. Without the preservation of such natural features catastrophic flooding could continue to worsen.

In addition to preserving these areas, Horry County Stormwater has updated its Stormwater Management Design Manual to include new technologies (i.e. LID practices), methodologies (i.e. Post-development volume control design) and the requirements of the latest versions of the SCDHEC Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit and the Construction General Permit. Continued support of the Crabtree Project, Murrells Inlet and Hog Inlet Projects, and the Stormwater Ocean Outfalls will help address both flooding and water-quality issues.

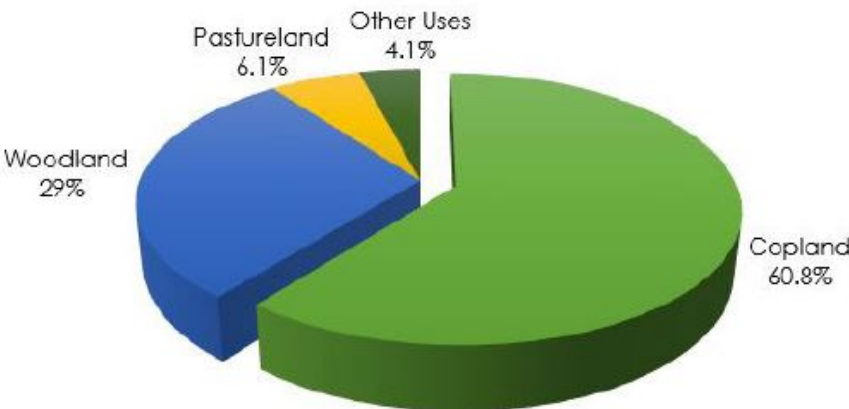
AGRICULTURE

Agricultural lands are a key component of Horry County’s landscape, history, and economy. Agricultural lands compromise about 22% of the land in the County.

In 2012, there were 938 farms, including lands for crops, pasture and grazing, and woodlands (USDA, 2012). Between 2002 and 2012, there was a 5% decrease in the number of farms in the County, along with a decrease in farm acreage and average farm size. While these numbers indicate little change in agriculture during the last decade, agricultural lands and the number of farms decreased from 2002-2007. This loss of farmland coincides with development increases in Horry County.

Since 2007, these numbers have nearly recovered and agricultural sales have seen a sharp incline. In 2012 alone, Horry County generated over \$101 million crop and livestock sales. Despite the loss of farmland, agriculture continues to have a strong impact on our local economy. More information on the economic impact

Lands in Farms by Type of Land

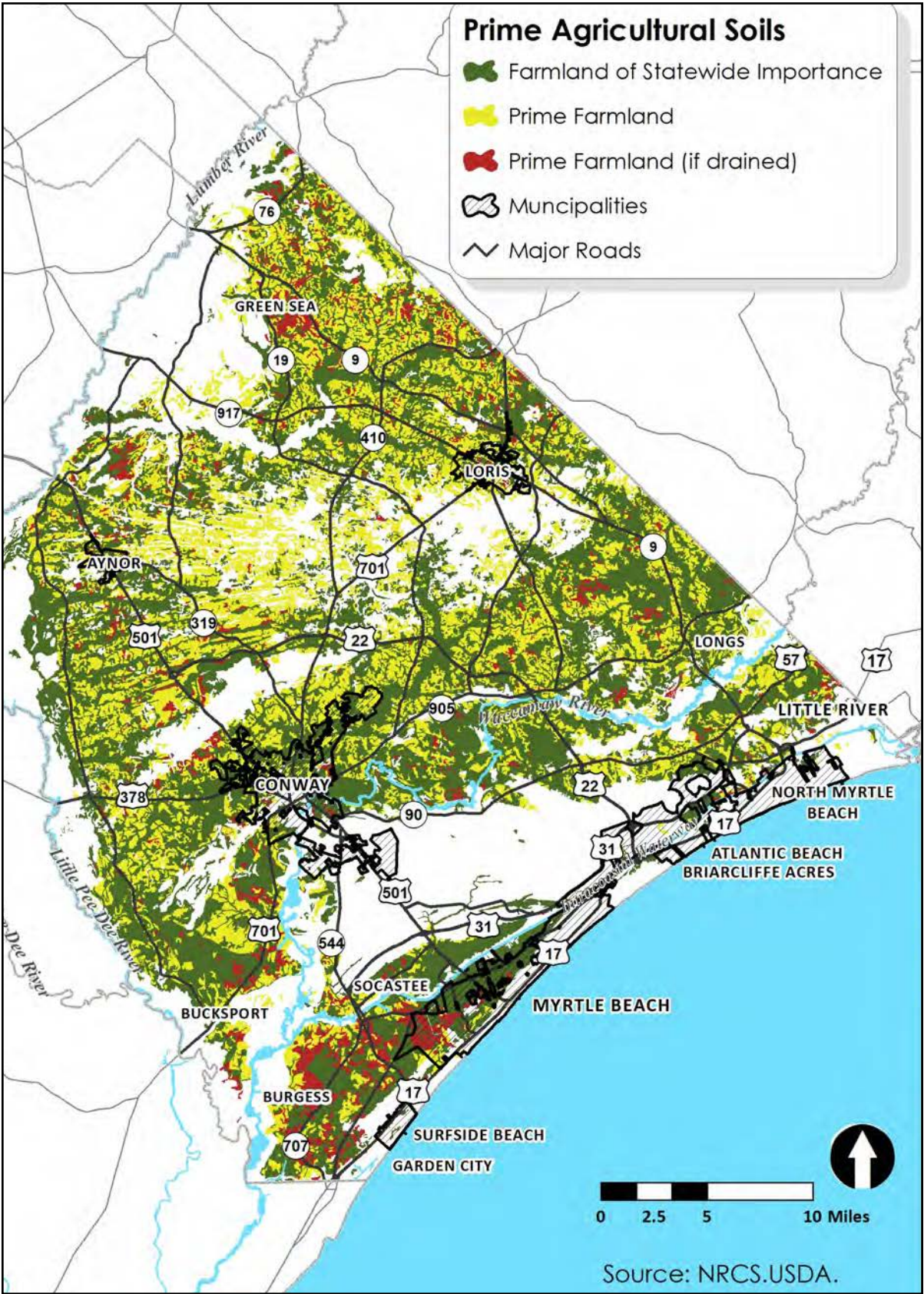


Source:USDA, 2012

Farmland Trends in Horry County

	2002	2007	2012
Number of Farms	988	914	938
Acres in Farms	188,311	163,622	177,569
Average Farm Size	191	179	189

Source: USDA, 2012





of agriculture can be found in the Economic Development Chapter of this plan.

### **CROPLAND**

Prime agricultural soils are abundant throughout Horry County, covering over 60% of the County's total land area. While much of the County is viable for crop production, only 12.8% is currently in use. These croplands account for two-thirds of all agricultural revenue in Horry County. Until recently, tobacco served as the largest revenue generating crop. While Horry County remains the number one producer of tobacco in the state (USDA, 2012), many farmers are diversifying or transitioning into growing other crops, such as peanuts or sweet potatoes (Hughes, 2013). The most abundantly grown crops in Horry County today include soybeans, corn, wheat, and peanuts (USDA, 2012). Cotton production and yield also increased markedly from 2007 to 2012 (USDA, 2012).

Horry County lags behind the state and region in fruit, vegetables, melons, berries, and nuts. However, given the increase in the number of area farmers markets, the local food movement occurring nationwide, and the decrease in farm sizes, fruit and vegetable farming could be an opportunity to expand market share (Hughes, 2013).

### **Poultry and Livestock**

Poultry and livestock generated over \$21 million in sales in 2012. Despite the fact that sales revenues have remained relatively the same since 2007, poultry and livestock inventories continue to decrease in Horry County. From 2007 to 2012, the sale of poultry and eggs decreased from nearly \$11 million to \$5.5 million and the inventory of broilers decreased by more than 360,000. During this same timeframe, the number of hogs decreased from 42,000 to 34,000, but sales increased over \$3 million, exceeding \$12 million in 2012. Horry

County continues to serve as the number two producer of hogs in the state (USDA, 2012). The County likely has a larger concentration of hogs and pigs than other South Carolina counties because of access to swine slaughtering facilities in southeastern North Carolina (Hughes, 2013). Other livestock revenue is derived from the sale of cattle, horses, and goats (USDA, 2012). The number and sale of horses and ponies has slightly increased since 2007. Because Horry County is such a large tourist destination and there is no other type of facility in the region, the County would be a prime location for a livestock and equestrian arena. Such a facility could help foster this agricultural sector.

### **FARMLAND PRESERVATION**

Often, lands that are most at risk for development are farmlands and timberlands. As farmers age and farming becomes less economically viable for them, many are opting to sell their land for development rather than continuing to farm. When this happens, benefits such as flood control, groundwater recharge and wildlife habitat are replaced by the social costs of infrastructure. In 2011, Horry County developed the Highway 319 Area Plan to protect the rural and agricultural heritage of the corridor between Conway and Aynor. Rural communities throughout the County are being encroached upon by new development, potentially threatening the agricultural heritage of the County. Targeted agricultural preservation is one means to minimize the subdivision and sale of farmland for large scale, residential development.

Farmers can participate in several state and federal programs that can help protect the cultural heritage and ecological benefits derived from farming. One such program is the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, which is managed by the USDA. Through this program and upon the request of the property owner, the USDA can purchase con-

servation easements on productive farm and ranch land. Farmers receive financial assistance in exchange for preserving their farmland and protecting the habitat, wetlands and streams on their property. In exchange for utilizing best management practices, farmers can improve their economic situation and simultaneously protect the environment. In Horry County, the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program has eight properties enrolled, permanently conserving over 825 acres of land (SC Conservation Bank, 2014). The Pee Dee Land Trust also supports agricultural preservation in the Pee Dee region, and has preserved two tracts in Horry County, totaling 306 acres (PDLT, 2014).

Beyond land conservation, the South Carolina Code of Laws Title 46- Agriculture, Chapter 45, also known as the "Right to Farm Act" issues specific directives to conserve, promote, and encourage the development and improvement of its agricultural operations. The act keeps active farms from being deemed a nuisance and being shut down. It is enacted to reduce the loss to the state of its agricultural resources by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural facilities and operations may be considered a nuisance. It only provides protections for commercial agricultural facilities, not personal use agriculture. Horry County's code relating to chickens, bees and other typically agricultural in nature animals can be found in Chapter 4; Animals and Fowl of the Code of Ordinances of Horry County.

### **AGRICULTURE FINDINGS**

Protecting farmland carries with it the safeguarding of our agriculture heritage, economic resources and numerous ecological benefits. The rural areas of Horry County are particularly vulnerable to development. Farmers need ways in which to be able to keep their farms amid the growing pressures for development. Through concentrating development





in the urban and suburban areas of the County where public facilities and infrastructure exist and encouraging low density development in rural communities, the County can help preserve rural character. Supporting local agricultural and timber operations through tax relief initiatives to owners who keep their property in agricultural or timber production can also help promote rural preservation. Horry County approved an Agritourism permit in 2016 and encourages eligible farmers to become Century Farms. For more information on these projects, see the *Horry County Historic Preservation Plan*.

Participants in the IMAGINE 2040 Public Input Survey who lived in Aynor, Loris, Longs, and the Green Sea Floyds area indicated a high desire to maintain the agricultural open spaces in their communities. Participants county-wide indicated a high preference for increased farm stand opportunities. Please see the Land Use Chapter for a more detailed analysis of farmland and rural preservation.

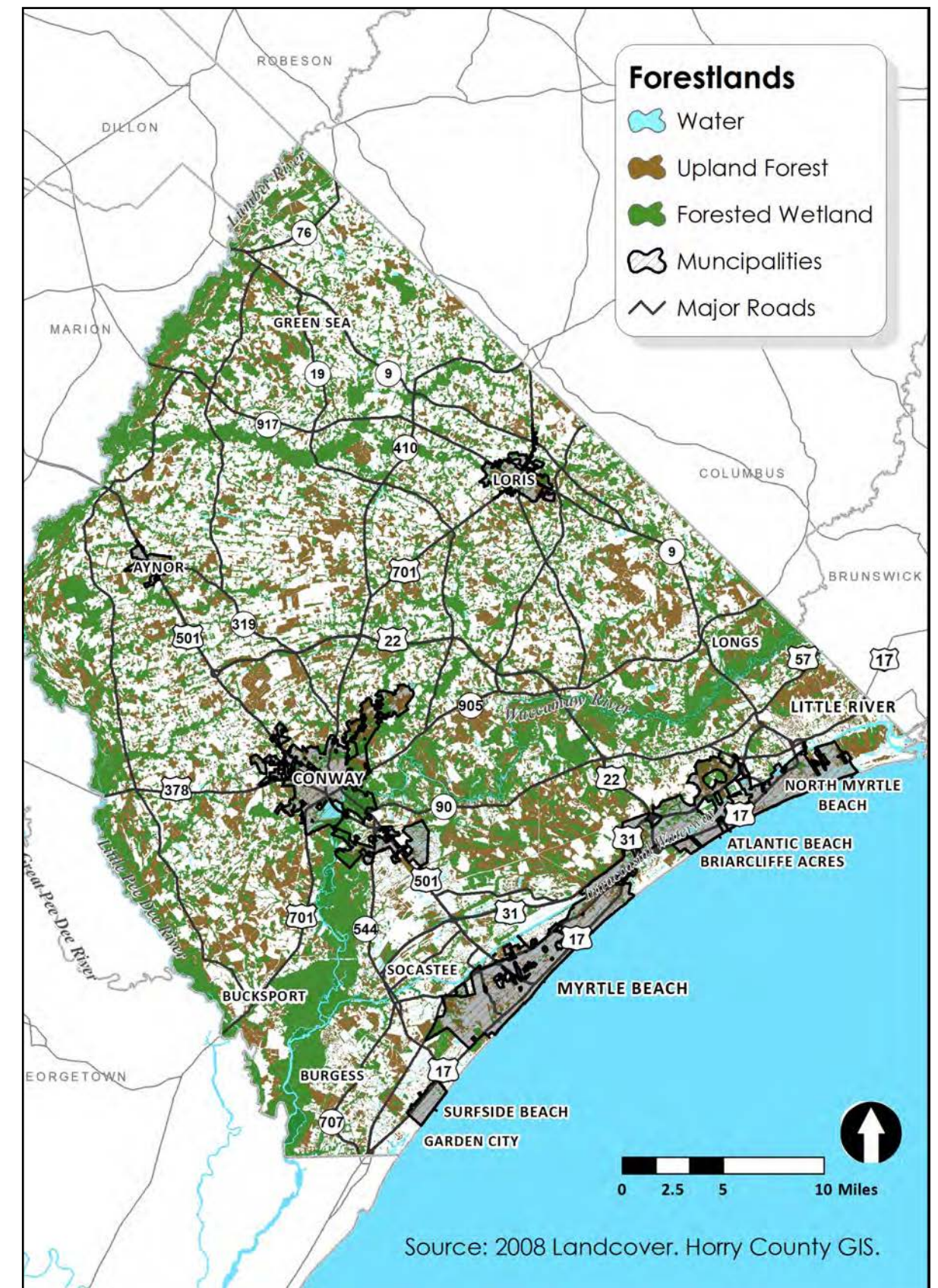
## FORESTLAND

Per SC Forestry, Horry County contains 725,574 acres of land of which 460,176 acres is classified as forestland, with 30.7% considered forested wetlands and 18.7% as upland forests. Nearly all of the upland forests are comprised of evergreens, while bald cypress and water tupelo trees are located along the floodplains of our waterways and within Carolina Bays. Forestlands are valuable natural resources and, if properly provide:

- Environmental quality by controlling noise, abating winds, filtering air, preventing soil erosion, and protecting water quality;
- Habitat for a variety of wildlife, including both game and non-game species;
- Outdoor recreational opportunities and enjoyment of scenic beauty through camping, hiking, picnicking, hunting, and bird watching;
- Job creation and the creation of more than 5,000 types of products.

## WILDFIRES

The SC Forestry Commission (SCFC) fights more than 2,000 wildfires in the state each year. On average, Horry County has approximately 242 wildfires that damage over 1,700 acres annually. In 2009, the Highway 31 Fire, also known as the Barefoot Fire, burned over 19,000 acres, destroyed 76 homes, and damaged another 97, resulting in over \$50 million in damages. The South Carolina Forestry Commission reports that between 35-45% of wildfires are caused by outdoor debris burning. This is by far the largest cause of wildfires in the state. Outdoor burning causes an increased risk in densely developed neighborhoods or those in close proximity to natural areas, such as the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. Horry County has helped address this risk by adopting an ordinance to prohibit open burning in major subdivisions. Wildfires happen most often between January and April, when relative humidity is low, pine debris and grasses are driest, and conditions are worst for fast spreading wildfires.





While wildfires have historically occurred in Horry County, increased development alongside large forested tracts of land hinders the ability for land managers to conduct prescribed or controlled burns to reduce wildfire fuels. Prescribed burning is the planned application of a controlled fire to forest, brush, or grassland vegetative fuels under specified environmental conditions and precautions which causes the fire to be confined to a predetermined area and allow accomplishment of the planned land management objectives. This decreases the likelihood of larger, more intense wildfires and the chance of residents accidentally starting wildfires by using fireworks, burning debris, bonfires, or other activities. Prescribed burning also interrupts the continuity of the fuel layer, not only horizontally on the ground surface, but also vertically. As underbrush grows taller over time, a vertical fuel structure is developed, which can lead to surface wildfires climbing the fuel ladder and becoming disastrous crown fires.



Highway 31 Fire, 2009  
Source: SCFC

SCFC employees work with local fire departments to assess the potential for wildfire damage to communities and individual homes. As part of the National Fire Plan effort, SCFC personnel also have been conducting workshops to educate community leaders and homeowners in high fire risk communities throughout the state (SC Forestry Commission, Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Prevention). The threat of wildfires will continue to increase as we develop closer to these wildfire dependent habitats. It also reduces the ability of DNR and SC Forestry to conduct controlled burns; therefore, making the threat worse. In addition, global climate change is resulting in having more extended time periods of droughts, which makes these areas even more fire prone.

## FIREWISE

So far, sixteen communities in Horry County have achieved a Firewise designation through the assistance of SCFC and the Horry County Wildfire Team. Many more communities are seeking this designation to voluntarily reduce their vulnerability to wildfires. Such measures include reduction of wildfire fuels within neighborhood open space and in individual yards. The County continues to work with neighborhoods seeking this designation, in addition to taking efforts to ensure that communities are developed safer from the start.



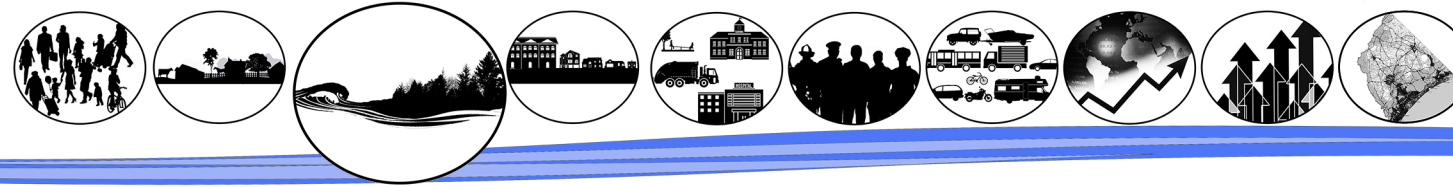
Example of Defensible Space  
Source: NFPA

There are steps that the County can take to reduce wildfire risks within major subdivisions, such as requiring developers to include defensible space into developments bordering a dense forested tract. Defensible space is an area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are treated, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire towards the structure. It also reduces the chance of a structure fire moving from a building to the surrounding forest (Dennis, 2003). Additionally, the County can protect property and lives by amending the Land Development Regulations to reduce block lengths or ensuring that future Planned Developments and Multi-Residential Developments have shorter block lengths, especially for those areas in close proximity to Carolina Bays and other wildfire prone forestlands. In addition, the County can discourage the approval of design modifications that reduce the required number of improved points of ingress and egress for new development. A floating overlay zone for high wildfire risk areas, detailing construction and design standards is also a mechanism the County could use to ensure development is safer from the start. It can also coordinate with SC Forestry Commission to conduct mitigation projects, ranging from emergency access upgrades to wildfire reduction measures. Through voluntary and regulatory efforts, combined with community education, Horry County can significantly reduce the threat of wildfire to life and property.

## URBAN FORESTRY

A majority of properties are being clear cut to meet stormwater grading needs to prevent flood damage, in exchange, there is a decrease in tree canopy to absorb flood waters. Participants in the IMAGINE 2040 Land Use Mapping Workshop indicated a number of areas where tree and forestland preservation are desired. While some of these areas were in rural areas, many were in the urban and suburban communities of Carolina Forest, Burgess, Forestbrook, Socast-





ee, and Little River. There are numerous benefits to providing urban and suburban green spaces, community forests, and streetscapes within neighborhoods and commercial areas, including:

- Habitat for urban wildlife
- Reduced heating and cooling costs
- Interception and storage of rainwater/reduced flooding
- Improved air quality
- Sound buffer, and
- Increased property values.
- Increased sense of place and community identity

As development increases in Horry County, natural tree coverage and vegetation will inevitably be lost. Because of the many benefits that trees provide, Horry County has measures in place to protect mature trees, including a Tree Preservation and Landscape Buffer Ordinance. This ordinance has mitigation requirements when large trees are cut down for commercial development. In addition every commercial project is also required to put trees back into the landscape on their parcel. In recent years, there have also been overlays added to the zoning ordinance which require additional trees greater than the requirements of the Landscape Ordinance to be added to commercial designs.

## FORESTLAND FINDINGS

As urban and suburban development encroaches on natural areas it will become increasingly important to recognize and plan for fire safety. Discouraging development adjacent to or impeding into natural areas, such as the Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve, will allow DNR to continue prescribed burning which helps preserve the much needed natural lands and ecological systems that protect the County from dangerous and costly flooding, provide residents

and visitors alike with recreational opportunities, and help maintain clean air and water. Public education about controlled burns is beneficial and should be promoted. In addition, addressing outdoor burning and wildfire risks through voluntary efforts, burning regulations, and design standards will also help to protect Horry County residents, businesses, and visitors from the potential for wildfires.

## SOILS

Horry's coastal character can be seen throughout the County, as sandy soils and relic sand dunes can even be found inland and along the Lumber, Little Pee Dee and Waccamaw Rivers. Coquina and limestone resources can also be found throughout the entire Pee Dee Region. While relatively flat, Horry County's highest elevations reach over 110 feet above sea level along the sand ridges of Carolina Bays (HC GIS, 2008). While Horry County's flat topography presents few development constraints, poor soil drainage can serve as a challenge for developers and property owners due to the possibility of flooding and poor septic percolation.

## DRAINAGE

According to the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service's Soil Survey, the majority of soils in Horry County are loamy sand and sandy loam with generally poor drainage characteristics. Approximately 43% of the soils in Horry Coun-



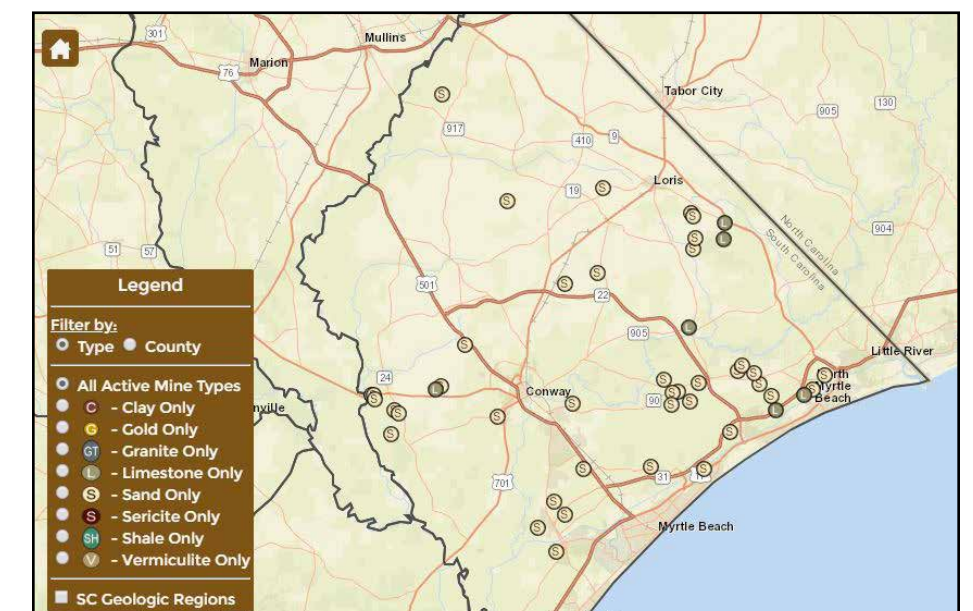
Highly Drained to Poorly Drained, Hydric Soils  
Source: USACE

ty have high to medium run-off potential with poor drainage capacity and a slow infiltration rate. These areas are found throughout the County but are concentrated near major rivers and streams. Poor drainage areas often coincide with wetland and floodplain areas and are typically classified as hydric soils. Areas with the best infiltration occur near the beach because the sandy soils have a higher infiltration rate and better drainage capacity.

## MINING

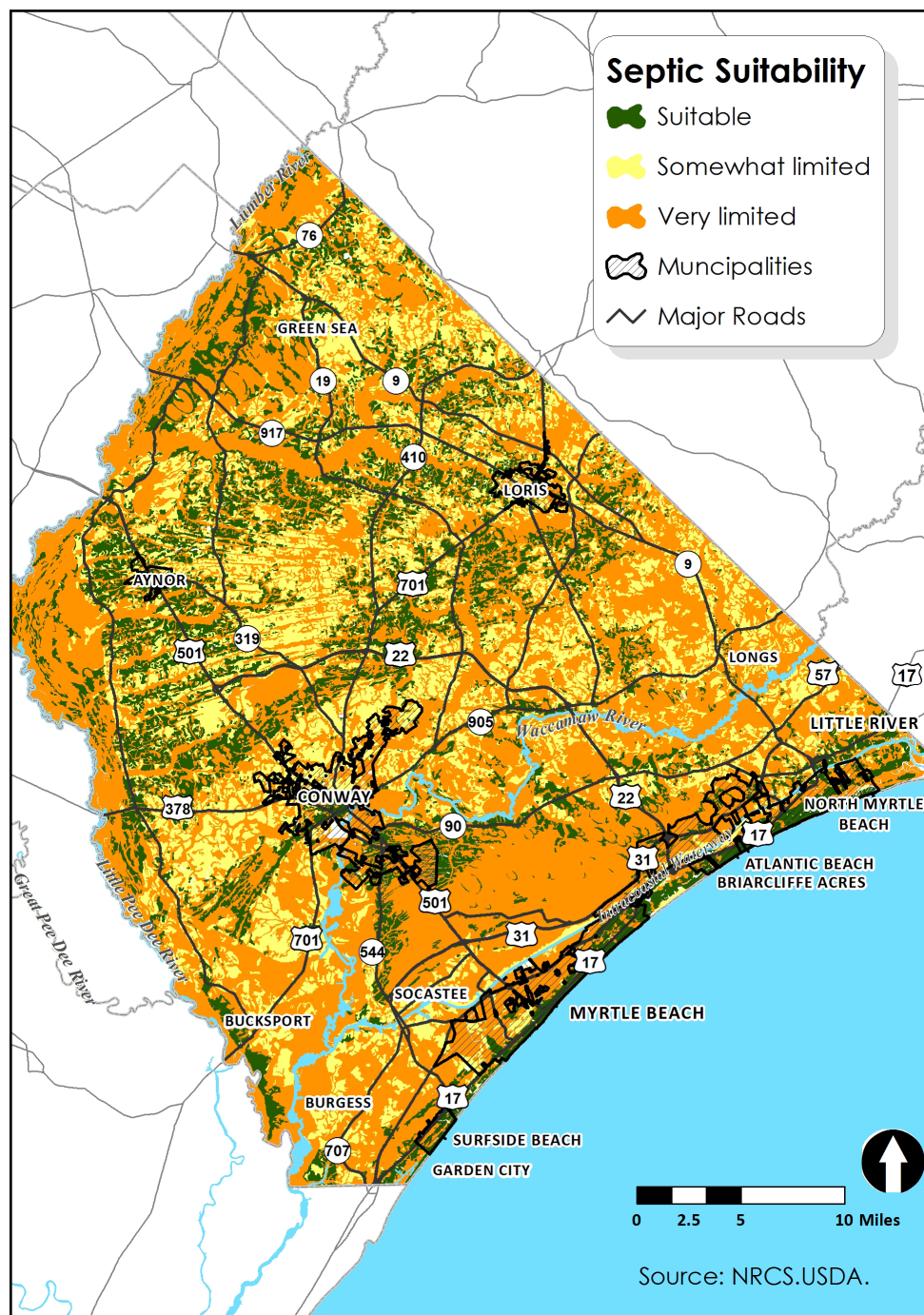
There are several types of surface mining done in South Carolina, including open pit, strip mines, and dredging. The SC Mining Act of 1974 defines mining as the removal of ores from the ground for sale or for use in a business. The Act and regulations outline the application process, how to conduct mine operations, and minimum reclamation standards. Mine permits and certificates are issued through DHEC's Division of Mining and Solid Waste Management.

There are 45 SCDHEC permitted mines in the County (SCDHEC, 2018). The material coming out of these mines is primar-



SCDHEC Permitted Mining Operations  
Source: SCDHEC





ily used for road construction and development projects. SC Department of Transportation (SCDOT), SC State Ports Authority, SC Department of Commerce - Division of Public Railways borrow pits operated by or for are exempt from mining permits if the material is used solely for the building or repair of South Carolina Public Roads, SC State Port Authority's shipping container terminals, or public rail infrastructure of the State. Practices such as farming and on-site construction may be exempt from mining permits from SCDHEC.

Horry County specifically recognizes that mining operation and activities are controlled by: (i) South Carolina Mining Act, S.C. Code Ann. §§ 48-20-10 et seq.; (ii) South Carolina Mining Compact, S.C. Code Ann. §§ 48-21-10 et seq.; (iii) Stormwater Management and Sediment Reduction Act §§ 48-14-10, et al.; (iv) the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1251, et seq.; (v) South Carolina Pollution Control Act, S.C. Code Ann. §§ 48-1-10, et seq.; (vi) Clean Air Act, 42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq. and (vii) regulations promulgated thereto. Horry County recognizes that the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental is the agency responsible for administering the South Carolina Mining Act, South Carolina Pollution Control Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act and Stormwater Management and Sediment Reduction Act and regulations promulgated thereunder. The listing of these specific statutes is not intended to be exhaustive but is intended to be illustrative of the scheme governing mining activities in Horry County and these statutes, inter alia, are the controlling authority for mining in Horry County. Horry County's intent is that no Horry County ordinance conflict with these authorities and that Horry County removes itself from regulation of mining, which is best left to federal and state authorities.

### SEPTIC SUITABILITY

Approximately 88% of Horry County has severe limitations for septic tank absorption fields. The soil absorption field provides the final treatment and distribution of the wastewater of a septic system. To treat wastewater, a septic system relies heavily on the microorganisms in the soil to help remove the organic matter, solids and nutrients left in the water (Lesikar, B., 2008). It is also dependent upon soil drainage. Areas less suitable for septic tanks usually require special design, significant increases in construction costs, and increased maintenance. In many cases, installing or connecting to a sewer line is a more viable and environmentally conscious choice. On the other hand, expanding sewer lines into rural areas can encourage development in areas of the County that are more suitable for agriculture, forest land, conservation or outdoor recreation.

Septic maintenance is also a problem countywide. Many utilizing septic fields need to tie into GSWSA for water quality reasons. This is especially a concern for those relying on well water for drinking. Due to changes in SCDHEC regulations in May 2016, many previously permitted septic fields no longer meet state standards. These fields will be required by SCDHEC to connect to public sewage treatment in the occurrence of issues or repairs.

### SOIL FINDINGS

One of the biggest inhibitors of development in the County is water issues. This can be from constraints upon the land due to wetlands, floodplain or due to the inability of the soil to perk for septic systems. In addition to this, the flatness of the land can





also make it harder to move water away from structures placing another restriction on development. And the more development takes place, the less pervious area there is to absorb the excess water.

SPECIES HABITAT

Horry County's diverse landscape supports a variety of plant and animal species. In many cases, the rich biodiversity found throughout the County can be directly associated with the abundance of water resources. Biodiversity is a sign of a healthy ecosystem, as it supports ecosystem productivity and ensures the greater capability to withstand and recover from disasters. Plant life is some of the most beneficial for ecosystem stability when it comes to absorbing flood waters. Plant life is somewhat sessile and unable to relocate making it very vulnerable to development pressures. A changing climate alone could have very heavy negative implications for such sessile life forms. According to South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the land along the Lumber, Little Pee Dee, and Waccamaw Rivers have the potential to support the greatest variety of species in the County, as seen in the Species Richness Map (SCDNR, 2001). While this map does not reflect the actual numbers of animals or their abundance in a given area, it does indicate where the greatest biodiversity of plant and animal species is likely to be found; therefore, indicating the areas with the greatest need for land and habitat protection. For a more complete map please see SCDNR's SC State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) maps.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

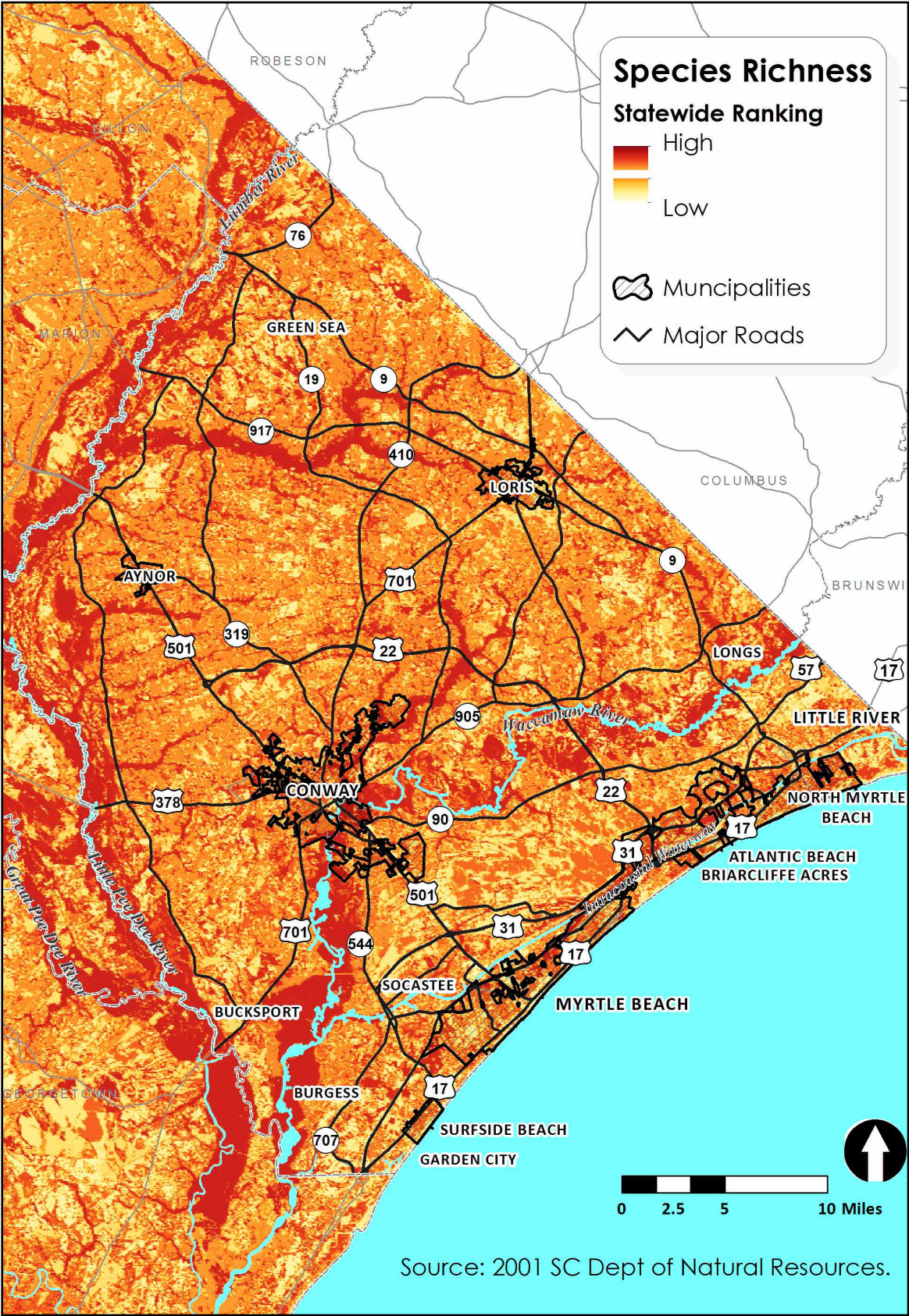
Horry County has a variety of rare, threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Development, logging, the use of pesticides, fishing and hunting are just a handful of reasons why some animal populations have declined throughout the Country. Invasive plants and animals that out compete and consume similar resources are another reason for the decline in certain plant and animal species.

The loggerhead sea turtle is a well-known endangered species. Their populations began to rebound with the use of Turtle Excluder Devices in commercial fishing nets and through volunteer efforts to protect and monitor nests along the beach. There are a number of threatened and endangered birds that reside or migrate through Horry County. The red-cockaded woodpecker is a well-known endangered species in this region, as they rely upon old growth long leaf pines, which nearly disappeared from Horry County in the late 1800s. Similarly, the bald eagle remains threatened in South Carolina, although it has been taken off the en-

Threatened and Endangered Species in Horry County

Vertebrate Animals		
Caretta caretta	Loggerhead	Threatened
Clemmys guttata	Spotted Turtle	Threatened
Corynorhinus rafinesquii	Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat	Endangered
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Threatened
Mycteria americana	Wood Stork	Endangered
Picoides borealis	Red-cockaded Woodpecker	Endangered
Sterna antillarum	Least Tern	Threatened
Vascular Plants		
Amaranthus pumilus	Seabeach Amaranth	Threatened
Schwalbea americana	Chaffseed	Endangered

Source: Updated from SCDNR, 2018





dangered list at the federal level. Bald eagle populations declined drastically from the 1940s through the 1970s due to the loss of habitat, shooting, and pollutants like DDT. Through conservation and habitat restoration efforts, many plant and animal species are on the road to recovery. Despite these efforts, additional rare, threatened, and endangered species continue to be added to state and federal listings. For a more complete list please see SCDNR's species lists.

### INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are non-native plant, insect or animal species that have been introduced into an area outside of their original range and compete with native species for resources. Invasive species are recognized as one of the leading threats to biodiversity and impose enormous costs to human enterprises, as well as to human health. Most recent estimates indicate that 42% of the nation's endangered and threatened species have declined as a result of encroaching exotic invasive species (SCDNR, 2008).

Not all non-native species are invasive, as many have become naturalized over time. Exotic plants are only a problem when they escape cultivation, spread rapidly and aggressively compete with native species. One example is bamboo. Unfortunately, many of these plants continue to be sold in nurseries.

Asian Longhorned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, and the Fire Ant are just a few of the commonly found invasive insects in South Carolina. In 2011, the Kudzu Bug arrived in South Carolina and quickly spread to every county in the state within the year, damaging soybean crops. Untreated soybeans were estimated to have a 20% loss in South Carolina (Clemson, 2014). Invasive animals can also be found in Horry County, including, but not limited to feral hogs, coyotes, and the apple snail. Problems stemming

from invasive animals include competing with native wildlife for food, damaging upland and wetland habitats, preying on small game, outdoor pets and deer, and altering the natural balance of the ecosystem.

New invasive species will likely be introduced into our County. Preventing further spread of invasive species and restoring impacted sites is a monumental task that depends on public awareness, eradication measures, and ongoing monitoring.

### CONSERVATION LAND

There are numerous federal, state, and non-profit organizations involved in conserving the unique habitats and wildlife corridors in Horry County, including, but not limited to, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the SC Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, and the Pee Dee Land Trust. Additional entities, such as the Waccamaw Riverkeeper, American Rivers, and the Coastal Conservation League are also partners involved in identifying local conservation priorities.

The Horry County Parks and Open Space Board developed the **Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan** to identify priority conservation areas based upon the location of existing conservation lands, wetlands, floodplains, and critical habitat corridors. The Priority Conservation Areas Map, see following page, not only identifies sites to expand existing conservation corridors, it also identifies opportunities to connect existing recreational amenities to these natural amenities. The following details some of the existing conservation lands in Horry County.

#### Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established the **Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge** (NWR) in December 1997. The refuge was established to protect and manage diverse hab-

itat components within an important coastal river ecosystem for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, freshwater and anadromous fish, migratory birds, and forest wildlife. The Refuge includes a wide array of plants and animals associated with bottomland hardwood habitats and provides compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education.

Located in portions of Horry, Georgetown, and Marion County, the Waccamaw NWR acquisition boundary spans over 55,000 acres and includes large sections of the Waccamaw and Great Pee Dee Rivers and a small section of the Little Pee Dee River. The USFWS is actively acquiring lands within this acquisition boundary from willing sellers and has acquired 27,000 acres thus far (USFW, 2013).

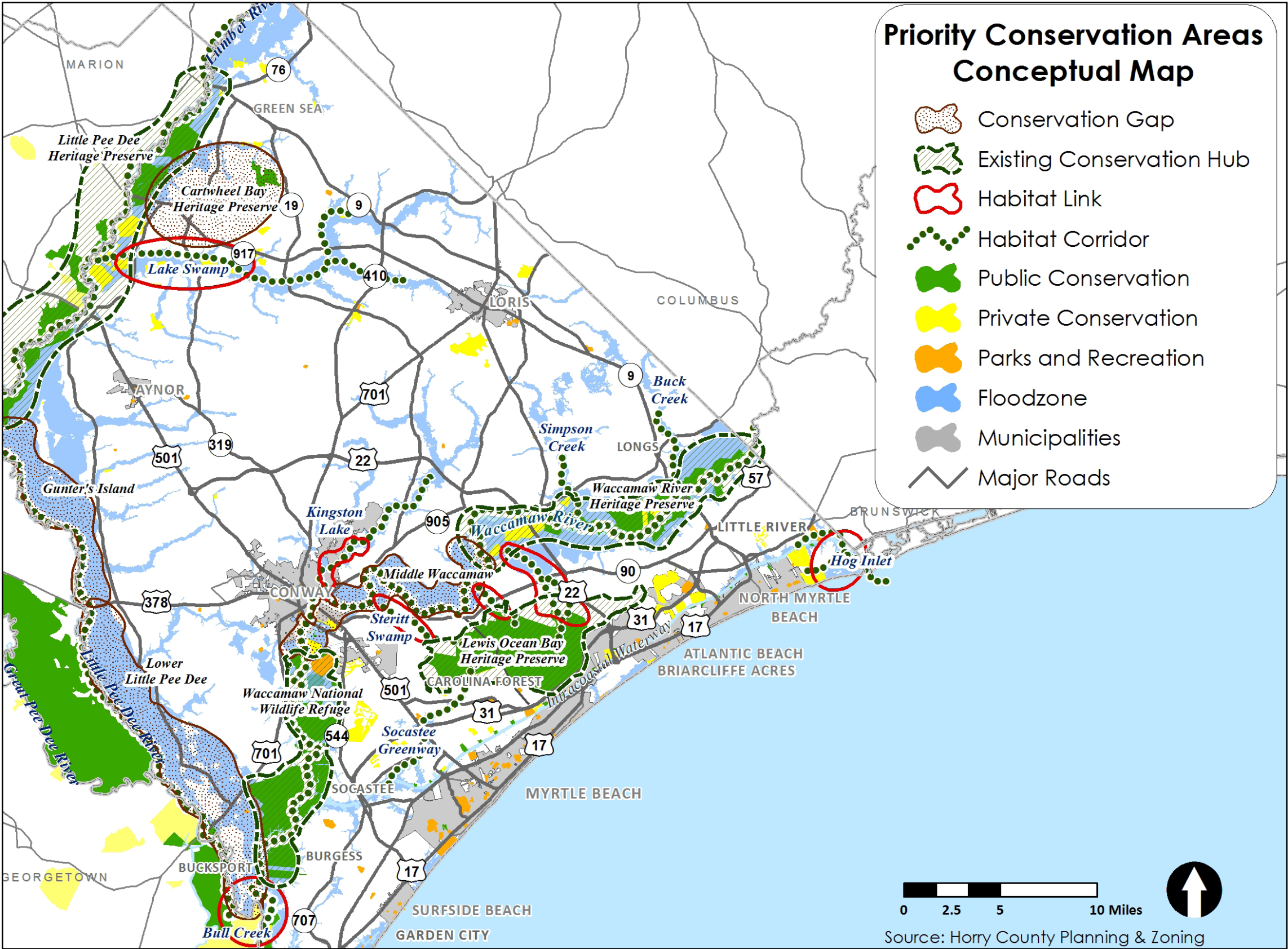
#### SC DNR Heritage Trust Preserves

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Heritage Trust Program was created in 1976 to preserve natural features and cultural remains, which are quickly disappearing as the state's population increases. The program's purpose is to identify, evaluate, and protect the elements considered the most outstanding representatives of the state's heritage. There are currently four heritage preserves in Horry County (SCDNR, 2014).

**Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve** – This preserve is 5,347 acres, which includes 30 miles of protected river wetlands and bottomland hardwood forests. The property contains examples of rare and threatened plant species, including the dwarf fimbry. It also contains mature hardwood forest.

**Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve** – This 568 acre preserve protects one of the few known Carolina bay-longleaf pine





savannah complexes in South Carolina. The longleaf pine savannahs contain white fringed, yellow fringed and rosebud orchids, Venus' flytraps, pitcher plants and a diverse array of wildflowers.

**Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve** – This 10,444 acre preserve contains a group of 23 Carolina Bays. This preserve includes habitats for black bears, red-cockaded woodpeckers, Venus flytraps and a pond pine pocosin plant community.

**Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve** – This 9,000 acre tract is in both Marion and Horry Counties. This property protects the rare sarvis holly, a mature floodplain forest, and scenic frontage along the Little Pee Dee River. The preserve includes Knife Island and four scenic oxbow lakes (SCDNR, Heritage Preserves).



## NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines nature-based solutions as including “actions to protect, sustainability manage, and restore natural or modified eco-systems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.” Nature-based solutions support and safeguard human well-being in ways that enhance resilience of ecosystems and their capacity. They are designed to address food security, climate change, water security, human health, disaster risk, social and economic development. The following sections outline recommended nature-based solutions in Horry County.

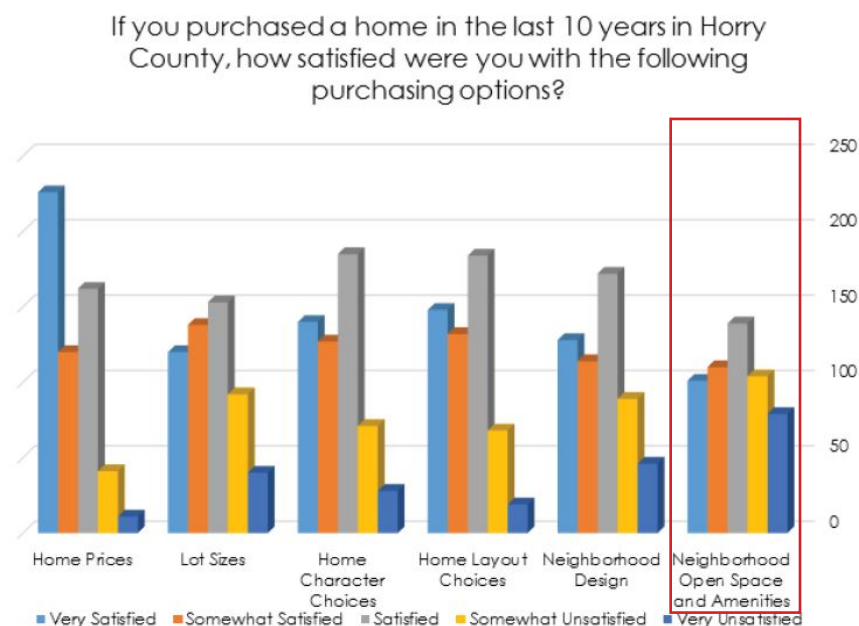
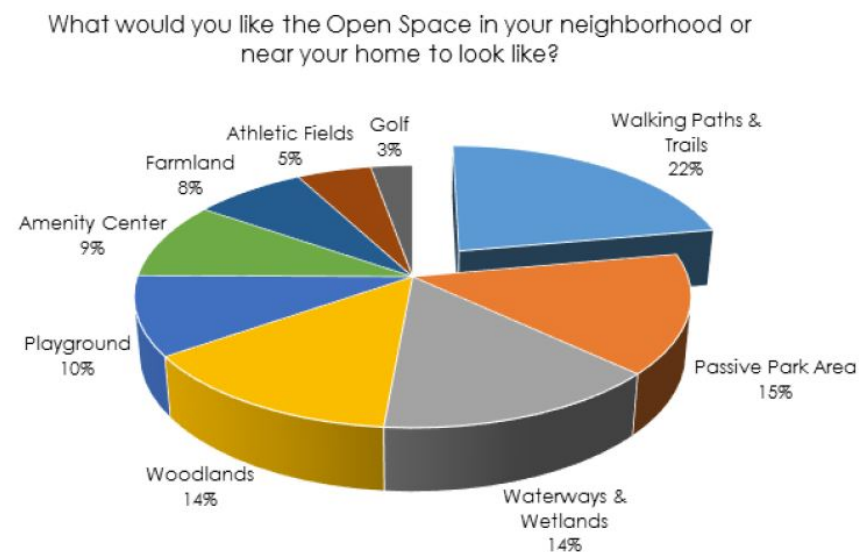
### Conservation Subdivision

Conservation subdivisions are a design strategy that attempts to preserve undivided, buildable tracts of land as communal open space for residents. Ideally, in a conservation subdivision, 50-70% of the buildable land is set aside as open space by grouping homes on the developed portions of the land. These types of subdivisions offer additional economic and environmental benefits when compared to conventional subdivisions. Not only do homes in such subdivisions typically have higher home values, but reducing the developed land area can also decrease the infrastructure and engineering costs, benefit wildlife corridors, result in decreased impervious surface (thereby decreasing stormwater management needs), and increased access to open space.

### Interconnected Open Space

Linking parks, greenways, river corridors, and other natural or restored lands together to create an interconnected green space system provides far greater benefits for people, wildlife, and the economy. It helps connect people and neighborhoods, provides opportunities for exercise that can

counter today’s trends in obesity and adult onset diabetes, and enhances emotional well-being by bringing nature closer to homes. According to results from the IMAGINE 2040 community survey, residents of Horry County preferred to see additional walking trails, passive park areas, waterways and wetlands, and woodlands closer to their homes. In addition, respondents showed a lesser level of satisfaction with neighborhood open space compared to other home purchasing option categories.



## HABITAT FINDINGS

The rise of suburban sprawl as the prevalent development pattern in America has resulted in extensive fragmentation of the landscape. Fragmentation reduces the diversity of wildlife, contributes to the degradation of water resources, and impacts community character. As development occurs, elements like roads, houses, railways, parking lots and utility lines divide the natural landscape into ever-smaller pieces. Natural habitat areas are reduced in size and quality, and native plant and animal populations decline. Some of the more sensitive species disappear. Compared to the obvious damage of a filled wetland or a clear-cut forest, the effects of fragmentation are subtle.

Every type of animal or plant has certain requirements for survival. The minimum area required to provide these needs and the amount of human disturbance that can be tolerated varies widely by species. For example, a single black bear needs anywhere from 6 to 160 sq. miles for roaming and foraging, depending upon the availability of food, water, and shelter (SCDNR, 2013).

As research continues, it is becoming clear that for many types of wildlife, it’s not the total acreage of habitat that counts, but how much of that habitat exists in large, undisturbed tracts. According to ecologists, large areas of continuous, unfragmented natural lands with a diversity of habitat types are needed. Experts also suggest that scattering moderate sized, 125 – 500 acre natural areas is also necessary. These smaller preserves can support species that do not require large forests in which to breed, and may even support small populations of the more sensitive species. Ideally, these smaller tracts should be as close as possible to larger tracts, contain a diversity of habitat/landscape types, and be connected to other natural areas. Isolated pockets





of natural lands are of value to the community, but to maximize ecological value it is important to connect open space wherever possible. Parcels contiguous to existing large and medium-sized tracts should be given high priority for conservation. Riverine floodplains should be targeted as these areas serve as both critical habitat and wildlife corridors for almost 70% of all vertebrate species.

While state and federal agencies, in addition to many private land holders, have protected their lands from development, many native species remain threatened by habitat fragmentation, which is the largest threat to wildlife in Horry County. Retaining the environmental, social and economic benefits of unfragmented open land requires a strategy that combines natural resource-based community planning and design, land conservation, with wise management of both developed and natural areas.

#### ENERGY AIR QUALITY

Historically, air quality has not been a concern in Horry County, as there are few point sources emitting chemicals into the air. In addition, the prevailing winds coming off of the ocean disperse most point and non-point sources of air pollution. While air quality is not a major concern in Horry County, the pollution generated here only exacerbates pollution problems elsewhere. Air pollution is becoming a more significant issue in South Carolina and throughout the World. The Waccamaw Air Quality Coalition was formed to serve as a forum to discuss air quality concerns and share ideas to reduce air pollution in the tri-county region (Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg Counties).

SCDHEC is responsible for air quality monitoring. Air monitors are operated throughout the state to measure the concen-

trations of pollutants in the air. Through the Clean Air Act, the USEPA set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment.

The air pollution in Horry County can be divided into several types of sources. Point sources are large, fixed sources, such as industrial sites that emit pollutants from activities on the site. Area sources are also fixed sources, but they are generally small and widespread; examples are dry cleaners and gasoline refueling stations. The mobile source category of air pollution is broken into on-road and non-road sources. On-road sources refer to highway vehicles, and non-road sources refer to vehicles or equipment, such as construction equipment and recreational boats. The EPA monitors emissions in several different ways from monitoring point sources, like smoke stacks of power plants, to measuring particulate matter and ozone at selected locations to capture the overall conditions of an airshed. As of 2012, there were only two active point source emitters in the County, far fewer than 12 just a decade ago. Inevitably, the emissions from point sources have reduced over time. SCDHEC no longer operates a particulate matter monitoring station in Horry County, although one was active in Myrtle Beach from 1990-2008. During that time, area sources served as the largest source of air pollution. This trend has likely changed, as vehicular traffic has increased and point sources have decreased.

SCDHEC has also not consistently operated an ozone monitoring site in Horry County because past studies and monitoring have indicated good air quality. SCDHEC is now exploring a potential ozone monitoring site in either Horry or Brunswick County because the EPA monitoring standards have evolved and Horry County and Brunswick counties are now part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area. On-road vehicles

are likely the largest contributor to ozone emissions in Horry County and other pollutants, like nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, and lead. On-road pollution can be reduced by improving the flow of traffic, reducing idling times, and reducing the total number of on-road vehicles by providing alternative transportation options.

#### WIND ENERGY

In order to protect air quality and reduce fossil fuel emissions, the EPA is calling for states to diversify their energy sources. Horry County has two potential renewable energy sources available to supply the state's power grid, including wind and solar energy. The South Atlantic Bight, including the Grand Strand, has been identified as a suitable location to establish off-shore wind turbines because of the available wind resource and the shallow water depths (Musial and Bam, 2010). The slope is much more gradual in waters off the Carolinas than in other areas off the Eastern Seaboard, meaning the towers can be positioned ten or more miles from beach-



*Onshore Wind Testing Turbine, North Myrtle Beach Oceanfront park  
Source: Aisha Khan, SCNow*



es without impairing scenic views. In 2016, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) saw 13 environmental studies completed in support of the Renewable Energy Program along the Atlantic coast. These studies include regional surveys, modeling ocean circulation and identifying shipwrecks (Renewable Energy, 2016).

South Carolina is well situated to become an economic hub for offshore wind development. In addition, Clemson Energy Innovation Center in Charleston operates the largest wind turbine testing facility in the world (Colbert-Busch, 2012). All of these factors make Horry County a prime location to incorporate offshore wind resources into the power grid.

**The North Strand Wind Coalition Wind Team** was established to support the development of wind energy in the Grand Strand and within the state. Since its inception, the City of North Myrtle Beach passed a resolution in support of the development of offshore wind resources and to accommodate electric cables from offshore sites through its deepwater stormwater outfalls. Additionally, the City of North Myrtle Beach has adopted a Small Wind Energy Systems Ordinance to promote the use of small onshore wind turbines, but in a manner that does not have adverse effects on neighboring properties (Ord. No. 10-03, § 1, 4-5-10). Onshore wind turbines can already be seen among beach resort high rises in North Myrtle Beach.

## SOLAR POWER

Solar energy is also an opportunity in Horry County, whether at the single homeowner level or large scale operations. South Carolina residents can receive a 25% tax credit for the installation of solar panels. Similar credits are also available for businesses. While the use of solar power is not prevalent in Horry County, Santee Cooper is working to expand its pres-

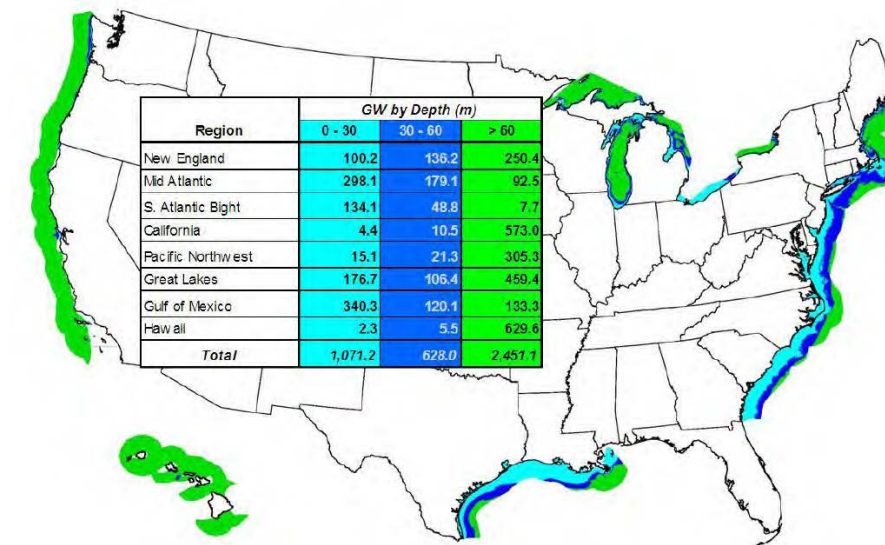
ence through demonstration projects and has added a new incentive program for customers who install solar energy. Santee Cooper installed a grid-tied solar array, consisting of 1,350 solar panels, on its maintenance facility on 10th Avenue in Myrtle Beach (see the Community Facilities Chapter).

Many of Horry County's new schools have also been equipped with a solar array on their rooftops. Santee Cooper and the state's electric cooperatives partnered to install solar in twenty schools throughout South Carolina, calling them Green Power Solar Schools. The initiative was designed to encourage interest in the environment and demonstrate the feasibility and limitations of renewable power generation.



Solar Array on Santee Cooper Facility  
Source: Santee Cooper

In 2018, Santee Cooper opened the Bell Bay Solar Farm on Highway 701. It has nearly 6,000 solar panels on 10 acres producing 2,800 megawatt hours (MWh) annually, which is enough power to run 205 households. Santee Cooper is also currently developing a solar project on a landfill site within Myrtle Beach International Airport. The site will have over 6,000 panels on 14 acres. While large solar installations are



U.S. Offshore Wind Resources by Region and Water Depth for Annual Wind Speed Sites over 7.0 m/s  
Source: Musial and Bam, 2010

not common in Horry County, there are many rooftops that could be equipped to provide power to the grid. Additionally, solar farms may prove to be a viable alternative for underutilized farmland in Horry County.

## OFFSHORE DRILLING

BOEM has recently opened 98% of the oil and gas resources in federal offshore areas to be considered for exploration and development. Three lease sales are in the Draft Proposal Program for the area that includes South Carolina. However, coastal communities are against this. (Groups, 2018) Even Governor Henry McMaster is advocating for an offshore 'no drill' oil exemption. (South Carolina Government, 2018) This is a battle that will continue to take place in the future.

## ENERGY FINDINGS

While air quality issues resulting from coal burning power plants has not been a problem for the Grand Strand historically, growing trends in more ecologically friendly "green"





energy solutions have placed Horry County in the forefront for potential sustainable energy solutions. New innovations and continued expansions in solar and wind power are critical for Horry County, both economically and ecologically.

### CONCLUSIONS

Conservation, preservation, and restoration of our natural resources is important for Horry County's future. People locate to Horry County in part due to access to the beach and natural areas. As population continues to rise, water quality, impacts of development on waterways, habitat fragmentation, natural resilience to flooding and fires, and the preservation of forestland are key issues that the County will need to address.

Containing residential development in the already suburban and urbanized areas can mitigate impact on our natural resources. In addition, encouraging permeability, Low impact development, better site design, and conservation of natural lands will allow for the protection of existing open space, water quality protection, habitat, agricultural, and culturally significant landscapes. It will also help to preserve rural character and encourage enhancements in existing public facilities and infrastructure in already densely populated areas.

By discouraging destruction of wetlands, restraining development in the floodplain, incorporating innovative flood resilient designs, and through encouraging sustainable energy solutions, Horry County can become more resilient to damages from a changing climate and rising sea level. Protection and restoration of damaged forestland, wetlands, and dune systems are critical to this resilience. Utilizing natural stormwater control is also vital in support of protection, conservation, restoration. Further enhancing the Stormwater regulations and best management practices can increase

Horry County's resilience from future flooding events and the effects of sea level rise. Through innovative, thoughtful design and planning Horry County can mitigate the disturbance of our natural resources and harness these assets for their ability to enhance our economic, social, and ecological resilience.



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# CHAPTER 5: HOUSING



## INTRODUCTION

Horry County has seen considerable housing growth over the past few decades. Not surprisingly, the housing industry represents an important sector of the local economy. As Horry County continues to grow, the housing stock must accommodate projected population growth and the needs of our changing community. The purpose of the Housing Chapter is to identify trends in the market and anticipate future residential growth. This chapter also addresses the need for safe and affordable housing, along with barriers to fair housing, and mechanisms to address these challenges.

## HOUSING ANALYSIS

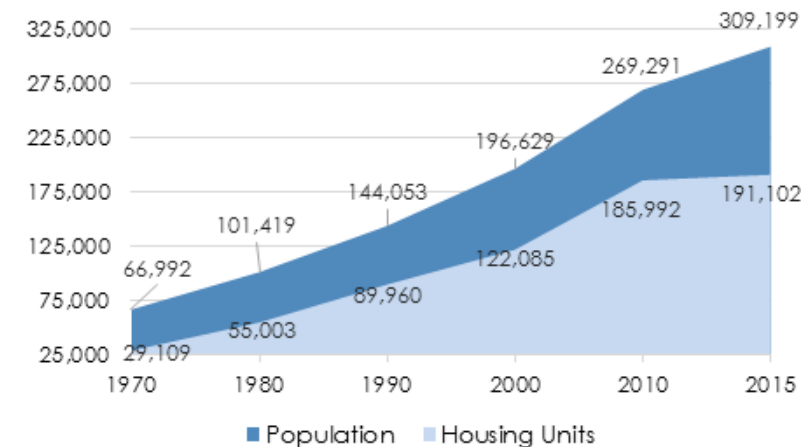
This analysis looks at trends in housing stock, including housing type, age, occupancy, vacancy, and conditions. It also details development trends over time, along with anticipated housing growth into the future.

## HOUSING UNITS

Horry County has experienced a steady increase in the number of housing units since the 1970s. Until the Great Recession, Horry County experienced growth rates ranging from 35-89%. From 2000 to 2010, the housing stock grew by 52.3%. The Recession had a significant impact on construction in Horry County. Between 2010 and 2015, the total number of housing units in Horry County only increased by 5,110 units, growing a mere 2.8%, to 191,102. Despite the Recession and slowdown in new construction, Horry County's population significantly increased during this same timeframe, indicating that the housing stock was already available.

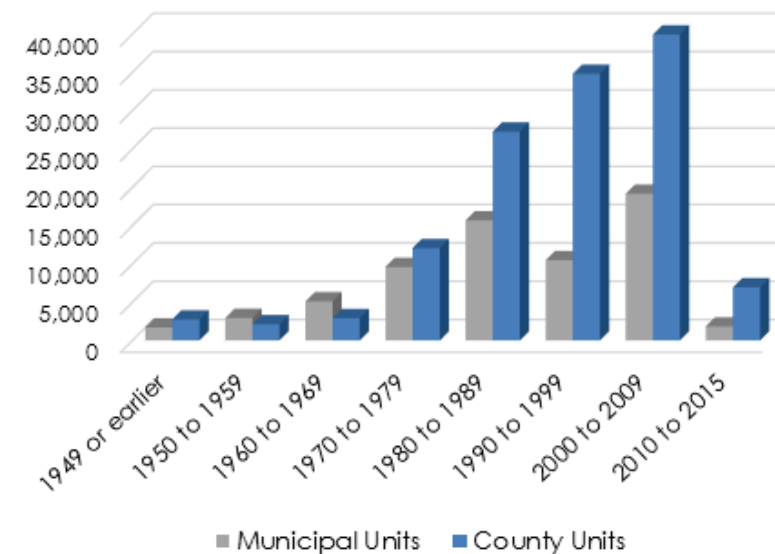
Unincorporated Horry County accounts for 125,457 (65.6%) of the total housing units in the County. Growth since the 1970s has primarily occurred in unincorporated Horry County. As of 2015, Myrtle Beach, Little River, and Conway East Census County Divisions (CCD) are the regions of the County with the highest number of units, respectively. These are the same areas with the greatest share of seasonal housing units.

## Housing Units and Population Growth



Source: U. S. Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015 (#B25001)

## Year Structure Built

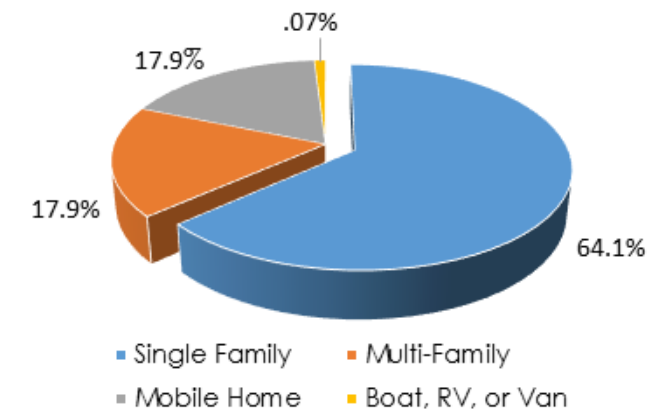


Source: U. S. Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015 (#B25034)

## HOUSING TYPES

Traditional, single-family homes are the most prominent type of housing in Horry County, with more than 64% of the population living within this housing type. The following chart details the breakdown of occupied housing units by type.

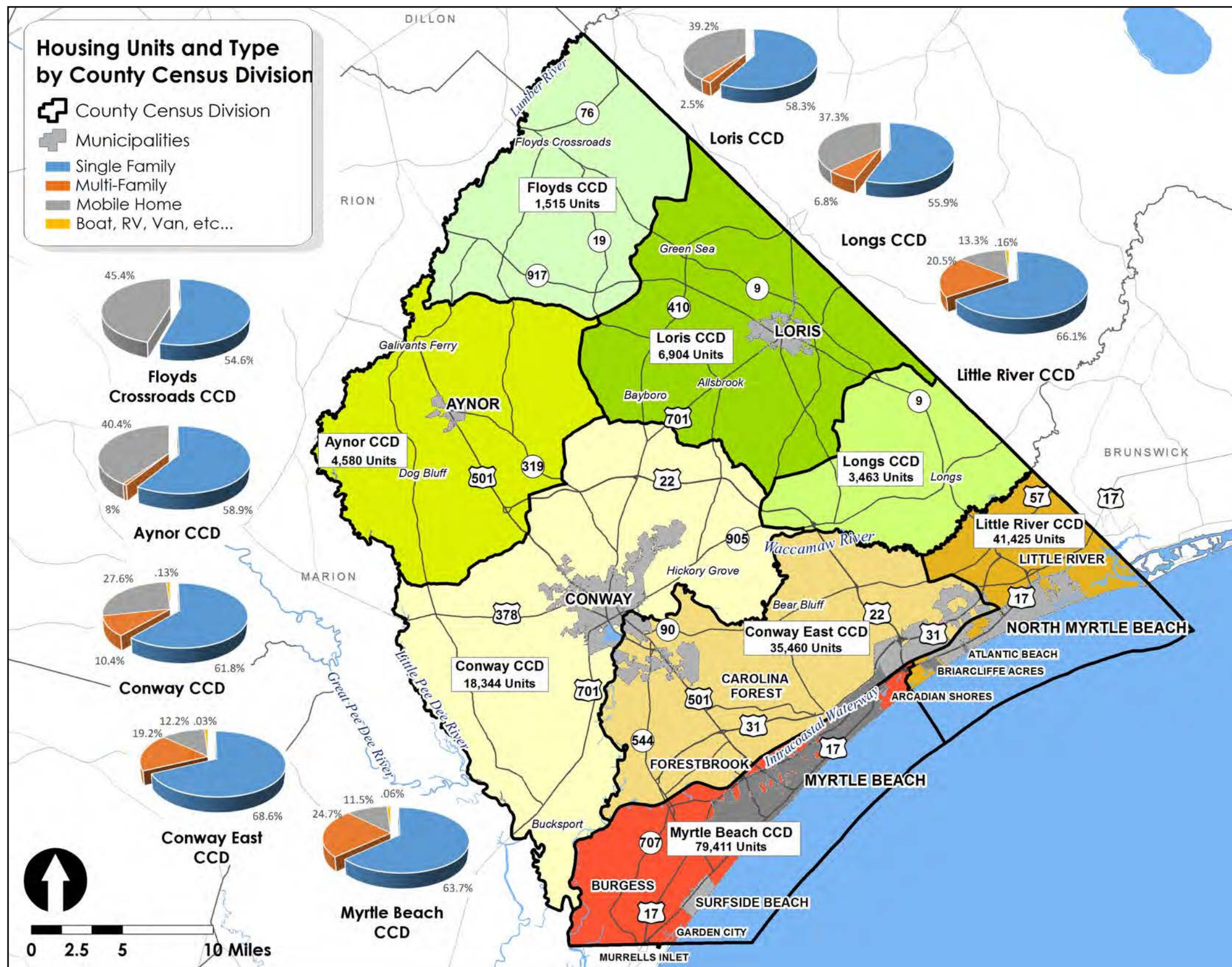
## Population by Housing Type



Source: U. S. Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015 (#B25033)

The breakdown of housing types by geography is detailed on the next page. The CCDs of Conway East, Little River, and Myrtle Beach have the highest shares of single-family units, while Floyds Crossroads and Longs CCDs have the lowest percent of residents living in single-family dwellings. 17.9% of the population lives in multi-family dwellings, while another 17.9% reside in mobile homes. In rural areas of the County, 37.3 - 45.4% of the population lives in mobile homes. This is a clear indicator that rural residents rely heavily on mobile homes for affordable housing, while urban areas rely heavily on multi-family units for affordable options. The housing composition in rural communities places an emphasis on the need for mobile home repair and replacement programs to ensure that residents have safe, durable, and affordable shelter. As population rises, a variety of affordable housing options will need to be considered for both the rural and urban areas.





<b>Aynor CCD</b>	<b>4,580</b>
Town of Aynor	290
unincorporated	4,290
<b>Conway CCD</b>	<b>18,344</b>
City of Conway	7,899
unincorporated	10,445
<b>Conway East CCD</b>	<b>35,460</b>
unincorporated	35,460
<b>Floyds Crossroads CCD</b>	<b>1,515</b>
unincorporated	1,515
<b>Little River CCD</b>	<b>41,425</b>
City of North Myrtle Beach	28,176
Town of Briarcliffe Acres	238
Town of Atlantic Beach	275
unincorporated	12,736
<b>Longs CCD</b>	<b>3,463</b>
unincorporated	3,463
<b>Loris CCD</b>	<b>6,904</b>
City of Loris	1,134
unincorporated	5,770
<b>Myrtle Beach CCD</b>	<b>79,411</b>
City of Myrtle Beach	23,406
Town of Surfside Beach	4,237
unincorporated	51,768
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>191,102</b>
Municipal Housing Units	65,655
unincorporated Housing Units	125,447

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015, (Number of Units - ID #B25001; Percent Population by Housing Type - ID #B25033)

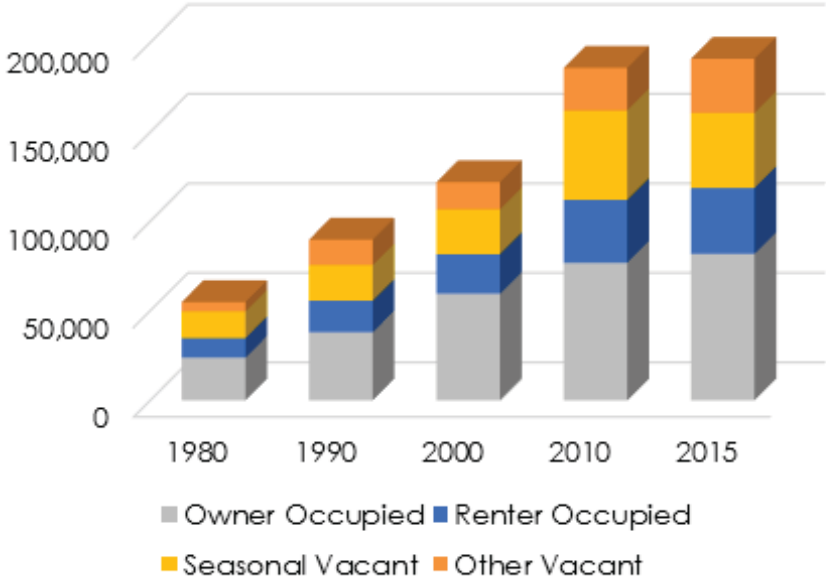




OCCUPANCY AND VACANCY

Of the 191,102 housing units in Horry County, 62.1% are occupied, 22.0% are classified as seasonal, and a remaining 15.9% are considered vacant, primarily for rent. 42.9% of the total housing stock is owner occupied, while 19.2% are renter occupied. Since 2010, there has been a slight increase in the number of owner and renter occupied units, while there has been a decrease in the estimated number of seasonal units and an increase in the number of vacant rental units. These slight changes may adjust as more accurate information becomes available with the decennial Census, especially in regards to the classification of seasonal and other vacant housing units (ACS, 2011-2015).

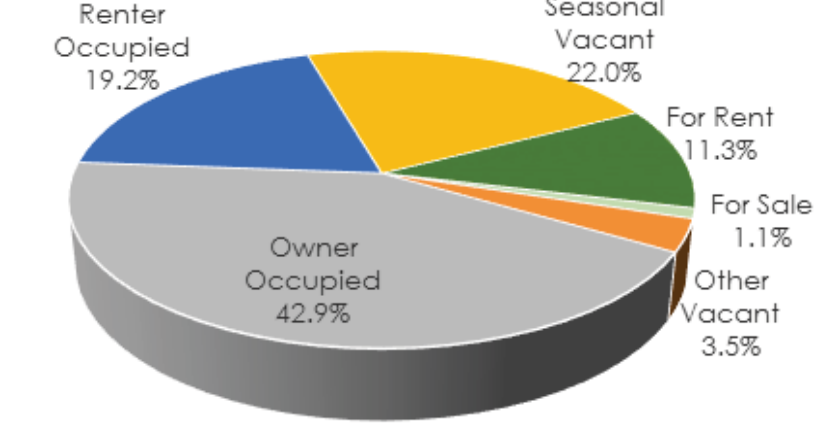
Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Trends



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015, (ID #B25003 and B25004)

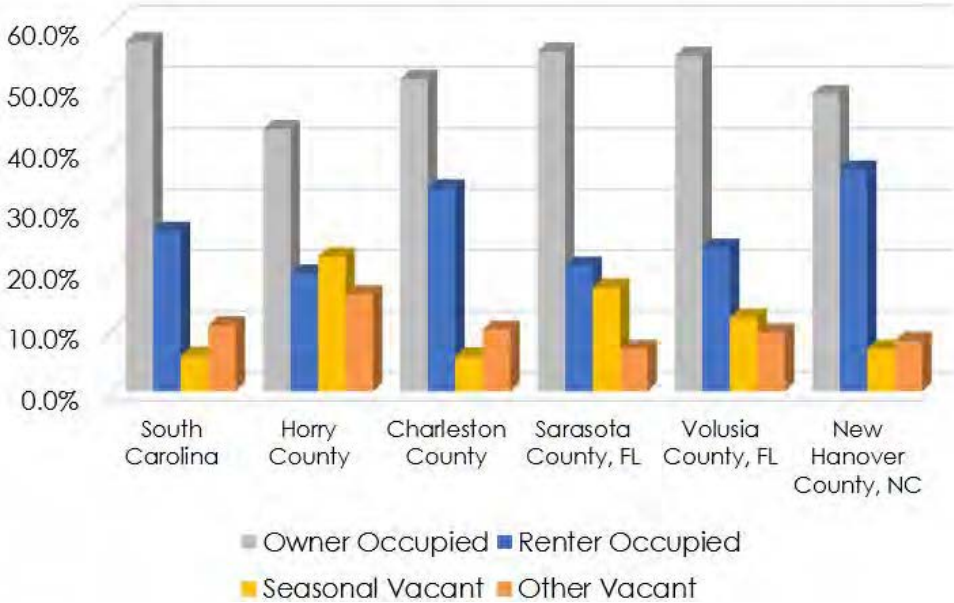
Year	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Seasonal Vacant	Other Vacant	Total Units
1980	23,925	10,873	15,020	5,185	55,003
1990	38,198	17,566	19,880	14,316	89,960
2000	59,713	22,087	24,945	15,340	122,085
2010	76,997	35,228	49,862	23,905	185,992
2015	81,966	36,772	42,083	30,291	191,102

Housing Occupancy and Vacancies



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015, (ID #B25003 and B25004)

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Comparison



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015, (ID #B25003 and B25004)

Overall, 37.9% of all units are considered vacant, largely due to the fact that 22.0% of the housing stock is seasonal. In total, there are approximately 42,000 seasonal units, which makes up 33.6% of South Carolina's seasonal housing stock. In 2015, only 1.1% of the overall housing stock was estimated to be vacant units for sale, supporting the fact that there are few units available for sale, especially in comparison to the number of vacant units available for rent. Areas with high proportions of vacation and second homes invariably show high vacancy rates.

Vacancy is calculated for April 1 of the Census year, prior to the peak of the tourist season. Second homes and units built specifically for seasonal rental purposes yield higher vacancy rates. Compared to other tourist-based coastal housing markets, Horry County has a greater share of seasonal housing stock. The sheer amount of housing units that are not available for year round usage, and are typically investment properties with high values, may have an impact on the availability of affordable housing in close proximity to the jobs available at near the beach. This has an impact on travel patterns and quality of life for working families.

	Occupied		Vacant				Total Units
	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Seasonal	For Rent	For Sale	Other	
Aynor CCD	3,005	956	231	78	5	305	4,580
Conway CCD	11,386	4,856	551	244	216	1,091	18,344
Conway East CCD	18,319	8,494	4,650	2,488	513	996	35,460
Floyds Crossroads CCD	857	376	55	48	-	179	1,515
Little River CCD	12,202	5,015	13,981	8,715	215	1,297	41,425
Longs CCD	2,161	514	360	76	77	275	3,463
Loris CCD	4,558	1,377	250	154	212	353	6,904
Myrtle Beach CCD	29,478	15,184	22,005	9,698	825	2,221	79,411
Total	81,966	36,772	42,083	21,501	2,063	6,717	191,102
Percent Total Housing Units	42.9%	19.2%	22.0%	11.3%	1.1%	3.5%	100%



## HOUSING CONDITIONS

Safe housing is fundamental to having a high quality of life. Because the vast majority of housing in Horry County has been recently constructed, there are few housing units that are classified as substandard, as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A residence is considered substandard if it does not have:

- (1) operable indoor plumbing;
- 2) a usable flush toilet inside the unit for the exclusive use of a family;
- (3) a usable bathtub or shower inside the unit for the exclusive use of a family;
- (4) electricity, or has inadequate or unsafe electrical service;
- (5) a safe or adequate source of heat; or
- (6) a kitchen.

Of all occupied housing units in Horry County, 0.3% lack complete plumbing facilities (304 units), 0.3% lack a means of heat (380 units), and 0.6% lack kitchen facilities (688 units). Overcrowding, meaning homes with more than one person per room, only makes up 2.1% of occupied units (2,552 units) (ACS, 2011-2015).

In addition, a housing unit is considered substandard if it is dilapidated, which includes unoccupied housing units. To classify as such:

- 1) the unit does not provide safe and adequate shelter, and in its present condition endangers the health, safety, or well-being of a family; or
- 2) the unit has one or more critical defects, or a combination of intermediate defects in sufficient number or extent to require considerable repair or rebuilding. The defects may involve original construction, or they may result from continued neglect or lack of repair or from serious damage to the structure.

These conditions are assessed and enforced by the Horry County Code Enforcement Department. Dilapidated structures are one mechanism to determine areas that need revitalization or are deteriorating and needing housing rehabilitation assistance, which is addressed further in this chapter.

Generally speaking, there are relatively few households living in poor housing conditions as tracked by the Census. However, it is important to note that the Census does not assess building code violations, fire and flood damage, or the conditions of unoccupied housing, such as foreclosed and abandoned homes.

### Flood and Wind

Because Horry County is located in the coastal zone and has an abundance of wetlands and riverfront, nearly 24% of the land area is located within the regulatory floodzone. As of 2018, there are numerous repetitive flood loss properties in unincorporated Horry County alone. Those properties have flooded multiple times over the course of five-years. Many of these homes were constructed prior to the adoption of the County's initial flood maps in 1987 and often do not meet today's floodzone construction regulations. Some repetitive flood losses are also located outside of the regulated floodzone, indicating the need for updated flood maps and mitigation efforts. Many single family homes, especially along the beachfront, have split into duplexes or enclosed the downstairs to make additional rooms or apartments for vacation rentals. It is unknown how many of these non-conforming uses exist and if they meet newer building code regulations, including fire and flood standards.

Beyond stick-built structures, there are many people living in older mobile homes or in campers. Mobile homes built prior to June of 1994 are not designed to withstand hurricane force winds. Campers and other recreational vehicles do not provide wind protection either. While mobile homes may be tied down,

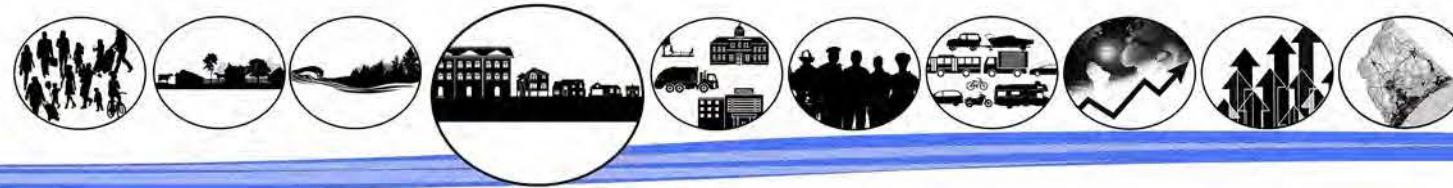
that does not mean that the structure can withstand hurricane force winds. Even though new model mobile homes have to meet wind zone standards, mobile homes constructed prior to 1994 can be sited and relocated anywhere in the County, regardless of wind zone. Horry County fortunately has not been impacted by a major wind event; however, there are many dwelling units at risk if such an event were to occur. At this time, there are an unknown number of campers or older mobile homes that serve as primary residences, vacation homes or rental properties. Because this data is not collected by Census, the County needs to continue to evaluate these inventories to identify appropriate housing solutions to natural hazards.

### DENSITY AND FORM

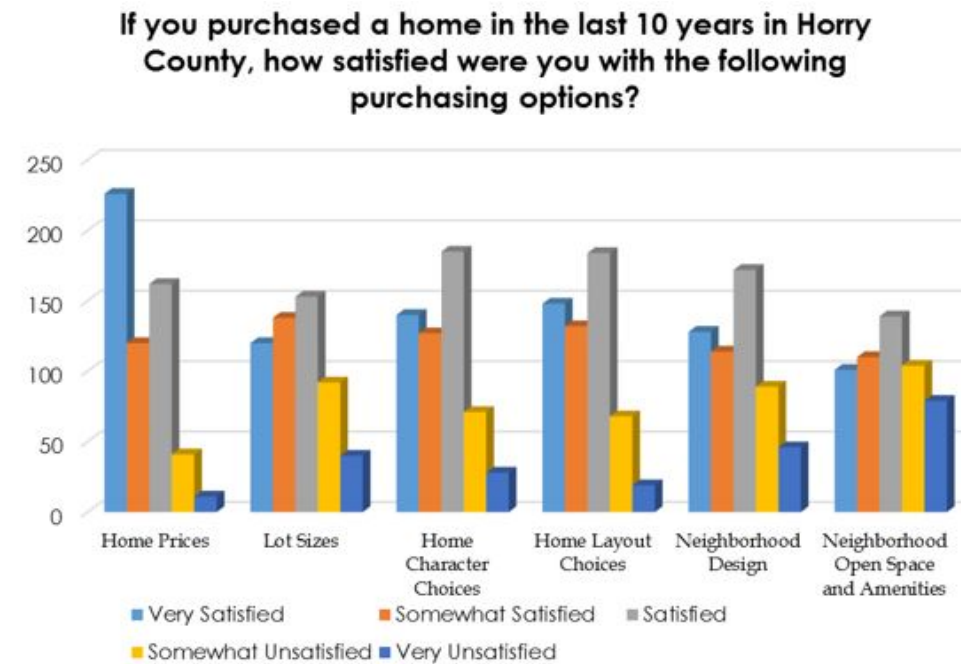
Residential density is intended to vary by zoning district to distinguish between rural, suburban and urban form. Zoning can result in variation in housing types, lot size, lot coverage, building separation, and even building heights. The smallest lot size under standard zoning is 6,000 sq ft; however, more dense developments can be approved as Planned Development Districts (PDD) or Multi-Residential Districts (MRD). Because of this, most of Horry County's zoning districts result in suburban design, with very few resulting in dense, urban design, besides those resort areas that were constructed prior to the establishment of zoning regulations.

All major residential subdivisions are required to meet Horry County's Land Development Regulations (LDR), which provide uniform standards for all new subdivisions to ensure traffic flow, adequate access for emergency vehicles, open space, and sidewalks. Some development criteria is triggered based off of the number of dwelling units. Additional regulations may exist within development agreements or overlay districts, in addition to stormwater regulations. Ac-



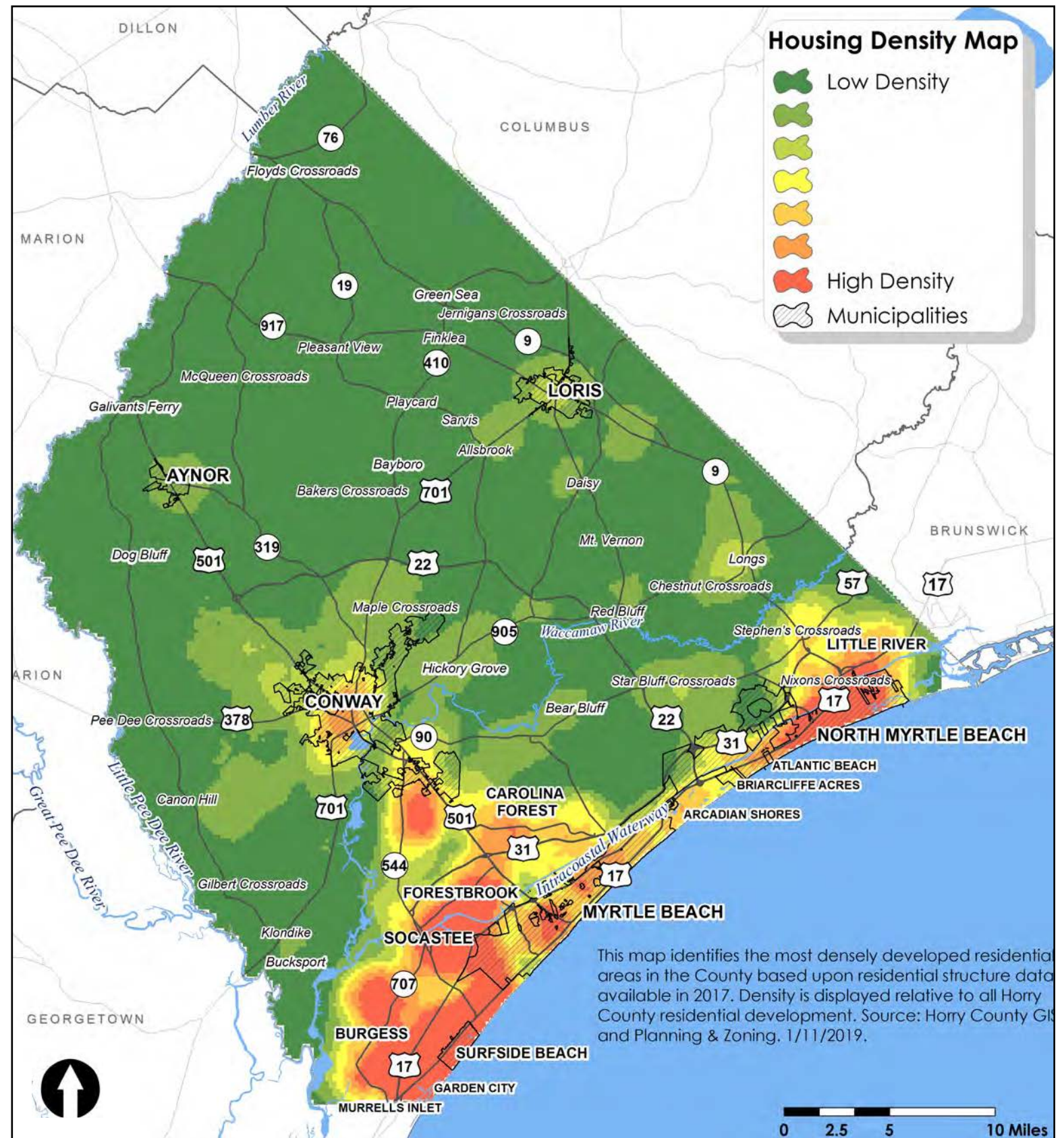


According to the IMAGINE 2040 Survey, those residents that purchased a new home in the last ten years were relatively happy with the housing types and lot sizes that were available on the market at the time of their purchase. Note that this is a reflection of the desires of existing residents and not those seeking to move to here.



Source: IMAGINE 2040 Public Input Survey

Based on existing residential development patterns, Horry County's most densely developed areas are the South Strand and North Strand. These areas have seen the most growth in recent years; however, the greatest density remains in resort areas along the beachfront. Most unincorporated areas of Horry County are not densely developed, and sprawling development patterns are apparent along major road corridors. Residential and commercial development are not centralized together with the exception of municipal downtowns and the areas directly along the beachfront. While residential development has increased drastically in the last 40 years, it has developed largely as residential major subdivisions without being integrated in to adjacent developments or with easy access to commercial uses and services. Establishing interconnected, walkable communities may be challenging in unincorporated Horry County because of extensive wetlands however, regulations and site design play a significant role in shaping livability. Redevelopment also presents opportunity to improve design.





Horry County will need to continue to revise its zoning and land development regulations to allow for variation in housing and neighborhood design to minimize impacts to the transportation network, improve access to jobs, and create healthy communities. The Future Land Use Map and definitions within the Land Use Chapter define where various densities are most appropriate. Development according to this plan will result in more distinct rural, suburban, and urban areas.

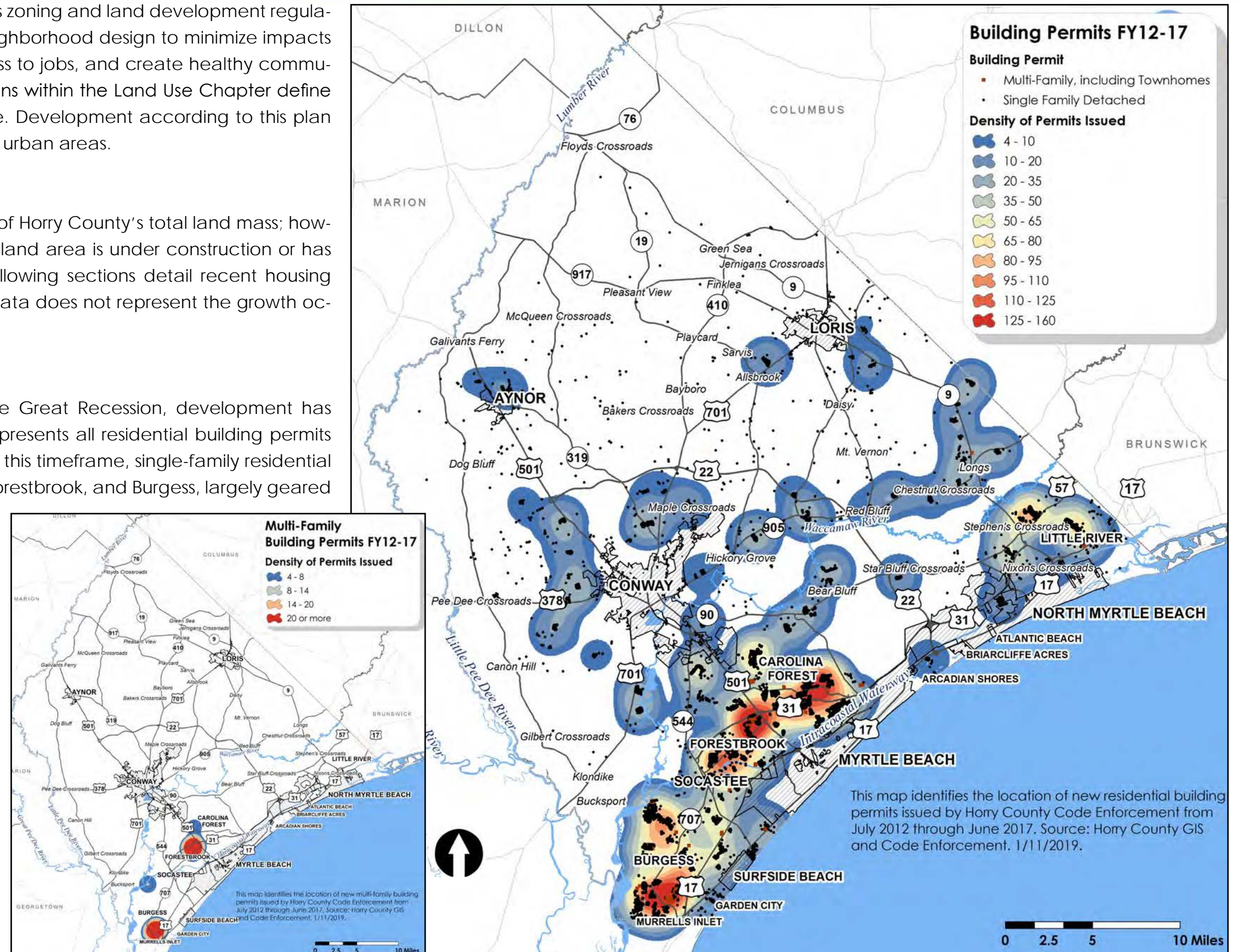
## DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Major residential subdivisions account for 2% of Horry County's total land mass; however, an additional 8% of the County's total land area is under construction or has been rezoned for major subdivisions. The following sections detail recent housing trends in unincorporated Horry County. This data does not represent the growth occurring in municipalities.

### Recent Growth

While residential growth declined during the Great Recession, development has started to rebound. The map on the right represents all residential building permits that were issued from 2012 – June 2017. Over this timeframe, single-family residential growth occurred heavily in Carolina Forest, Forestbrook, and Burgess, largely geared by construction in major subdivisions, like The Farm, Tuscany, Amberfield, and Prince Creek. These areas can be clearly seen as red 'hot spots' on the map to the right. Within these high development areas, there was limited construction of new multi-family units, as shown below, largely due to the abundance of available multi-family units prior to the economic downturn.

The majority of the growth that has occurred in recent years occurred as a result of rezoning requests that were approved nearly two decades ago. Areas shown in blue indicate where residential permits were not as prominent over the last few years; however, many of them can be seen in areas emerging as







growth areas, such as Hwy 9, 90, and 905 corridors. There is also growth emerging around the perimeter of City of Conway. If development patterns continue in these rural areas of the County, infrastructure needs and costs will need to be evaluated to inform future land use decisions and capital improvements, such as road projects, fire stations, police services, recreation, and schools.

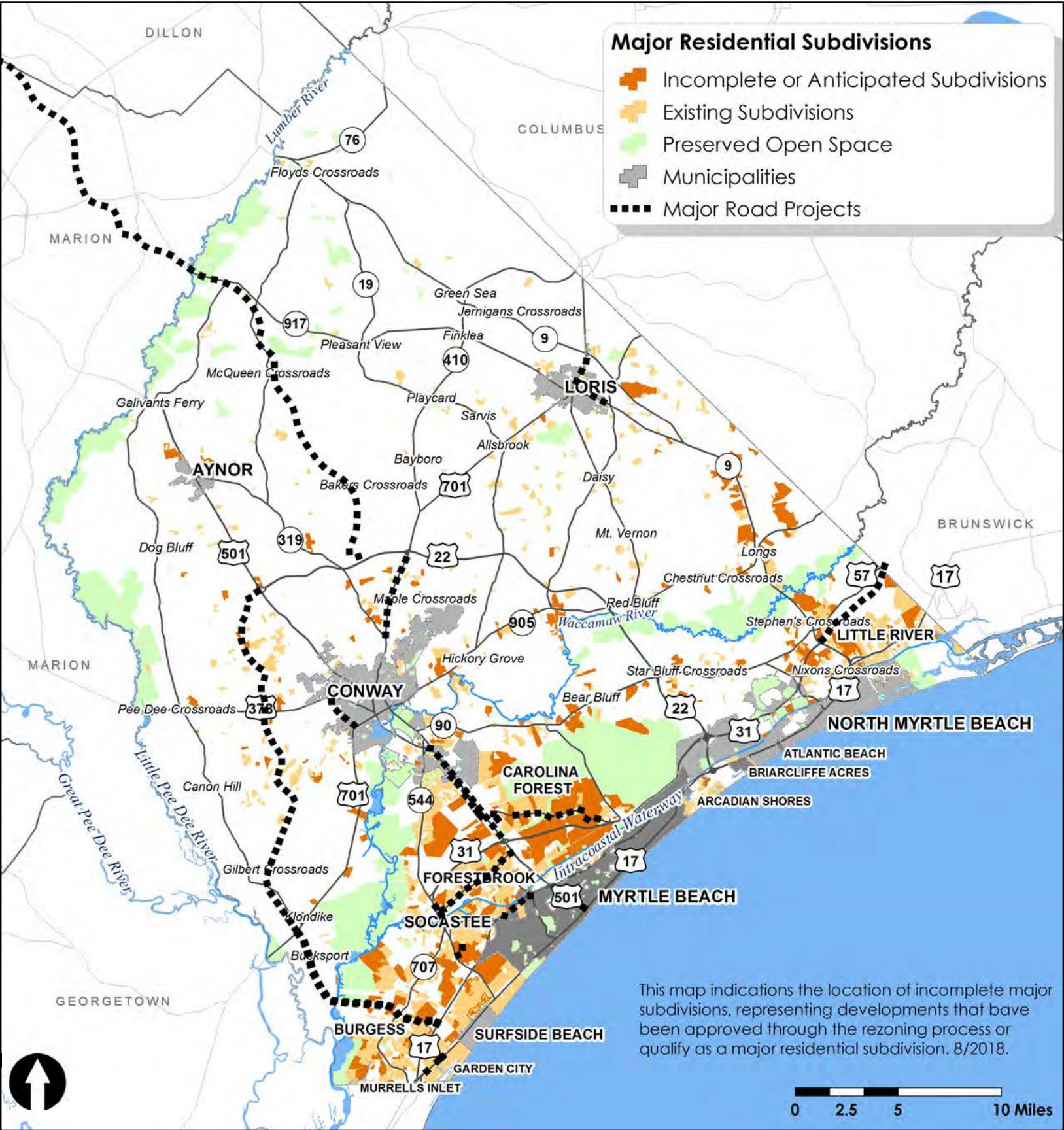
Potential Growth

Based off of population projections, approximately 275,000 more people will be living in Horry County by 2040. In order to accommodate this growth, assuming that average household size remains approximately 2.37, an additional 116,160 housing units will need to be available between the cities and unincorporated Horry County. As of 2017, over 52,000 housing units in unincorporated Horry County were approved within major residential subdivisions through the rezoning or development review process; however, they remain to be constructed. Nearly 14,000 of these units are located in Carolina Forest, another 10,000 in Little River, and approximately 6,000 in the Burgess Community. If constructed and average household size remains the same, unincorporated Horry County can accommodate approximately 45% of the projected population growth through 2040. Nearly 64,000 additional units will be needed if population continues to soar as anticipated. The breakdown by County Census Division shown below conveys existing housing trends and speculates growth if those trends continue. They do not account for alterations in development patterns that could occur from land use policies or incentives. The projected additional units needed also does not account for seasonal housing unit needs or the transition of seasonal housing into year-round residences.

Projected Housing Growth and Needs

Census Division	Existing Units	Preapproved (Not Constructed) in Unincorporated Horry County			Additional Units Needed
		Multi-Family	Single-Family	Total	
Aynor CCD	4,580	-	899	899	2,356
Conway CCD	18,344	-	2,235	2,235	10,022
Conway East CCD	35,460	9,008	13,385	22,393	21,799
Floyds Crossroads CCD	1,515	-	-	-	754
Little River CCD	41,425	3,886	5,035	8,921	5,156
Longs CCD	3,463	995	2,596	3,591	8,185
Loris CCD	6,904	-	802	802	4,128
Myrtle Beach CCD	79,411	6,473	7,111	13,584	11,336
	191,102	20,362	32,063	52,425	63,736

Sources: Housing Units – American Community Survey 2011-2015. (ID #B25001); Preapproved Housing Units – Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2018.





## HOUSING ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Because a large portion of the future population growth can be accommodated within already approved residential areas, additional rezonings for major subdivisions should be evaluated to ensure that an adequate balance of housing types, densities, and community design are available for permanent residents and vacationers. Beyond the availability of housing, the County should also more heavily monitor housing conditions, including, but not limited to repetitive flood loss areas and enclosure of breakaway walls, conversion of single-family homes into duplexes and vacation rentals, mobile home age and durability, and dilapidated housing.

## COST AND AFFORDABILITY

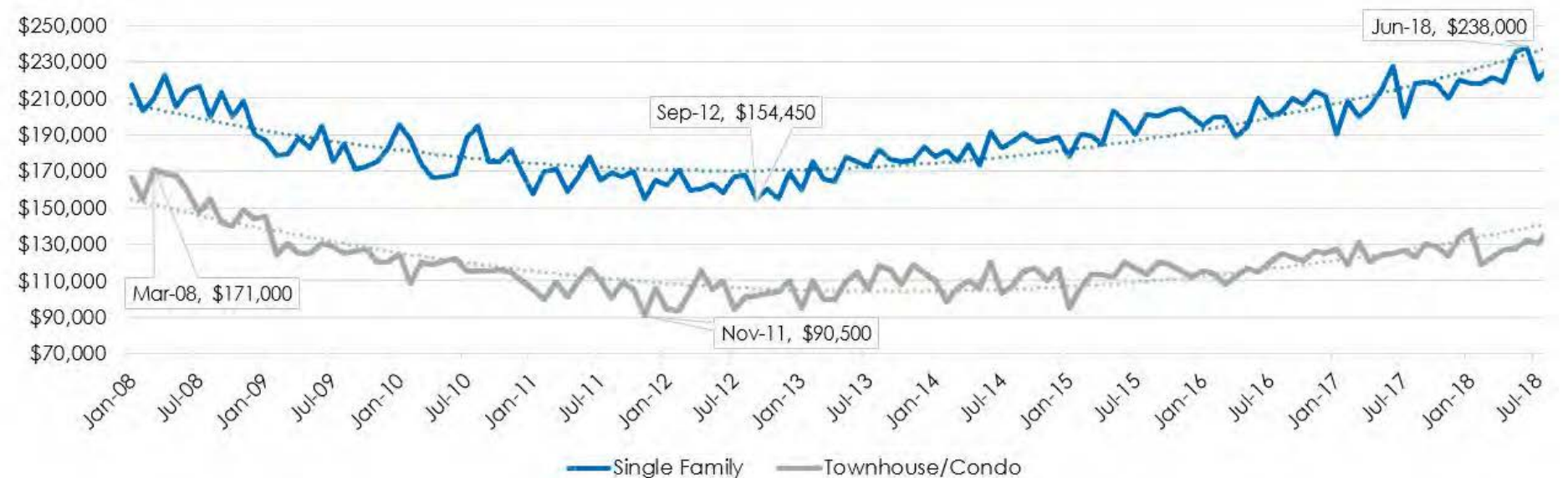
Home costs and average rents have increased since the economic downturn. Single family home values have rebounded more quickly than condos and townhouses. Unfortunately, wages have not increased at the same rate, resulting in an increased cost burden on many households. This trend will likely continue and further increase the need for affordable housing within close proximity to job centers, schools, retail, and services.

## HOUSING COSTS

In 2017, the median property value of owner-occupied housing units in Horry County was \$176,400, which is slightly lower than the median property value of \$181,800 in 2007. Property values remain slightly above the state, but lower than national median values. 65.8% of owner-occupied housing units are valued at less than \$200,000. See the table to the left.

Despite low property values, average single family sales prices reached an all-time high of \$238,000 in 2018, far above the lowest monthly average of \$154,450 that was recorded in September 2012 during the Recession. The recent increase in values reflects the recovery of the housing market, but may indicate that home sales beginning to exceed their value.

## Median Sales Price



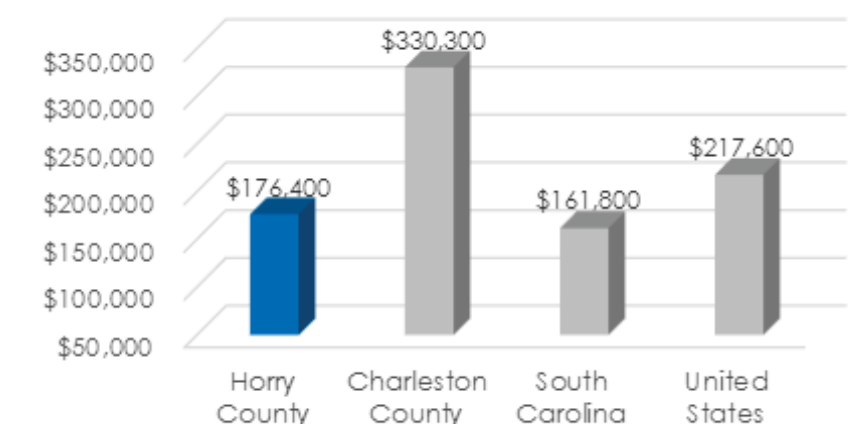
## 2017 Median Sales Price

	Single Family	Condo/Townhouse
Aynor	\$177,525	NA
Carolina Forest	\$249,000	\$120,500
Conway	\$155,000	\$88,000
Garden City/Murrells Inlet	\$259,733	\$144,700
Little River	\$199,900	\$92,000
Loris/Longs	\$148,358	\$87,000
Myrtle Beach	\$303,729	\$120,000
North Myrtle Beach	\$297,000	\$166,900
Socastee	\$178,000	\$93,900
Surfside Beach	\$226,500	\$84,000
Grand Strand	\$217,000	\$126,000

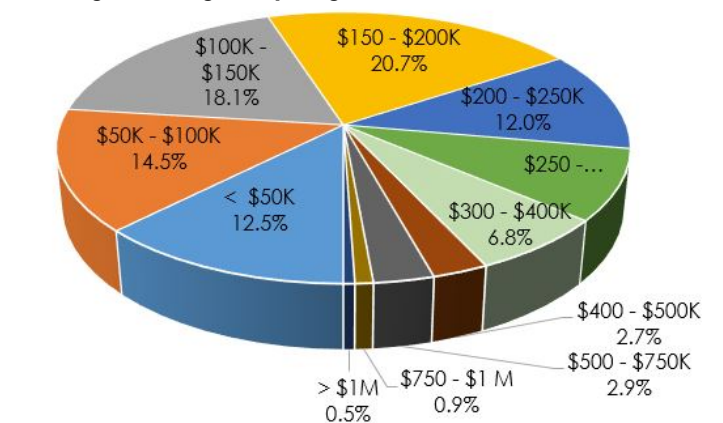
Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®. Local Market Update.

On average, 35% of single family home sales in the Grand Strand are made up of new construction, while the remaining 65% is comprised of resales. New construction is resulting in higher median sales in the region, nearly \$30,000 more on average (CCAR, 2018). In addition, new single-family home prices exceed the cost of a resale, but the gap is beginning to close as fewer units are available for sale.

## Median Property Value Comparison



## Horry County Property Values

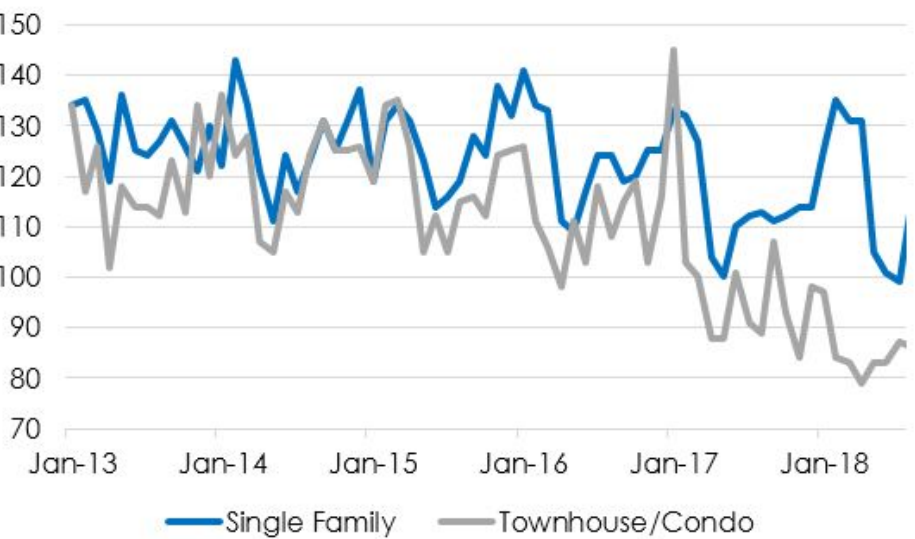


Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2011-2015, (ID#B25075)



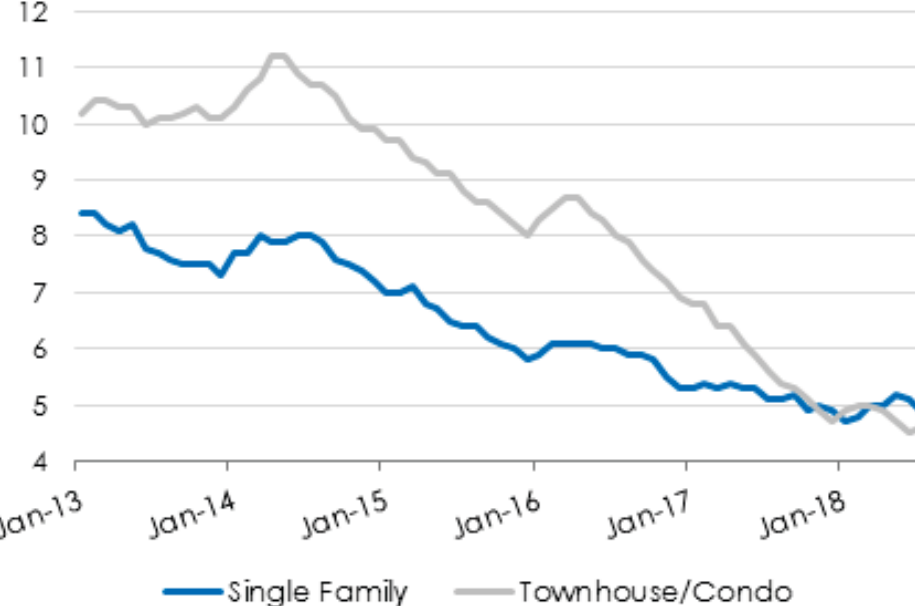


Median Days on the Market



Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®, InfoSparks © 2018 ShowingTime.

Monthly Supply of Residential Units for Sale



Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®.

Rental Costs

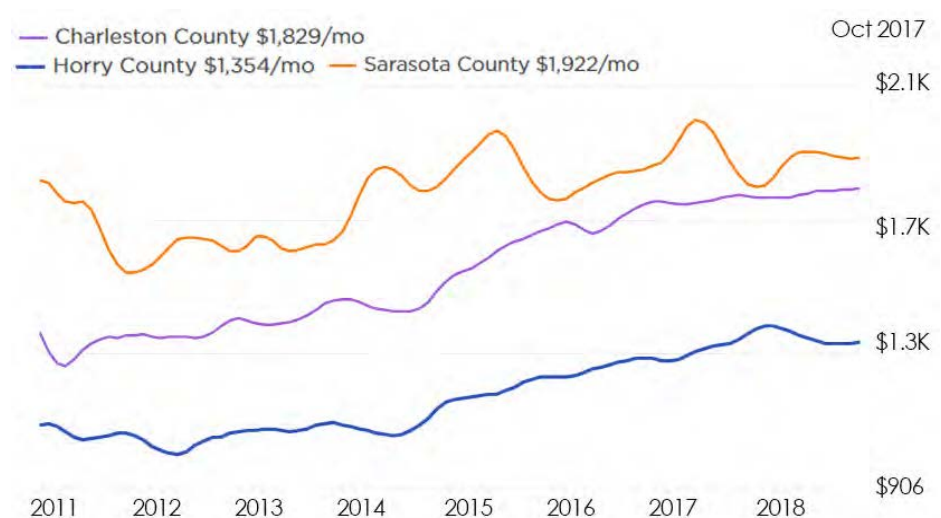
While renting often seems like a more affordable option than purchasing a home, rental costs are also increasing rapidly. The 2015 American Community Survey estimated that approximately 60% of all renters paid between \$500 and \$999/month. 2015 estimates suggest that average rent has increased to approximately \$1,295/month, nearly a \$300/month increase since 2011.

Rising housing costs can lead to displacement of residents due to economic pressures. Renters are particularly impacted, as increases in the value of a home can lead to higher rents (Horry HOME Consortium, 2017). Because Horry County has a high number of seasonal rental units, this can drive up the cost of year-round rentals especially in proximity to the job centers at the beach. Conversely, off season housing near the beach can be more affordable, but is not a viable long-term housing solution.

Housing Supply

Despite the fact that Horry County and the rest of the nation is emerging from a decline in construction, there now is a deficit of housing in Horry County, which can have a profound impact on sales prices and rental pricing. While a number of housing developments are underway, there is not enough product on the market to meet the growing demand. In addition, recent floods may have placed an additional burden on both the housing market and the construction industry. New development is attempting to keep up with the demand, driving up the cost of housing; however, the sale price for condos and townhomes have yet to reach the sale price peak from 2008. In order to wait out the Recession, many homeowners rented out their properties, as opposed to selling them.

Three Bedroom Rental Cost Comparison



Source: Zillow, Horry County Homes Prices and Values

2015 Median Rent Price

Estimated Rent Paid in 2015	%
Less than \$500	6.7%
\$500-999	60%
\$1,000-1,499	20.9%
\$1,500-1,999	3.7%
\$2,000 or more	1.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2011-2015

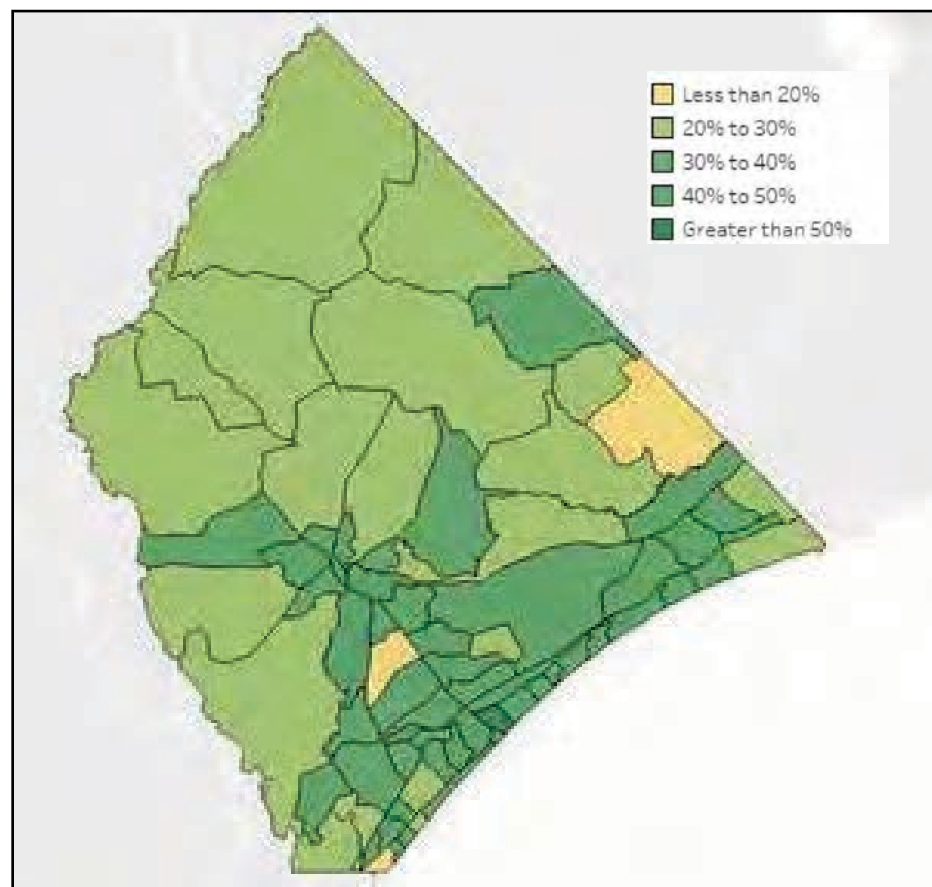


## COST BURDEN

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as when the occupant or family spends no more than 30% of their gross household income towards their total gross housing costs, whether renting or owning. Housing costs include rent or mortgage costs, water, sewer, gas, and electric services. Approximately 39% of homeowners and 56% of renters in Horry County were considered cost-burdened in 2015 (ACS, 2011-2015).



Horry County Percent Cost Burdened

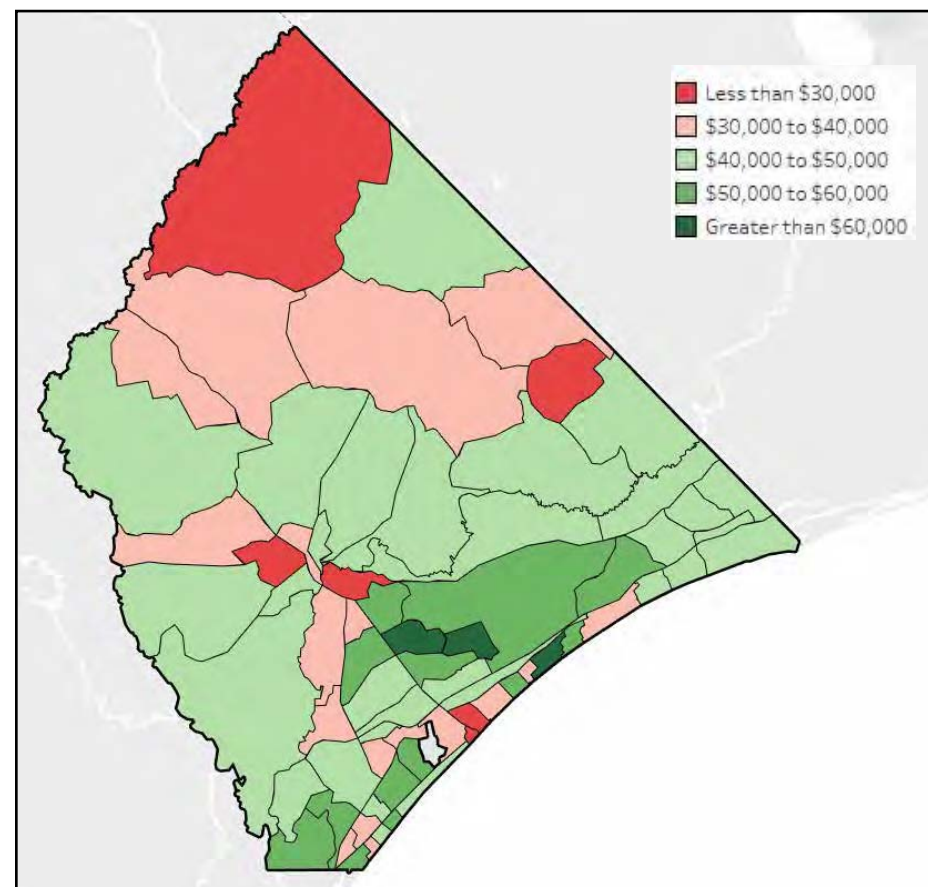


Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Income

Cost burden heavily correlates with median household income. According to HUD, the Area Median Income (AMI) for Horry County in 2017 was \$52,100, 13% lower than South Carolina's annual AMI of \$58,894. Those families whose income is 30% of the area median income are considered low-income by HUD. From 2001 to 2018 Horry County's median home value increased 45.81%. Over almost the same period, the median household income went up 42.86% from \$36,470 to \$52,100 (ACS, 2011-2015 and HUD). This could afford a two-to-three-bedroom home in Horry County, as shown in the tables to the right.

Median Household Income



Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Household Income	Income Limit Category	4 Person Household
\$52,100	Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits	\$24,600
	Very Low (50%) Income Limits	\$26,050
	Low (80%) Income Limits	\$41,700

Source: HUD, FY 2017 Fair Market Rents

## Fair Market Rent

In 2017, 31% or 36,772 households were renters in Horry County were renters (NLIHC, 2017). In order to assess renter affordability, Fair Market Rents (FMR) primarily used to determine payment standard amounts for housing programs. According to HUD, FMRs are gross rent estimates that include the cost of all tenant-paid utilities, except telephones, cable, or satellite television service, and internet service. Note that FMR does not include homeowners' association dues, which are commonplace for most developments in Horry County. They are especially high within condo regimes.

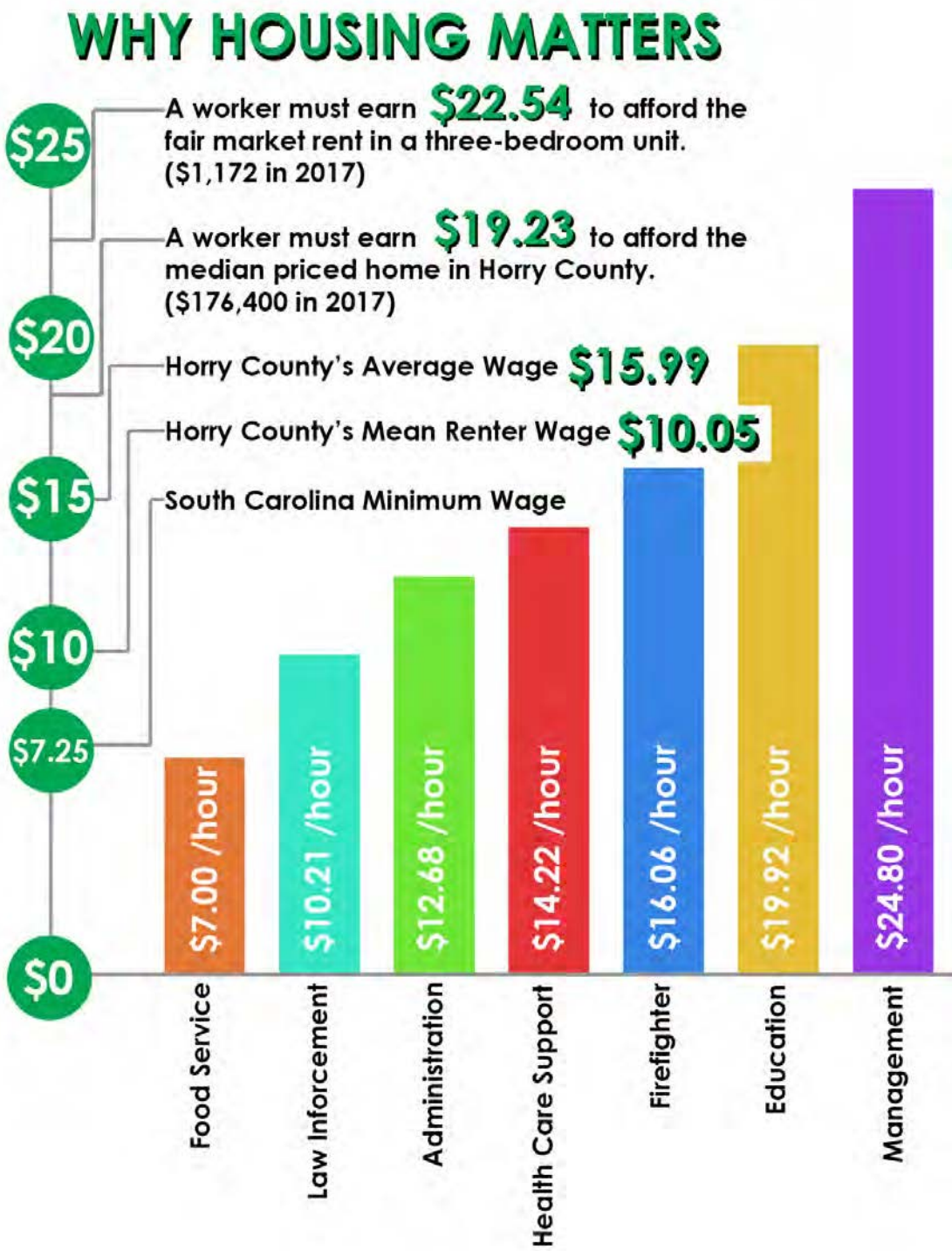
Fair Market Rents (FMR) by Number of Bedrooms				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$688	\$823	\$1,094	\$1,322
Horry County	\$754	\$880	\$1,172	\$1,345
Annual Household Income to Afford FMR by Bedrooms				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$27,515	\$32,930	\$43,758	\$52,869
Horry County	\$30,160	\$35,200	\$46,880	\$53,800
Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent (At 40 hours/week)				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$13.23	\$15.83	\$21.04	\$25.42
Horry County	\$14.50	\$16.92	\$22.54	\$25.87

The first table indicates the FMR by the number of bedrooms, while the following tables indicate the annual household income or hourly wage needed to afford those rents. In all housing size categories, a higher income is necessary in Horry County than the state. While the median household income in Horry County is \$52,100, a three bedroom home is the largest home a family could afford with this income. For those households that qualify as low income, they could only





afford a two-bedroom home. And households that qualify as very low and extremely low income cannot afford housing in the County.



Sources: Horry County Fair Housing Plan (2017), Trulia Heat Map: Horry County, SC. (2018), DataUSA: Horry County, SC. (2015), and Zillow Mortgage Calculator. (2018)

In Horry County, a citizen would have to work 80 hours per week at minimum wage to afford a one bedroom home at FMR. While the estimated mean renter wage in Horry County is \$10.05/hour, this would only afford an individual \$523 towards housing, not even enough for a one-bedroom unit. This stresses the importance of providing affordable housing and direct rental assistance for those in need, in addition to attracting higher paying industry.

Foreclosures

Foreclosures are another way to measure cost burden. According to Zillow Home Value Index, foreclosures will be a factor impacting home values in the next several years. In Horry County 2.9 homes are foreclosed per 10,000. This is greater than the national value of 1.6. The percent of delinquent mortgages in Horry County is 1.7%, which is slightly higher than the national value of 1.6%. With US home values declining more than 20% during the economic downturn, many homeowners remain underwater in their mortgages, meaning they owe more than their home is worth. The percent of Horry County homeowners underwater on their mortgage is estimated to be 11.6%. These homeowners may be cost burdened and unable to move to a more affordable location because they cannot sell their homes for what they owe. As the housing market continues to recover, fewer people will be underwater in their mortgages, but these same individuals may not be able to find more affordable housing options.

FAIR HOUSING

Fair housing has long been an important issue in American urban policy, stemming from discrimination and fueled by growing civil unrest that reached a boiling point during the Civil Rights Movement. The passing of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 was a critical step towards addressing this complex problem, but was far from the solution. The Fair Housing Act mandates that HUD 'affirmatively further fair housing' through its programs. Towards this end, HUD requires funding recipients to undertake Fair Housing Planning (FHP) to proactively take steps that will lead to less discriminatory housing markets and better living conditions for minority groups and vulnerable populations.

While affordable housing is a significant fair housing issue, addressing fair housing needs is much more complex. The following impediments were identified in Horry County's 2017 Assessment of Fair Housing:

- Location and type of affordable housing;
- Community opposition to public housing, the not in my Backyard (NIMBY) sentiments;
- Displacement of residents due to economic pressure;
- Heir's property issues;
- Lack of access to financial services;
- Lending discrimination;
- The availability of affordable units in a range of sizes;
- Admissions and occupancy policies and procedures, including preferences in public housing;
- Lack of access to high performing schools;



- Quality of affordable housing information programs;
- Lack of public fair housing enforcement;
- Lack of assistance for housing accessibility modifications;
- Lack of affordable, integrated housing for individuals who need supportive services;
- Lack of public investments in specific neighborhoods;
- Lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations;
- Lack of local fair housing laws.

The highest barrier to fair housing is the location and type of affordable housing. Community opposition and displacement of residents due to economic pressure also contribute to multiple fair housing issues. Equally important, the lack of public investments and lack of local fair housing enforcement also contribute to multiple fair housing issues.

### **COST AND AFFORDABILITY FINDINGS**

Horry County is rapidly recovering from the economic downturn. The availability of homes for sale is lower than 2% of the entire housing stock. The demand is driving up home values and also spurring new construction of single-family homes. Major subdivisions that were put on hold are now being built out, and there has been a recent increase in rezoning requests for new major subdivisions.

From a pure quantitative standpoint, there are ample units in the region to house the population; however, high home values and rents in comparison to wages, result in much of the housing stock being out of the affordable range for large portions of the population. This indicates that many households are vulnerable to becoming homeless, as there is no ability to establish a 'rainy day fund.' While tourism and

service sector jobs in Horry County reduce unemployment rates during part of the year, they can work to impede the economic viability necessary for many to participate in the housing market. In addition, the lack of a variety of affordable housing options with convenient access to job centers, schools, public transportation, and services also creates a barrier to affordable, fair housing. Public housing complexes are no longer an effective way to provide affordable housing in one's community as they often perpetuate the cycle of poverty and are stigmatized. Addressing fair housing will require creative solutions with area housing partners, developers, and lending agencies, including but not limited to, the development of market-based incentives for affordable housing, down payment assistance, and first time homebuyer education.

### **SHORT-TERM HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

Shelter is the basic necessity for all individuals. Addressing housing needs requires a multi-faceted approach, from providing short-term housing solutions for those most direly in need to providing long-term solutions to provide safe, quality housing for all.

### **HOMELESSNESS**

Homelessness is fundamentally about a lack of housing that is affordable to households at different income levels. On a single night in January 2015, 564,708 people were experiencing homelessness nationwide. In 2016, the South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless Point in Time Count estimated 5,050 persons experiencing homelessness statewide. Horry County had the highest number of unsheltered homeless individuals (236), and the third highest total homeless individuals (492) counted in South Carolina (South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless Point-Time-Report, 2016). Nearly 60% of the homeless in Horry County are unsheltered, some of which live in nomadic homeless camps. These camps are located on private property and do not have running water, restrooms, or proper trash disposal, resulting in unsanitary conditions for those living in them.

Horry County and the City of Myrtle Beach maintain much of the homeless population for the region. Regional data clearly conveys that 55.5% of the homeless population is black or African-Americans, which is considerably higher than the percent of the overall population, 36%. 19.4% of the homeless population are children under the age of 18, but 32% of the total population. 60% of the homeless population are male and 40% female.

Eastern Carolina Homeless Organization (ECHO) is the lead entity coordinating the region's Continuum of Care (CoC)





Program. The CoC brings together over 80 members representing more than 40 agencies that provide a wide range of services to the homeless. These services include homeless/emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, supportive services, emergency food, meals, clothing, medical services, mental health services, rental and utility assistance, and many other appropriate services.



Homeless Camp in an unincorporated area of Myrtle Beach  
Source: Horry County GIS

### EMERGENCY HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Everyone is ready for housing - "Housing First" is a low barrier approach which ensures that no preconditions, behavioral contingencies, or other limiting factors to enter into housing are placed on the individual. This approach prioritizes client choice in both housing selection and in service participation.

Homelessness is unacceptable and expensive. A response that focuses solely on shelters is ineffective and expensive. The County has prioritized funding of homelessness prevention (HP) and rapid rehousing (RRH) programs with HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) dollars.

Horry County, through a subrecipient agreement with ECHO, assisted 139 households through rapid rehousing and 70 households through homelessness prevention assistance during the 2016-2017 program year. The time between intake and housing a family is approximately 26 days, indicating that a lack of availability of affordable rental units in the County impedes solutions for the homeless.

### RAPID REHOUSING

The National Alliance on Homelessness has reported that 75% of rapid re-housing participants exit to permanent housing, much higher than from emergency shelter (16%) or transitional housing (42%). The average cost per exit to permanent housing was significantly lower for rapid re-housing (about \$4,100) than it was for either shelter (about \$10,000) or transitional housing (about \$22,200). Therefore, five families can be housed utilizing the rapid rehousing approach for the same cost of housing one family at a transitional housing shelter.

### PUBLIC HOUSING

Publicly supported housing includes public housing, project-based Section 8, other Multifamily Assisted developments, and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV). According to HUD, public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Legally protected groups in Horry County (the elderly, individuals with a disability, certain race groups, and families) have higher proportions of their members in several public housing programs than the general public. There are two Public Housing Authorities serving low-income households throughout the County:

- The Housing Authority of Myrtle Beach provides Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers;
- The Housing Authority of Conway provides Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and public housing units.

### HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION - HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Horry County Community Development Department manages several home repair programs funded through HUD. The Essential Home Repair Program is designed for low-income homeowners only, whose income is not more than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Examples of essential home repairs that may be covered under this program include leaking roofs, flooring issues, accessibility modifications for disabled residents, deficient plumbing, etc.

Some of the eligibility requirements for the program include: owning the home and living in it, documentation of ownership, current property taxes, and executing a forgivable loan for the cost of the repairs, etc.



Rehabilitation Examples  
Source: CDBG

The Horry County Emergency Repair Program provides financial assistance to low and moderate income owners who have needs for replacement of heating and air conditioning systems in their homes. The program also provides assistance to disabled homeowners who need accessibility improvements, such as wheelchair ramps or hand rails.



### SHORT-TERM HOUSING ASSISTANCE FINDINGS

Fundamentally, homelessness is the result of a lack of affordable housing. Emergency shelter options are limited in Horry County and do not provide a long-term, safe housing solution for those in need. In addition, transitional housing is only allowed within the ME2 zoning district, which also allows drug treatment and counseling services. To attempt to rezone for such a use will spark opposition from the public. There are a couple of older zoning districts in the County in which transitional housing is allowed; however, there are a limited number of properties available. While it is more affordable and effective to place someone in a permanent home, there is a lack of affordable rental inventory throughout the County and many affordable areas are not close to job centers, public transportation, schools and services. One of the best means to address homelessness remains in proactive measures to prevent homelessness. Horry County continues to provide homeowner repair and assistance to prevent the deterioration of safe and affordable housing stock.

### REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

The Horry County Community Development Department leads revitalization efforts throughout the County, in partnership with other County departments, numerous municipalities and non-profit organizations. Because the Community Development Department is responsible for administering Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for housing and infrastructure improvements in the County and region, HUD requires that the County develop a Consolidated Plan to outline funding priorities for a five year time frame. HUD also requires that the County develop an Annual Action Plan to detail the activities to be completed and the funding sources for them. The activities are planned to help achieve HUD's CDBG national objectives as well as Horry County's long-term goals as identified in the Consolidated Plan. Each

year, citizen input and participation is incorporated in helping to identify the types of future CDBG projects to be funded. The Consolidated Plan, Annual CDBG Action Plans, and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Reports are available through the Community Development Office and online at: <https://www.horrycounty.org/Departments/CDBG>.

Grant money can go towards any of the following:

- Acquisition of real property;
- Relocation and demolition;
- Rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures;
- Construction of public facilities and improvements such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes;
- Public services, within certain limits;
- Activities relating to energy conservation and renewable energy resources;
- Provision of assistance to profit-motivated business to carry out economic development and job creation/retention activities (<http://www.hud.gov/>).

Beyond managing Community Development Block Grant funds and projects, the Community Development Department also serves as the primary lead for the administration of grants. In addition, they orchestrates major recovery efforts in the event of a disaster, managing FEMA documentation and funds for County lead recovery efforts.

### NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

In an effort to address housing conditions, infrastructure, and public service needs in deteriorating communities, Horry County has developed neighborhood plans. The intent of

these plans are to help stabilize a community from further deterioration and to help improve the condition and quality of life for its residents. These areas are often defined as low-to-moderate income areas and are often strained by deteriorating or dilapidated housing, deteriorating road and drainage conditions, lack of adequate water and waste water systems, accumulation of trash and debris, over growth of brush, high crime rates, and a lack of access to services. In addition, many housing solutions are impeded by zoning because of non-conforming structures and uses, as most of the communities in need of rehabilitation were developed prior to the establishment of zoning in Horry County.

Neighborhood plans can provide solutions to some of these challenges and identify short and long-term options to stabilize a community. These plans are adopted as amendments to the Horry County Comprehensive Plan and can provide inform capital improvement needs that can be incorporated into the County's Capital Improvements Plan. To date, the County has developed two revitalization plans, including the Racepath Neighborhood Revitalization Plan and the Bennett Loop Neighborhood Plan. Bucksport, Cedar Branch, and Freemont are additional communities in need of neighborhood plans. Recent flood events have also triggered the need for community and countywide recovery and resiliency plans.

### NUISANCE ABATEMENT PROGRAM

The Nuisance Abatement Program was approved by County Council in 2017 to address unfit dwellings and related structures within the unincorporated areas of Horry County. This addresses the need for any building or structure which are unfit for human habitation due to:

- Dilapidation;
- Disrepair;





- Defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities;
- Lack of adequate ventilation, light or sanitary facilities;
- Extensive damage or structural deterioration so as to render the dwelling unsafe; or
- Other conditions rendering such dwellings unsafe or unsanitary, dangerous, or detrimental to the health, safety or morals or otherwise inimical to the welfare of the residents of the County.

After a dwelling has been indicated unfit for human habitation due to any of the stipulations listed above, the County has the authority to exercise its police powers to repair, close, or demolish such dwellings. The Nuisance Abatement Program formalized the procedure for the County to address dwellings that create hazards to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Horry County. The implementation of this program requires an integrated partnership between Community Development, Code Enforcement, Police Department, Procurement Department, and Attorney’s Office. It has also resulted in more consistent, streamlined procedures for identifying and addressing dilapidated housing throughout the County.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION FINDINGS

Revitalization requires an integrated approach among various partners and County departments to effectively result in change. Horry County’s Community Development Department facilitates most revitalization efforts occurring both in the County and in area municipalities, as they allocate funding for housing assistance, new construction, and infrastructure improvements. There are many challenges that successfully revitalize a community. Zoning and non-conforming uses can impede the ability to provide transitional housing, public

housing, or even repair or rehabilitate one’s home. Luckily, the State of South Carolina has granted local governments the authority to establish priority investment zones for the establishment of market-based incentives and alleviation of zoning regulations that hinder revitalization.

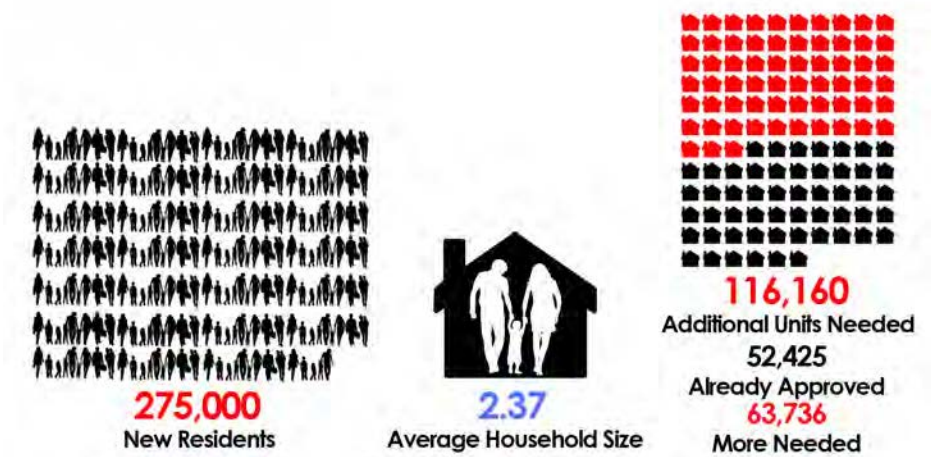
While repairs and new residential construction can help stabilize a community, Horry County is limited in its authority to provide services to donut-hole areas within the City of Myrtle Beach and Conway. Without annexing into the adjoining municipality, revitalization efforts can be stymied. State law also inhibits revitalization efforts in unincorporated areas, as the state has not granted counties the authority to remove dilapidated commercial buildings. This is often a critical component to trigger revitalization and redevelopment. The state also has not granted local governments the authority to place liens on properties for cleaning up overgrown brush or junk, only allowing liens to be placed on a property for the removal of a structure. These are just a few challenges to overcome blight.

Horry County is continuing to pursue the development of neighborhood plans; however, there is also a need to develop community plans that can prevent areas of the County from becoming blighted and to spur reinvestment. Horry County will need to continue revitalization, stabilization, and recovery plans in order to ensure safe housing options for our residents.

CONCLUSIONS

As Horry County continues to grow, it will need to ensure that housing is safe and affordable. To do so, housing supply and the type of desired supply must keep up with demand both for full-time and seasonal residents. Housing and community design have a direct impact on quality of life, along with housing proximity to jobs, services, shopping, and leisure activities. Community form will be driven by zoning, land development regulations, and the Future Land Use Map and future rezoning requests.

Reinvestment and revitalization efforts will need to continue and be targeted in order to have a significant impact on existing communities. Prior to recent flood events, there was already a need for housing assistance and revitalization in many parts of the County. Hurricane Florence and the subsequent flooding from it has expanded the need for additional housing assistance and mitigation efforts. This event has also triggered the need to evaluate other construction and neighborhood design standards to create a more resilient community.





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# CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES



## INTRODUCTION

Community facilities provide services to meet the day-to-day needs of the community and to enhance quality of life. The Community Facilities Chapter considers general governmental facilities, water supply and wastewater treatment, stormwater, solid waste and disposal, educational facilities, medical services, libraries, recreational facilities, and other public facilities. These facilities are greatly influenced by the direction and intensity of development in Horry County.

Pursuant to Section 6-29-540 of the 1994 SC Planning Enabling Legislation, the Horry County Planning Commission is required to review proposals for all new public facilities except utilities. After the adoption of the Community Facilities Element, no new street, structure, square, park, other public way, grounds, open space, or public building may be constructed in Horry County until plans have been submitted to the Planning Commission for comments and compatibility to the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENTAL FACILITIES

Horry County maintains a council-administrator form of government, with a current full-time staff of approximately 2,200 employees. While many services are now available through the internet, the County also operates facilities throughout its districts to serve its residents.

### County Government Complexes and Offices

The County has several government complexes, including the Horry County Government and Justice Center in Conway, the 21st Avenue Complex in Myrtle Beach, and the South Strand Complex in the Burgess community. While these complexes have redundant services, this makes it easier for the public to access highly used offices, such as the Treasurer's Office. The County has many departments and

services that are not located within these complexes, which can make it difficult for internal and external services and coordination. For instance, Business Licensing is located in a separate building from Zoning, both of which are necessary for someone to visit when setting up a new business. Another example is the Treasurer's Office which is located in a different building than the SC Department of Motor Vehicles (SC DMV), which can impact someone paying their car taxes and needing to obtain a sticker for their license plate. Similarly, someone needing to obtain a social security card, passport or birth certificate has to travel to completely different buildings to obtain copies of these documents.



*Horry County Government and Justice Center*

### Government Building Locations

Horry County Government Main Offices are located at the **Horry County Government and Justice Center** at 1301 2nd Avenue in downtown Conway. Offices include: County Council Chambers, County Administrator, County Attorney, Finance Department, Public Information Office, Human Resources, Assessor, Treasurer, Auditor, Register of Deeds, Planning and Zoning, Code Enforcement, Sheriff's Office, Solicitor, Clerk of Courts, Circuit/General Court, Family Court, Probate Court, Supreme Court, and Master-in-Equity. The government portion of the building was designed to accommodate a third floor in the future.

Other **Downtown Conway Facilities** include the Old Horry County Courthouse, Business Licensing and Hospitality Fee Departments, IT/GIS and E911, Community Development and Voter Registration & Elections, Maintenance, Horry County Library - Conway Branch, Horry County Museum, Public Defender, and Pretrial Intervention Program, and the Cochran Building which houses Horry County Parks and Recreation.

**The ML Brown Public Safety Building** is located off of Hwy 701 North/North Main Street on the outskirts of the City of Conway. It includes the Emergency Management, Police, Fire Rescue, and Coroner's offices. This facility already has space limitations. In addition, the parking lot and access to this site have experienced flooding numerous times during major storm events. **Horry County Procurement and Records Management** is located off of Hwy 319 East, north of the City of Conway.

The **Industrial Park Road Complex** is located off of Hwy 701 North. It includes the J. Reuben Long Detention Center, Animal Care Center, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Clemson Extension, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC), Veteran's Affairs, Department of Social Services (DSS), Health Department, and SCDMV. There is additional room in and around this complex for the future expansion of facilities.



*J. Reuben Long Detention Center*  
Photo Credit : WMBF News



The **Public Works Complex** is located off of Hwy 701 North on Privetts Road. It houses the Engineering, Public Works, Stormwater and Fleet Services departments. Expansion of this complex will be necessary as the departments' and equipment needs expand.

The **Ralph Ellis Building** is located at Stephen's Crossroads off of Hwy 57. It includes the North Strand Police Precinct, Treasurer's Office, Little River Library, a Fire Rescue Station, Senior Center, SCDMV, and Health Department. This complex has outgrown its existing space.

The **21st Avenue Complex** in Myrtle Beach houses the Treasurer, Auditor, and Magistrate's Offices, in addition to a Fire Rescue Station. This complex is heavily used and undersized for the volume that it handles. This complex is in need of replacement. The SCDMV is located across the street.

**South Strand Office Complex** located on Scipio Lane in the Burgess Community includes the South Strand Police Precinct and Magistrate's Office, along with extension offices for the Treasurer, Auditor, Assessor, and Clerk of Court.

Other government facilities, such as libraries, parks and recreation, fire stations, and schools are further addressed in this chapter and the Public Safety Element. Government owned industrial parks are addressed in the Economic Development Chapter, and County operated airports are addressed in the Transportation Chapter.

## State and Federal Offices

In addition to Horry County Government facilities, there are several state and federal facilities located in Horry County, including but not limited to, SCDHEC, SCDMV, Social Security



Historic Horry County Court House  
Photo Credit: Courthousehistory.com

Administration, Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, and post offices. Many of these services are collocated in County complexes or in adjacent buildings.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENTAL FACILITY FINDINGS

As the population grows, the demand for new facilities will continue to increase. Intradepartmental and interjurisdictional coordination will be necessary to ensure cost effectiveness for major investments. It will also be necessary to ensure a high level of service for facility users by constructing new facilities in convenient locations or reprogramming existing buildings to maximize existing space. The County recently installed wayfinding signage in the Government and Justice Center and Old County Courthouse. This is part of an effort to help direct the public to the correct buildings and offices. At this time, there are no resources on the County's website to inform the public about all of the offices located within each facility beyond the listing of the main address for each department.

## UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The following section details power suppliers, water and sewer suppliers, stormwater, solid waste, and telecommunications. These facilities are critical to support existing and new growth. They are also critical for supporting economic development and for restoring normalcy after a disaster.

## POWER SUPPLIERS

**Santee Cooper** is a state-owned utility and the primary source of electricity for approximately two million people in all 46 counties of South Carolina. They serve more than 184,000 residential and commercial customers directly in Berkeley, Georgetown and Horry Counties. Power is transferred into the County from outside generating stations via transmission lines and substations. Inside the substations, voltage is reduced, and then transferred to streets or homes via distribution lines. Santee Cooper maintains both overhead and underground distribution lines.

The 50-year old Santee Cooper Grangier Generating Station in Conway was closed in 2012 and demolished in 2016. The site is being remediated, and its cooling pond, Lake Busbee, is no longer having water pumped into it. The lake is expected to return to a more natural state. Prior to its retirement in 2012, the Grangier station was used in a limited capacity, due in part to the cost of compliance with federal emissions standards for coal fired plants. Santee Cooper produces energy from wind, solar, and landfill gas in Horry County. While the use of solar power is not prevalent in Horry County, Santee Cooper recognizes the opportunity and is working to expand its presence. In 2018, Santee Cooper installed a 10 acre solar farm, Bell Bay, along Hwy 701 South containing 5,904 solar panels with an annual production of 2,827 megawatt hours (MWh). This is in addition to two demonstration projects, the 311-kilowatts Grand Strand Solar Station in Myr-





tle Beach and the 16-kilowatt solar display at Coastal Carolina University. Beyond expansion of solar, Santee Cooper is also exploring on-shore and offshore wind opportunities, which is further discussed in the Natural Resources Chapter.

In order to maintain the reliability of the electrical system serving the growing Horry County population, Santee Cooper is currently planning a 230 kV transmission line between Marion and Conway. This transmission line will utilize the existing

**Duke Energy** provides electric and gas services across the Country. They provide electric services to the Aynor area. Currently, Duke Energy is in the process of constructing two solar farms along Hwy 9 in Horry County.



Demolition of the Granger Generating Station stacks  
Photo Credit: Jim Huff, Santee Cooper

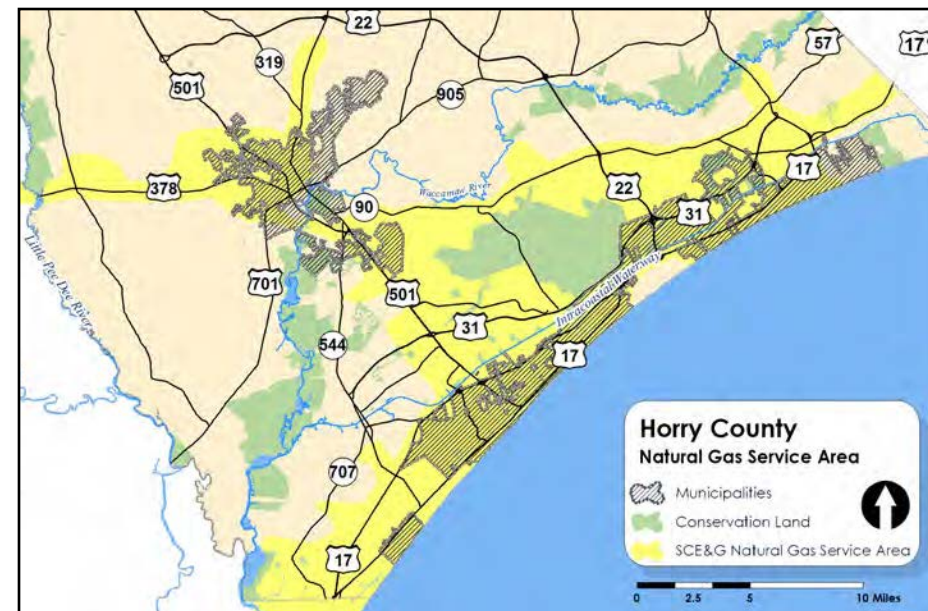
**Horry Electric Cooperative**, headquartered in Conway, primarily serves the western side of the Intracoastal Waterway. It has franchise agreements with the Cities of Loris, Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and the Town of Aynor.

**South Carolina Electric & Gas Company (SCE&G)** provides electricity and natural gas services to approximately 1.1 mil-

lion customers across the state. As the natural gas provider in Horry County, SCE&G has served residential, commercial, and industrial gas customers in the area for more than 50 years. SCE&G purchases gas from the **Southern Natural Gas Company**. Natural gas is available along a number of major corridors, such as Hwy 90 and portions of Hwy 501. It is also available in a number of new subdivisions. While natural gas is often a necessary component in manufacturing, it is not readily available to existing industrial parks in the County.

## POWER FINDINGS

Energy consumption will continue to increase in Horry County. Additional transmission lines and other means of power generation will need to continue to be developed. With the addition of new transmission lines to accommodate additional growth, these lines may present an opportunity for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. The closing of the Granger Station also presents an opportunity for redevelopment and reinvestment into downtown Conway; however one drawback to this is Lake Busbee which remains an area of concern for residents.



Source: SCE&G

## WATER SUPPLIERS

There are a number of water and sewer providers in Horry County; however, Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority serves all local water authorities, including area municipalities. In the municipalities of Conway, Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and Loris, they utilize the extension of water and sewer to developing properties contiguous with their city limits to force annexation. Also, properties that are close to city limits must sign a pre-annexation agreement to receive water and sewer service. This agreement states that once the property becomes contiguous with the city limits, it will be annexed.

The **Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA)** has two surface water treatment facilities. The majority of the area is supplied by the Bull Creek Treatment Plant, supplemented by Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) wells located throughout the service areas. In addition to the ASR wells, water is stored in ground storage reservoirs and elevated tanks. There are pumping stations at the plant and re-pumping stations in remote portions of the system to boost water pressure.

GSWSA's Bull Creek Regional Water Treatment Plant, located in Bucksport, has a peak flow capacity of 45 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) and is designed for ready expansion. Untreated surface water is pulled from the Bull Creek which carries about 60% of the water flowing through the Great Pee Dee and Little Pee Dee Rivers. During the drought of 2002, the minimum flow in the Great Pee Dee just above Bull Creek was approximately 710 MGD. The plant's peak three day average daily flow (ADF) occurred in June 2008 at a flow of 35 MGD. During this same period, there were 3.7 MGD of flow being added to the distribution system from ASR and blend wells concurrently for a total system demand of 38.7



MGD. The by-product of the treatment process, alum sludge, is thickened and land applied to a designated centipede grass turf farm.

GSWSA's Myrtle Beach Water Treatment Plant, located in the City of Myrtle Beach, has the ability to generate 45 million gallons per day and is also designed for ready expansion. Water is pulled from the Intra-coastal Waterway.

In addition, GSWSA has eight groundwater wells withdrawing 4.2 MGD. This native ground water is blended with treated surface water at major entry points to the distribution system. GSWSA is a national leader in the development of ASR technology. This technique allows for the storing of water treated during off peak periods for use during emergencies or peak demand conditions. Currently, the ASR wells have a combined storage capacity of 1 billion gallons available for use each year. The water can be withdrawn from the wells at a rate of 13.5 MGD.

Altogether, GSWSA services approximately 800 square miles in Horry County with both water and wastewater services. Peak summer demands are approximately 65 MGD. This accounts for all customers including the Cities of Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Conway, and Loris, the Town of Tabor City, Little River Water and Sewer, and Georgetown County Water. The combined capacity of the Bull Creek and Myrtle Beach water plants is 90 MGD. In addition to constant maintenance, current plans are to expand both water treatment facilities by 15 MGD and the ASR wells by 20 MGD. However, the existing excess water capacity along with the current ASR wells will allow for a longer time period prior to investing in plant expansions.

GSWSA also has a rural program that tries to help customers with existing water and septic systems that are failing. If water and sewer is available to the parcel, an application simply needs to be made in order to obtain service. If service is not available to a parcel, GSWSA will extend services for up to a mile at no cost, but they require three applications for service prior to the extension.

**Bucksport Water System** is another major water supplier in the County. Bucksport Water System is a member-owned, non-profit water system providing needs based service. The system pumps water from the Black Creek Aquifer and is licensed for a capacity of 550 million gallons of water per year. Currently, the system pumps approximately one MGD, which equates to about 66% of capacity. This system provides water to Bucksport and surrounding communities by utilizing five well sites (four elevated and one ground) with available storage of 1.3 million gallons of water. In early August 2017, Bucksport Water System utilized their first reverse treatment osmosis system at the Pawley Swamp well site. The Bucksport Water System is constantly improving and expanding to support the projected economic growth in their service area. With

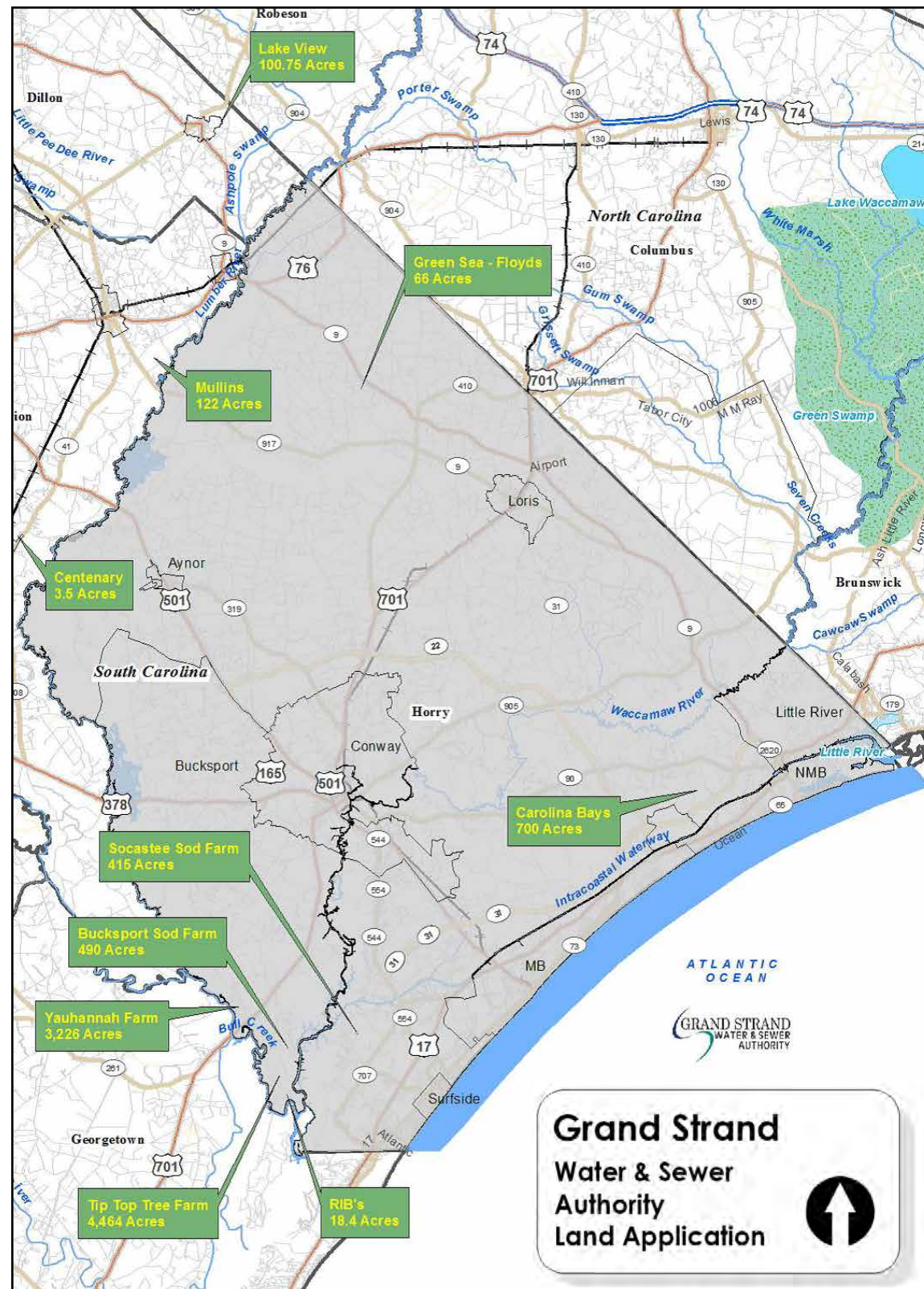
the approval of Ride 3, Bucksport Water is preparing for growth with the extension of El Bethel Road in Conway, connecting US 378 to US 701 South, as well as the construction of the Southern Evacuation Lifeline.

Beyond GSWSA and Bucksport Water System, the City of Conway, City of North Myrtle Beach, and Little River Water and Sewerage Company provide emergency water supply through wells.



Source: Grand Strand Water and Sewer





Source: GSWSA 2035 Strategic Business Plan

### WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

GSWSA utilizes thirteen wastewater treatment plants and one leach field. Wastewater transmission lines are adjacent to most of the County's major transportation corridors. Rural lines are extended on a petition for service basis. As discharging directly into waterways have become more stringent, GSWSA has developed strategies for effluent and sludge management through land application of treated wastewater and sludge by-products. Plans currently exist for over 9,000 acres in Horry County, 130 acres in Marion County, and over 100 acres in Dillon County.

GSWSA is continually updating their facilities with routine maintenance, as well as relocating lines in coordination with transportation improvements and overall capital improvements. In addition, GSWSA collects water and wastewater capacity fees (impact fees) from new customers so that the current customer base does not bear the burden of new growth for both water and wastewater improvements. In 2014, \$5.21 million in impact fees were collected in direct proportion to new customers added.

The City of North Myrtle Beach maintains two wastewater treatment facilities: Ocean Drive and Crescent Beach. The City is currently in the design phase to upgrade these facilities to continue to provide adequate sewer services to the residents of North Myrtle Beach.

### WATER AND SEWER FINDINGS

As development continues to expand in Horry County, water and wastewater facilities will need to follow suit. Currently, existing providers are adequately supplying services and have plans for improvements to keep pace with growth. GSWSA 2035 Strategic Business Plan outlines the capital improvements, structural, human resources, operational requirements and financing required to meet the needs of the area through 2035. In addition, the existing excess water capacity allows plans for expansion to be delayed for a longer period of time.



## STORMWATER

Horry County is a regional stormwater leader that recognizes stormwater management as a community-wide issue that requires a community-wide solution. Stormwater refers to the precipitation that drains off the land. The amount of impervious surface (i.e. streets, roofs, and parking lots) is the most significant factor affecting the amount of runoff from an area. As Horry County continues to develop from rural to urban uses, runoff volumes and rates will continue to increase, as will the need to implement stormwater control measures.

The goals of the Stormwater Management Program, as outlined in the Stormwater Management Program Strategic Plan, are to preserve and enhance the quality of the water systems of Horry County; to reduce the impact of flooding in the County; to create public support for the importance of stormwater management; and, to manage stormwater program funds to maximize benefits to the citizens of Horry County.

In 2017, the Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Ordinance was updated to comply with SCDHEC's revised National Pollution Discharge Elimination System. It also clarifies and improves the design, construction, and maintenance of stormwater systems in new developments to minimize flood damage and improve water quality.

### Stormwater Advisory Board

The Horry County Stormwater Advisory Board was established in 2000 to provide guidance and advice to County Council pertaining to the Stormwater Management Program. This includes the review of the Horry County Stormwater Ordinance, Stormwater Manual and specialized stormwater plans. In addition, this Board promotes education, awareness, and research regarding stormwater best management

practices to targeted audiences, including, but not limited to engineers, developers, homeowners associations (HOAs), and property owners.

### Stormwater Permitting

The Stormwater Management Program reviews and inspects all new developments disturbing over 1/2 acre of land. Since the year 2000, the Stormwater Department has issued over 2,300 stormwater permits within the unincorporated areas of Horry County. During the review and inspection process, emphasis has been placed upon preventing and reducing downstream flooding and on water quality to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II program. Certified construction site inspectors focus mainly on erosion and sediment control measures.

### Stormwater Fees

Stormwater utility fees are paid annually by each property owner in the unincorporated areas of Horry County. Single-family homes, townhomes and condominiums are charged a flat fee. Non-residential properties are charged according to a formula that accounts for each property's gross area and percentage of impervious surface. Stormwater utility fees appear on real property tax bills and are collected by the County Treasurer with property taxes. These fees are used for maintenance and capital improvements to the stormwater and drainage system. There are also several watershed areas in the County that are exclusively maintained by the Department as part of a special tax district.

### Drainage Maintenance and Improvements

A common citizen concern and primary role of the Stormwater Management Department is drainage maintenance and improvements. As the County's road system expands

with increasing development, so too the drainage system must expand. The County holds many public drainage easements for the purpose of maintaining storm drainage infrastructure. Easements are designed to allow personnel and equipment to access and repair infrastructure (e.g. pipes, catch basins, ditches). Maintenance is routinely conducted on a cycle to keep the drainage system operating smoothly. Some ditches may be maintained using equipment, while others may require the use of hand crews. The Department is limited to using public funds for areas with public benefit and is also limited by environmental rules in sensitive areas, such as wetlands. Beyond maintenance of County stormwater infrastructure, staff often works with HOAs to help them identify options to resolve their pond maintenance issues, such as erosion.



Pond Bank Erosion  
Photo Credit: Clemson Extension

### Water Quality Monitoring & Education

The Horry County Stormwater Management Department partners with several organizations and other municipalities to take a watershed approach to stormwater solutions through water quality monitoring and public education, thus supporting compliance with the County's NPDES Phase II storm-





water requirements. This collective group of organizations is known as the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium (CWSEC). This regional organization includes local governments in both Horry and Georgetown County, research institutions, educators, and advocacy organizations. Coastal Carolina University's Center for Marine and Wetland Studies, the University of South Carolina's Baruch Institute for Marine and Coastal Sciences, and Clemson's Baruch Institute for Coastal Ecology and Forest Science all serve as valuable research partners that are engaged in identifying and researching water quality impairments. CCU's Waccamaw Watershed Academy, USC's North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Clemson's Carolina Clear Program, Murrells Inlet 2020, the Waccamaw Riverkeeper, and SC Sea Grant Consortium, are also CWSEC partners. Together, these organizations provide water quality education to a variety of groups and ages. Training events are also held to educate civil engineers on low impact development practices and further its use locally to minimize water quality impacts of new development.

Through a cost-sharing arrangement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Horry County supports a network of real time monitoring USGS gages on the Waccamaw and Little Pee Dee Rivers. These gages transmit data to a publicly-accessible website and include various water quality parameters, as well as flow and gage height information that is used to predict and track flooding.

In addition, Horry County provides funding for volunteer water monitoring on the Waccamaw River, Surfside Beach and in Murrells Inlet. Volunteers are coordinated through the Waccamaw Riverkeeper and Murrells Inlet 2020. Program oversight, volunteer training, equipment calibration and maintenance, and quality control is provided by Coastal

Carolina University's Environmental Quality Laboratory (EQL). Under contract, EQL staff also conduct additional monitoring at river gage sites, as well as special projects as needed. In addition, the County also funds monitoring at Apache pier, while the Cities of Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach fund the Cherry Grove and 2nd Ave piers, in collaboration with the Long Bay Hypoxia Monitoring Consortium. This data is also available via a publicly-accessible website. This information is used to identify when water quality is declining and can help determine the sources of the impairments through a variety of indicators. More information on water quality can be found in the Natural Resources Chapter.

#### Mosquito Control

Mosquitoes are a public health concern, as they can transmit diseases to humans, their pets, and their livestock. Horry County uses integrated pest management techniques to control mosquito populations. Such techniques include: mosquito population assessment; education and outreach; site inspections; biological control of mosquito larvae; and chemical control of adult mosquitoes. Care is taken to avoid chemical application around known sites for beekeeping operations, organic farming operations, or citizens with special health needs. A primary program focus is on public education emphasizing personal protection methods and elimination of breeding sites around homes and businesses.

#### STORMWATER FINDINGS

Horry County recently updated its stormwater ordinance to ensure that all new major subdivisions are designed to handle a 100-year storm, far greater than the 25-year storm that the state requires for new developments. In addition, first floors must be 18 inches above the road centerline to minimize flood damage in homes. The old standard required 12" above centerline. This measure, while necessary to ensure

positive drainage has resulted in extensive tree removal and grading. With the new requirement, this will result in even more land alteration or it will become more cost effective to not construct slab on grade. Overall, these regulatory changes will result in better designed communities. Older development within the County and developments less than ½ acre in size are not subject to these higher regulatory standards. In many cases, the existing infrastructure is under-designed or failing. A comprehensive Stormwater Drainage & Maintenance Capital Improvements Plan is needed to fully understand the costs associated to improve drainage, reduce flooding and improve water quality.

Because most prime locations for development have already been utilized, the use of marginal lands for construction is likely to continue. The County allows for fill in the flood zone and there are no measures to prevent fill in wetlands beyond US Army Corps of Engineering approval. The reuse and re-purposing of existing developed land will be a challenge moving forward. The County should continue to support projects that help improve drainage and storm water diversion and retention. This includes current projects such as the Melody drainage basin, repair of control structures under Chestnut Rd., the Rosewood Outfall, Hwy 9 Improvement Project, Bay Rd. drainage improvements, and the Simpson Creek drainage improvements.



## TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE

Everyday life, in addition to economic development, is strongly tied to the availability of cell phone service and fiber optic cable. Horry Telephone Cooperative (HTC) and Spectrum provide television cable service, internet services, phone service, and home monitoring in Horry County. Cellular phone services are provided by many national systems including AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, and T-Mobile.

### Cell Towers

In recent years, residents have begun to rely more on cell phones than land lines. The importance of coverage is also impacted by the number of tourists that visit to our community each year. With this, there has been an increase in demand for cell towers and antennas.

In the past, the technology for the receiver antennae required large devices. Today's current technology has decreased the size of the cellular antennae. Horry County has seen an increased demand for installing them on top of light poles in larger parking lots and on the side of large malls and box stores. Pursuant to Section 6-29-540 of the 1994 SC Planning Enabling Legislation, the Horry County Planning Commission is required to review proposals for all new cell towers. The County has a special permitting process for Telecommunications Towers, which have to be approved by County Council. The concern over large towers may diminish over time as the industry continues to improve the technology.

### Fiber optics

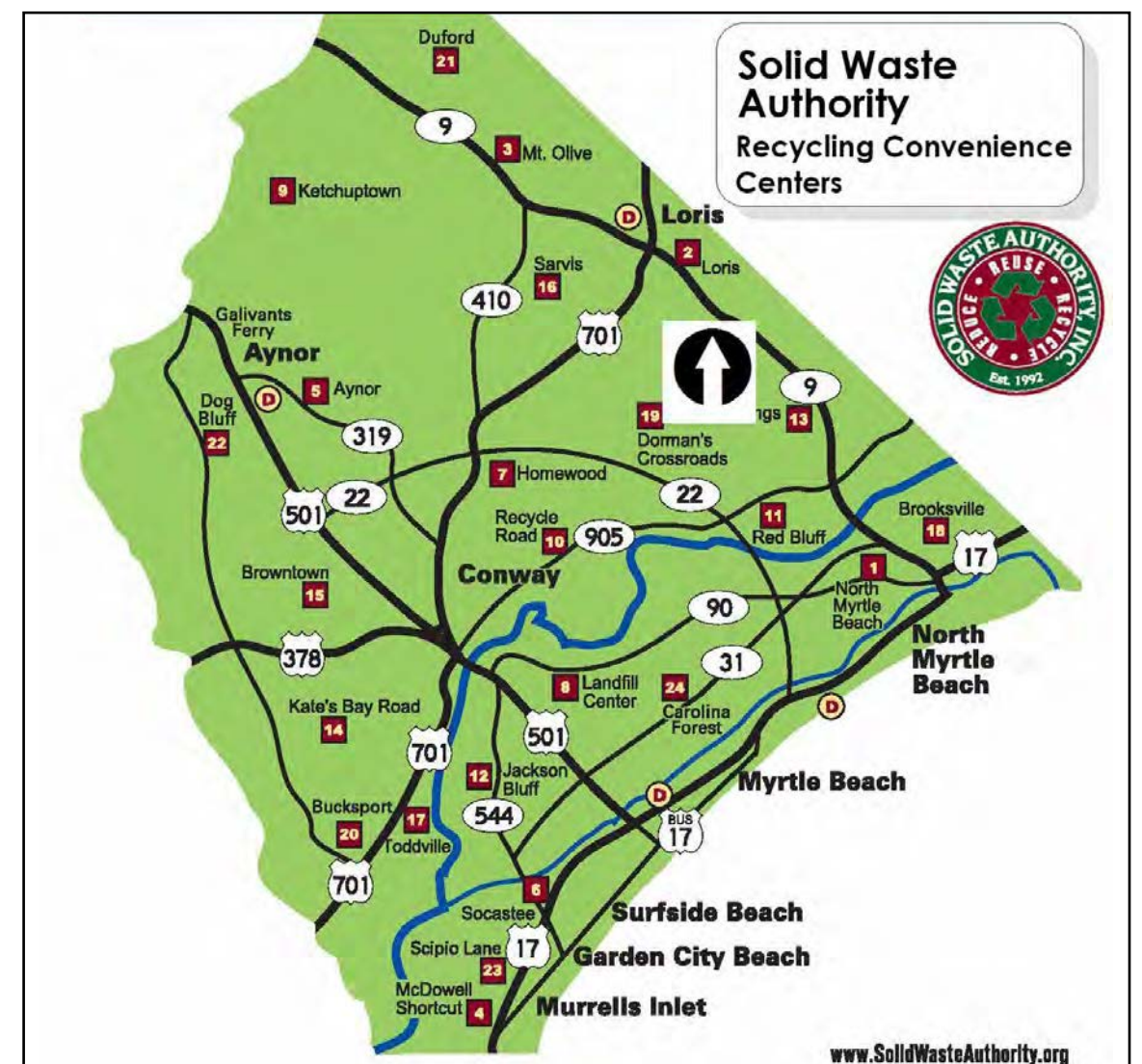
Fiber optics are thin flexible fibers of glass or other transparent solids to transmit light signals for telecommunications. All fiber-optic cabling and pedestals are located underground. Horry County has an extensive service of fiber optic cable offered by HTC and Spectrum. Rural areas have broadband readily available opening up opportunities for home-based businesses and virtual call centers. The County currently maintains a fiber route system for its own facilities, which is a core component of the County's infrastructure.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS FINDINGS

As technology continues to evolve, the concern over the siting of cell towers will likely continue to diminish as the towers become smaller in size. There remains a need for improved cell services in the County, in addition to fiber optic availability in rural communities. Beyond immediate public need, the County should consider the cost of extending the fiber optic network in the early site-selection process for new government facilities.

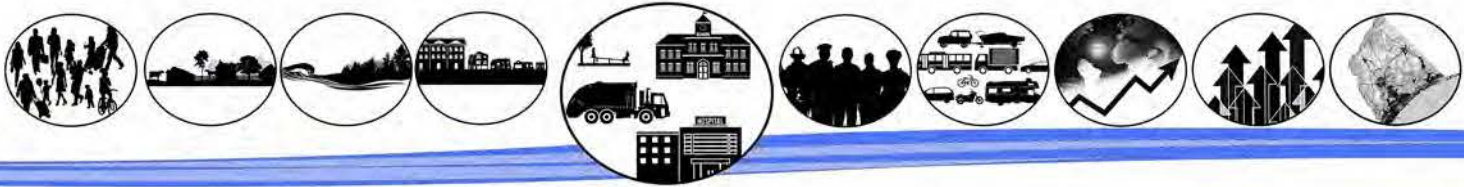
## SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The Horry County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) provides integrated waste management throughout Horry County. Per state law, the governing body of a county has the responsibility and authority to provide for the operation of solid waste management facilities. Therefore, Horry County Council created the SWA in 1990 to carry out these responsibilities regarding waste management. In 2009, Horry County Council enacted Ordinance 02-9 which provides an effective means of regulating the collection and disposal of solid waste generated in Horry County. In Horry County, this includes solid waste recovery, recycling, and disposal services to the unincorporated parts of the County, as well as municipal areas.



Source: SWA





The Horry County Solid Waste Management Plan was originally completed in 1993, and the latest update was completed in 2018. A copy of this plan can be found on the SWA website.

Collection and Transfer

Collection and transfer of waste for disposal in Horry County depends on the location. The collection of solid waste is primarily through curbside pickup or staffed convenience centers. Currently, the Solid Waste Authority staffs 24 convenience centers. Collection sites are generally located within a five-mile radius of any given County residence. A new convenience center was recently constructed on McDowell Shortcut, and there remains a need for an additional center to serve the Carolina Forest and Hwy 544 area.

Neighborhoods and businesses in unincorporated Horry County contract for collection services with private haulers, as the SWA does not have its own hauling fleet. The municipalities of Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Aynor, Conway, Briarcliffe Acres, Loris, Surfside Beach, and Atlantic Beach provide curbside collection of household waste and yard waste within their jurisdictions. There are two municipally-operated transfer stations located in Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach.

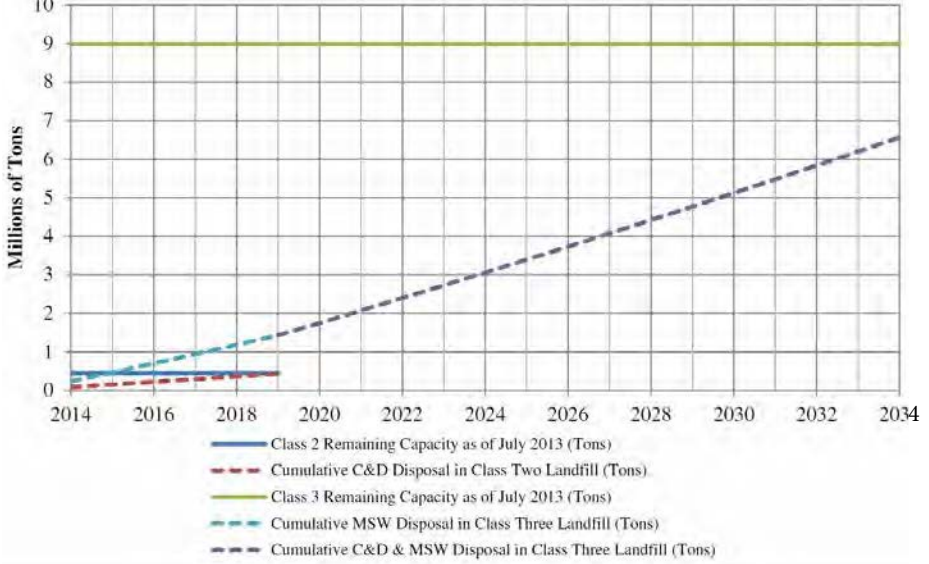
The permanent and tourism populations are both major contributors to solid waste generation in Horry County. Based on FY2016 figures, South Carolina Solid Waste Management 2016 Annual Report determined each South Carolinian disposed on average, 3.6 pounds per day of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). The expected population and tourism growth will also mean more construction and development, which results in increased Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste in addition to the increased MSW. MSW is produced

by households and businesses, while C&D is yielded by construction and industrial activities.

Disposal Facilities

The SWA operates a Class Three MSW landfill and a Class Two C&D Landfill on a 734-acre parcel on Highway 90 outside of Conway. For disposal of MSW, the Class Three landfill has a permitted disposal rate of 750,000 tons per year. Approximately 273,350 tons of MSW were disposed in FY2017. This was high due to storm-related debris. The landfill area has approximately 7,562,000 tons of MSW capacity remaining as of July 2017 (built capacity and yet-to-be-built capacity). Based on estimated consumption, the Class Three landfill will reach capacity sometime in FY2041. However, the SWA plans to initiate in FY2019 the permitting of a new or expanded Class Three Landfill.

Remaining Capacities in Horry County Landfills



Source: Horry County Solid Waste Authority, 2018

The Class Two C&D landfill has a permitted disposal rate of 250,000 tons per year. Approximately 123,250 tons of C&D waste were disposed in FY2017. This was high due to storm-related debris. The landfill area has approximately 591,000

tons of C&D capacity remaining as of July 2017. Based on estimated consumption, the Class Two landfill will reach capacity sometime in FY2024.

Estimated Debris Volume by Hurricane Category

Hurricane Category	Estimated Debris Volume (Cubic Yards)	Debris Management Site Requirement (Acres)
Category 1	331,781	12
Category 2	1,327,123	48
Category 3	4,313,150	155
Category 4	8,295,520	298
Category 5	13,271,232	478

Source: Horry County Solid Waste Authority, 2014

In 2014, Horry County Council enacted Ordinance 78-13. This Ordinance allows construction and demolition (C&D) debris/waste produced in Horry County to be sent to an “appropriately licensed and DHEC permitted” disposal facility rather than the designated HCSWA landfill. This was intended to extend the life of the Class Two C&D landfill.

In order to provide disposal capacity for the remainder of the 20-year planning period, HCSWA completed a Piggyback Extension of the MSW landfill in 2016. This Piggyback Expansion provides additional capacity per acre by taking advantage of the “valley between two previously used waste disposal areas”.

SWA has built a C&D recycling facility to reduce the amount of C&D waste in the landfill. The capacity provided by the existing 27-acre Subtitle D landfill, the horizontal expansion, and Piggyback Expansion is anticipated to provide MSW capacity over the 20 year planning period. The Piggyback Phase I is anticipated to last until 2024-2025. The figure to the left illustrates the remaining capacity of the Class Two and Class Three Landfills and the estimated consumption over the next 20 years.



## Debris Management

Per SWA Disaster Debris Management Plan, Horry County could generate 4.3 million cubic yards of debris from a category three hurricane. A summary with estimated quantities of debris and the acreage necessary to store and process the debris is shown in the chart below. However, these figures are from 2014 and due to the increase in population these estimates will be low.

Current acreage set aside for debris processing is shown in the following chart. Total acreage for vegetative debris management is 290 acres, eight acres shy of the 2014 estimates needed for a category four hurricane.

**Current Acreage Set Aside for Debris Processing in Horry County**

Site Name	Closest Address	Site Acreage	Anticipated Site Use
State Road 33 Site	Hwy 33 and Grassy Bay Road Green Sea, SC	141	Vegetative
1187 Site	Hwy 90 and Environmental Parkway Conway, SC	109	Vegetative
State Road Hwy 578 Site	NW Corner of Intersection of Hwy 9 and Hwy 57 (Stephens Crossroads) Little River, SC	40	Vegetative

Source: Horry County Solid Waste Authority, 2014

## Green Power

Since 2001, the Landfill Facility has maintained a Green Power Program, a partnership between SWA, Santee Cooper, Horry Electric Cooperative, and Central Electric Power Cooperative. "Green Power" refers to the process of generating electricity through renewable resources such as solar,

wind and decomposing garbage at landfills. The Program transfers methane from the landfill into an environmentally friendly electricity product. Santee Cooper owns and operates the generating equipment. SWA owns and operates the landfill and methane gas collection system and sells the fuel to Santee Cooper. Horry Electric and Central Electric supply the lines for the Green Power to travel.

## Waste Reduction/Reuse/Recycling

Horry County maintains programs to encourage recycling, including recycling convenience centers, educational activities, and a regional Material Recycling Facility (MRF). The SWA also operates a yard waste/composting facility. While Horry County recycling is voluntary, residential, curbside pick-up is available in most municipalities. Recycling and yard waste disposal is also available at all County convenience centers. Increasing recycling participation throughout the County is critical to extending the life of the landfill. This can be done through numerous voluntary and regulatory mechanisms, in addition to community education.

The SWA currently leads recycling education efforts through its school recycling programs and its 'Talking Trash' competition. The SWA, in partnership with the Horry County Council on Aging, also operates 'The Store,' a resale outlet offering used items that you can give a second life. The Store accepts donated items that can be recycled, reconditioned or repurposed for continued use. This keeps reusable household items, furniture, lawn and garden and building supplies out of the landfill.

## Litter Reduction

A Community Cleanup Program is implemented by **Keep Horry County Beautiful (KHCB)**, a subcommittee to the **Horry County Parks and Open Space Board**. This program is designed to assist civic, community and/or volunteer groups that help in keeping the County's streets, parks, open spaces, rivers, schools, and other community amenities clean and litter free. In 2017, 25,935 pounds of trash were collected off of 98 miles of roadway, 67 acres of parks, one mile of river and three public beach accesses.

KHCB also works in a proactive manner. The 2017-2018 educational focus was on securing loads on trucks and trailers, which has been identified as the number one source of roadside litter. This was a combined initiative between KHCB and the HCSWA. In addition, the County now facilitates an annual county-wide litter assessment and cleanup. These efforts led to KHCB receiving an Affiliate Recognition Award for outstanding efforts in litter awareness and pick up programs in South Carolina from Palmetto Pride.



Volunteers at the 2015 Community Cleanup Day  
Photo Credit: Keep Horry County Beautiful



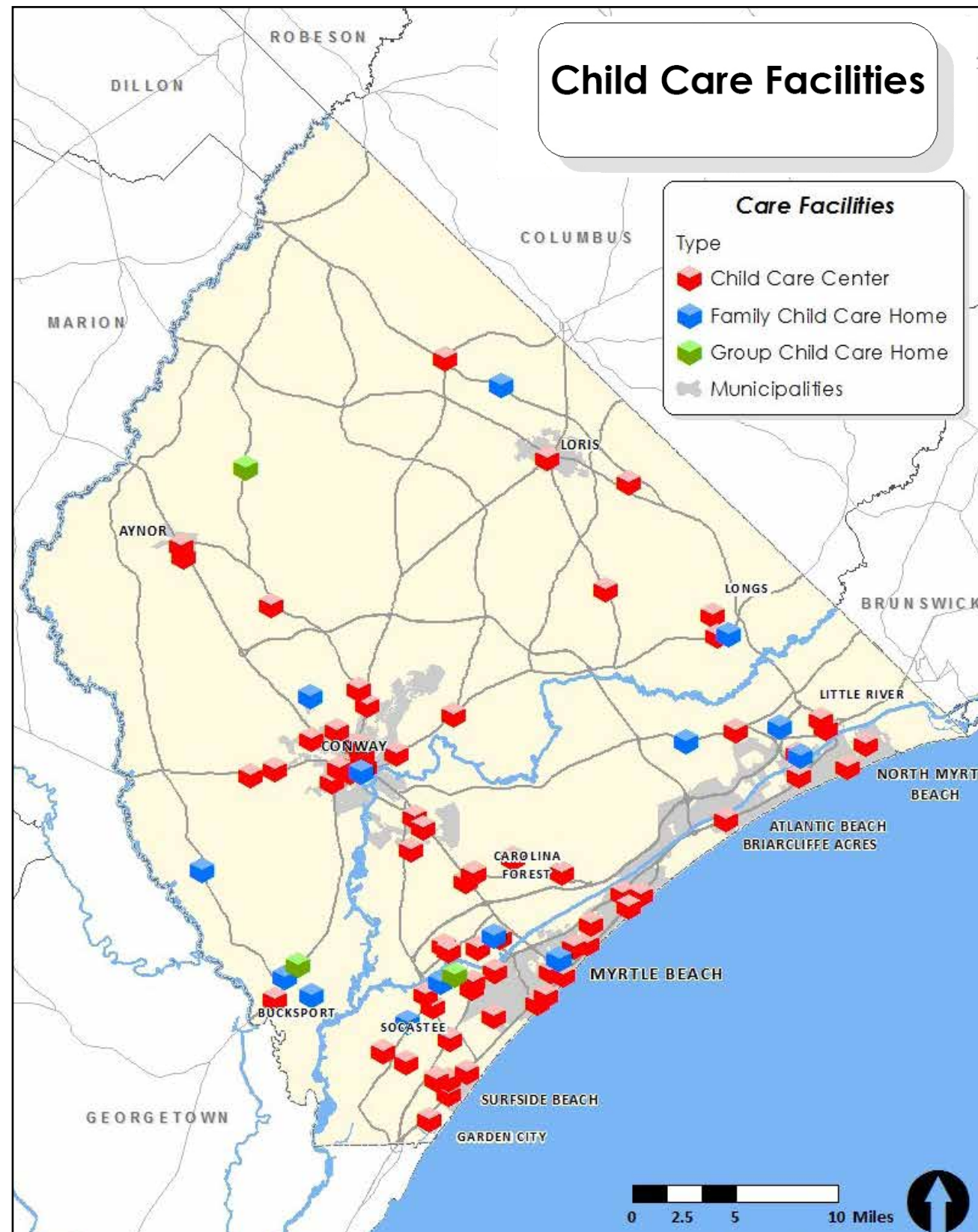


## SOLID WASTE FINDINGS

As population and visitor use increases in Horry County, more waste is produced and the landfill gets closer to capacity. Many existing convenience centers will likely need to expand and existing trash haulers will need to consider adding curbside recycling to their offerings. There is also a need to continue to expand recycling and recycling education services to keep recyclables out of the landfill. In addition, it will become a necessity to identify land for a future landfill site, as land acquisition and the permitting of a new landfill is going to be a lengthy and costly process.

## UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FINDINGS

Rapid development places stress on public and private infrastructure. As demand for services increase, so too will the demand for new facilities and the maintenance and upgrades of existing infrastructure, especially in regards to what Horry County provides for stormwater and solid waste. The County and its partners should continue to work together to ensure that future growth and major project information is shared amongst organizations. By doing so, all entities will be better informed of capacity needs and ways to effectively allocate capital improvements.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning

## EDUCATION FACILITIES

Education is vital to the overall economic and social well-being of any community. Horry County has recently seen a surge in demand for expanded educational facilities for all age ranges. For daycares and PK-12 schools, this correlates with recent birth rates and influx of young families. For higher education facilities, especially Coastal Carolina University, their increase in student population largely stems from out-of-state enrollment. Regardless, growth is driving demand for new facilities.

## DAY CARE FACILITIES

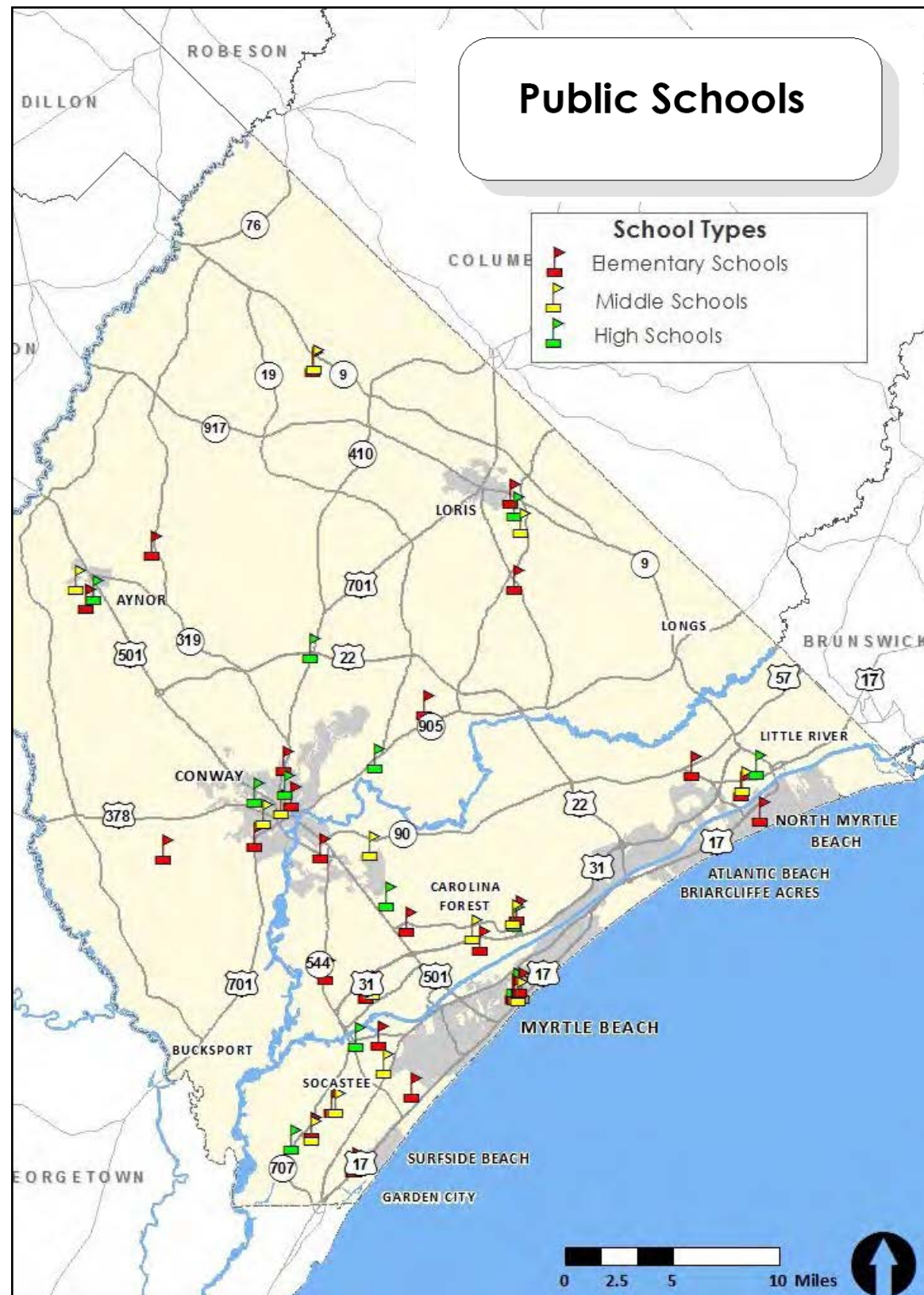
As of 2016, there were 90 state licensed child care facilities in Horry County, which includes three types:

- 72 licensed child care centers (care for 13 or more children; operates more than four hours a day and two days a week)
- three licensed group child care homes (care for 7-12 children in the home)
- 15 licensed family child care homes (care for up to six children in the home)

There are also many exempt child care providers in Horry County, which include: anyone who cares for children from only one unrelated family; an educational program which operates solely for educational purposes in grade one or above; Kindergartens, nursery schools or other daytime programs operating no more than four hours a day; School vacation or school holiday day camps; Bible schools; Facilities for the mentally ill or handicapped; etc.

With the rising number of children, there is a high demand for additional child care facilities. Many of the facilities maintain a waiting list, which shows how full these facilities are.





Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning

## PK-12 EDUCATION

The Horry County School District maintains one countywide school system with nine attendance zones in Aynor, Conway, Carolina Forest, Green Sea/Floyds, Loris, Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, St. James, and Socastee. Horry County Schools (HCS) operates a total of 57 schools: 26 primary/elementary schools, 15 intermediate/middle schools, ten high schools, four charter schools, three academies and an additional five specialty programs. In addition to the many traditional schools, students also have the opportunity to attend four charter schools: Bridgewater Academy, Palmetto Academy of Learning and Success (PALS), Academy of Hope, and Palmetto Academy for Learning Motor Sports (PALM). Beyond public schools, there are currently 15 private schools in Horry County, the majority of which are religiously affiliated.

HCS also runs the Playcard Environmental Education Center. Playcard instructs students in the natural sciences and provides a place for observation and study by various scientific disciplines.

## HORRY COUNTY SCHOOLS FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY ESTIMATES

Five-Year Forecasted 45-Day Modified Average Daily Membership\*\*\*

(Revised 3-1-2018 with additional facility use data)

	School	Functional Capacity	2017-18 45-Day Modified ADM***	2017-18 Utilization	2018-19 45-Day ADM Forecast ***	2018-19 Utilization	2022-23 45-Day ADM Forecast***	2022-23 Utilization
AYNOR	Aynor Elementary School	720	822	114%	857	119%	895	124%
	Midland Elementary School	735	569	77%	560	76%	572	78%
	Aynor Middle School	631	713	113%	741	117%	818	130%
	Aynor High School	1,059	720	68%	730	69%	840	79%
CAROLINA FOREST	Carolina Forest Elementary School	1,009	1,048	104%	1,084	107%	1,152	114%
	Ocean Bay Elementary School	783	824	105%	860	110%	992	127%
	River Oaks Elementary School	870	1,081	124%	1,160	133%	1,403	161%
	Palmetto Bays Elementary School	639	617	97%	620	97%	683	107%
	Waccamaw Elementary School	863	831	96%	826	96%	887	103%
	Black Water Middle School	833	664	80%	694	83%	773	93%
	Ocean Bay Middle School	909	496	55%	513	56%	687	76%
	Ten Oaks Middle School	1,212	868	72%	937	77%	1,095	90%
CONWAY	Carolina Forest High School	2,388	1,999	84%	2,063	86%	2,508	105%
	Conway Elementary School	644	692	107%	697	108%	743	115%
	Homewood Elementary School	639	607	95%	613	96%	630	99%
	Kingston Elementary School	618	515	83%	498	81%	524	85%
	Pee Dee Elementary School	840	831	99%	832	99%	869	104%
	South Conway Elementary School	639	572	90%	558	87%	573	90%
	Conway Middle School	606	584	96%	639	105%	619	102%
	Whittemore Park Middle School	884	733	83%	758	86%	766	87%
GREEN SEA	Conway High School	2,095	1,280	61%	1,299	62%	1,492	71%
	Green Sea Floyds Elementary School	660	604	92%	598	91%	616	93%
LORIS	Green Sea Floyds High School (6-12)	812	585	72%	604	74%	632	78%
	Daisy Elementary School	661	602	91%	600	91%	652	99%
MYRTLE BEACH	Loris Elementary School	874	764	87%	759	87%	776	89%
	Loris Middle School	833	664	80%	706	85%	728	87%
	Loris High School	1,059	687	65%	681	64%	779	74%
	Myrtle Beach Early Childhood School**	762	775	102%	437	57%	453	59%
N. MYRTLE BEACH	Myrtle Beach Primary School**	700	657	94%	654	93%	671	96%
	Myrtle Beach Elementary School**	1,100	718	65%	1,001	91%	987	90%
	Myrtle Beach Middle School	1,212	1,001	83%	1,084	89%	1,041	86%
	Myrtle Beach High School	1,329	1,260	95%	1,256	95%	1,421	107%
SOCASTEE	Ocean Drive Elementary School	896	950	106%	960	107%	1,020	114%
	Riverside Elementary School	685	627	92%	639	93%	694	101%
	Waterway Elementary School	823	667	81%	636	77%	699	85%
	North Myrtle Beach Middle School	1,212	1,122	93%	1,146	95%	1,209	100%
ST. JAMES	North Myrtle Beach High School	1,464	1,159	79%	1,218	83%	1,475	101%
	Forestbrook Elementary School	1,030	950	92%	935	91%	960	93%
	Lakewood Elementary School	1,006	970	96%	954	95%	978	97%
	Socastee Elementary School	873	815	93%	827	95%	851	97%
ST. JAMES	Forestbrook Middle School	1,010	823	81%	892	88%	953	94%
	Socastee Middle School	800	412	52%	464	58%	586	73%
	Socastee High School	1,757	1,503	86%	1,533	87%	1,882	107%
	Burgess Elementary School	714	715	100%	730	102%	795	111%
ST. JAMES	Seaside Elementary School	665	571	86%	562	85%	568	85%
	St. James Elementary School	780	743	95%	753	97%	844	108%
	St. James Intermediate School	1,092	845	77%	844	77%	916	84%
	St. James Middle School	909	781	86%	874	96%	917	101%
ST. JAMES	St. James High School	1,577	1,554	99%	1,567	99%	1,903	121%

Source: Horry County Schools



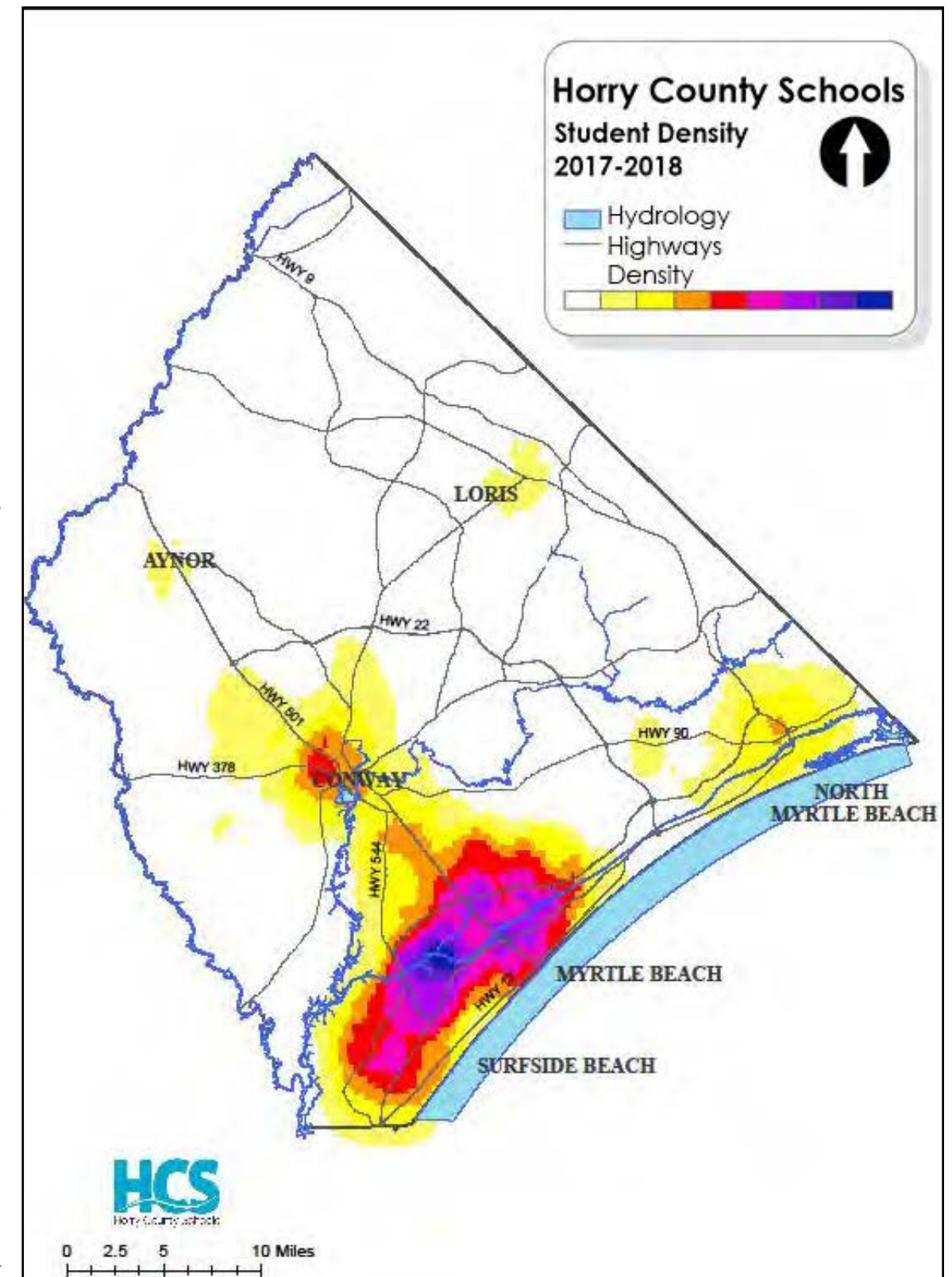


In 2017, HCS completed construction of two middle schools (Socastee and Carolina Forest), one intermediate school (St. James Area), along with the replacement of two older schools (Socastee Elementary and Myrtle Beach Middle). These five schools were designed based on a high performance – energy positive concept, where the building integrates energy conservation, environmental cost-benefit, productivity, sustainability, functionality, and operational considerations. The designs also incorporated the use of various elements such as solar panels, geo-thermal fields, natural daylight, etc. to create an energy positive environment for the schools. Additional schools are anticipated based off of development trends.

For the 2017-2018 school year, the average daily membership (ADM) for all of HCS K-12 was 42,796 students. That number increased by 903 students from the previous year, or by 2.16%. This growth rate is consistent with the District's annual growth rate for the past several decades, resulting in it being the third largest school district in South Carolina. By 2023, K-12 enrollment is projected to be 47,739 plus Pre-K and Child Development will have an additional 1,264 students, based on the 2017-2018 numbers, bringing the total PK-12 enrollment to 49,003 (an increase of 4,943 over a five-year period). This does not include enrollment numbers and growth estimates for area charter schools, which all maintain a maximum enrollment based on their charters.

HCS' Planning Department receives and analyzes monthly Advance Notice reports from the Horry County Planning and Zoning Department for new development rezoning requests. Since new information is received on a monthly basis, the growth assumptions made above are based on data through December 2017. From a school attendance area perspective, the highest anticipated growth areas of the county are Carolina Forest, St. James, Socastee, and North Myrtle Beach. Over 75% of the total student growth in the District will be focused in these four attendance areas. These forecasts have heavily influenced the recommendations of Growth and Capacity projects for the next five years and beyond. Without further capital improvements over the next five year period, HCS anticipates that at least 22 of our schools will be at or above 100% capacity by 2023.

HCS recommends that a new elementary school be added along Carolina Forest Blvd and another off of Ron McNair Blvd in order to reduce overcrowding at River Oaks Elementary. The lack of road connectivity between River Oaks Drive and Carolina Forest Blvd actually necessitates the construction of two elementary schools versus one new facility; however, in the long-term, both facilities will be necessary to accommodate additional growth in Carolina Forest and overflow from the Forestbrook community. Additionally, HCS recommends the replacement of St. James Elementary School and the construction of a new intermediate school in the Little River/North Myrtle Beach area. Replacement facilities are needed for the Horry County Education Center (Alternative School), Conway Education Center, and Whittemore Park Middle School. The HCS Transportation Office and Science Kit program are in need of a combined replacement facility. Additions and renovations are needed for a number of schools over this same five-year timeframe.



Source: Horry County Schools



## Land Suitability

In the master planning of some large developments, such as Carolina Forest, the developers set aside tracts for school sites that can be purchased by the School District. If sites are not already “set aside”, HCS look within their attendance zones to find a site with a buildable area that meets size requirements. At a minimum, elementary schools need 20-25 acres; middle schools need 25-30 acres; and high schools with athletic fields need 75-100 acres. In certain areas of Horry County, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find site candidates for new schools. On rare occasions, schools must be constructed outside the attendance zone in order to meet requirements. The District prefers not to go outside the zones, as this means attendance zone changes, which is unpopular and difficult.

Utilities and traffic patterns also play an important role in school site selection. The School District considers the existence of stoplights near the property, or whether stoplights could be added for the site. School location also determines if safe walking and biking routes can be established. Safe routes to school is a way to improve childhood health and adds to the community’s quality of life.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

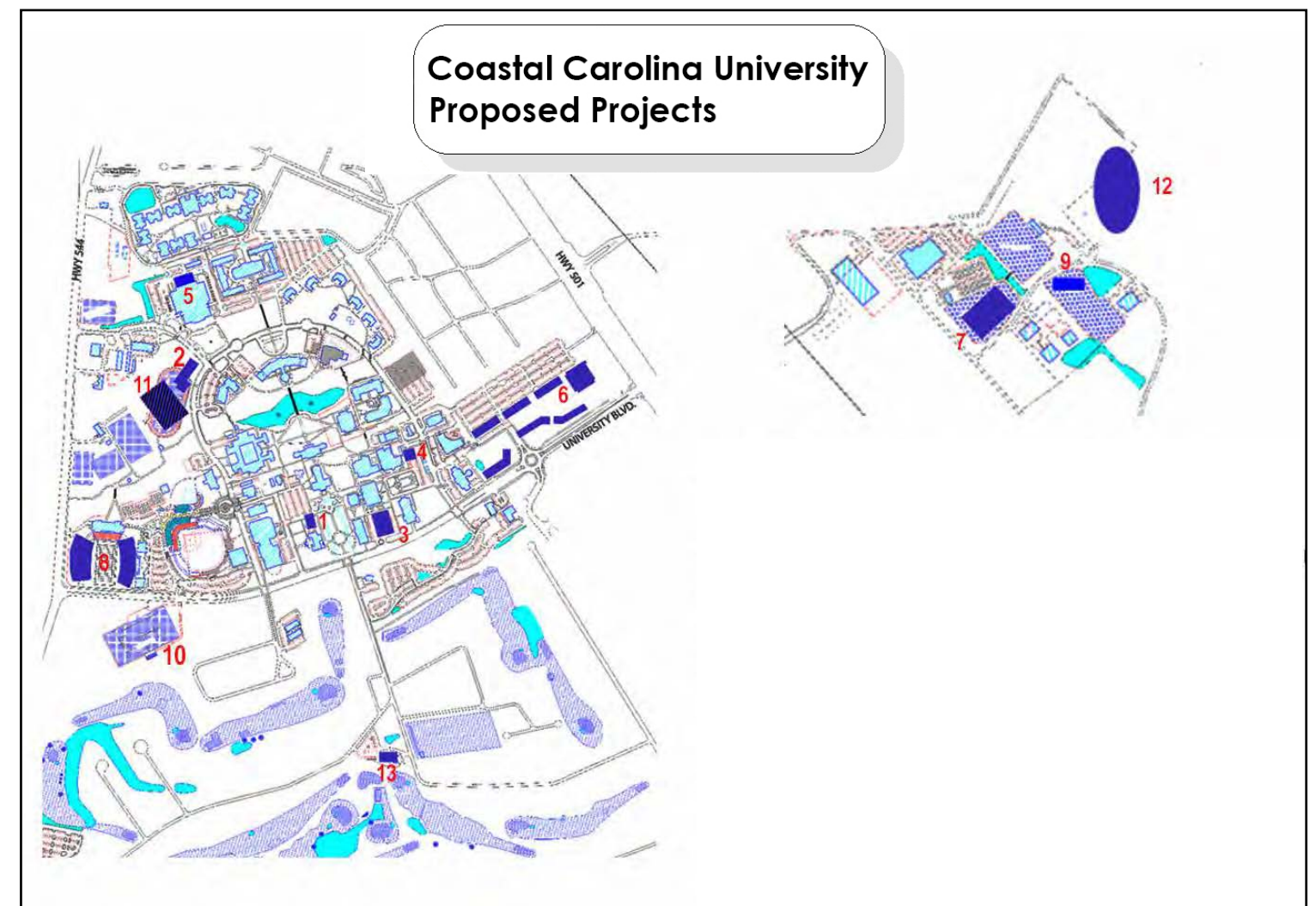
There are four higher education institutions in Horry County. These facilities not only educate students that already live in Horry County, but they attract students to locate here. Student and program growth has positive implications for the County and has the ability to better prepare people for the workforce.

**Coastal Carolina University (CCU)** is a four-year institution located in Conway that comprises 115 main buildings on 633 acres. The campus also includes the Burroughs & Chapin Center for Marine and Wetland Studies, located in the Atlantic Center on US Highway 501. Adjacent to the CCU campus is the James Hackler Golf Course at Coastal Carolina University, a public 18-hole golf facility and the only university-affiliated course in Horry County. The University also offers courses at the Myrtle Beach Education Center, and in Litchfield and Georgetown. A 1,105 acre tract that includes a portion of Waties Island, a pristine barrier island on the Atlantic coast, provides a natural laboratory for extensive study in marine science and wetlands biology.

In the fall of 2016, a CCU Master Plan Update was approved. This update proposed many future projects, including: two academic/administrative buildings, academic enrichment

center and auditorium, HTC Center expansion, track and soccer complex on the east campus, Brooks Stadium expansion, outdoor sand volleyball complex, potential future parking structure, Hackler Golf Course clubhouse, and PGM program classrooms and offices.

The updated plan also discusses the potential for a “gateway neighborhood vision” at the intersection of Highway 501 and University Boulevard, possibly with a performing arts center. Also included are proposed campus circulation projects, including: a proposal to shift University Blvd/ Highway 544 alignment south to allow possible football expansion; a proposed connection at the north end of campus to 501; and conversion of the section of Chanticleer Drive north of the Wall Building to pedestrian, transit, service, emergency vehicle use only to enhance north-south pe-



Source: CCU Master Plan





destrian connections and safety between student housing and core campus facilities. Other future program needs include a center for literacy education, child development center, music practice rooms, and a band hall.

The growth of the CCU campus also generates a demand for more housing, primarily off-campus high-density residential units. Some of this off-campus housing is located across Highway 544 from the campus, and CCU is reviewing options for student safety while crossing this major corridor. Student housing is also being constructed along the Hwy 501 corridor.

In addition to off-campus apartments, many students live in the surrounding single-family neighborhoods. This can lead to issues within the neighborhoods; therefore, Horry County approved the Coastal Carolina University Neighborhood Overlay Zone in 2009. This was established to provide standards relative to neighborhood appearance and safety in the residential areas surrounding and adjacent to CCU. It provides occupancy limits and parking requirements in these areas in order to promote a sense of place in an orderly neighborhood context.

**Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC)** is a two-year technical college providing more than 80 associate degrees, diploma, and certificate programs of study. The College has three campuses located in Conway, Georgetown, and Myrtle Beach. In 2013 at the Conway campus, HGTC completed the Early College High School, which blends high school and college students. The International Culinary Institute was completed in 2016 at the Myrtle Beach campus.

**Webster University** maintains a Myrtle Beach campus and designs its programs to appeal to working adults by offering the weekend format for students who may need to travel to attend the campus.

**Miller-Motte Technical College** in Conway offers programs in CDL training, cosmetology, esthetics technology, massage therapy, medical assisting, medical billing and coding, medical clinical assistant, medical office assistant, criminal justice, paralegal, and business administration.

## LIBRARIES

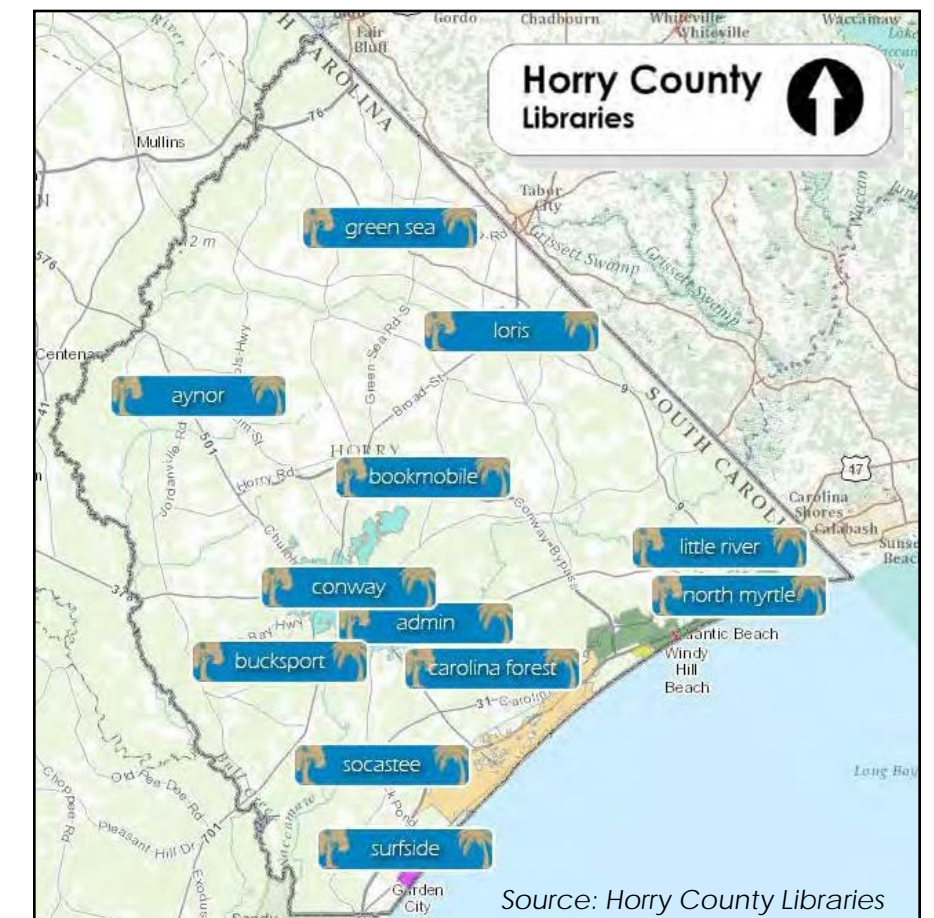
The Horry County Library System provides library services on a countywide basis. The Library System consists of ten locations, a bookmobile, and an administration office. The City of Myrtle Beach also operates the Chapin Memorial Library, which is the only municipally owned and operated public library in South Carolina.

Libraries provide education services for people of all ages. While they provide books, audio and video rentals, they also offer classes, programming, and special events. These events frequently provide resources that are not available through the school system or local colleges, but are often critical to life-long learning. Currently, the library has 132,942 active users with a circulation for FY2017-18 of 1,028,881.

Moving forward, library services and staffing will need to be expanded to keep pace with increased demand and usage of library facilities, resources, and programming. This demand is driven by the County's rapid population growth, but it fluctuates throughout the year with increased usage from snowbirds in the Little River and Surfside communities. There is also a change in usership at libraries, such as Socastee that has an increasing Hispanic speaking population. As Horry County grows, the Library System must keep up with new technology and the changing needs of our demographics. The Library System must also identify ways to integrate themselves in the activities of local residents, and ensure that the programs and offerings remain relevant. They should strategical-

ly identify ways to bring the tools and resources to people that cannot readily access them. In addition, HCS should capitalize on the volunteer resources available to them, as there are many retired residents with specialized knowledge that are willing to get involved in offering programs.

There is a proliferation of information technology and online content that patrons can stream or download from the library's website to their own computers, personal devices or smart phones. In FY2015, the library's total circulation of e-books and other electronic resources (audiobooks, movies, television shows, and music) only accounted for a little more than 40,000 checkouts. In FY2016 the total circulation of electronic resources almost doubled with 70,000 items being downloaded from the library's online collections.



Source: Horry County Libraries

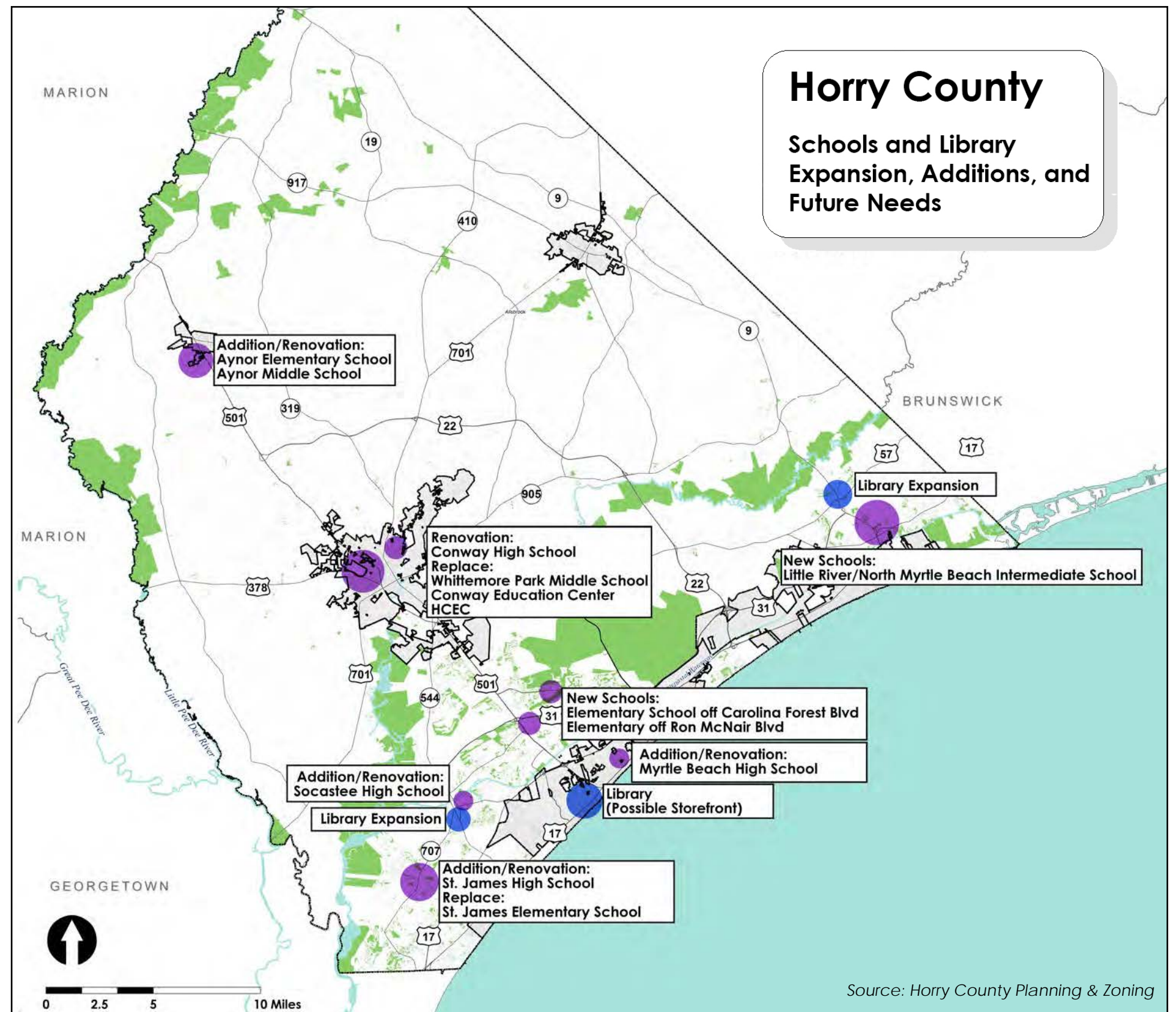


In order to accommodate additional population growth, there are expansion needs in the Little River area, in addition to expanded opportunities with the City of Myrtle Beach. Beyond physical locations, the Library System must also invest in additional bookmobiles and items that it can take to schools, afterschool and summer camp programs at community centers, recreation centers, senior centers, elder care facilities, and other local gathering places. To better serve the public, existing and future facilities should consider expanding operation hours when possible.

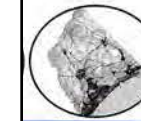
## EDUCATION FINDINGS

As Horry County grows, so does the need for additional classrooms, new schools, and expanded library facilities and offerings. As land availability become more scarce, the County will need to work with the School District and developers to identify future school sites. The Library System, while it will need to expand in the future, should also capitalize on the partnership opportunities with the School District, area colleges, and volunteers to increase its program offerings, programming, and impact in the community.

Higher education facilities continue to expand and will continue to grow, but will reach their desired maximum capacity in a short time frame. While the growth of college enrollment is positive for Horry County, it does have implications on land use and public services. As the student population increases, more housing units will be added in close proximity to area campuses. The influx of housing will have impact on traffic and pedestrian patterns. It may also have impacts on established neighborhoods that experience an increase in students living there. The County needs to support higher education growth, but should also be cognizant of the infrastructure needs that coincide with that growth.





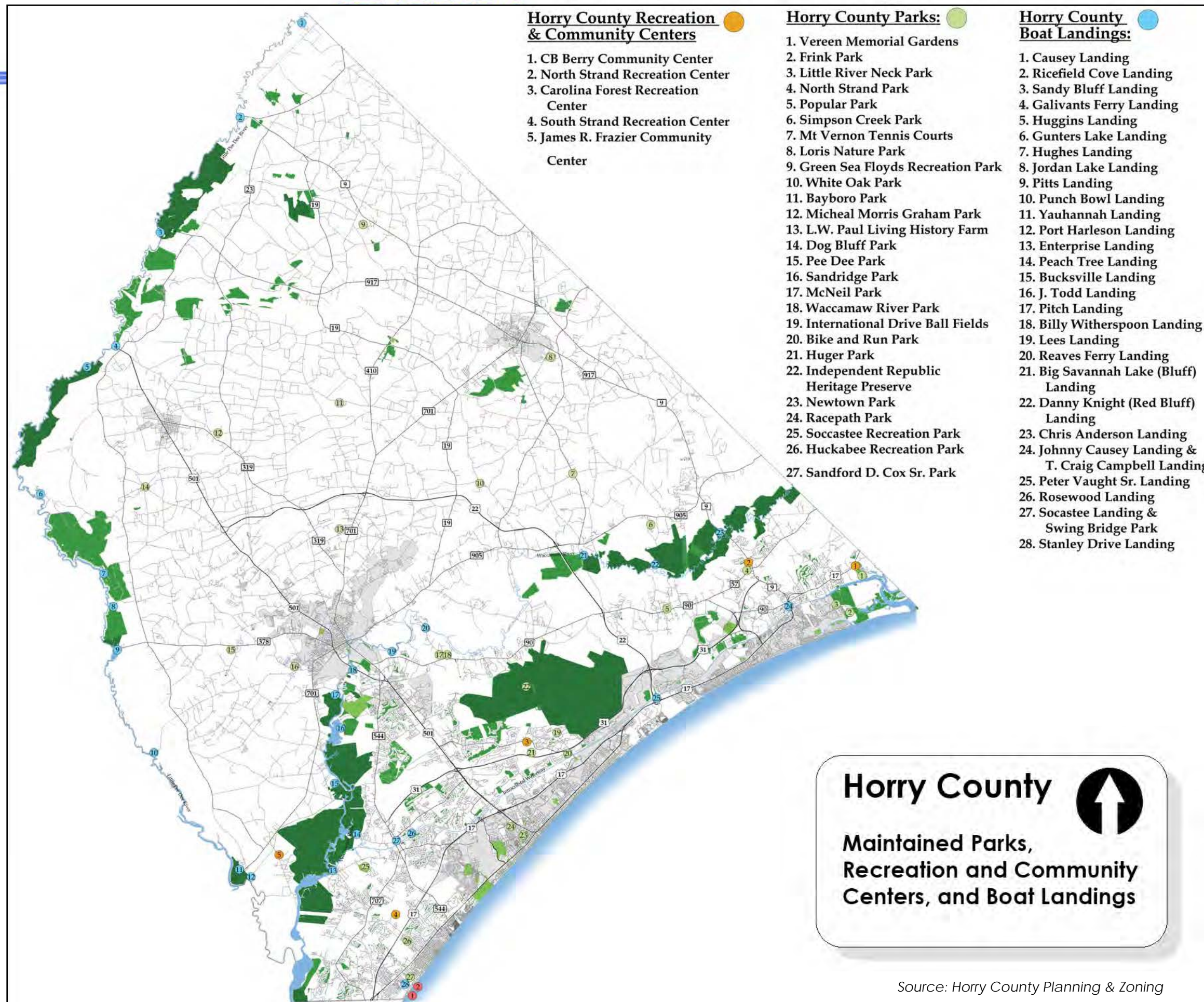


## RECREATION AND LEISURE FACILITIES

Youth and senior populations are growing rapidly, along with the growing seasonal population that lives here for multiple months out of the year. These demographics are often in high demand of activities to enrich their lives. Programming and resources available at County recreation centers and senior centers serve all of these age groups and also provide people with the opportunity to develop a greater sense of community. They also provide a means to develop and maintain good physical and mental health through exercise and socialization.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The Horry County Parks and Recreation Department was created in 1997 to meet the immediate and long-term recreation needs of County residents. The Department's activities are funded through dedicated millage, taxes on Sunday alcohol sales, and grants. The **Parks and Open Space Board** was established in 2000 to provide the County with guidance on land acquisition and recreational improvements to meet residents' needs.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning



Horry County operates three regional parks, three recreation centers, two community centers, 28 parks, 29 boat landings, and 22 beach accesses. These facilities include 39 baseball/softball fields, 19 multi-purpose fields, 15 tennis courts, 13 outdoor basketball courts, 26 playgrounds, two disc golf courses, and 13.5 miles of trails on nearly 600 acres of land. The County also has two nationally recognized paddling trails, the Waccamaw River Blue Trail and the Southeast Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail. A complete list of Horry County recreational facilities can be found in the **Horry County Parks and Open Space Inventory**.



Classes are Provided at Recreation and Community Centers  
Source: Horry County Parks and Recreation

In all, the County provides approximately two acres of park space per 1,000 residents, while national standards for a community of our population typically offer six acres per 1,000 people. The County has significant natural features that supplement the recreational assets of the community and can boast an impressive 64,600 acres of open space (which equates to roughly 200 acres per 1,000 residents). Unfortunately, the beach and rivers are not readily accessible

to everyone. In addition, there are many recreational facilities that have limited amenities; thus, they are not usable for people of all ages and physical capabilities.



Model Community Park with mixture of uses  
Photo Credit: Jim Leggitt

Access to recreation and natural spaces can have a direct impact on physical and mental health. Based on a review of ten studies, the Center for Disease Control has reported an increase in physical activity simply by improving the proximity of recreational facilities to residences. Neighborhood design, access to walking paths, and appropriate siting of public recreation facilities is essential to consider with future development. Ideally, recreation centers (20 – 100 acres) should be within three miles of urban and suburban residents and within five miles of rural residents. Community parks (five – 20 acres) should be within three miles of residents, and neighborhood parks (1/2 – five acres) should be located within 1/4 mile to one mile of residents in urban/suburban communities.

There is an existing need for the development of communi-

ty and neighborhood parks, especially in older, established portions of the County, like Burgess, Garden City, Forestbrook, Little River, Myrtle Ridge, and unincorporated Surfside. In addition, there are many neighborhood and community parks in need of expansion, as they are already undersized for the population that they serve. Recreation centers are in high demand in Aynor and in Loris, and have been for many decades. There is also a desire for multi-generational parks with a mixture of activities so that families can enjoy spending time together.

While the County has dedicated millage to support recreational needs in the County, the funds are struggling to support the operations and maintenance of existing facilities, let alone meet the development of new facilities. There is a strong demand for recreation among existing residents, which will be augmented by future population growth. The lack of funding cannot meet this demand.

Beyond access to facilities, the County must also consider the programming needs of County residents. Programming is currently available at all recreation and community centers, in addition to a specialized outdoor recreation programs and an athletic programs for leagues. In order to maximize usership and increase program funding, the County will need to evaluate its existing offerings and rates, and capitalize on volunteers and sponsorships. **The Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan** further explores recreational needs in unincorporated Horry County.

## SENIOR CENTERS

The Horry County Council on Aging Inc. (HCCOA), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1975 to provide senior care services. They currently serve over 10,000 senior citizens throughout Horry County. Programs and activities include:





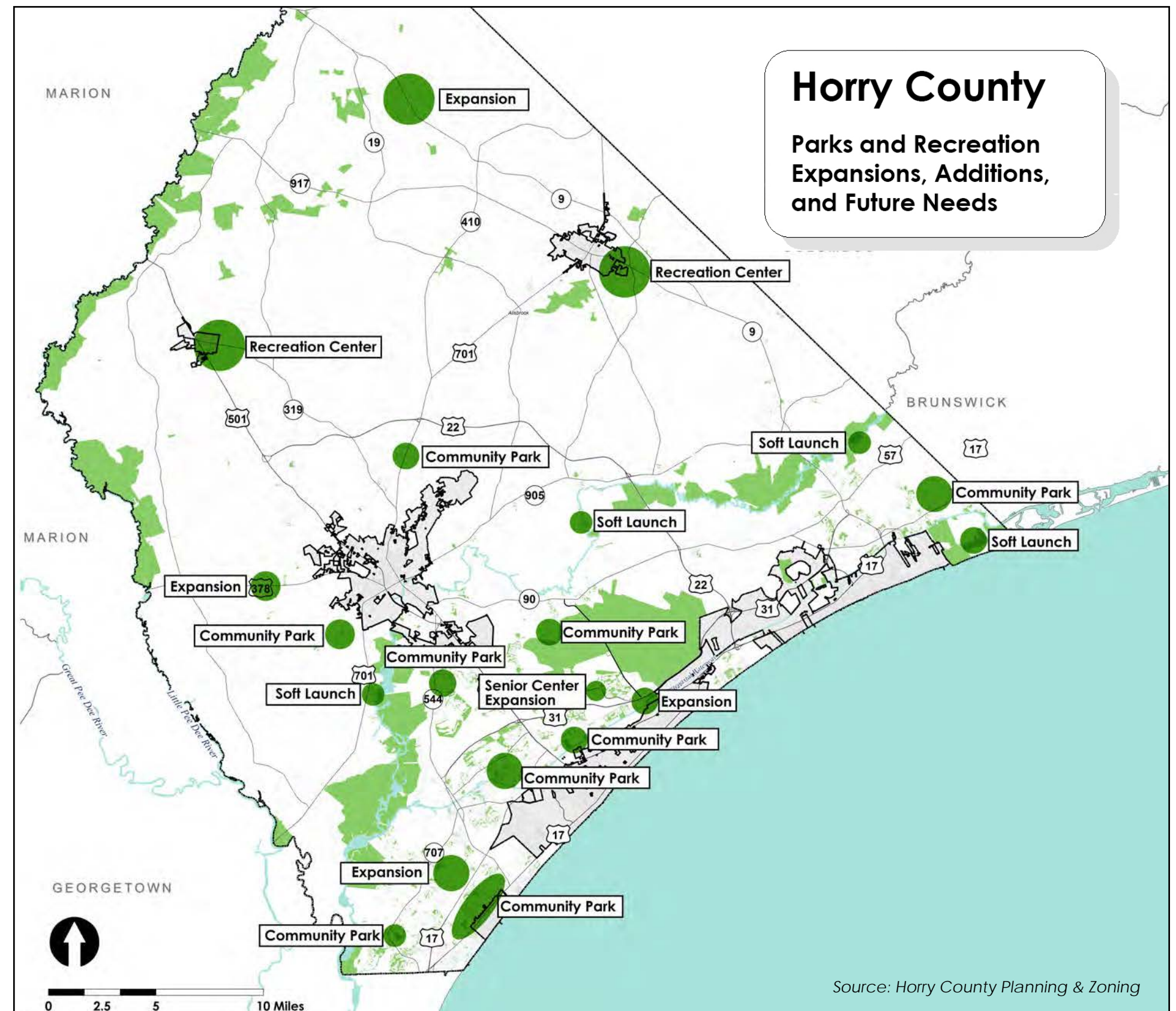
meal services, transportation assistance, housekeeping assistance, senior activities/recreation, exercise programs/health promotion, basic health checks, telephone reassurance, in-home visitation, group counseling, employment opportunities, and field trips/local outings.

Senior Center locations include: Aynor, Bucksport, Burgess, Carolina Forest, Conway, Grand Strand, Green Sea/Floyds, Loris, North Strand, and South Strand. The HCCOA currently operates a senior center out of a small storefront in Carolina Forest, with plans to open a larger senior center facility beside the Carolina Forest Recreation Center and Library.

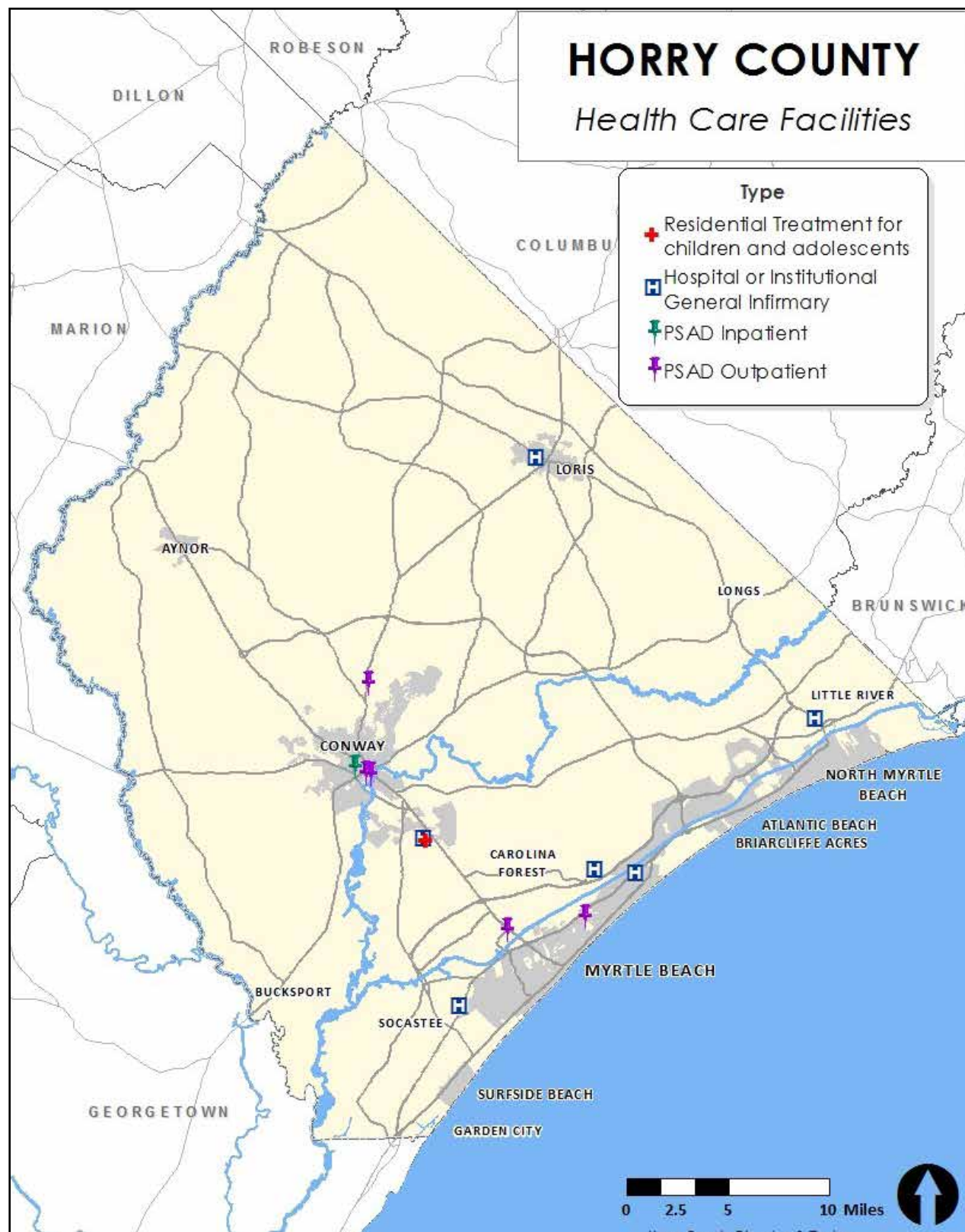
## RECREATION AND LEISURE FINDINGS

There is a clear need for the development of parks and community gathering sites throughout the County. The land for future parks should be acquired in the near future, especially in high growth areas. There are also many facilities that are undersized for the population that they serve. While funding may not be available to develop new parks at this time, the County should strive to acquire recreational lands while it is available and affordable. In addition, park lands can be master planned to allow for them to be developed in phases, as funding becomes available.

In order to minimize duplication of services, recreation and community centers, libraries, and senior centers should work together to expand their programming in a strategic manner and to capitalize on their combined capabilities. They should not define their boundaries by their individual buildings, and should share each other's resources and space when possible.







Source: SCDHEC 2018

## HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

While Horry County's permanent and visitor population has greatly increased over the last few decades, the health care system is just starting to identify and catch up to the needs of the County's population.

## HOSPITALS

As of 2016, there were five hospitals in Horry County. Currently, there are several medical parks/campuses that have plans for expansion, including: 1) the addition of an emergency room at the new 43 acre McLeod Seacoast medical campus, located at International Drive and Hwy 31 in Carolina Forest, (2) the development of a Grand Strand Medical Center emergency room near Carolina Forest Blvd and Hwy 501, (3) the expansion of McLeod Seacoast Hospital in Little River, and (4) a \$65 million expansion of existing facilities by Conway Medical Center. In addition, there are a number of, doctor's offices, physical rehabilitation, and urgent care clinics within Horry County. In 2019, an 84,000 square foot Veterans Affairs Clinic facility is expected to break ground in the Market Commons area of Myrtle Beach.

Per South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Division of Health Licensing, the following facilities were licensed in Horry County as of March 2018:

### Hospitals and Medical Centers, Bed Counts

Facility	Total Beds	General Beds	Neonatal Special Care	Psychiatric	Substance Abuse
Conway Medical Center	210	210	6	0	0
Grand Strand Medical Center	345	325	2	20	
McLeod Seacoast Hospital	50	50	0	0	0
McLeod Loris Hospital	105	105	0	0	0
Lighthouse Care of Conway	96			69	27
<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>27</b>

Source: SCDHEC, 2018

### Licensed Health Care Facilities

Facility Types	Number of Facilities	Licensed Units Within
Ambulatory Surgery	5	20
Home Health	7	26
Hospice Facility	1	36
Hospice Programs	3	54
Psychoactive Substance Abuse Dependence (PSAD) Inpatient	1	10
PSAD Outpatient	4	6
Renal Dialysis	8	139
Residential Treatment for Children & Adolescents	1	18
Public Health Clinics	5	N/A

## Opioid Epidemic

The 2016 World Drug Report from the United Nations stated that heroin use in the US is up 145% since 2007. According to DHEC, in 2016, there were 101 deaths from opioid overdoses within the County. This same year, EMS administered the drug Naloxone (or Narcan) 1,043 times; Naloxone reverses the effect of opioids. In both categories, Horry County is the leader in the state of South Carolina. The death rate is 36% higher than the rate of the next highest county, Charleston with 65 deaths, and the administration of Naloxone was 31% higher than the county of Greenville, which administered the drug 721 times. Currently, Horry County has three methadone clinics. Often zoning laws and public stigma prevent the siting of





facilities. Per the CDC, the US opioid epidemic is continuing and there is an urgent need for a multifaceted, collaborative public health and law enforcement approach.

## ELDER CARE FACILITIES

According to US Census data, the overall population of Horry County is growing older. This exemplifies the National phenomenon of the significant “baby-boom” generation becoming older and retiring in warmer climates. 2016 estimates show that 37% of Horry County residents are 55 years and older.

Assisted living facilities, also known as community residential care, help residents with daily activities including bathing, dressing, eating, and taking medicines. Nursing homes provide medical care, and are intended for adults with serious medical needs. Per SCDHEC, Division of Health Licensing, there are three Adult Day Cares (total 175 units), 28 In-Home Care Providers, 16 Community Residence Centers (ten with Alzheimer care, total 1,158 units), and nine Nursing Homes (total 854 units).

In addition, three assisted living facilities are currently in the planning stages. These include River Park Assisted Living and Water’s Edge Assisted Living, located between North Myrtle Beach and Little River and Coastal Palms Assisted Living in Longs. As Horry County’s population continues to age, there will be added demand for these facilities, along with residential communities that offer housing options for people to age in place, and for care facilities with a combination of independent and specialty care housing.

## HEALTH CARE FINDINGS

With the growth in population, it can be expected that an increase of facilities/beds will be needed to accommodate

both permanent populations and vacationers. An increased demand for health care services and facilities should be expected as the age of the County’s population increases. This increased need will include nursing homes and assisted living facilities. In addition, as the opioid epidemic escalates more rehabilitation and methadone centers will be needed, along with a multifaceted strategic plan to fight the epidemic within Horry County.

## CONCLUSIONS

As Horry County continues to grow, there will be increased needs for community facilities and services, along with increased stress on existing facilities. This will result in additional capital expenditures to ensure that the needs of the community are met and to adequately support future growth. There is a need to have a dedicated funding source for public facilities to ensure that the County can provide a good quality of life. As land becomes scarce, especially in rapidly developing areas, there will be increased competition among government organizations to acquire the same sites as developers, potentially driving up costs for tax payers. Coordination within departments of Horry County Government and with Horry County Schools, utility providers, and developers will be critical in making capital improvements in a smart and fiscally sound manner.



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# CHAPTER 7: PUBLIC SAFETY



## INTRODUCTION

Public safety is critical to the daily activities of all citizens and visitors to Horry County. While components of Public Safety are typically integrated into a comprehensive plan as part of the Community Facilities Chapter, Horry County has developed a separate Public Safety Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter includes the 9-1-1 Communications Center, emergency operations, law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services and the court system. Understanding trends in these public safety sectors is extremely important to identifying solutions that will improve the sense of security and quality of life for our residents, visitors, and business community.

## EMERGENCY 9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The Horry County Emergency 9-1-1 Communications Center in Conway is a vital link between the community and the public safety responders in the area. The utmost responsibility of 9-1-1 emergency telecommunicators is to work with the caller, service providers, computer aided dispatch (CAD), and mapping to assure rapid response, accurate database management, and support of the Public Safety Division and Horry County Government. All 9-1-1 calls and non-emergency calls made in Horry County, including in area municipalities, are answered in the Communications Center. The center dispatches police, fire, and ambulance calls, including law enforcement for Atlantic Beach, Aynor, Briarcliffe Acres, Conway, Loris, County Police and County Sheriff, and fire rescue for Conway, Surfside, Loris and the County. If the services of the SC Highway Patrol or any other emergency agency is needed, the call is immediately transferred to them. In addition, staff provides medical pre-arrival instructions to callers, dispatches to County environmental services and litter control officers, along with maintaining the records of all calls and radio traffic.

In FY2017, the 9-1-1 Center handled 528,307 total incoming calls, which resulted in 235,087 dispatches, along with an additional 125,201 outgoing calls. This averages to 71 calls per hour being handled by nine telecommunicators and two supervisors per shift with two rovers working between the two shifts per day. However, staffing is greater during special events and emergency situations such as hurricanes.

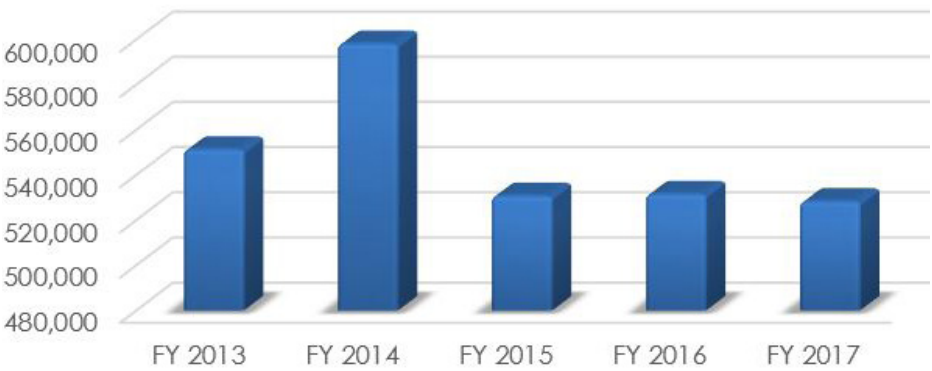
### Amount of Telephone Calls

	FY17
9-1-1 Calls Received	272,254
Non-Emergency Calls Received	256,063
<b>Total Incoming Calls</b>	<b>528,307</b>
All calls made to all others from the 911 Center	125,201
% of 9-1-1 from wireless phones	77.6%

Source: Horry County Emergency 9-1-1 Center

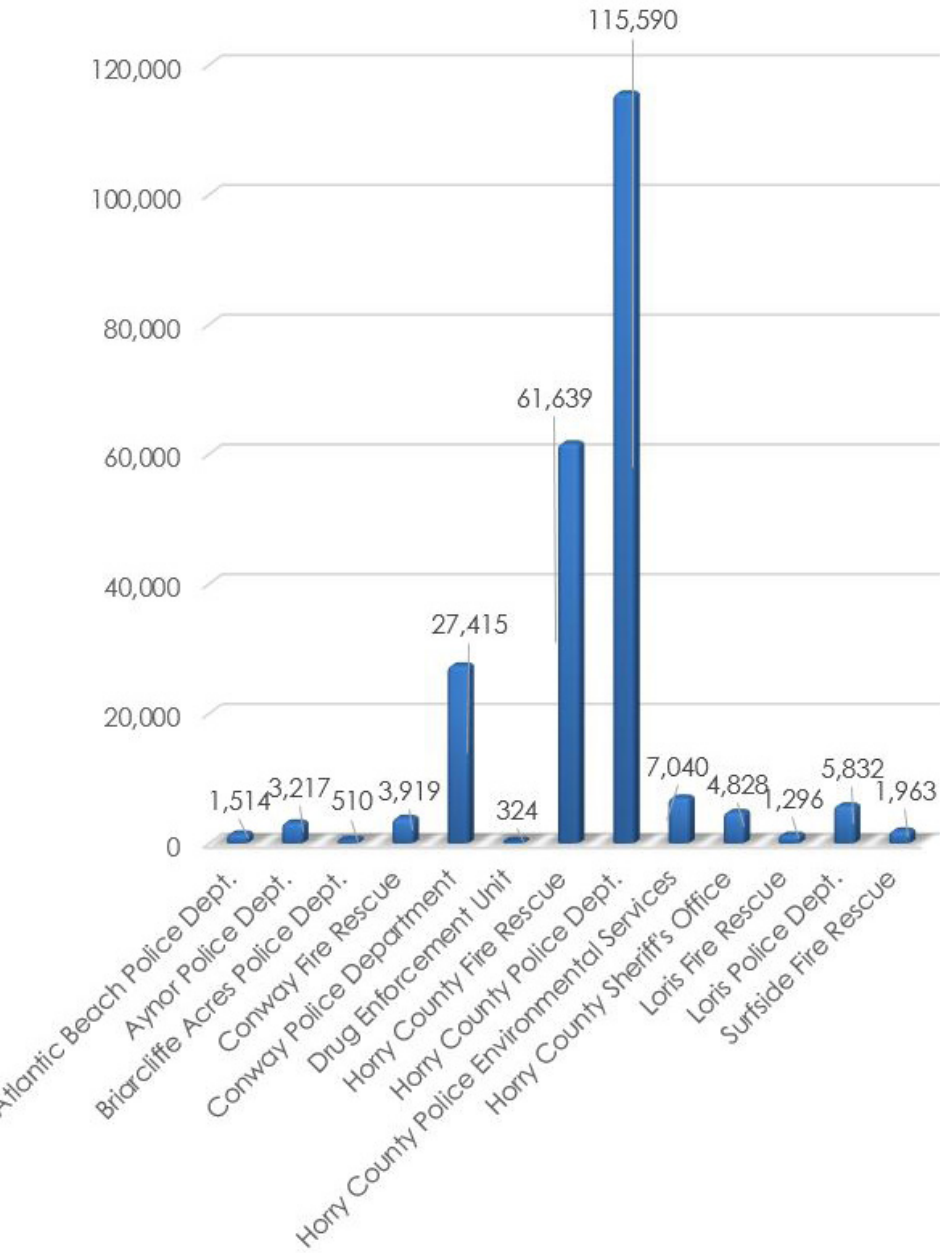
While call numbers have been relatively constant over the last few years, they can spike during economic downturns. It is also common that in consistently high crime areas that residents often become apathetic to report crimes for a variety of reasons.

### Incoming Call Volumes to 9-1-1 Communications Center



Source: Horry County Emergency 9-1-1 Center

### 2017 Dispatched Calls



Source: Horry County Emergency 9-1-1 Center



## 9-1-1 FINDINGS

Staffing levels should keep up with changing population, visitor numbers and as staffing increases for police and safety personnel. Currently, staffing levels are below what the budget allows for; however, there is a need for even more positions and equipment to keep pace. Beyond staffing, public information and education should be made more readily available regarding the non-emergency phone number. In addition, paper records need to be added to the electronic data base, making information readily available to the telecommunicators.

With growing call volume, the Emergency 9-1-1 Center will need a larger facility that is tied into the County's fiber optic line and located where there is unimpeded ability to cooperate with the Emergency Operations Center and IT/GIS. Not only have they outgrown their existing space, the building is not programmed with sleeping areas, a kitchen, and showers that would be necessary for long-term occupancy during majors storms and during disaster recovery. In addition, the backup 9-1-1 system facilities are also too small, and the building's location may inhibit access during flood events. Plans to relocate the 9-1-1 Center with a new Emergency Operations Center are being looked at.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Horry County Emergency Management leads the County's all-hazards emergency management program through collaborative planning, education, and coordination of response operations and recovery initiatives. Emergency Management is responsible for developing emergency response plans, and taking the lead role in the coordination of those plans during an emergency. The Department serves as the liaison between the local, state and federal agencies in the emergency management network. In addition, Emergen-

cy Management is responsible for special events permitting, post-disaster recovery planning and the emergency alert notification system, known as CODE RED. These efforts do not include the municipalities which have their own Emergency Operation Centers.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Horry County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) is the governing strategy for all operations during an emergency or disaster. Through the implementation of measures aimed at the four phases of emergency management; preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation, lives can be saved and property damage minimized. This ongoing operation is called comprehensive emergency management, and it emphasizes the interrelationship of activities, functions, and expertise necessary to deal with disasters. The CEMP was created by the County emergency management staff, working cooperatively with the state and local governments, and non-profit organizations that have a role in the emergency management program in Horry County.

The CEMP culminates all other required planning documents into one overarching plan. It includes the Public Information and Outreach Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, Logistics Plan, Short-Term Recovery Plan, All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, and Continuity of Operations Plan. This plan addresses a variety of natural disasters and man-made emergencies, including, but not limited to: earthquake, hurricane, riverine and coastal flooding, tsunami, communication, evacuation, mass fatalities, re-entry, operational areas, mosquito borne disease, severe weather, drought, wildfire, along with specific emergencies, such as a plane crash or a toxic spill.

The Emergency Management Plan also contributes to the County's participation in the Community Rating System (CRS), which uses disaster operation plans, hazard mitigation plans and floodplain management activities to enhance public safety, reduce damage to property and public infrastructure, help avoid economic disruption and losses, reduce human suffering, and protect the environment in addition to reduced flood insurance premium rates for policyholders. This important document can be found on the Emergency Management website.

## EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)

The Emergency Operations Center is centrally located in the M.L. Brown Building in Conway, in addition to Fire Rescue, Police, and the Coroner. The M.L. Brown Building is located in a flood prone area. This was made apparent during the 2015's historic floods, 2016's Hurricane Matthew, and as far back as Hurricane Floyd in 1999. Hwy 701, that leads to the building, in addition to the parking lot and vehicles parked within it, have flooded in the past. This not only restricts the flow of relief staff to the EOC, but also the delivery of supplies and food in the days following the storms. In addition, the roof of this building is only able to sustain winds of minimum hurricane strength.



Flooding at the ML Brown Building Parking Lot  
Source: Horry County Emergency Management





A FEMA Hurricane Evacuation Study was completed in 2012. This study indicated that the M.L. Brown facility was modeled to be under approximately 6.5 feet of storm surge flooding in the event of a Category-5 Hurricane, and the County’s back up facility, the IT/GIS Technology Center, is projected to be under approximately 8.5 feet under a worst-case scenario. Therefore, this potentially renders the existing structures incapable of serving their designed purposes.

In addition to being flood prone, the EOC lacks enough showers, a kitchen, and sleeping quarters that are necessary for emergency situations, which can last for weeks. Currently, staff must bring their own cots or sleeping bags and end up sleeping in the hallways of the building. The design for a new Emergency Operations Center is underway and is tentatively planned to be located across from J. Rueben Long Detention Center. It is estimated to cost \$26 million; however, after more than one spatial needs assessment and building design, funding has yet to be allocated for its construction.



Site Plan for new EOC, 9-1-1 Facility  
Source: Architects Design Group

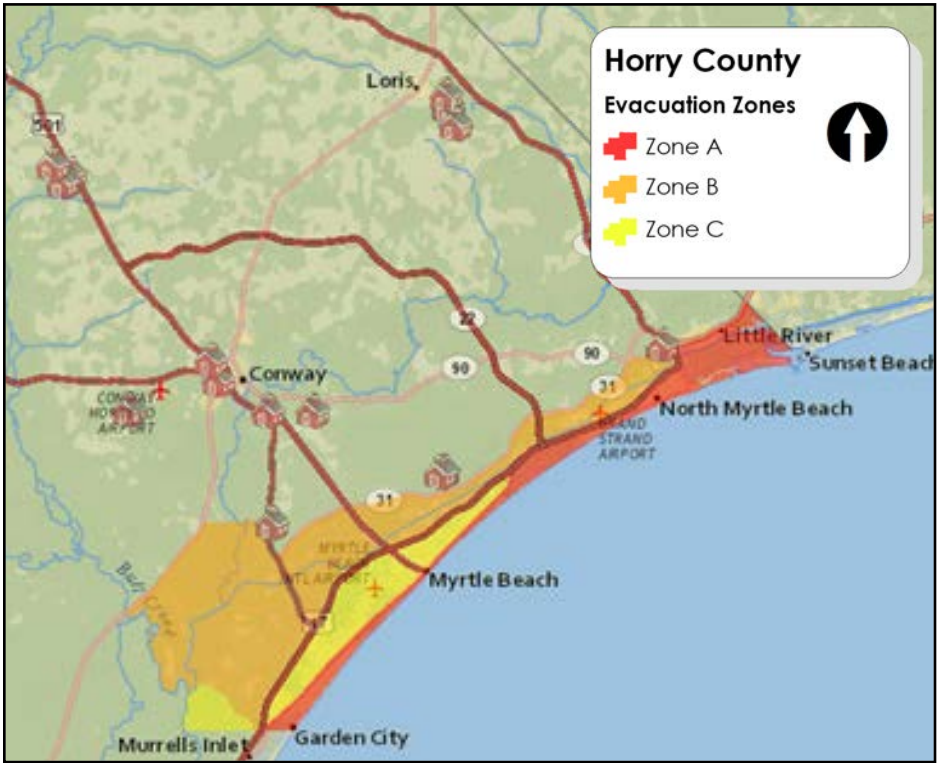
EVACUATION ROUTES

Emergency Management is responsible for alerting evacuations and in conjunction with law enforcement implementing lane reversals. The department implements the ‘Know Your Zone’ public education campaign to inform the citizens and visitors of Horry County of the hurricane evacuation zones and their vulnerability to storm surge. The Know Your Zone campaign was developed as a result of the information contained in the South Carolina Hurricane Evacuation Study (HES) for the Northern Conglomerate that was released by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 2012. The campaign also reflects the National Hurricane Center’s (NHC) decision to separate the association of storm surge inundation from the category of storm.

As new major roadway projects are completed, such as the Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL, also known as the Hwy 22 extension) and I-73, evacuation times will vastly improve in the County. These improvements will also allow people to return more easily after a disaster, thus allowing the community and economic activity to return to normal sooner.

SHELTERS

Emergency Management is also responsible to alert the public to the opening of shelters and their locations. Currently there are 16 shelters in the county; all are public schools. In addition shelter locations can change over time. As new schools open, they can be designated as shelters. Finding shelters that are not schools is important to ensure that schools can begin operating as soon as possible after an event. This is a tactic to help families have a sense of normalcy during the hectic recovery process. During Hurricane Matthew and post-Hurricane Florence, the James Frazier Community Center became a shelter and at times even local churches have served as shelter locations.



Source: Horry County GIS. <https://www.horrycounty.org/Online-Services/Know-Your-Zone>

DISTRIBUTION POINTS

Another consideration is additional “distribution points” for use during a disaster situation. These distribution points are large paved parking areas (at least 250’ x 300’) for trucks and helicopters and used by Emergency Operations, National Guard, etc. Currently, the County uses parking areas at recreation centers and schools. These distribution points, also known as “black tops”, could be included in new County facilities, such as recreation centers. Another possibility is pursuing partnerships with amusement facilities to use their parking areas during a disaster situation.

There is also a need for distribution points where County officers and first responders have gas available to refuel during power outages and emergency situations. Currently Privetts Rd. is the only fueling location available for County vehicles to refuel if power is out throughout the County.



## PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Emergency Management Department has the latest information online concerning safety for a variety of issues, including how to prepare for and what to do in case of specific emergencies, with links to additional safety information. In addition, there is printed information available such as the Know Your Zone Hurricane Guide. Beyond printed materials, Horry County Emergency Management hosts multiple public meetings and special events throughout the year for the public to learn how to prepare for a natural hazard.

## SPECIAL EVENT PERMITTING

Outdoor events that anticipate having over 500 people at any given time are required to have an approved Special Event Permit from the Emergency Management Department. Parades, rallies, concerts, festivals, marathons, circuses, fairs, block parties, poker runs, community events, mass participation events, sporting competition events such as running events, bicycle races or tours, or spectator sports such as football, basketball and baseball games, golf tournaments, hydroplane or boat races, may require a special event permit. After a complete application is obtained by Emergency Management, staff has ten days to approve or deny the request.

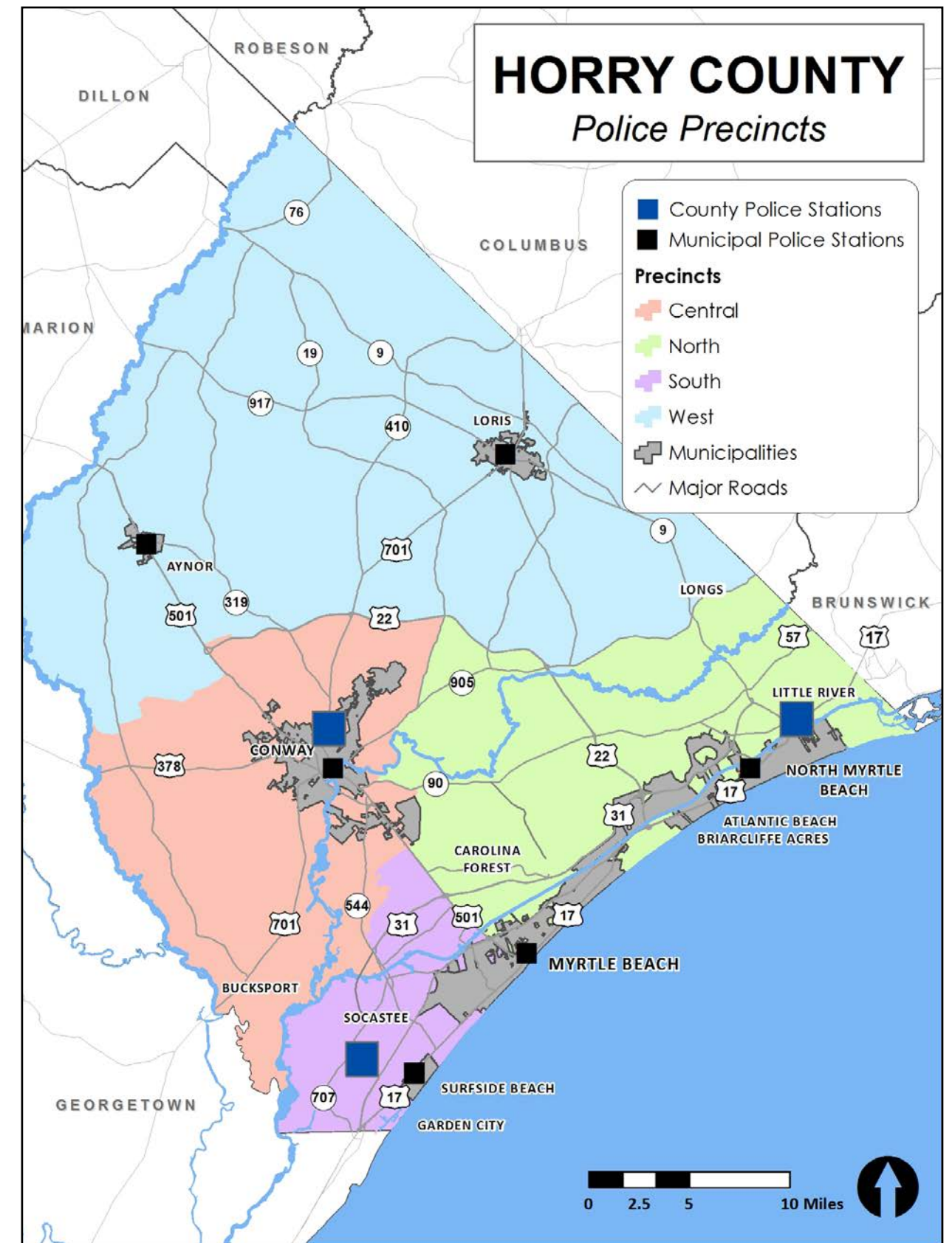
## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FINDINGS

A new 9-1-1 Communications Center is in the design phase in conjunction with the relocation of the EOC, to ensure adequate response capabilities in the event of any disaster. This center will need the capacity to expand. Evacuation routes, shelters, plans, and distribution points will need to be evaluated and updated on a continuing basis as population increase and major road projects are completed. As new developments are underway, they should not be located along the future routes of major roadways, like the SELL and I-73, to ensure that the construction of these roadways remains a viable option. Last, but not least, a continued and expanded public education program is necessary to ensure that newcomers to the area are able to prepare for all natural hazards.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT

### POLICE

The Horry County Police Department provides law enforcement services to the unincorporated portions of the County. It was established as the primary law enforcement agency in 1959, and remains the only county police department in South Carolina. Municipalities within Horry County also maintain individual police forces. The County participates in mutual aid agreements with the cities and supplements their police services upon request. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), DNR, as well as Probation and Parole assist during major events such as bike week.







As of 2017, the Police Department maintained a staff of over 275. Services are centralized within the M.L. Brown facility in Conway, which acts as the operational center and includes the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief, Professional Standards, Crime Analysis, Public Information Officer, and administrative staff. The department's patrol function is separated into four precincts; North (Little River), Central (Conway), South (Myrtle Beach), and West (Green Sea).

Additional units include a blood hound tracking team, beach patrol, SWAT team, hostage negotiation team, criminal investigation division (CID), training division, bomb squad, airport division, community outreach team, street crimes unit, traffic unit, environmental standards, and an honor guard. Officers not only provide regular duty services, but also fill positions in these units. The Police Department has a regulatory component that issues preclearance letters for Late Night Establishment, lends engravers for Operation Identification, issues Precious Metal Permits, and is involved with towing enforcement. Staffing is below the national average.

The County Police are at capacity in the M.L. Brown Building, as well as in the four precinct buildings. Future growth includes the construction of a new fifth Police Precinct. This fifth "East" Precinct is planned to be located east of the Waccamaw River and has an estimated cost of \$3,000,000. The Police Department's recommendation to staff this facility is 45 new positions. However, the department also recommends precinct staff expansion, support expansion and CID expansion for a total of 80 new positions.

Training facilities are currently scattered. While some specialized training is done at the M. L. Brown Building, EOC rooms, and conference rooms at Conway Airport are also utilized. Driver training is done at Conway and Georgetown Airports. Police use the City of Conway's firing range located on Highway 905, which is too small to accommodate use by all local law enforcement and does not allow for night time training. A centralized practice firing range that has the capacity of training with handguns and rifles is needed. An indoor range would add the advantage of additional use at night and during inclement weather, however it is only good for handgun training. The construction of a consolidated Police Training Facility with driving and firearm practicing facilities would accommodate the future growth needs of not only the police department but the Sheriff's Office as well.

Currently, the department is purchasing new equipment as budget and grant money allows for. This includes safety equipment for officers; however, there is still a great need to ensure officers have the training and equipment they need.

Response Times

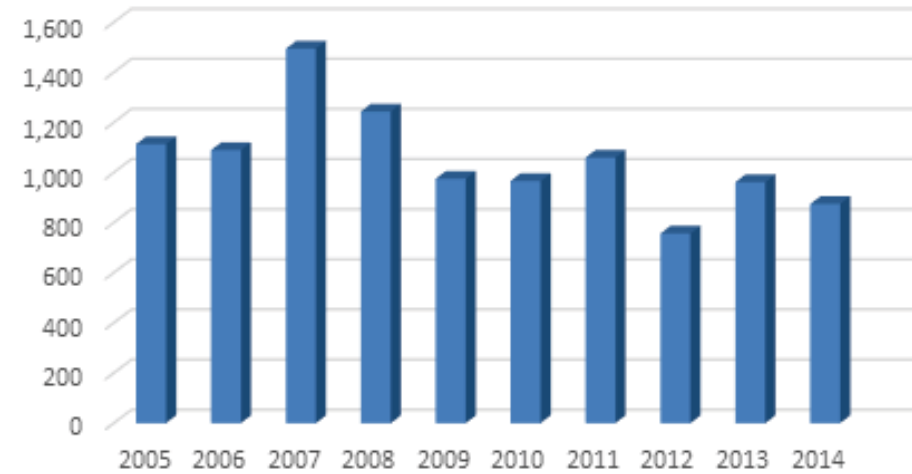
Congestion on roads can play a factor in delaying response times. Emergency Vehicle Preemption is an option and is discussed further in the Transportation Chapter. Logistics can also play a part in delayed response in the west precinct. There are large areas to cover and the location of the officers in proximity to where the call comes from

can influence response time. In addition, when cars need servicing for oil changes, each officer must drive to Privetts Rd. This affects the availability of the officer.

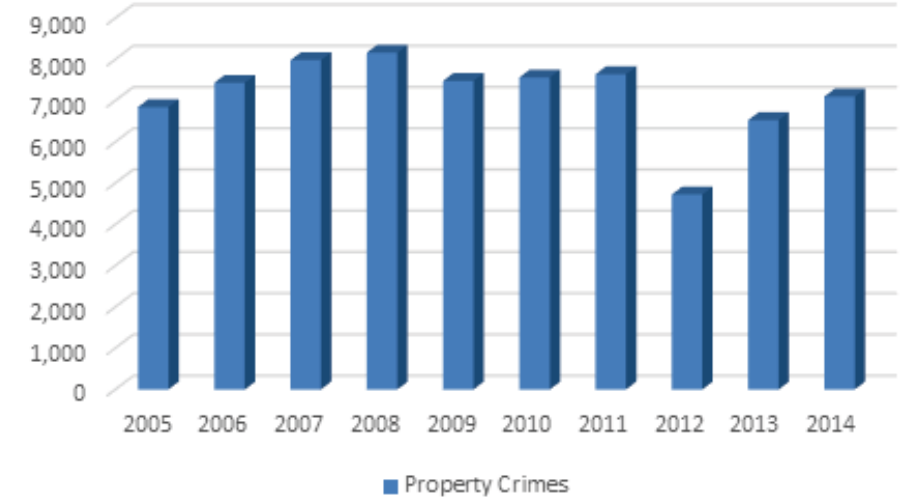
Crime Trends

The following two charts show crime data for the unincorporated areas of the County, as reported to the FBI from 2005 to 2014. Violent crimes include murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, larceny – theft, and motor vehicle theft.

Violent Crimes Reported

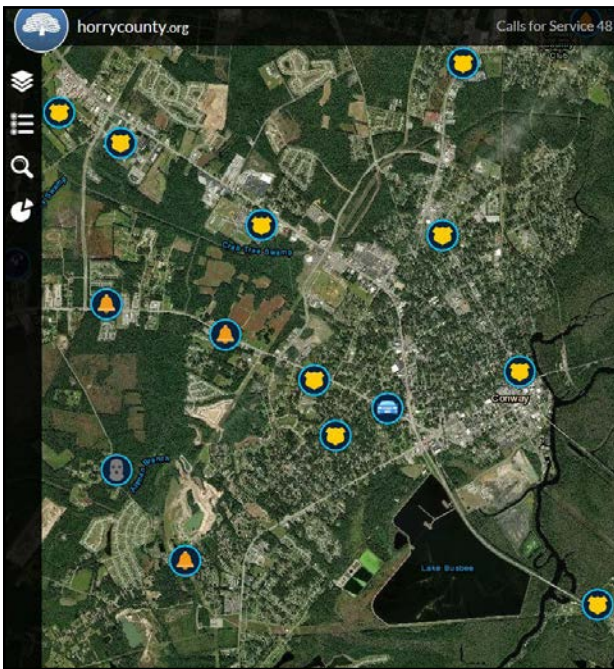


Property Crimes Reported



Source: FBI





The Police Department has an online GIS map that tracks crime for the past 48 hours.

Source: Horry County GIS. <https://www.horry-county.org/gis/calls48/>

## Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

The design of the built environment can play a role in limiting crime and aiding police efforts. Examples of design factors that can improve visibility and minimize criminal activity include the siting of entry and exit points, building orientation with windows overlooking streets, sidewalk and parking lot lighting, and landscape design. Even property maintenance can have an effect on crime. When it is perceived that no one cares about an area, the broken window theory suggests that this further encourages criminal behavior. The County can use a variety of measures to address community safety, but it requires a collaborative effort amongst departments and with the community.

For example, building code enforcement of deteriorated and abandoned buildings can ensure such buildings are secured, repaired, or demolished. The lighting and programming of park space can also be a deterrent. In addition, the creation of Neighborhood Watch Organizations and community cleanup programs to remove trash and graffiti can contribute to reduced crime rates.

## Environmental Services

Environmental Services is comprised of nine officers with one-supervisor. These officers handle the enforcement of all laws pertaining to animals, litter, and property maintenance. This includes, but is not limited to, the accumulation of garbage, junk cars, and illegal dump sites.

## Animal Care Center

The Horry County Animal Care Center is located in Conway. An addition is needed for a surgical and recovery area, as well as a large storage area for animal feed. Beyond publicly operated facilities, there are two Humane Society shelters, one in Myrtle Beach and one in North Myrtle Beach, as well as animal rescue centers around the County.



Picture Taken on Opening Day at the Horry County Animal Care Center  
Source: <https://www.horrycounty.org/Departments/Animal-Care-Center>

## Domestic Violence

Currently, there are no domestic violence shelters in Horry County. There are several domestic violence groups working to raise the funds to build a facility, however there is a need for long term funding to operate the center once it is built.

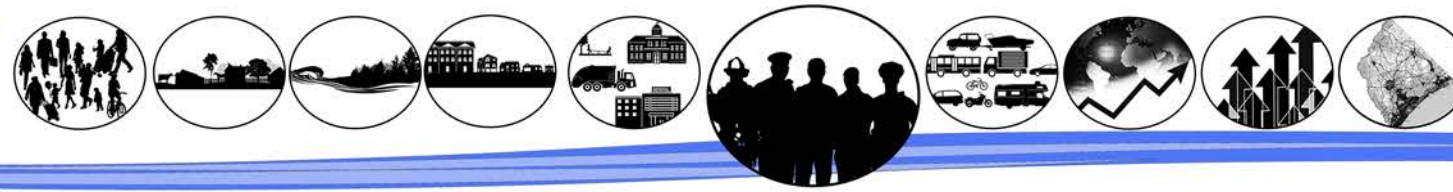
## SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Horry County Sheriff's Office is separate from the Horry County Police Department. Its roles include serving papers, serving warrants, maintaining and securing the Court House and the J. Reuben Long Detention Center. The Sheriff's Office also conducts fingerprinting, provides funeral escorts, performs local record checks, assists with temporary beer and wine permits in conjunction with the Department of Revenue, and has personnel that participate in mental health court. Horry County is the only county in South Carolina that has both a police department and a sheriff's office.

In addition, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for the cameras throughout the Government and Justice Center building. To replace the system with all new technology will run around \$170,000. As the old analogue cameras are replaced, they are being updated individually with IP cameras and converters to be compatible with the analogue system. Eventually, the entire system will need to be converted to IP.

Presently, the Sheriff's Office is located in Conway. In addition to the area on the first floor of the Justice Center, which the department has outgrown, the Sheriff's Office is using additional space wherever it can be found. This means that the Sheriff's Office has been scattered between the first, second and third floors of the Justice Center and within the old courthouse across the street. Currently, training is located in rooms above the J. Reuben Long Detention Center administrative offices and can accommodate up to 160 people. Firearm training takes place at the City of Conway's range and the City of Myrtle Beach's indoor range. There is no facility for use that would allow for firearm training with a gun range, a driving course, and a conference center along with a training facility all in one location. Although no future plans are currently in place, a single larger facility is needed for the sheriff's office.





### J. Reuben Long Detention Center

The Horry County Sheriff's Office assumed control of the J. Reuben Long Detention Center in 1999 from Horry County Government. The center provides a safe, secure environment for the incarceration of people charged with criminal offenses awaiting trial, inmates sentenced in court and serving 90 days or less, or inmates sentenced in family court.

The Detention Center facility opened in 1989, with the original building designed to house 213 inmates, and later accommodated to house 249 inmates. It was the first direct supervision type facility in South Carolina. This type of facility contains a group of cells surrounding an area known as a pod which contains tables, chairs and a television. An officer is stationed within the pod and is able to observe the inmates and has the ability to interact with them. In 1996, a 96-bed minimum security building was completed to house the sentenced inmate worker population. In 2003, a female housing unit, courtroom, and victim services section was built adjoining the original building. In 2008, a 128-bed dormitory-style facility was completed. From 2009-2011, a 563-bed tower, administrative building, kitchen, and laundry building were constructed. Currently, the Detention Center can house 1,000 inmates in twenty housing units. As of February 2018, the Detention Center has never been at full capacity. On Labor Day of 2017, the Detention Center had 904 inmates. According to the sheriff's department, at the current rate of use, a second tower with 526 beds may need to be started in 2021 allowing for two years to complete.

A way to stretch out the use of the existing facility would be to increase the Community Corrections Program, which allows for electronic monitoring instead of incarceration. Currently, there are about 100 people electronically monitored but increasing this method of correction, will keep the incarcerat-

ed population down. The electronic monitoring equipment is leased at a rate of \$4.50 per day which makes this the cheapest way to keep the numbers down within the Detention Center. Currently personnel for the day report/electronic monitoring have outgrown their space and are in need of larger quarters.

The Jail Diversion/Reentry Program, a drug and alcohol treatment program, currently has a proven track record of approximately 33% of the participants that complete the program and are able to remain clean and sober. In comparison, 30 to 90 day acute care treatment programs are achieving a 7% clean and sober rate. However, this program is currently only available to male inmates.

Staffing for detention facilities is determined by the Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities in South Carolina which receives its authority from the South Carolina Code of Laws. Using an analysis of 650 inmates, J Reuben Long was understaffed for 2017 and incurred overtime costs of \$850,000.

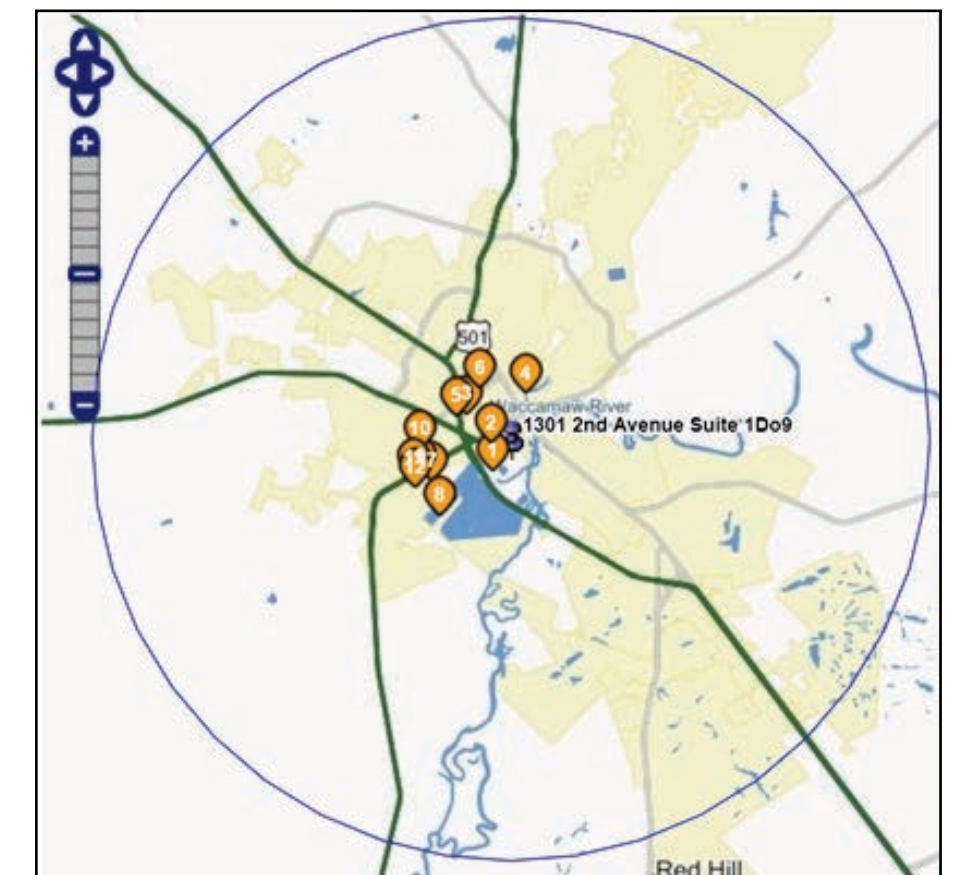
### Sex Offenders Registry

The Sheriff's Office is in charge of sex offender management and the community notification tool. This tool manages and monitors the whereabouts, conduct, and compliance status of registered offenders in Horry County. An updated registry is available on line for anyone to use and even allows for free email notification when a sex offender registers in Horry County. Currently, there are five staff members monitoring sex offenders with 550 active cases.

According to S.C. Code Ann. §23-3-535, it is unlawful for a specific type of sex offender who has been convicted to reside within 1,000 feet of a school, daycare center, children's

recreational facility, park, or public playground. When siting new schools, daycare centers, children's recreation facilities, parks, and public playgrounds, any existing registered sex offenders within the 1,000 feet of the new facility will be exempt from the rule because they were there prior to the new facilities. When the County considers the development of new facilities, it should also consider the location of existing sex offenders, so children are not brought into a potentially unsafe environment. Properly sited public facilities could possibly serve as a deterrent for new sex offenders locating themselves in Horry County, as they cannot live within a 1,000' radius of new schools, recreation centers, and parks per state law.

### Example of Horry County Sex Offender Mapping



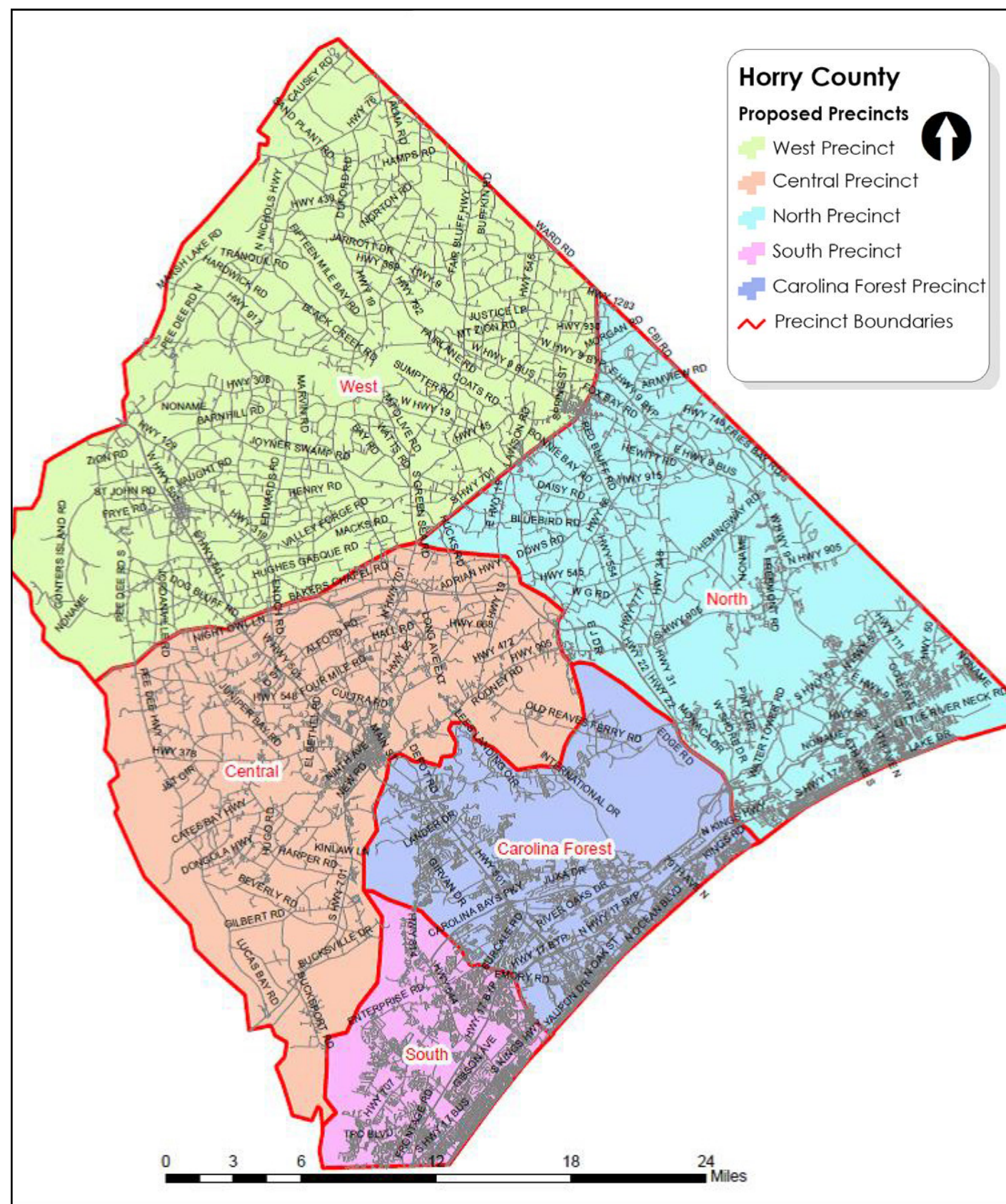
Source: Horry County makes information on the location of registered sex offenders available to the public through its website at: <https://www.horrycounty.org/Online-Services/Sex-Offender>.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT FINDINGS

For both departments, staffing levels must keep up with the changing population, visitor numbers, and call volume. In addition, equipment needs to be continually updated. A training facility that includes a firing range with the ability to train at night, driving course and conference area is desirable. In addition a satellite fleet maintenance center or a contract with an oil change business is needed.

While the police are looking to add a fifth precinct, the Sheriff's Office would like to consolidate all offices into one building to enable operations to run smoother, and a location on the J. Reuben Long Detention Center campus would be ideal. A small sheriffs presence for security at the Court House would need to be maintained and the camera system within the Government and Justice Center will continue to require updating. The expansion of the Community Corrections Program will put off the construction of a new jail facility. In order to use this option to a greater capacity the court system must buy in. Last, the addition of a Jail/Diversity Program for women is needed.



## COURT SYSTEM SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit includes Horry and Georgetown Counties and our mission at the Fifteenth Circuit Solicitor's Office is to preserve the rights of the citizens of these counties while prosecuting those who violate the law. The office is staffed by a team of assistant solicitors, investigators, victim advocates, and qualified staff personnel who work hard to ensure criminals are punished for their crimes and the rights of victims are protected.

The 15th Circuit Solicitor's Office handles all General Sessions Court cases and certain misdemeanor cases in Magistrate's Court and all criminal cases in Family Court in Horry and Georgetown counties, which includes the Grand Strand and Myrtle Beach areas. Each year our office prosecutes about 14,000 cases. In addition to prosecution, the 15th Circuit Solicitor's Office manages several diversion programs for adults and juveniles.

The Solicitor's Office is a high demand department which faces daily challenges related to infrastructure and staffing needs. When the Solicitor's Office moved into the Justice Center, they took office space on the first, second and third floors. The department is now spread out between floors and also between several buildings. Investigators are located in the Drug Enforcement Building on Church Street; a building the County pays the mortgage for. The Victim Advocates have moved into a rented building on Beaty Street; the County pays a portion of the rent and the rest is paid





through a grant. In addition, the Solicitor's Intervention Program for diversion away from the court system, is located in a fourth building on the corner of 2nd Avenue and Laurel St. This building is owned by the Solicitors Office. While a security officer has been hired for this location, for security reasons it would be better if this program was located in a wing of a structure that housed all of the solicitor's offices together. Recently, the Solicitor's Office has purchased the old Conway Hospital on 11th Ave and Hwy 501 in Conway. Renovation will be needed prior to use.

Technology needs and infrastructure are another daily struggle for the Solicitor's Office. Presently, court rooms are only equipped with a drop down screen. All technical equipment needed for court is brought in daily and must be secured. More equipment is needed, but there is no available space to add secured storage. In addition, storage of files and digital file conversion are a problem. The amount of cases this department currently handles means that there are constraints for files, equipment, and staff.

### CLERK OF COURTS

The Clerk of Court's purpose is to provide all the services of the judicial system to the general public for Circuit and Family Court. Their services include, but are not limited to:

- summoning of jurors for civil and criminal court
- filing of civil, criminal and family court documents
- processing arrest warrants
- passport applications
- public defender applications
- hawker's and peddler's applications
- notary public registration
- filing of bondsman license and collecting estreatments

- collection and disbursement of child support and alimony
- collection of general sessions fines and court costs
- custodian of civil, criminal, and family court documents
- preparation and maintenance of civil and family court dockets

Currently, the Clerk of Court's office is located in the Justice Building in Conway. They have outgrown their space, resulting in jury and waiting rooms and even closets being converted to office space. Additionally, records are being stored on opposite floors from staff, creating staffing inefficiencies. Staffing levels are already too low to address the current case load. As the County's population grows, so will the number of cases, files required to be stored onsite, and the staffing to keep up with the cases and files. The possibility exists to scan the records into an offline secured database; however, the physical files will still need to be kept at Records Retention, which would free up space in the Justice Building.

### COURT SYSTEM FINDINGS

Staffing levels for both the Solicitors Office and the Clerk of Courts, need to keep up with the changing population, vacationers and police personnel. Both offices need more room and the consolidation of all Solicitor's offices into one building would make operations run smoother and more secure. Within the current building, the Solicitor's Office, Sheriff's Office and Clerk of Courts are all competing for space. Another service that would help these two departments to run efficiently and free up space, is to create a dedicated scanning department. In addition, the Solicitor's Office needs more secured storage areas for Exhibits and the satellite Magistrate offices will also need to be expanded.

### FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

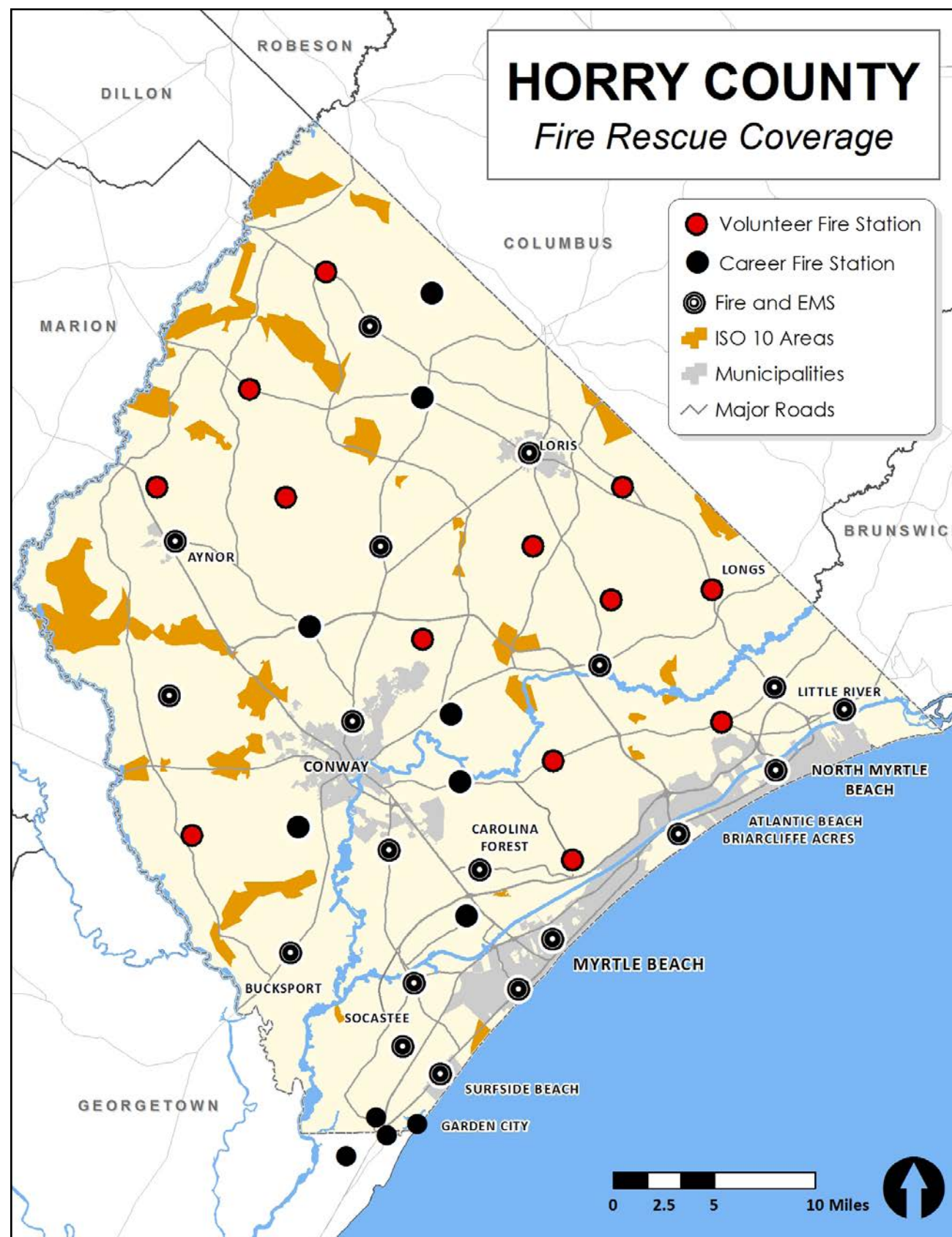
Horry County Fire Rescue has been in service since 2001. The department is an all-hazards emergency response agency consisting of both Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS), providing protection in the unincorporated areas of Horry County, Aynor and Atlantic Beach, as well as EMS coverage in all the incorporated municipalities.



Horry County Fire Socastee Station  
Source: Horry County Fire and Rescue

Horry County Fire Rescue provides aid to the cities of Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Conway, Surfside, Loris, Murrells Inlet, and Nichols, as well as Fairbluff, Tabor City and Calabash in North Carolina. These departments also provide aid to the County. The Department is split into four battalions geographically, operating from 39 stations. As of 2017, staffing for the department consists of over 394 full time career staff and over 300 volunteers. In addition to the County and municipal stations, the Murrells Inlet – Garden City Fire Department operates within a Special Purpose District serving approximately 25 square miles in southeastern Horry County and northeastern Georgetown Counties. This area is protected by three stations, with a fourth recently completed on McDowell Shortcut Road.





Currently, Horry County Fire Rescue utilizes 20 EMS Transport Units to serve the entire County and municipalities. The headquarters is located in Conway within the M.L. Brown Building. Four volunteer-based rescue squads within Horry County provide a supplement to the EMS response. A Fire Rescue Training Academy is located on Hwy 67 in Loris.

Horry County Fire Rescue does not have a Fire Marshal, as this responsibility is housed within the Horry County Code Enforcement Department. This means that routine inspections of buildings are the responsibility of Code Enforcement.

### ISO RATINGS

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) rates all fire stations throughout the County. ISO is a private insurance organization that evaluates fire protection capabilities. Ratings criteria include the distance between structures and fire stations (requirement is within five drivable miles), the composition of structures, numbers and types of firefighting equipment and apparatus, fire stations, and personnel. Lower ratings represent lower premiums assumed by the insurance-holder. The survey evaluates all aspects of fire rescue services, as well as water supply services. In 2016, the ISO rating in Horry County was improved from a Class-5 to a Class-3. Any area rated ISO-10 is more than five miles from a station. Currently the County has fifteen ISO-10 areas with 72.29 square miles (6.87% of the total coverage area). Since the evaluation of ISO-10 areas a 16th one was created within a new development. Future growth in these zones will result in greater stresses on the department to service these areas and higher insurance premiums for those living there. The top three ISO-10 areas have an assessed value of \$20,007,068.

### FIRE RESPONSE

Response times are not only important for ISO ratings, but should also be used to inform rezoning requests and land development decisions. Reflecting rapid population growth, call volume handled by Horry County Fire Rescue over the past ten years has risen considerably. Fire Rescue services would like to rework their coverage areas and add a fifth battalion. The following chart shows an average of 10% increase per year in emergency responses.

Emergency Responses by Horry County Fire Rescue



Source: Horry County Fire Department





The addition of 18 new positions would allow Fire Rescue to convert staffed stations to three-person staffing; however, this is a shortfall compared to the four-person staffing as recommended by the National Fire Protection Association. To accommodate current and projected needs, the County will minimally need to convert the Carolina Bays, and Longs stations from volunteer into career stations and Cherry Hill, Goretown, Joyner Swamp, Nixonville/Wampee, Maple, Antioch, Mt. Vernon, and Floyds stations from volunteer to day staff. It will also need new stations for Prestwick, Oak Street, Hwy. 378, Shell, Atlantic Beach, and Carolina Forest, while So-castee needs to be expanded and the Forestbrook station upgraded. In addition, renovation is needed at the Ketchup-town, Cates Bay, Mount Olive, North Myrtle Beach and Loris stations along with the training facilities, while replacement is needed for the Myrtle Beach 21st Ave, Longs and Finklea, locations. This list does not include lifecycle maintenance or recurring capital needs.

#### EMS RESPONSE

Moving forward, the department will utilize community and citizen needs, combined with response data to provide an EMS deployment which meets the needs of Horry County. EMS Service will be delivered through the deployment of a combination of fire and transport units. These units will be staffed by personnel and equipment with the capability of providing Basic Life Support Care, and Advanced Life Support Care, driven by patient need at the onset of the 9-1-1 call for service. To address the growing EMS volumes, 24-hour ambulance crews will need to be added to the following stations; Nixonville/Wampee, Longs, Lee's Landing, Ocean Bays, Finklea, Pitch Landing, and Allens. In addition, EMS daytime coverage would be added to Goretown and Cherry Hill stations.

#### PERSONNEL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The department staffs a full-time Fire Training Center in the Bayboro area and has recently added a Mobile Training Simulator. This allows training programs to be delivered at each of the 39 Fire Rescue Stations. This resource will provide training in the areas of Live Fire Training, Search and Rescue, Ladder Drills, High-Angle Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, and Firefighter May-Day Drills.

In addition, the department staffs a full-time EMS Training Division in the M. L. Brown Building. These members deliver all the required initial emergency Basic Life Support training, CPR training, in-service and recertification training for all Fire Rescue Personnel, as well as specialized training for the Advanced Life Support providers. The department is currently completing the process to become an Advanced Life Support Training Center and will begin providing this training in-house.

#### TRAINING FACILITIES

Horry County Fire Rescue will continue to seek to improve the capabilities of their training facilities. The current facilities, while functional, are dated in age, as well as technology. The ability to replace the current Fire Training Facility with a state-of-the-art training center, capable of live burns utilizing Class A materials, in combination with a second burn building which utilizes Class B materials, would be an excellent improvement for the future needs of the members and the organization. This should be combined with a training tower, built specifically for the needs of firefighter training; replacing a pole-barn construction type building currently utilized by the department.

The department also needs to consider updating the tools, equipment, and technology for training. Providing the ap-

propriate state-of-the-art training equipment for both the EMS instructors, and providers, will ensure the entire department is trained and equipped to handle any medical emergency or trauma incident.

#### WILDFIRE TEAM

The Horry County Fire Rescue Wildfire Team operates from Fire Station 27 (Allens) located at 2501 Bay Water Drive, Aynor. The members of the Wildfire Team are available to work with individuals and groups to assist with wildfire prevention efforts and as the liaison with "Firewise USA", a program of the National Fire Protection Association. This Nationally recognized program teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and take action now to prevent losses.

#### OUTDOOR BURNING

Horry County has taken steps in recent years to reduce wildfire risks. As of 2018, Outdoor burning was no longer authorized in any development of 11 lots or more within unincorporated area of the County. All other areas within the County, are regulated by the South Carolina Forestry Commission. All burning regulations and rules, can be located at the South Carolina Forestry Commission web address: <http://www.state.sc.us/forest/fire.htm>. As the pressures for development increase, so will the dangers of wildfires in the wildland urban interface (WUI). Regulations will need to be continually evaluated and updated to reduce these risks further.

#### FIRE RESCUE FINDINGS

Staffing levels and facilities must keep pace to meet the emergency response needs of a constantly changing and increasing full-time and transient population in Horry County. Outdated equipment needs to be replaced. In conjunction with this, the continuation of studies for the locations and need for



new Fire Rescue Facilities, and addition of career staff to volunteer stations, to ensure the expanding Fire and EMS needs of the community are met. Coordination with Planning and Zoning on rezoning cases to ensure response times are maintained within proper parameters should be implemented.

### CONCLUSION

Staffing levels must keep up with the changing population and visitor numbers for all safety departments. New equipment and training will need to be met to ensure a high level of service is provided when it comes to the safety of the community. Adding a 5th Police Precinct will allow for greater police coverage and response times. In addition, numerous new and expanded fire and EMS stations are necessary throughout the County. In contrast, the sheriff's office would like to consolidate all offices at one location.

On the 2018 public input survey for the comprehensive plan, safety was the number one answer to the question; in the next 20 years, what do you think will be the MOST concerning issue in your community? In addition, people also responded that they were willing to pay extra for public safety service improvements. Public Safety, including emergency preparedness, fire safety, emergency medical services, and provisions for our judicial system should remain as one of the forefront topics for improvement for the County.



# CHAPTER 8: TRANSPORTATION



## INTRODUCTION

Transportation plays a critical role in people's daily routine and quality of life. It also plays a significant role in economic development and public safety. Because transportation projects often involve local, state, and often federal coordination for funding, construction standards, and to meet regulatory guidelines, projects are identified many years and sometimes decades prior to the actual construction of a new facility or improvement. Coordinating transportation projects with future growth is a necessity.

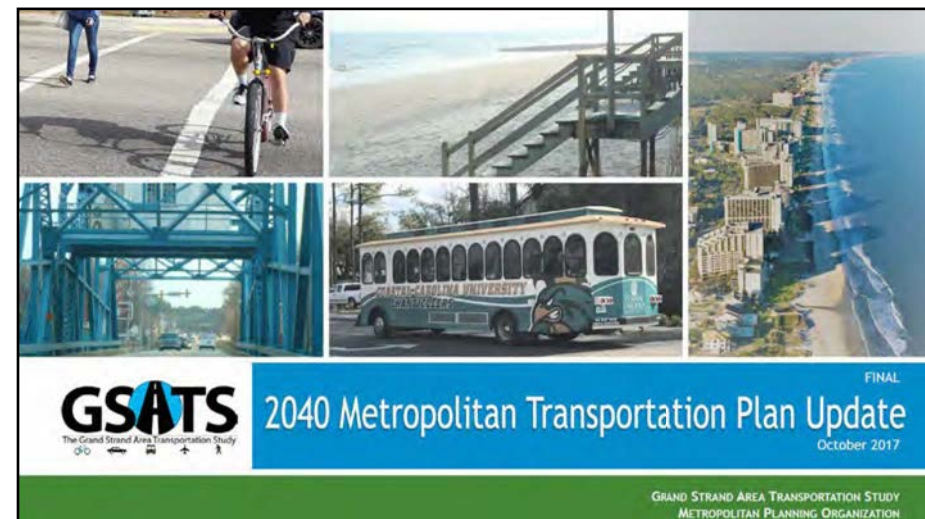
The Transportation Chapter provides an analysis of transportation systems serving Horry County including existing roads, planned or proposed major road improvements and new road construction, existing transit projects, existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

## REGIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS

There are a number of agencies involved in transportation planning efforts, including Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS), Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG), and numerous County departments. In addition, South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and area municipalities play a critical role in identifying inter-jurisdictional project needs.

**Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS)** is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as designated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for the urbanized region of Brunswick, Horry, and Georgetown counties. It is made up of representation from each of the three counties, municipalities, COAST RTA, SCDOT, and WRCOG. GSATS agencies analyze the short- and long-range transportation needs of the region and offer a public forum for transportation decision-making.

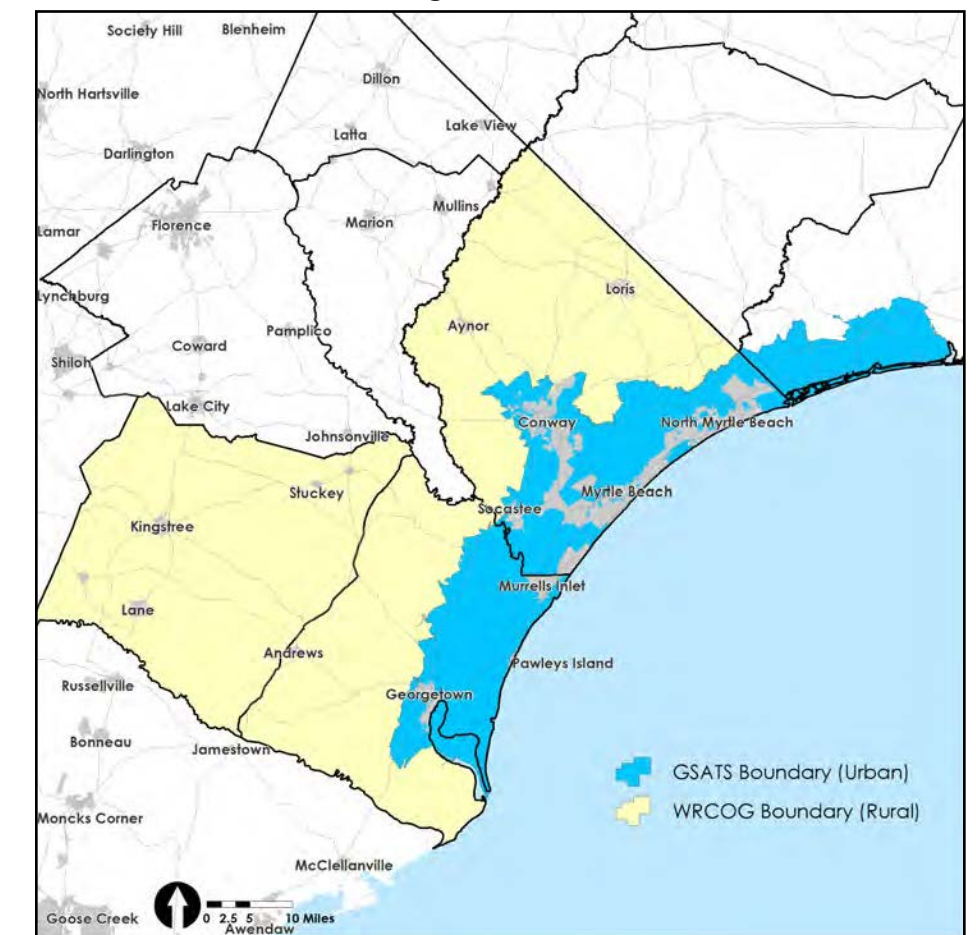
GSATS is responsible for an overall 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that identifies the most desirable and efficient means of meeting transportation needs. The plan addresses a minimum of a 20-year planning horizon and includes both long- and short-range strategies and actions that lead to the development of an integrated, intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. The Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) is a five-year capital projects plan adopted by the GSATS and by SCDOT. The local TIP also includes a three-year estimate of transit capital and maintenance requirements. The projects within the TIP are derived from the MTP. Information on GSATS Plans and funded projects can be found on their website at [www.gsats.org](http://www.gsats.org)



The **Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG)** not only assists in managing GSATS, but it also helps SCDOT with transportation planning outside of the boundaries of the MPO for Horry, Georgetown, and Williamsburg counties. SCDOT partnered with WRCOG to develop the **Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP)** to identify and prioritize state highway needs for areas outside of the MPO. The Rural Long Range Transportation Improvement Plan (Ru-

ral TIP) covers funded "Guideshare" regional improvement projects that comply with South Carolina ACT 114 and are identified in the RL RTP. The TIP is not only a plan but a fiscally constrained document. Additionally, it covers other federally funded project awards designated to a municipality or agency within rural jurisdictions. These federally funded projects are typically expected to be undertaken during a six-year period.

## GSATS and WRCOG Planning Areas



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning GIS



## SPECIALIZED STUDIES AND PLANS

Beyond these regional planning initiatives that are mandated to receive federal and state transportation funding, GSATS and the agencies involved in it have developed a number of transportation plans and studies that are relevant to unincorporated Horry County. These plans are used to inform future corridor design and bicycle and pedestrian needs. The County utilizes these plans to ensure that development in these areas coincides with the recommendations of the plans.

The Kings Highway Corridor Study (2008) area covers the section of US Hwy 17 Kings Hwy from Farrow Parkway up to the City limits of North Myrtle Beach. In the County's jurisdiction, it addresses the area known as Restaurant Row. The plan includes recommended projects and design cross sections for the corridor.

The **Northeast Area Transportation Plan (2009)** study area was bounded by SC 22 to the west, SC 90 and SC 57 to the north, SC 9 to the east, and the Intracoastal Waterway to the south. The study area also included the Little River Neck area south of the Intracoastal and east of SC 9. The plan looked beyond the roadway to determine the effects of growth on the built environment and acknowledges the importance of balancing the land use and transportation equation. The plan provides tools aimed at creating a successful merger between smart growth and the demands of the roadway users. The plan includes a Transportation Best Practices Toolbox which provides background information and guiding principles on access management, collector street planning, complete streets, and interchange design. It also provides detailed cross sections, including median, bicycle and pedestrian, and right of way needs for portions of SC 90 and SC 9.

## Focus areas in the Northeast Area Transportation Plan



Source: Northeast Area Transportation Plan

The **Comprehensive Road Improvement Plan** is also known as the dirt road paving plan. This plan was developed to address road improvement needs for the unincorporated areas of the County. It is regularly updated by Horry County Council as projects are completed or deemed infeasible. Projects are added to the plan as approved by Resolution by County Council.

The East Coast Greenway is projected to be a 2,600-mile long multi-use urban spine trail system extending from the northeast corner of Maine (Calais, Maine) to the southern tip of the Florida Keys. The **East Coast Greenway Master Plan (2003)** plan focuses on the 92 miles of trail that will make up the East Coast Greenway route through Horry County and Georgetown County. The plan is being implemented through Transportation Alternatives Funds that are prioritized and allocated for the development of the East Coast Greenway in the GSATS region. Sections of the East Coast Greenway have been completed in unincorporated Horry County, and the entire 13 miles in the City of Myrtle Beach have been completed. Efforts are underway to connect existing sections of trail throughout the County.

In addition to the East Coast Greenway planning efforts, Horry County has developed the **Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**. It identifies opportunities for greater connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians, including projects associated with roadway improvements and trail systems to connect neighborhoods and destinations. To date, the plan identifies the needs in the Carolina Forest and Burgess communities; however, there is an expressed desire to expand the plan to include all of the bicycle and pedestrian needs of unincorporated Horry County.

The **Coast RTA Transit Development Plan** is a five-year plan addressing transit needs in Horry and Georgetown Counties. Written in 2010 and updated in 2014, the Plan lays out a series of service and capital improvements for the regional transit system. Recommendations include several service improvements including expansion of fixed route service to Loris, Longs, and North Myrtle Beach, introduction of a vanpool program and more tourist based service. The Plan also laid out a series of capital improvements for the system, including a bus stop sign/shelter program and replacement of the system's operating and maintenance facility.

## EXISTING PLANS FINDINGS

Transportation plans and studies are currently underway in Horry County. These plans and studies range in size and design based on the area of which they are implemented to target. At this time, Horry County largely relies on GSATS and the WRCOG to develop its transportation plans. As unincorporated Horry County begins to develop and urbanize, the demand for localized planning efforts will increase. Such planning can refine and define community character and shape quality growth.





EXISTING ROAD NETWORK

Horry County has the largest road network of any county in South Carolina. It includes federal, state, local, and private roads. The capacity and condition of our existing road network is influenced by existing land use and growth.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Horry County maintains a total of 1,464 miles of county roads, of which 864 miles are paved and 600 miles are unpaved. Additionally, the South Carolina Department of Transportation manages a total of 1,338 miles of primary and secondary state roads within the County. The federal government and the state maintain a total of 223 miles of US Highways. (October 2017). The majority of roads within new subdivisions are conveyed to the County. Roads are typically classified by their design and average daily traffic count (ADT).

Road Classification		
Street Type	Function	Guideline Maximum ADT
Major Arterial	Artery conveying more than 9000 ADT.	9001+
Minor Arterial	Principal traffic artery within residential or commercial areas that carry relatively high traffic volumes and conveys traffic from arterial streets to lower-order streets. Its function is to promote the free flow of traffic; as such, no parking shall be permitted along and no residences should have direct access to such roads.	5,001 - 9000
Collector	Conducts and distributes traffic between lower-order and higher-order streets. Carries large traffic volume at high speed. Function is to promote free traffic flow; therefore, parking and direct access to homes from this level of street is prohibited.	2,001 - 5,000
Neighborhood Collector	This is a collector road that is usually within a master planned community. The road volumes are too high to provide direct access to the street.	2,001-4,000
Sub-collector	Provides frontage for access to lots, and carries traffic of adjoining access streets. Designed to carry somewhat higher traffic volumes with traffic limited to motorists having origin or destination within the immediate neighborhood.	501-2,000
Access Street	Provides frontage for access to lots, and carries traffic having destination or origin on the street itself.	500
Alley	A service road that typically provides access to lots whose primary frontage is on a collector or arterial status road. On same level as an access street, but different standards apply. Should be designed to discourage through traffic, but shall not be limited to one (1) access point.	500
Shared Private Driveway	A non-exclusive and appurtenant easement. The primary function is to provide access to three or fewer lots. Shared private driveway easements are intended for traffic speeds less than ten mile per hour.	30

When rezoning requests and new developments are being planned, Horry County evaluates the capacity of the existing roadway system and those roadways within the proposed development. New public or private roadways are designed to ensure that the roadway will function as intended and will provide safe and efficient traffic movement to the public. Geometric features, such as sight distances for stopping on horizontal and vertical curves, corner sight distances, and horizontal and vertical curves are sized and designed in accordance with the standards published in the

South Carolina Department of Transportation Highway Standards Manual or the AASHTO Manual based on the roadway type that will be constructed.

MAINTENANCE

Road maintenance responsibilities depend upon the ownership of the road. SCDOT is responsible for the maintenance of state-maintained roadways. Horry County Public Works and Engineering departments are responsible for roads within the County's maintenance system, both paved and unpaved. Paved roadways are repaired and resurfaced with road fee funds. The road fee funds also assist with the paving of approximately eight miles of unpaved roadways a year, largely in rural parts of the County. 100 miles of dirt roads were paved through RIDE-2 funding along with the resurfacing of 67 miles of existing paved roads. Ride-3 will fund the paving of an additional 100 miles of dirt roads along with the resurfacing an additional 67 miles of existing paved roads. All unimproved roadways are selected for paving through the priority ranking of the County's Comprehensive Dirt Road Paving Plan. Routine maintenance and scraping of unimproved roadways are funded by the General Fund. Private road maintenance is the responsibility of the owner or often a homeowners' association.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

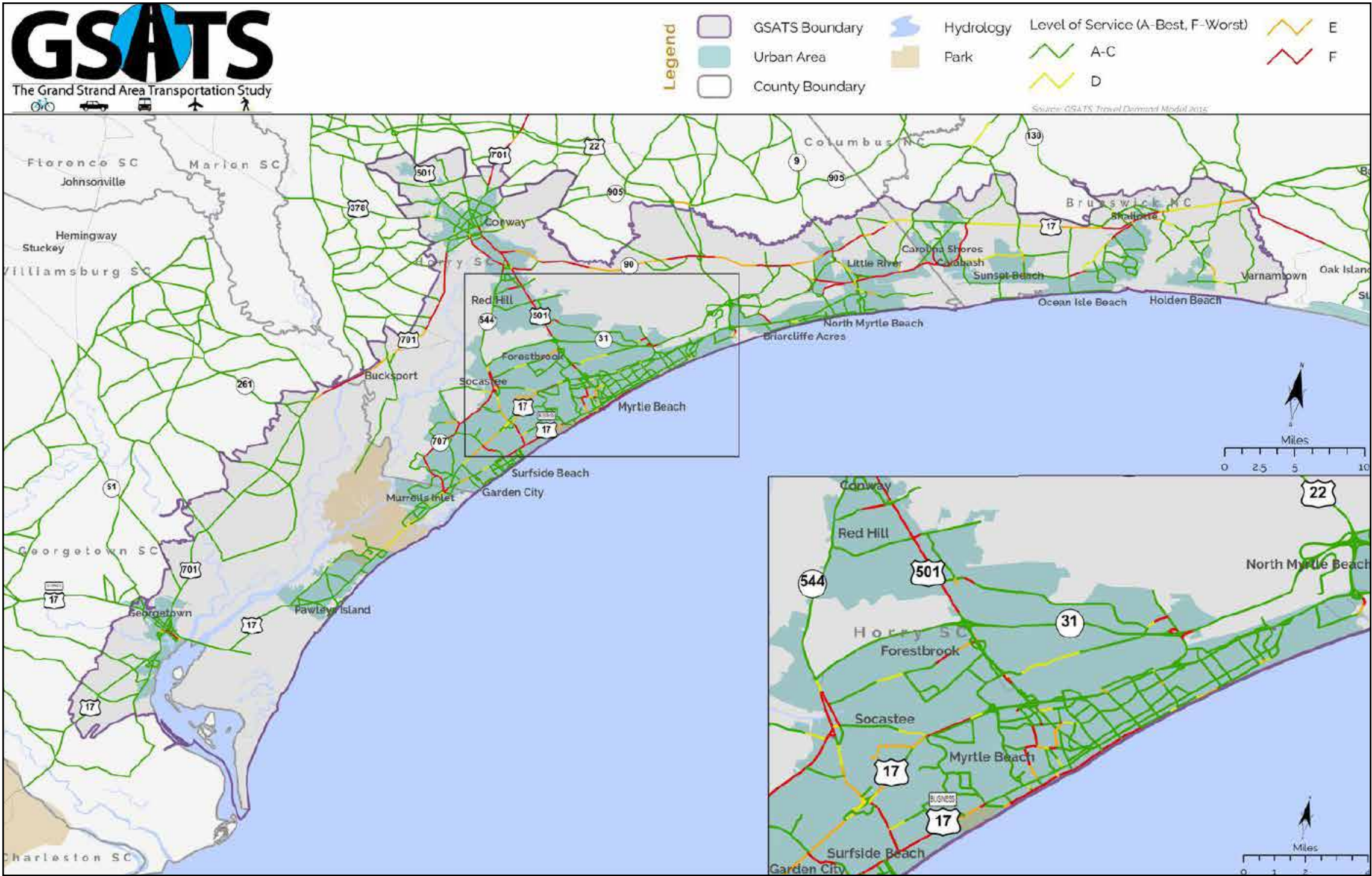
Based on the Highway Capacity Manual by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies (TRB), Level of Service (LOS) is a scale used to evaluate how the use of a roadway compares to the number of vehicles it was designed to accommodate. Transportation planners derive LOS for a roadway by examining its traffic volumes, operating capacity (the number of vehicles per hour the roadway can handle without creating congestion), and estimated or observed vehicle speeds. When the roadway traffic volume exceeds the capacity of the roadway, the facility loses its ability to efficiently move traffic and becomes congested. LOS ratings are similar to the A-to-F grading system used in school.

While LOS evaluates traffic congestion, it is only one measure of the condition of roadways and does not provide solutions to resolving congestion. Often times, the easy assumption is that a roadway needs to be widened; when in fact, the issue may be traffic light timing or the need for turn lanes. In many cases, congestion may be relieved through improved road connectivity. Understanding driver origins and destinations is extremely important to identifying long-term solutions. The County can assess the location of major destinations, such as shopping centers, schools, and employment centers. It can also utilize available information from Bluetooth users to better understand their travel patterns, especially for vacationers traveling in from out of the region and the state. Understanding existing and future land use patterns can inform the need for new roadways and traffic improvements.





LOS	Volume to Capacity (V/C) Ratio
A	< 0.5
B	> 0.49 and ≤ 0.74
C	> 0.74 and ≤ 1.0
D	> 1.0 and ≤ 1.15
E	> 1.15 and ≤ 1.34
F	> 1.34



2015 Roadway Level of Service Scores for the GSATS Area  
Sources: Northeast Area Transportation Plan, GSATS 2040 MTP





## INTERSECTIONS

Signalization and intersection improvements can manage traffic flow in an effort to reduce crashes, mitigate environmental impacts such as fuel consumption and emissions, and reduce congestion from normal and unexpected delays. Failing intersections are a primary cause of traffic delays and poor Level of Service ratings from roadways. A progressive-controlled signal system can coordinate traffic signals along a corridor to allow vehicles to move through multiple signals without stopping. Traffic signals are spaced appropriately and synchronized so when a vehicle is released from one intersection the signal at the next intersection will be green by the time the vehicle reaches it. Likewise, adaptive signal control involves continuously collecting automated intersection traffic volumes and using the volumes to alter signal timing and phasing to best accommodate actual—real-time—traffic volumes. Adaptive signal control can increase isolated intersection capacity as well as improve overall corridor mobility by up to 20% during off-peak periods and 10% during peak periods.

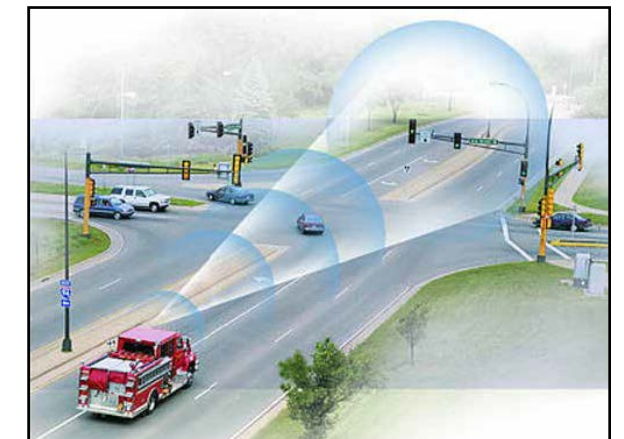
### 2015 Intersection Level of Service Scores for a portion of GSATS Area



Source: GSATS 2040 MTP, Appendix D

**Emergency Vehicle Preemption** is another method to alter signalization when an oncoming emergency or other suitably equipped vehicle changing the indication of a traffic signal to green to favor the direction of desired travel. Preemption improves emergency vehicle response time, reduces vehicular lane and roadway blockages, and improves the safety of the responders by stopping conflicting movements. Such investments can mean the difference between life and death for those needing medical assistance or to put out fires.

### Emergency Vehicle Preemption



Sources: US DOT Traffic Signal Timing Manual

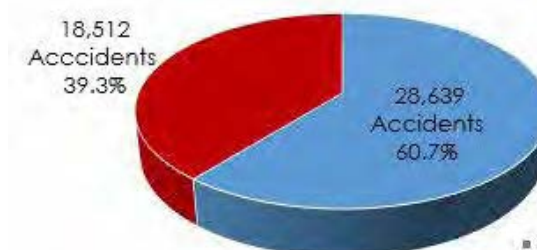
Beyond signalization improvements, other intersection improvements, such as lighting, crosswalks, and appropriately designed turn lanes, can make significant headway in reducing traffic accidents.

## SAFETY

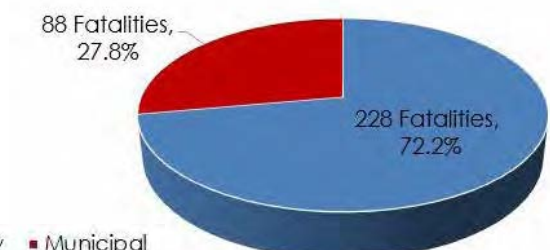
Traffic accidents serve a measure of safety and often provide an indicator of where road improvements are necessary. Unfortunately, Horry County, including its municipalities, have led the State of South Carolina in the number of traffic fatalities. 60.7% of all accidents and 72.2% of all traffic fatalities between 2012-2016 occurred in unincorporated Horry County.

Distracted driving, people not knowing where they are going, alcohol use, and not wearing seatbelts are common factors in Horry County traffic deaths. "Historically, Horry County traffic fatalities involving an alcohol-impaired driver constitute approximately 39% of the total fatalities in that county each year," said Emily Thomas with the South Carolina Department of Public Safety (<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article52471305.html#storylink=cpy>).

### Traffic Accidents 2012-2016



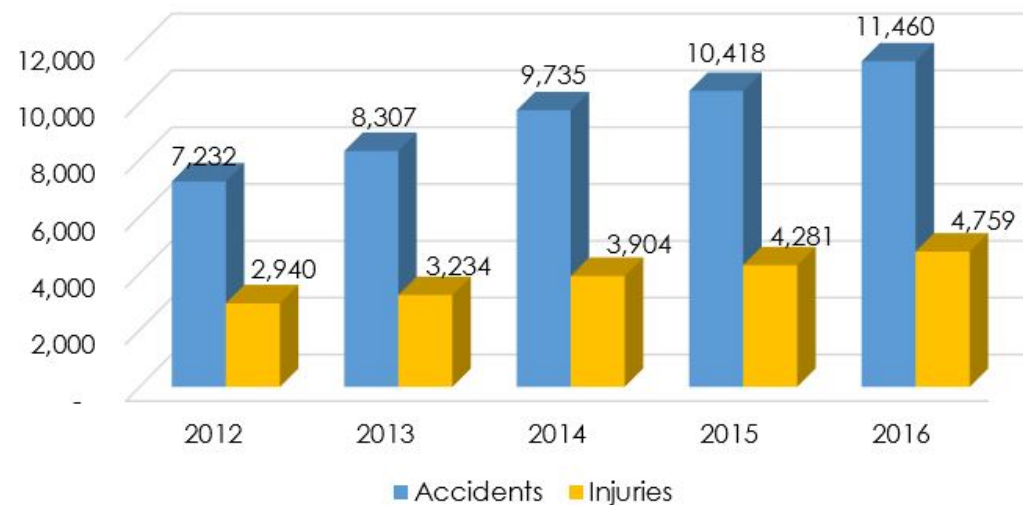
### Traffic Fatalities 2012-2016



Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation

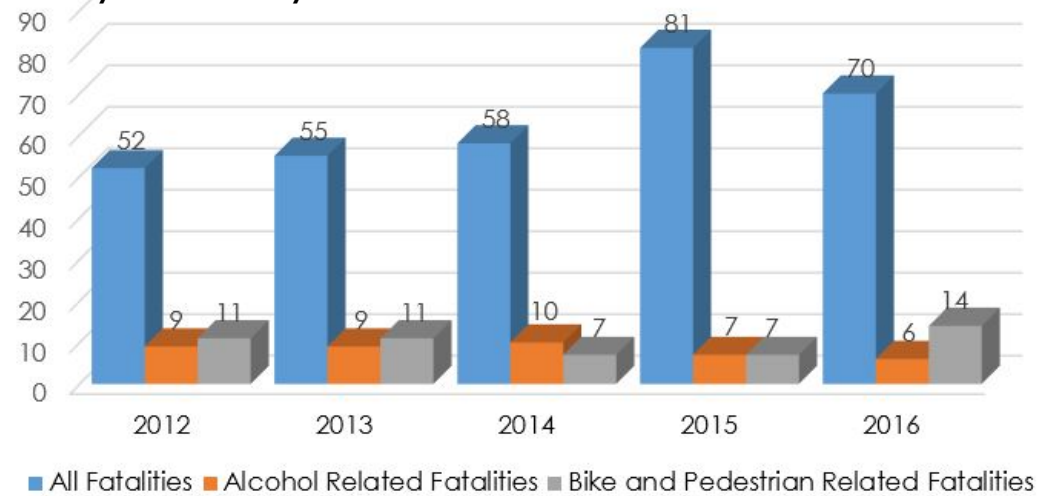


## County-Wide Accident Trends 2012-2016



Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation

## County-Wide Fatality Trends 2012-2016

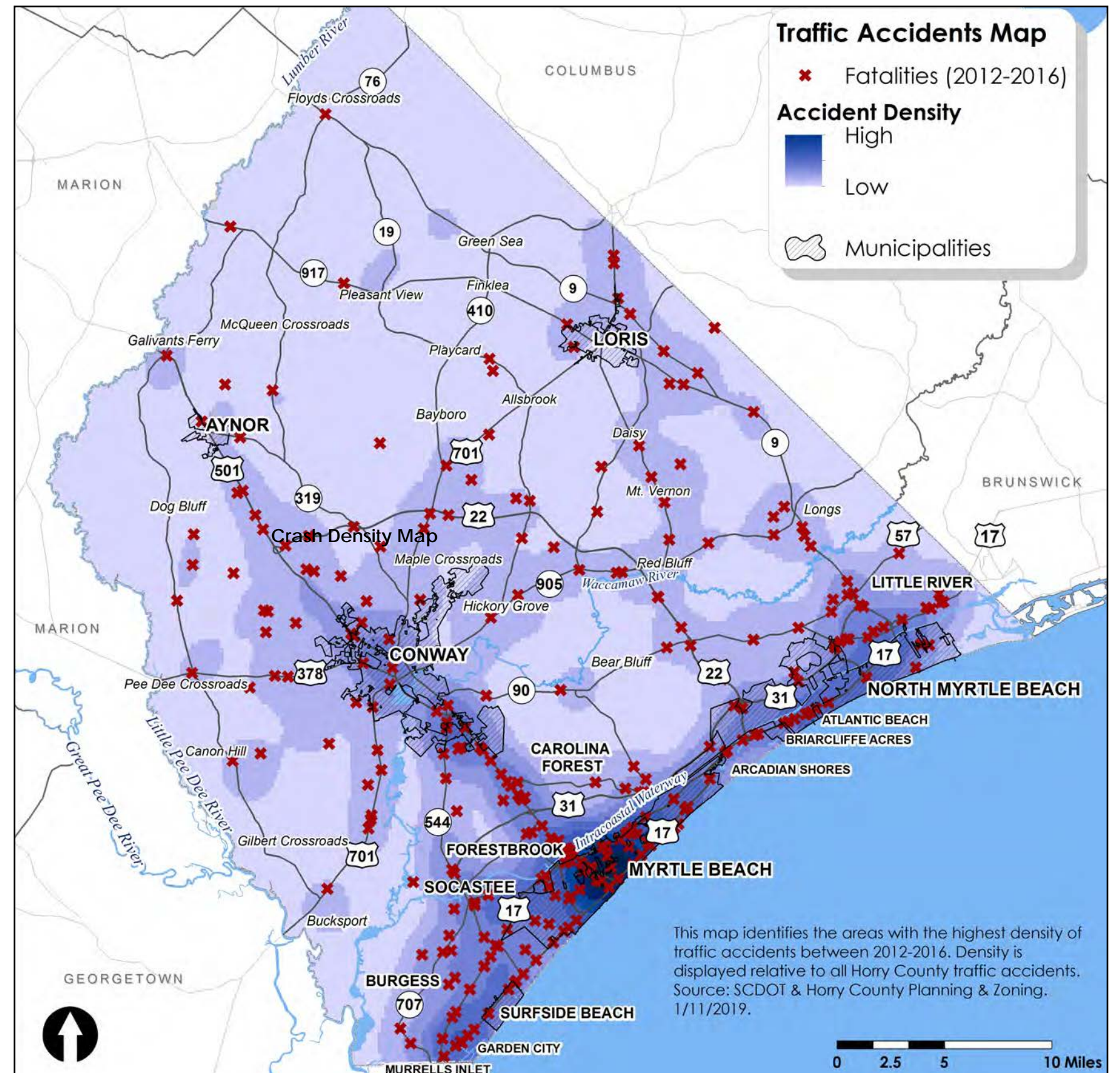


Source: South Carolina Department of Transportation

## Accident Trends 2012-2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Accidents	7,232	8,307	9,735	10,418	11,460
Injuries	2,940	3,234	3,904	4,281	4,759
Fatalities	52	55	58	81	70
Alcohol Related Accidents	422	448	470	413	543
Alcohol Related Injuries	266	252	289	298	382
Alcohol Related Fatalities	9	9	10	7	6
Bike & Pedestrian Related Accidents	83	118	118	128	125
Bike & Pedestrian Related Injuries	69	105	101	119	101
Bike & Pedestrian Related Fatalities	11	11	7	7	14

Sources: SC Department of Transportation





## WAYFINDING

Navigation to and around the Grand Strand and within its individual communities can be improved through wayfinding signage. In 2013, GSATS initiated an origin-destination study to obtain a better idea of how drivers navigate throughout the Grand Strand. Despite Hwy 22 being available, in addition to the widening of Hwy 9, the study informed the County and GSATS that these roadways were still not being capitalized on by people traveling in from out of town to visit the beach. This was largely due to navigation systems not directing people to use these routes, and because there was limited directional signage leading to and around the Grand Strand. Since this study was completed, GSATS has funded and installed a major sign installation throughout the region. Local jurisdictions will be responsible for taking the signage to the next level by ensuring that people can easily be directed to major attractions and destinations. Ultimately, such signage should reduce the number of distracted drives and improve the flow of traffic in and out of the region.

## Origin-Destination Study Conducted for GSATS



Source: WRCOG 2013, Grand Strand Routing and Wayfinding Plan



Examples from the Grand Strand Area Community Wayfinding Guidelines developed to create uniformity and consistency in wayfinding signage in the Grand Strand  
Source: WMBF News Graphics; Grand Strand Routing and Wayfinding Plan

## ROAD NETWORK FINDINGS

The roadway network is the most important aspect of Horry County's transportation system, as it bears the burden of transporting the majority of goods and people throughout the region. The region's economic vitality is dependent on this roadway network, which makes the area accessible for commuter, industrial, commercial, tourism and other day-to-day uses. This system should be viewed as an indispensable regional economic asset that requires constant reinvestment to protect the economic stability of the region. Maintenance and safety of the roadway network is a critical factor in ensuring the safe and efficient travel of both residents and visitors alike. In addition, there should be ongoing efforts to ensure easy navigability of our County. As our land use decisions are made, careful consideration should be made regarding the needs and capacity of the transportation system.



Source: NEATP, Revised from Wisconsin DOT image



## COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shopping areas, bicycle to work, and take the bus to important destinations. Ultimately, complete streets can shape community form and interaction, can improve safety and efficiently accommodate all modes of travel, while simultaneously creating a greater sense of place and fostering quality of life.

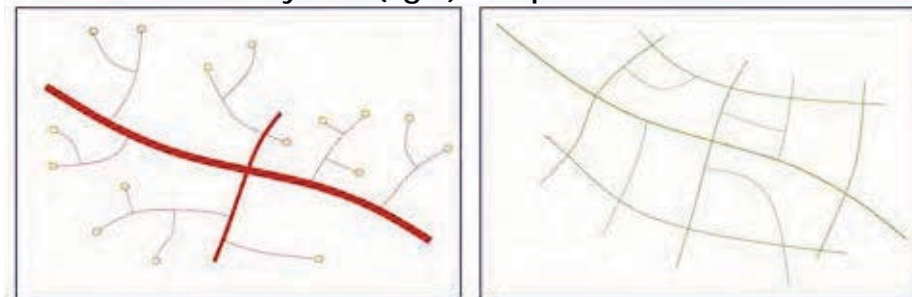
There is no singular design prescription for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to its community context. A complete street may include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. A Complete Street in a rural area will look quite different from a Complete Street in a highly urban area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

## INTERCONNECTIVITY

In many places built since the 1950s, roadway design usually means a system of widely spaced, large arterials fed by smaller roadways that rarely connect with each other. This system concentrates motorized traffic on a limited number of large roads, which causes longer, indirect trips and limits opportunities for alternate routes. Such a network makes it difficult for people who might walk, bike, or take public transportation because the indirect routes lengthen their trips and force them onto roads that are usually not designed for their safety or comfort. Public transportation also has a difficult time serving isolated neighborhoods with only one or two entry or exit points. So, people end up driving, even for very short trips.

Connectivity (or permeability) refers to the directness of links and the density of connections in a transport network. A highly permeable network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead ends. As connectivity increases, travel distances decrease and route options increase, allowing more direct travel between destinations, creating a more accessible and resilient transportation system. The concept of interconnectivity is applicable at regional and neighborhood scale. Connected streets can reduce traffic congestion by dispersing traffic and offering travel options. Networks of connected Complete Streets can carry as many travelers as conventional sprawling roadway design, but do not rely on a sparse network of major arterials. An interconnected network of major and minor streets with some redundancy in traffic capacity on parallel major streets. Concern over a "loss" of traffic capacity can be tempered with "surplus" capacity elsewhere.

**Limited connectivity relies on arterial system (left) verse an interconnected street system (right) that provides route alternatives.**



Source: Northeast Area Transportation Plan

A network of Complete Streets works best if block size is reduced. Short blocks are important to people on bikes or on foot because they reduce the total distance traveled and provide direct access to properties. A smaller block structure also allows land use to evolve and adapt over time, providing development flexibility. After updating its City Code to achieve Complete Streets, North Myrtle Beach now requires most blocks to be human-scaled, between 300 and 400 feet long. In new major residential subdivisions; Horry County and Myrtle Beach require that blocks be no more than 1,800 feet. While this allows

for environmental constraints, it does not prioritize the need for shorter block lengths and more walkable neighborhoods. The County also does not require road interconnectivity to adjacent subdivisions or shopping opportunities, although it does not prohibit it. The Future Land Use Map and Definitions within this plan calls for increased interconnectivity in suburban and urbanizing areas.

**Neighborhood street design can result in longer trips and limited choice (left) or can provide easy access to internal and external destinations (right).**



Source: Kimley-Horn Inc and Digital Media Productions

The County has standards for the number of entryways into a subdivision based on the number of units within the development. This is in large part for public safety purposes for emergency response. Access management techniques usually control and regulate the location, spacing, and design of driveways, medians, median openings, traffic signals, and freeway interchanges. By varying interconnectivity and access management standards by urban, suburban, and rural geographies, the County could have a greater capability to incorporate multi-modalism, enhance safety, develop community centers, and ultimately guide and enhance community character.



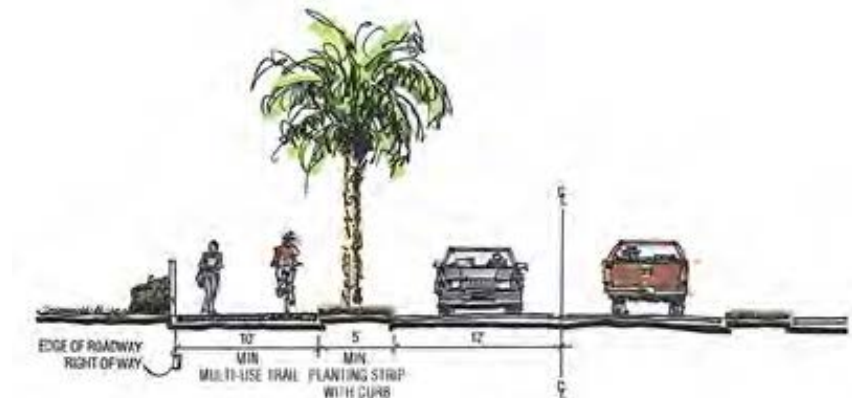
## BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Alternative modes of transportation other than the automobile include such activities as walking or riding a bike either for recreational or work commuting purposes. In Horry County most bicycle and pedestrian facilities are located within incorporated municipalities, such as Aynor, Conway, Loris, Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach. While similar facilities exist in the County, there are numerous opportunities to strengthen connectivity within adjoining communities and throughout the region. Because the majority of connections to major destinations rely on arterial roadways, the GSATS region has made it a policy to integrate bicycle and pedestrian facilities into all of its road projects, whether the development of new roads or the widening of existing facilities. This has resulted in the increase in bicycle and pedestrian facilities in unincorporated Horry County in recent years.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be incorporated into most roadway designs, whether in a downtown, along a major thoroughfare or within a neighborhood. Design plays a significant role in making an inviting and safe place for walkers and cyclists. If not designed appropriately for road width and speed, a sidewalk or bike lane will not be used. Similarly, if safety measures are not put in place along off-road trails and greenways, they will go unused. The design standards for an urban area should vary from those in a suburban neighborhood, as the purposes and expectations of users vary in each area.

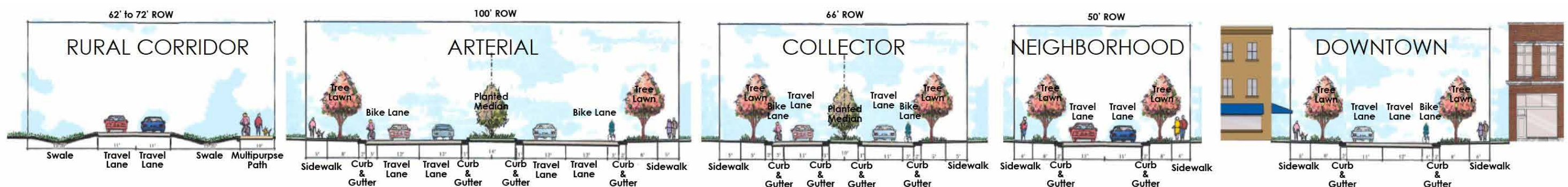
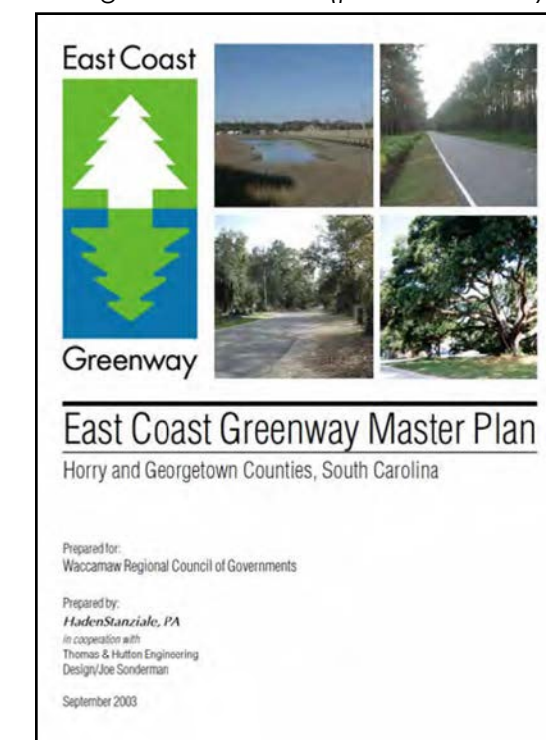
Planning and design of the bike and pedestrian infrastructure should build upon the existing segments and networks within the region and strive to implement facilities that attract new users while linking destination and providing more accessibility. The **Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan** identifies many opportunities and programs to strengthen interconnectivity. These include areas of high bicycle and pedestrian demands, integration of Safe Routes to School principles, and multiple design standards of roadways to include sidewalks, multi-use paths, landscaped buffers, and intersection improvements. Beyond community needs, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan also addresses regional connectivity through such routes as the East Coast Greenway. Multiple sections have been completed in Horry County; however, the greatest constraint for the completion of the East Coast Greenway and other regional bicycle and pedestrian facilities is the lack of a dedicated funding source for their construction beyond the small amount that GSATS communities compete for each year. In unincorporated Horry County, the installation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is largely dependent upon road widening projects or installation completed by developers.

As Horry County continues to grow, it will need to continue to build out its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to include all unincorporated areas of the County. The County will also need to identify creative funding solutions to support growing recreational desires of our residents.



Typical cross-section of the East Coast Greenway in unincorporated Horry County.

Source: East Coast Greenway Master Plan for Horry and Georgetown Counties (pictured below)



*Pedestrian Facilities can be incorporated into all road types. Source: Northeast Area Transportation Plan, adapted by Horry County Planning and Zoning*



## STREETSCAPING & GATEWAY SIGNAGE

Streetscaping is often combined with bicycle and pedestrian improvements and lighting to improve safety and provide a greater sense of belonging for its users. Streetscaping should be done according to road classification to ensure the right of way and traffic needs can accommodate it. Segments of a corridor with sufficient cross access, backdoor access, and onsite circulation may be candidates for median treatments. A median-divided roadway improves traffic flow, reduces congestion, and increases traffic safety, in addition to reinvestment into a community. While medians restrict some left-turn movements, overall traffic delays are reduced by removing conflicting vehicles from the mainline. Landscaping and gateway features incorporated into median treatments improve the aesthetics of the corridor, in turn encouraging investment in the area.



*Hwy 501 Beautification Completed in 2013*

Horry County has made extensive efforts in recent years to improve the gateway corridors into Horry County, including Hwy 501 between Carolina Forest and Myrtle Beach, Hwy 17 Business in Garden City, and the Hwy 17 and 22 Interchange in Arcadian Shores. Additional beautification efforts are underway at the Hwy 17 Bypass and Holmestown Road intersection. Other projects, such as the beautification of the Hwy

501 corridor between Hwy 544 and Carolina Forest Blvd, the Hwy 544 and Hwy 17 Bypass Interchange, and the Hwy 17 Bypass in Garden City, are planned. While funding can be secured for the installation, there is no dedicated funding source or staffing to cover ongoing maintenance costs, such as pruning, plant replacement, mowing, litter removal, irrigation, and lighting.



*Beautification efforts can easily incorporate gateway signage to provide a greater sense of place.*

Lighting is another component of streetscaping that can not only improve safety, but also help people know that they have arrived to a destination. Roadway lighting needs vary throughout the County based upon road type, as illumination for a highway is different from the lighting needs along a boulevard or park setting. Lighting is funded in a few special tax districts in unincorporated Horry County and has partially been funded through Accommodation Tax allocations in places like Garden City and Arcadian Shores. If a community desires roadway lighting, it is best funded through homeowners' associations or through special tax districts.

Horry County continues to partner with community groups via Keep Horry County Beautiful to advance private beautification efforts. The success of these partnerships can be

seen along Carolina Forest Blvd and River Oaks Drive, where Beautify Carolina Forest has taken the initiative to plant and maintain the medians in that community. Horry County assisted with that effort by providing landscape design and recommendations. The County has also worked with other community groups to install gateway signage, but there are many more community and business partnerships to be forged to further community branding and streetscape improvements.

## COMPLETE STREETS FINDINGS

Complete Streets is a common way to enhance and create a sense of community, promote active lifestyles, and provide equitable access to shopping, employment, and community centers. There are multiple steps that the County should take to pursue a complete streets network, ranging from changes in land use to making improvements along existing roadways. The Future Land Use Map, zoning, and Land Development Regulations serve as mechanisms to support the development of traditional communities with complete streets. Additionally, funding and community partnerships will be needed to foster unique identities through streetscaping and community signage.



PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit is the transport of passengers by group travel systems available for use by the general public, typically managed on a schedule, operated on established routes, and that charge a posted fee for each trip. Examples of public transit include buses, trolleys, passenger trains, and airlines. Private operators, including limousine, taxi services, and shared ride Uber/Lyft) are also available throughout Horry County.

Within the Grand Strand area, transit service provides transportation and mobility options for the residents each day. Not only do the residents of the Grand Strand area rely on these options, but so do tourists which represent a significant amount of the population during the peak tourist season. Access to jobs, medical care, shopping, recreational activities, needed services, and all other aspects of daily life are provided by these options. These needs increase tremendously during the peak tourist season and continue through the remaining off-peak season. As the area's population has grown, and continues to do so, convenient and reliable transit service will become an even greater necessity.

WACCAMAW REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Public transit in Horry County is mainly comprised of fixed route and demand response services. Bus riders typically fall into one of two categories – choice or captive. Choice transit riders choose to leave their vehicle at home to save time and money or for other reasons, while captive riders use transit because they have no other option. Captive riders include those too young to drive, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and those without the financial means to own and operate a personal vehicle.

Waccamaw Regional Transit Authority (Coast RTA) is the major provider for transit services in Georgetown and Horry Counties.

Coast RTA is based in Conway, South Carolina and offers a variety of service options for residents traveling around the Grand Strand area, including fixed-route services, curb-to-curb paratransit service and ADA. The Authority receives part of its operating funds from Horry County. Beginning July 1, 2018, \$6.50 from registered vehicles in County Road Use Fees goes to Coast RTA.

System wide ridership for the Coast RTA has increased in the most recent years. Approximately 1,520 average weekday boardings, 1,450 average Saturday boardings, and 1,132 average Sunday boardings throughout the system. Overall annual ridership for FY2016 through 2018 is shown in the chart below.

Paratransit Services			
Year	Transit	Paratransit Services	System Total
2016	476,995	3,942	485,076
2017	501,948	11,875	513,823
2018	509,586	13,695	523,281

The Coast RTA operates fixed-route regularly scheduled bus services daily, from approximately 4:00 a.m. to approximately 9:00 p.m. depending on the specific route. There are 10 routes that provide service within the City of Andrews, Conway, Georgetown, Myrtle Beach, and now Loris and Buckport. The current fleet consists of 23 vehicles for fixed route and 10 vehicles for paratransit.



Coast RTA now offers advertising opportunities.

Coast RTA also offers a fixed route serving beach hotels and Broadway at the Beach, known as the Entertainment Shuttle Route. With projected increases in population and tourist expectancy, the expansion of this service to the entirety of the Grand Strand region could be needed in the future.

Coast RTA has a few formalized bus stops within the City of Myrtle Beach, but there are no formalized bus pull-offs or covered seating areas in unincorporated Horry County. Coast RTA still largely works off of a flag system along its fixed routes, meaning someone must wave them down to stop. However, Coast RTA has initiated its Bus Stop Designation Program where stops are formally established with a sign installed.

Beyond its fixed routes, Coast RTA offers **Paratransit Services** for persons who are unable to access its fixed routes independently and safely due to physical or mental disabilities. Coast RTA's Paratransit Program is a curb-to-curb advanced reservation, shared ride, transportation service. It is openly available to anyone pre-qualified (and certified by a medical professional) on the basis of having a physical or mental disability (whether short-term or permanent). Passengers requiring door-to-door service in order to use paratransit may request a modification of this policy when scheduling their trips. In such cases, the driver will provide assistance on a door-to-door basis. Service is provided on a time and space availability basis. Any persons who are currently ADA certified or qualified for the Coast RTA Paratransit program will be permitted to ride the Coast RTA fixed routes at no cost.



## RAIL

As the sole freight hauler on rail, RJ Corman operates a short line Carolina Lines between Chadbourn, NC and Myrtle Beach. The portion of the line between Conway and Myrtle Beach is owned by Horry County and leased to RJ Corman. They received a \$9.7 million grant last year through the US Department of Transportation to upgrade rail lines to increase haul speed and weight. Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development and the County are working together to expand business growth along this route. This is further addressed in the Economic Development Chapter. As upgrades to the rail line and its usage increases, public safety improvements will also need to be made to crossings and traffic signals in close proximity to the active portion of the line.

Horry County currently lacks any passenger rail lines. The nearest station is the AMTRAK located in Florence, and there are not any spur lines to the Grand Strand.

## AIRLINES

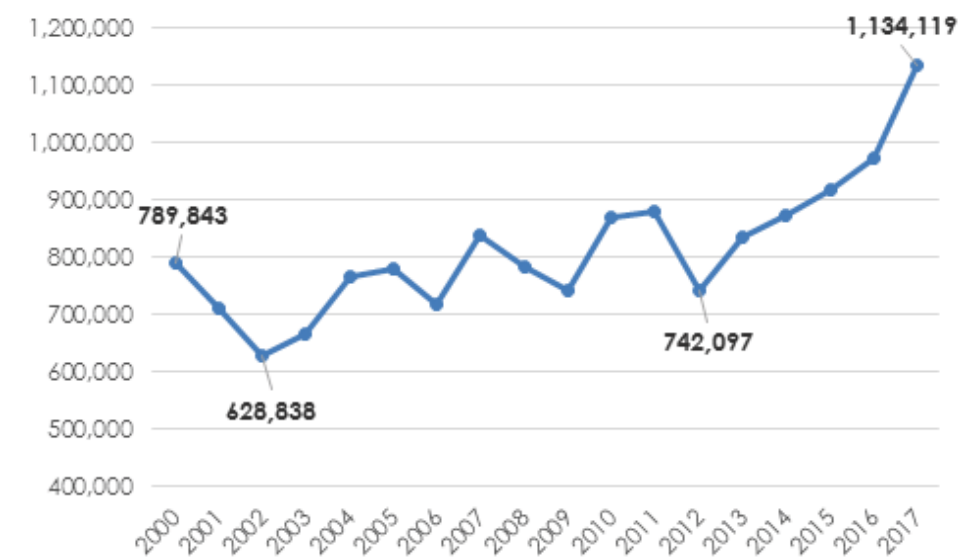
Horry County owns and operates four airports. These include one commercial service airport serving the greater Myrtle Beach Region, known as the Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR), as well as three general aviation airports - Grand Strand, Conway, and Loris Twin Cities. The Grand Strand Airport (CRE), located in the city of North Myrtle Beach, serves private and corporate aircraft. The Loris Twin Cities Airport (5J9) is an unattended public use airport that is used for training for practice approaches and landings. The Conway-Horry County Airport (HYW), located five miles west of Conway, provides operations and services for the growing general aviation community in the western part of Horry County.

The Department of Airports is a department of Horry County

and receives its funding for operations and maintenance of County airports through user fees and charges on aeronautical activities at the airport. No County general fund taxes are used to support the airports. Primary funding for most major capital improvements is obtained through the federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and from South Carolina Division of Aeronautics.

Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR) is the County's sole international commercial aviation facility, with ten airlines offering scheduled air service to and from the Grand Strand. They set a record number of passengers in 2017. The number of passengers are expected to correlate with the local population, the number of non-stop destinations in and out of the airport, and the sheer volume of tourists visiting our area. The economic impact and opportunities associated with the Myrtle Beach International Airport is discussed further in the Economic Development Chapter.

### Deplanements by Year



Source: Myrtle Beach International Airport

The location of airports has an impact on land use, as the County has to evaluate new development and construction within the approach zones of each airport. Title 55, Section 55-13-5 of the South Carolina State Code of Laws requires that certain development applications in specified Airport Safety Zones and Airport Land Use Zones, be submitted by local government planning, zoning, and building permit officials to South Carolina Aeronautics Commission (SCAC) for review and comment. The SCAC has a tool known as the Airport Compatible Land Use Evaluation "CLUE") Tool. The tool is designed to evaluate land use compatibility near airports.







### OTHER TRANSIT PROVIDERS

Several private service operators, such as shuttle, limousine, and taxi services transport residents throughout eastern South Carolina and southeastern North Carolina to job sites along the Grand Strand area. There are also private ridesharing services, such as Uber and Lyft, which provide additional mobility options to those with a smartphone by allowing them to request a ride through an application. These private services have the potential to allow for individuals to move throughout the area and not rely on public transportation services such as buses or demand response options. There are also nonprofit services who provide door to door service for home bound seniors and chronically ill and disabled students, such as Neighbor to Neighbor.

Coastal Carolina University provides free shuttle service for its students around campus, including routes from university housing at University Place, the main campus and the east campus. They operate fixed route service during the day and on demand at night. They also offer shuttles to airports and Amtrak train service stations for breaks and holidays.

Beyond what is available locally, there are a few transit service providers located outside the GSATS region that provide demand response service in our area, including:

- Williamsburg County Transit Authority
- Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority
- Intercity bus service: Greyhound, and Southeastern Stages

### PUBLIC TRANSIT FINDINGS

A variety of public transit options are available in Horry County. These options include Coast RTA offering fixed route services, entertainment route services, and paratransit services

for regions of Horry and Georgetown Counties. Coast RTA largely relies on a flagging system and has few designated and improved stops. Horry County should work with Coast RTA and identify locations for bus stops. It should also work to coordinate with Coast RTA to establish design guidelines into its land development regulations and the design of future roadways and road widening projects. This is an important step in ensuring reliability for public transit users, in addition to expanding the usership of locals and vacationers.

Beyond the bus system, there are private providers that meet local transportation needs. At this time, there are no designated places within local cities and areas with an active nightlife for private transport services to pick up riders for safe passage home.

Services transporting people in and out of Horry County and the Grand Strand, are limited to coaches and to Myrtle Beach International Airport. Additional growth is expected at MYR, and continued expansions and improvements to the airport are expected.



## PLANNED PROJECTS

There are numerous transportation projects in the planning and design phase in Horry County. Many of these projects have been in the making for multiple decades and are still working to come to fruition. Some projects are funded; however, there are a large number of projects lacking adequate funding or funding at all.

## ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENTS

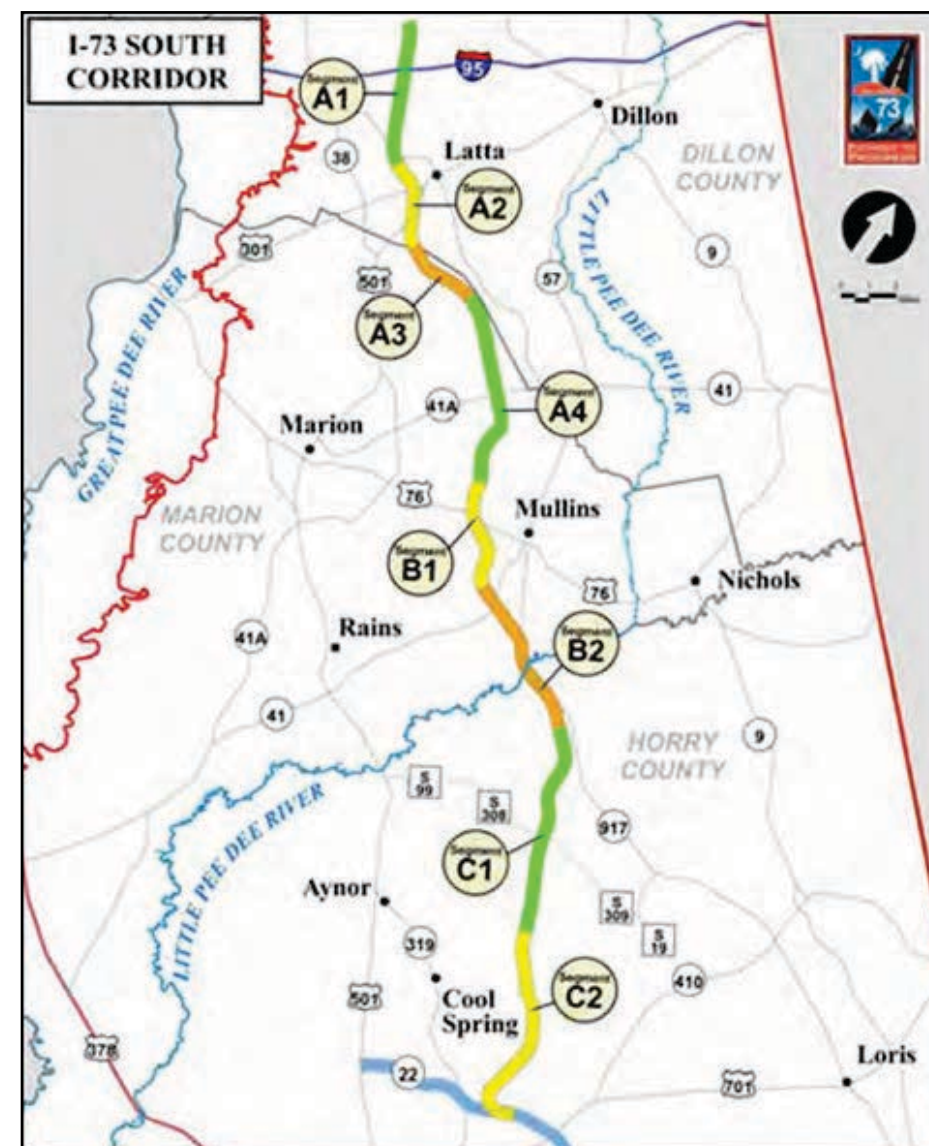
### The Interstate Highway 73/74 Corridors

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) designated the I-73/74 North-South Corridor as a "High Priority Corridor" that has been defined to run from Charleston, SC through Winston-Salem, NC and to continue north through the states of Virginia and West Virginia before splitting entirely at Portsmouth, OH with I-74 turning west to its current end in Cincinnati, OH and I-73 continuing north to its planned termination in Saint Sault Marie, MI.

Interstate 73 was identified as a high priority route from Michigan to South Carolina in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act (ISTEA) that the US Congress passed in 1991. The "Southern Project" portion of Interstate 73 runs from Interstate 95 to State Route 22 (Conway Bypass, or Veteran's Highway) in the Myrtle Beach/Conway area.

The 42-mile southern section of the I-73 Project (I-73 South) will extend from South Carolina Highway 22 (SC-22; Conway Bypass/Veteran's Highway) in the Myrtle Beach/Conway area in a new alignment east of Aynor to the northwest between Mullins and Marion, intersecting I-95 just west of Dillon. The purpose of I-73 South is to provide an interstate link between the Myrtle Beach region and I-95 that serves residents, businesses, and tourists by improving travel times, level of service (LOS), and national/regional connectivity, as well as facilitat-

ing hurricane evacuation. Right-of-Way plans are complete for I-73 South, and construction plans are available from US 501 to I-95. I-73 South is expected to open to traffic in 2025 and is expected to cost between \$2.8 and \$3.4 billion.



I-73 South Corridor  
Source: <http://www.i73insc.com/ROW.shtml>

Interstate Highway 74 is proposed to run roughly parallel to the NC/SC border from Interstate 95 and run towards Wilmington, NC before turning south and heading to Charleston. NCDOT completed a feasibility study that would turn 74 southward near Bolton, NC and follow 211 towards Supply, NC and follow the US Hwy 17 south towards Shallotte, NC and connect with the northward extension of SC 31 Carolina Bays Parkway.



Proposed I-74 Route to Myrtle Beach.  
Source: NCDOT I-74 Feasibility Study

### The Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL)

With increasing numbers of summer tourists and year-round residents, the provision of a more convenient evacuation route between US 17 and US 501 from the South Strand to areas further inland has become a necessity. The SELL task force was formed to promote the development of an Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate alternatives for providing an additional evacuation route across the Waccamaw River. The SELL is a proposed 28-mile, multi-lane, limited-access toll facility that is proposed to extend from US 17 near Garden City to US 501 at the SC 22 interchange.





On January 19, 2006 the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission allocated the \$1 million of state funds required to match at least 20% of the \$4 million of federal transportation funds that were made available to this project. RIDE-3 is supporting a portion of the land acquisition to support the development of the section connecting Burgess to Bucksport.

#### Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Hwy 31)

Another project of regional significance is the extension of Carolina Bays Parkway (SC 31). The southern connection from SC 544 to SC 707 (just north of Moss Creek Road), a distance of approximately 3.8 miles is about 80% complete.

The northward extension of the Carolina Bays Parkway into North Carolina is expected to connect from its existing terminus as SC 9 to US 17 on the north side of Shallotte, NC. NCDOT is currently administering the contract to conduct the preliminary project development and environmental studies. NCDOT/SCDOT estimate the cost at \$434.8 million (\$185 million in South Carolina and \$249.8 million in North Carolina).

The extension would provide a more direct and efficient movement of traffic seeking to bypass congestion within the areas of Calabash in North Carolina as well as Little River and the Grand Strand areas in South Carolina. It would also improve traffic flow and safety at the intersection of SC 9 and SC 57 and provide a more direct route for coastal truck traffic moving through North Carolina.

Although the project is funded for study, no schedule has been established for right-of-way acquisition or construction. Horry County RIDE-3 is funding up to \$125 million of the estimate \$185 million in construction on the South Carolina por-

tion of the project. North Carolina has not currently funded anything other than the environmental study.

Both new interstate highways, the extension of Carolina Bays Parkway, and furthering the design of SELL will be essential for establishing better national connectivity to the Grand Strand, thus providing not only long-term stability to its tourism economy, but also providing a vital prerequisite for achieving necessary economic diversification and job creation within this labor market. These interstate highways will also alleviate traffic on currently congested highways throughout the region.

#### RIDE Program

The Road Improvement and Development Effort (RIDE) program was initiated in Horry County in 1996 to determine the short and long-term transportation infrastructure needs for the County. We are now on our third local option sales tax. The initial RIDE sales tax and matching funds from the State Infrastructure Bank raised \$1.2 billion towards road projects, including the construction of Hwy 22 (Veteran's Hwy), the first segment of Hwy 31 (Carolina Bays Pkwy), Robert Edge Pkwy, the Fantasy Harbour Bridge, and the widening of Hwy 544 and US 17 Bypass.

The RIDE-2 initiative was a \$425 million dollar effort to improve 100 miles of county dirt roads, resurface 67 miles of county paved roads, widen Hwy 707, create a grade-separated interchange at Hwy 707 and Hwy 17 at the Backgate, widen Hwy 707, construct an overpass in Aynor over Hwy 501, widen Glens Bay Road and create a grade-separated interchange at its intersection with Hwy 17 Bypass, and pave International Drive to Hwy 90. Horry County also utilized \$93.6 million from this initiative as a match to the South Carolina

State Transportation Infrastructure Bank and was awarded a \$235 million grant for design, permitting and right of way acquisition of the Carolina Bays Parkway Extension from Hwy 544 to Hwy 707.

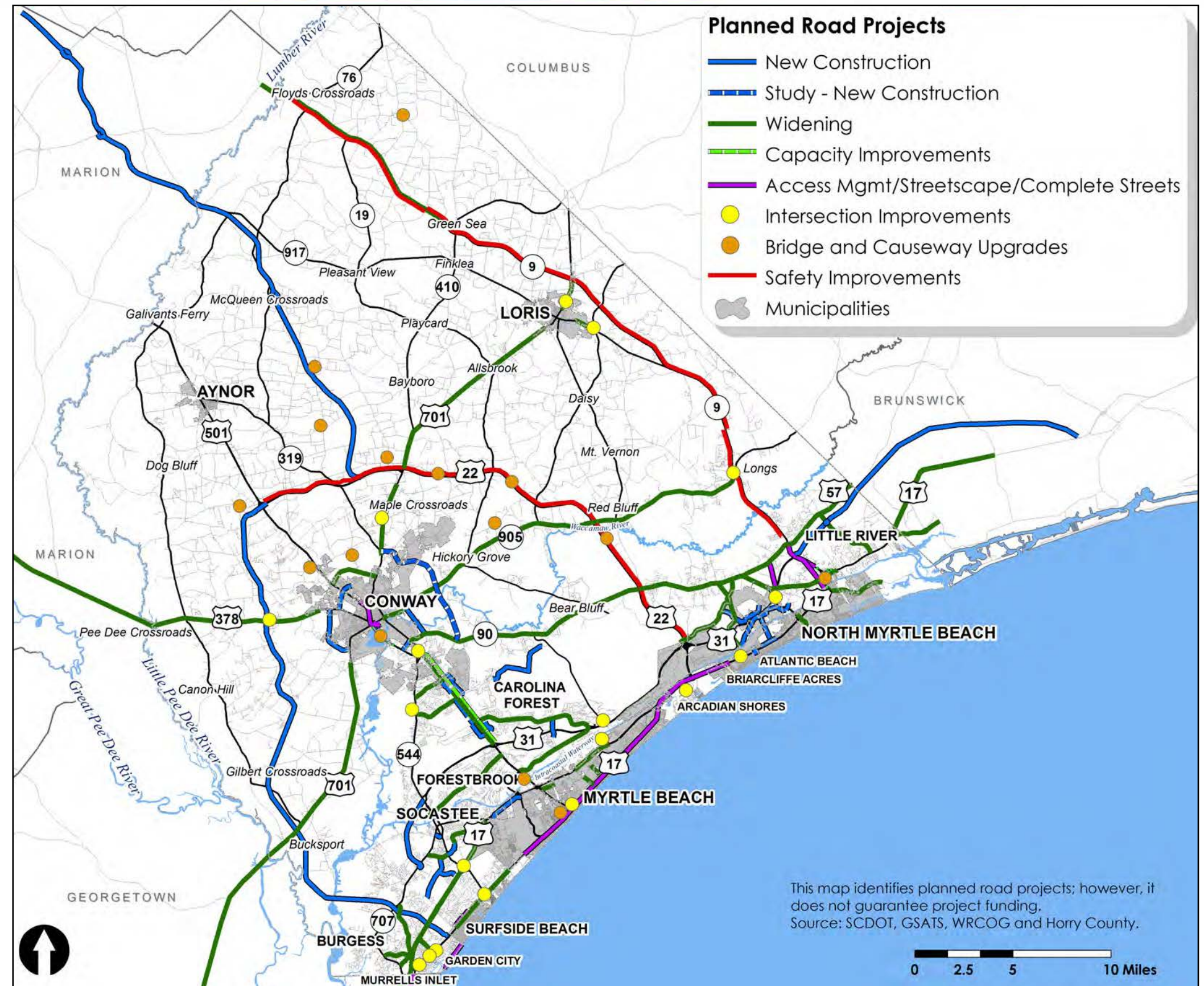


Horry County is currently collecting funds to support projects within the Ride-3 program. In November 2016, 69.1% of voters approved a 1-cent capital sales tax on all retail sales, accommodations and prepared food/ beverages. Groceries (unprepared food) will be exempt from the sales tax. Horry County is slated to receive \$592 million over the 8 year life of the 1-cent Capital Projects Sales Tax that will expire on April 30, 2025. RIDE-3 will consist of five paving projects to include one hundred miles of dirt roads, resurfacing one hundred miles of paved roads and fourteen major road construction projects. The status of these projects can be followed on the Horry County website at: <http://www.horrycounty.org/Ride3>.



## Identified Road Projects

The following identifies project needs that were included within the GSATS 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the 2040 Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, state Gas Funded Projects, and additional projects that were identified needs or anticipated needs based off of future growth projections. Note that there are far more road project needs than there is funding. While a project may be identified below, it does not guarantee that the project has dedicated funding allocated to it. The list of projects does not include those within area municipalities, with the exception of those projects funded by RIDE 3. This list also does not include bicycle and pedestrian projects, other than those road improvements that include such facilities.







Location	Type	Plan
Alma Rd (S-142)	Bridge over Huggins Swamp	State Gas Tax
Augusta Plantation Extension	Road extension connecting with Revolutionary War Way, including an interchange over Hwy 31.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Big Block Road	Widen and realign. Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities	GSATS 2040 MTP
Broadway (S-15)	Bridge over Withers Swash, City of Myrtle Beach	GSATS TIP/ State Gas Tax
Brunson Spring Rd (S-97)	Bridge over Palmetto Swamp	State Gas Tax
Carolina Forest Boulevard Widening	Complete Widening of Carolina Forest Blvd to River Oaks Drive. Improved road will include a multi-use path, 4-lanes (with turning lanes at intersections) and traffic signals as determined by traffic study during design phase.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Champions Blvd Extension	Extend Champions Blvd in North Myrtle Beach to connect with Long Bay Rd	GSATS 2040 MTP
Chestnut and Kings Road Intersection	Realignment	
Conway Perimeter Road Phase II	Construct new road with multi-use path from US 378 (at El-Bethel Road) to US 701 South. The new road will feature 4-lanes with median and turning lanes at the intersection.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Cultra Road Widening	Widening	
East Coat Greenway	Portion of Project	2015-2022 TIP
Forestbrook Road Widening	Widen Forestbrook Road between Hwy 501 and Dick Pond Road. Improvements will feature 5-lanes including a center turn lane and the installation of bike/pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and wider travel lanes.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Fred Nash Boulevard Connection to Harrelson Boulevard	Construct new 3-lane road including a center turn lane to extend Fred Nash Blvd around the end of the airport runway (MYR) to provide a direct connection to Harrelson Blvd. The project includes bicycle facilities.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Garden City Connector	Widen and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities	GSATS 2040 MTP
Gardner Lacy Extension	Extension of Gardner Lacy to International Dr	
Good Luck Rd (S-569)	Bridge over Lousing Swamp	State Gas Tax
Good Luck Rd (S-569)	Bridge over Smith Swamp	State Gas Tax
Hwy 111	Safety and capacity improvements	
Hwy 134	Bridge over Jenkins Swamp	State Gas Tax
Hwy 17 and Champions Blvd Connector	Construct connector bridge between US 17 and Champions Blvd in North Myrtle Beach between 17th and 21st Ave	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bridges in North Myrtle	Replace Hwy 17 bridges at flyover	GSATS 2040 MTP



Location	Type	Plan
Hwy 17 Business Intersection Improvements-Garden City	Improve capacity and safety at the following three intersections in Garden City (intersection widening, turn lane extensions, and other operational improvements): 1) US 17 Bus @ Inlet Square Mall/Mt. Gilead Road. 2) US 17 Bus @ Atlantic Avenue. 3) US 17 Bus @ Garden City Connector/Pine Ave.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Business, Surfside	Eliminate Frontage Roads along US 17 Business in Surfside, add additional turn lanes	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bypass	Widen from Backgate to Hwy 544	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bypass	Widen from Hwy 544 to Georgetown Countyline	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bypass & Hwy 544	Interchange and intersection improvements at Hwy 17 Bypass and Hwy 544 from Beaver Run Blvd to South Strand Commons, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bypass to Hwy 17 Business Connector Road in Garden City	Construction new road connecting Hwy 17 Bypass and Business, between Glens Bay Rd and Garden City Connector. Possibly constructed as the corridor leading into the SELL	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 17 Bypass Widening	Widen to 6 lane between Farrow Pkwy and Shetland Dr	2015-2022 TIP
Hwy 17 Bypass/International/Robert Grissom	Ramp and merge improvements	
Hwy 179	Improve and widen. Incorporate multi-purpose path, as part of East Coast Greenway Route.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 22 Elevation	Raise Hwy 22 from Hwy 905 to Hwy 905	
Hwy 22 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC-22 from Hwy 501 to Hucks Rd (L-1769)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 22 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC-22 from Hucks Rd (L-1769) to Hwy 905	State Gas Tax
Hwy 22 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC-22 from Hwy 905 to Water Tower Rd (L-369)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 22 Upgrades	Upgrade Hwy 22 to Interstate status alongside the completion of I-73. This will ensure an official interstate can access the beach.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 31 (Carolina Bays Parkway) Extension to SC/NC Line (I-74 Connection)	Final phase of SC Hwy 31 (Carolina Bays Parkway). Build new limited-access freeway to extend SC Hwy 31 from SC Hwy 9 to NC State line.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 31/Hwy 111	Interchange at new Carolina Bays Parkway extension and Hwy 111	
Hwy 31/International/Robert Grissom	Signalization and turn lane improvements	
Hwy 319	Extension South to International Drive and Hwy 90. Initiate feasibility study.	
Hwy 378	Widening	
Hwy 378 & S-134	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 472	Bridge over Kingston Lake	State Gas Tax
Hwy 501	Capacity improvements between Hwy 31 and 544	



## Transportation

Location	Type	Plan
Hwy 501	Raise Hwy 501 near Lake Busbee and the Waccamaw River	
Hwy 501 Bridge into Myrtle Beach	Replace and Widen. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 501 Corridor Improvement (SC Hwy 31 to SC 544)	Complete 6-lane widening and signalized intersection improvements on US Hwy 501 from SC Hwy 31 to US Hwy 501/544 Interchange.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 501 Realignment from Broadway St. to 7th Ave North (City of Myrtle Beach)	Realign Hwy 501 at Broad Street intersection to connect to 7th Avenue N at Oak Street in City of Myrtle Beach (new alignment). Install sidewalks and intersection improvements on 7th Avenue N, between Oak Street and North Kings Hwy.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 544 and Myrtle Ridge	Turn lane improvements	
Hwy 548	Bridge over Mclean Swamp	State Gas Tax
Hwy 57	Widen	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 701 & Fox Bay	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 701 & Harris Shortcut	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 701 & Industrial Park	Intersection Improvements, turn lane	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 701 N	Widening from Hwy 22 to Loris	
Hwy 701 N Widening North Conway	Widen US Hwy 701 north of Conway from SC Hwy 319 to Hwy 22. Improved road will feature 5-lanes including a center turn lane and installation of bike/pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and wider travel lanes.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 701 S	Widen Hwy 701 from Conway to Georgetown Countyline	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 701 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to US 701 from Georgetown/Horry County line to Copperhead Rd (L-435)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 701 Widening North of Loris	Widen US Hwy 701 north of Loris from end of existing 3-lane section (Dogwood St) to SC Hwy 9 interchange. Improved road will include turning lanes and installation of bike/pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and wider travel lanes.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 707 Connector	Road Extension	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 9	Access management improvements from SC 57 to US 17 interchange. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities and median beautification.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 9 & Heritage	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 9 & Hwy 905	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
Hwy 9 Bypass Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 9 from Hwy 66 to Marlowe Cir (L-2088)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 9 Bypass Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 9 from Bayview Dr (S-142) to Hwy 66	State Gas Tax
Hwy 9 East Widening Loris	Widen SC Hwy 9 east of Loris from the end of the existing 4-lane section to intersection of Hwy 66. Improved road will be expanded to 4-lanes with sidewalks.	GSATS 2040 MTP



Location	Type	Plan
Hwy 9 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 9 from Marlowe Cir (L-2088) to Charter Dr (L-3478)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 9 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 9 near US 76 to Bay View Dr (S-142)	State Gas Tax
Hwy 9 Widening	Completion of widening project to Countyline	
Hwy 90	Widen, 3 Phases	GSATS 2040 MTP
Hwy 90 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 90 from SC-22 to Robert Edge Pkwy	State Gas Tax
Hwy 90 Safety Improvements	Rural Safety Improvements to SC 90 from Lee's Landing Cir (S-1135) to SC-22	State Gas Tax
Hwy 905	Widening	
Hwy 905 & Old Reaves Ferry Rd	Intersection Improvements	2040 RL RTP Plan
I-73	Extension of Interstate 73 to Horry County	GSATS 2040 MTP
Kings Hwy Improvements	67th Ave Myrtle Beach to 48th Ave in North Myrtle Beach	GSATS 2040 MTP
Little River Neck Road	Widen and include a multipurpose path	GSATS 2040 MTP
Louisville Rd (S-669)	Bridge over Maple Swamp	State Gas Tax
McDowell Shortcut	Widening with bicycle and pedestrian improvements	
Middle Ridge Extension 1	Extend Middle Ridge Drive east (Myrtle Ridge Dr to W. Perry Road)-and west (Wal-Mart to Singleton Ridge). Extension of collector roads Postal Way and Middle Ridge Avenue).	
Middle Ridge Extension 2	Southern extension from Legends Drive	
Mt. Zion Road	Improve alignment of Mt. Zion Road (SC 90 to SC 57)	GSATS 2040 MTP
Myrtle Ridge Road	Widen	GSATS 2040 MTP
Oak St Ext (S-107)	Bridge over Brown Swamp	State Gas Tax
Palmetto Pointe Blvd Extension	Construct extension of Palmetto Pointe Blvd to connect to SC Hwy 544 at the Big Block Road intersection. New road will include 2-lanes and bike/pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and wider travel lanes.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Postal Way	Extend Postal Way east to Waccamaw Pines Dr and install required intersection improvements and sidewalks (including Postal Way @ Carolina Forest Blvd/Renee Dr/Oak Heard Rd).	GSATS 2040 MTP
Postal Way Extension to Atlantic Center	Road Extension	GSATS 2040 MTP
River Oaks Drive	Widen and include multi-purpose path	GSATS 2040 MTP





Location	Type	Plan
Rural Road Improvements	Shoulder widening, safety improvements, and resurfacing	
Sandridge Road Extension	Connect Sandridge Rd to	GSATS 2040 MTP
Scipio Lane Extension	Extend to Big Block Road. Incorporate multipurpose path	GSATS 2040 MTP
Sea Mountain Hwy	Widen Sea Mountain Hwy from SC 9 to the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Singleton Ridge Road	Widen and include bicycle and pedestrian facilities	GSATS 2040 MTP
Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL)	Environmental Studies & ROW Funding to complete the final environmental impact studies required to obtain Record of Decision (ROD) for future roadway. The land purchase for the right-of-way of the final alignment will be identified in the Record of Decision.	GSATS 2040 MTP
Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL)	Complete acquisition and construction following work completed with RIDE 3 funding	GSATS 2040 MTP
Tournament Blvd	Improve Tournament Blvd between McDowell Shortcut and Hwy 17 Bypass	GSATS 2040 MTP
Tournament Blvd	Widening to Hwy 707 with bicycle and pedestrian improvements	
Waccamaw Drive	Upgrade Waccamaw Drive from Melody Ln to Atlantic Avenue to Complete Streets Model	
Water Tower Road and Long Bay Rd	Widen	GSATS 2040 MTP

## OTHER TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Beyond roadway improvements, there are other transportation projects in the area that will improve the region's quality of life.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Identified bicycle and pedestrian projects can be found within the **East Coast Greenway Master Plan for Horry and Georgetown Counties**, the **Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**, and the **Northeast Area Transportation Plan**. While there are numerous project needs identified, there is limited funding dedicated to support such improvements, unless they coincide with major roadway improvements along the same corridors.

## Coast RTA

In order to better serve and expand its ridership, permanent

bus stops are needed throughout the County. The installation of sheltered benches and bus pull off areas with ADA accessibility are needed in strategic locations throughout the County and in the urban areas. Additionally, a new Coast RTA hub is needed in a location that is more central to its ridership and destinations. Such a facility is best located in the City of Myrtle Beach and will allow Coast RTA to expand the types of services it provides and the routes within the cities. As Coast RTA grows, it will also need strategically located auxiliary maintenance and bus storage facilities.

## Railroad

Continued improvements along the RJ Corman line are underway to improve the railroad travel speeds. Improvements east of Gardner Lacy Road may also be necessary to attract additional industry. At such a time that the railroad east of Gardner Lacy

Road is deemed not viable, the County and the City of Myrtle Beach will need to evaluate alternative transportation options.

## Airports

Myrtle Beach International Airport is currently going through a master planning effort in order to identify upgrades that will be necessary to accommodate future growth in tourism, business travel, and expanded delivery and export of goods.

## PLANNED PROJECTS FINDINGS

Horry County has a vast amount of planned transportation projects. With previous success of the RIDE II program, RIDE-3 consists of five major paving projects, the resurfacing of 100 miles of paved roads and paving 100 miles of



dirt roads. Other planned projects within Horry County include Interstate Highway 73/74 corridors, The Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL), and the extension of Carolina Boys Parkway SC Hwy 31). While the County has a plethora of transportation projects, there is limited funds to achieve the identified and projected needs. These projects will need to be continually reevaluated at the state, regional, and local level to ensure that they remain relevant, and to ensure the projects are prioritized based off of funding availability and need.

### FUNDING MECHANISMS

Road projects are traditionally financed through federal, state, and local funds primarily derived from taxes on fuel and fees from vehicle registrations. Transit projects are also funded through federal, state, and local sources, as well as revenue received through fares.

Beyond allocations made from SCDOT and GSATS, transportation funding options include, road fees, Local Option Sales Taxes, State Transportation Infrastructure Bank (STIB) and the County Transportation Committees (CTC). Privately funded transportation improvements can include Impact Fees, Tax Increment Financing, Municipal Improvement Districts, Development Agreements or other private investment.

### FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDS

Signed into law in December 2015, the **Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)** provides modest increases in federal highway and transit spending, allowing states greater long-term funding certainty and streamlines the federal project approval process. The five-year, \$305 billion FAST Act will provide a boost of approximately 15% in national highway funding and 18% in national transit funding over the duration of the program, which expires in 2020. The FAST Act funds the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), which allocates mon-

ey to the state, which is allocated by formula to GSATS. The FAST Act does not provide adequate funding to meet the nation's need for highway and transit improvements and does not include a long-term and sustainable funding source.

**GSATS** is funded by a mixture of federal and state transportation dollars. The SCDOT "Guideshare" Program supports the GSATS MTA based on population and averages around \$7.6 million per year to the urban region of Horry and Georgetown counties. Those funds support the implementation of the 2015-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the GSATS area, which is a five-year program of transportation capital projects together with a three-year estimate of transit capital and maintenance requirements. While the TIP is usually approved biennially, the document may be amended throughout the year. The TIP may also include regional highway projects that are being implemented by the state, City and County for which federal funding is requested. This is to ensure that the region is eligible for matching grant funds. The TIP will be revisited often to ensure that it aligns with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the state's Transportation Improvement Plan. As the available funding and priorities change over time at the local and state level, they can be tracked on the GSATS website at: <http://www.gsats.org/index.php/tip/>.

### State Infrastructure Bank

The State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) stretches taxpayer dollars by leveraging federal seed money in partnership with local governments and private interests. The South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank was created by Act Number 148 of 1997. The purpose of the SIB is to select and assist in financing major qualified projects by providing loans and other financial assistance for constructing and improving highway and transportation facilities necessary for public purposes including economic development. The proposed project must

provide public benefit in one or more of the following areas: enhancement of mobility and safety; promotion of economic development; or increase in the quality of life and general welfare of the public.

### Gas Tax

In 2017, the SC General Assembly passed its first gas tax increase in 30 years, which will raise the gas tax by 2 cents per year until 2024. Revenues from that increase will be augment SCDOT's resurfacing efforts and work to improve structurally deficient bridges, improve highway safety, and widen interstates. In Horry County, these funds will be directed to road safety improvements along Highway 9, 701, 90, and 22. It will also include bridge improvements along Alma Rd, Broadway, Brunson Spring Rd, Good Luck Rd, Hwy 134, Hwy 472, Hwy 548, Louisville Rd, and Oak St Extension.

### LOCAL FUNDS

The **Horry County Transportation Committee (CTC)** will manage the remaining gas tax funds to ensure that local transportation improvements and maintenance is being prioritized locally. The CTC is composed of 11 members appointed by the Horry County Legislative Delegation. The members of the CTC are appointed by Council District; therefore, represent all areas of the County.

C Funds come from 2.66-cents per gallon of the state gasoline tax distributed to each of the 46 counties based on population, land area, and rural road mileage. By law, counties must spend at least 25% of their C funds on the state highway system for construction, improvements and maintenance. CTC reserves the right to select all roads and/or bridges to be funded. The goal of the CTC will be to cooperate with the SCDOT in maintaining and resurfacing existing secondary roads in Horry County and to hard surface as many unpaved





roads as practical. Consideration will be given to roads serving schools, industries and businesses, roads used for school bus routes, bridges, sidewalks, and the necessary drainage for these projects. Projects will be prioritized based upon a rating sheet prepared in cooperation with the SCDOT, Horry County Engineer's Office and after all pertinent information has been reviewed by the Horry County CTC.

Beginning July 1, 2018 the CTCs portion will increase .3325-cents per gallon through 2021, when the total will equal 3.99-cents per gallon. This increase must be used exclusively for repairs, maintenance and improvements to the state highway system. The Donor Bonus allocation goes to counties which contribute more to the C fund than they receive. New legislation increases that total statewide allocation from \$9.5 million to \$17 million. After that amount has been divided among the donor counties, SCDOT is to then transfer an additional \$3.5 million to be divided among donor counties within three-years. Horry County CTC received \$3.6 million plus in FY2017-18 and also received additional Donor Bonus monies.

#### **RIDE Program**

Horry County has already opted to create a local sales tax to support transportation projects, known as the RIDE Program. The County is now in its third rendition of the program, which has been effective in creating new connections and widening existing roadways. The projects within RIDE 3 were defined through the voting process and cannot vary from those set forth in the adopted resolution to approve the sales tax. In 2025, Horry County will have the ability to consider a new sales tax referendum, if warranted and supported by the public.

#### **Horry County Road Maintenance Fee**

Horry County collects \$50 on every vehicle registered within the County as a road maintenance fee. This currently adds up to just over \$15 million a year. The funds are used for paving, resurfacing, maintenance and improving the County's transportation system. It can also be used to support public transportation.

#### **OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS**

Road improvements can also be privately funded through a number of other mechanisms, such as Impact Fees, Tax Increment Financing, and Development Agreements. In order to pursue such efforts, a development project would have to trigger the need for such improvements and can only fund the equitable portion of transportation improvements related to a development. While these mechanisms are appropriate for arterial, collector, and subcollector road improvements and installation of multi-modal capital improvements, it is not appropriate for major road projects.

The development of expensive improvements, like the construction of new highways and interstates, can be funded by a number of the previously mentioned sources; however, new road construction will be competing for the same limited funds available for road improvements and maintenance. The use of toll roads to fund major projects may be an option to consider if some of the significant road projects in the County are to get past the planning stage and move to construction.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In recent years, planners and community leaders across the country have observed increased public interest in reversing the trend of urban sprawl and its consequences. Their efforts largely are motivated by the impacts of suburban development patterns: consumption of sensitive land for development, costly expansion of public infrastructure, and increasing traffic congestion. Throughout Horry County, the distance between complementary land uses (e.g., home and work, home and school, or home and shopping) and a lack of overall street connectivity leads to unintended consequences for the regional transportation system — increased vehicle miles traveled and energy consumption, longer commute times, increase in cost of doing business, increased air pollution, heightened infrastructure and public service costs, increased emergency response times, and impacts to mental and physical health of our residents. Unintended consequences to rapid growth will result, if changes are not made to better integrate land use, urban form, and transportation decision-making. A complete transportation system will not only address roadway needs, but offer a variety of mode choices, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transportation, railroad and airplanes. The County should continue to develop a consistent criteria for evaluating new development and its impact on the transportation network.



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# CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development Chapter provides information on significant existing plans, workforce and employment trends, economic sectors, and economic opportunities. It also addresses opportunities to expand and diversify Horry County's economic base, in addition to identifying opportunities to spur business growth through revitalization. While the Economic Development Chapter provides recommendations for business and employment growth, economic growth cannot be successful without considering the close ties to housing, transportation and land use. Providing a stable environment and a high quality of life are key components in attracting new and expanding existing businesses, all of which will be necessary to grow Horry County's economy.

## EXISTING PLANS

There are a number of agencies involved in economic development in Horry County, including Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, the SC Department of Commerce, Santee Cooper, various business associations, and area chambers of commerce. In addition, there are numerous educational institutions involved with developing our County's workforce and with providing assessments of economic growth opportunities.

## ECONOMIC PLANNING EFFORTS

The **Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Cooperation (MBREDC)** serves as a resource for location and expansion assistance to new and existing industries across Horry County. The Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan 2016) identifies three areas for the MBREDC to focus, including:

- Recruit and retain high-quality industries in order to generate jobs for the citizens of Horry County;
- Provide a variety of high-quality economic development "products" in which new and existing industries can locate and/or expand; and
- The MBREDC being recognized as a leader in economic development within Horry County and throughout South Carolina.

The Strategic Plan identifies a variety of mechanisms for MBREDC to achieve these goals, which primarily focus on manufacturing growth.

The **Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG)** is responsible for the development of the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Waccamaw Region 2017-2022 (CEDS)**. This plan is designed to guide regional economic growth in Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties in terms of job creation, diversified economies, and improved coordination between public and private entities. This plan is required to qualify for US Economic Development Administration Public Works Program and Economic Adjustment assistance. While the recommendations in this plan are regional, it is important to understand Horry County's economic significance in the region.

The **Economic Development Strategic Plan (2008)** for Horry County was developed by the Clemson Institute for Eco-

nomics and Community Development and the BB&T Center for Economic and Community Development at Coastal Carolina University. The purpose of this effort was to identify and prioritize issues surrounding economic development in Horry County and to build consensus around a set of actions that may be taken in the pursuit of a collective economic vision. Consensus building through numerous public service entities and their private partners was conducted to collectively identify ways to overcome the barriers and challenges to continued economic prosperity. This involved an array of strategies extending beyond typical economic development planning efforts, as it addresses quality of life and services needed to lay a foundation for economic growth. While this plan was developed through a number of partners, follow through of the implementation strategies has been sparse, as it is not regulatory in nature and there is no agency charged with responsibility for implementation.

In 2013, Clemson University developed the **Horry County Agribusiness Strategic Plan**. This plan outlines the trends in agriculture in Horry County, the region and the state, and identifies opportunities for agribusiness growth in the County. Among its recommendations include a stronger focus on sweet potato and peanut production and processing, the development of a food hub to service locals and the food industry in the area, and the development of an equine show facility to diversify our tourism offerings.

## SPECIALIZED STUDIES AND PLANS

There are multiple academic specialists from the Grant Center for Real Estate and Economic Development and the Clay Brittain Jr Center for Resort Tourism at Coastal Carolina University that provide the County and area industries with economic updates for the County. In addition, the Myrtle Beach



Chamber of Commerce provides monthly and quarterly economic indicator publications to track trends in development, employment, and hotel occupancy and rates. This data informs emerging economic trends in the Grand Strand.

### EXISTING PLANS FINDINGS

There are multiple plans and studies that have been conducted by government agencies, business associations, and academic institutions. Each of these plans conveys the need for building upon our existing economy, diversifying our industries, developing a marketable product, and fostering workforce development. The implementation of all of these plans is dependent upon voluntary efforts of numerous organizations; however, there is no one agency that is responsible for ensuring the implementation of these plans. Coordination is critical to effectively overcome and foster economic development in any community.

### WORKFORCE

In 2016, individuals in Horry County within the workforce was estimated to be 145,503. This means that 59% of people who are of working age are active in the workforce in Horry County, compared to 60% for South Carolina and 63.1% in the United States. This is the result from a number of factors, such as unemployment, disabled individuals, families with stay at home parents, and residents that retired early. It may also be an indicator that people are traveling out of the County for work and contributing to another community's workforce.

When compared to South Carolina and the United States, Horry County has a greater percentage of participation from people of workforce age, 16 to 24 (13.1%, 13.1% and 14.85%

#### Labor Force Statistics Comparison to Similar Counties

	Horry County	Charleston County	New Hanover County, NC	Sarasota County, FL	Volusia County, FL	SC	US
Labor Force Participation (age 16+)	59.0%	65.1%	64.8%	48.9%	51.8%	60.0%	63.1%
With a disability, under age 65	12.0%	7.1%	8.9%	8.9%	10.7%	10.4%	8.6%
Persons without Health Insurance	17.4%	12.6%	12.4%	15.7%	14.8%	11.9%	10.1%
HS Education+ (% of persons 25 yrs+)	88.2%	89.7%	91.7%	92.6%	89.3%	86.0%	87.0%
BA Degree+	22.8%	40.4%	36.9%	33.1%	22.4%	26.5%	30.3%
Median Household Income	\$43,299	\$53,437	\$50,088	\$54,989	\$42,240	\$46,898	\$55,322
Per Capita Income	\$24,094	\$32,162	\$29,880	\$35,210	\$24,834	\$25,521	\$29,829
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing	\$159,700	\$249,200	\$214,300	\$181,400	\$131,600	\$143,600	\$178,600

Source: US Census, Quickfacts

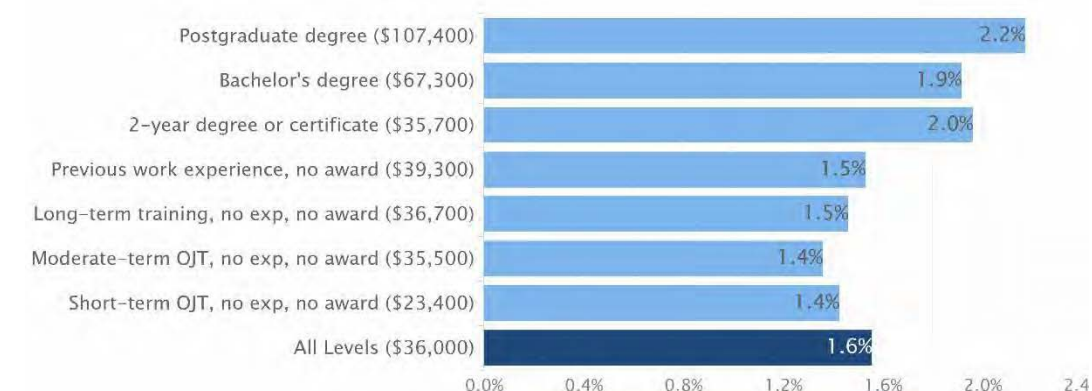
respectively). Similarly, Horry County has a higher percentage of workforce over the age of 65 (5.60%, 5.81%, and 6.83% respectively). In contrast, Horry County has a smaller percentage of workforce between the ages of 25 and 64 (81.73%, 81.9%, and 78.16% respectively). The highest percentage of the active workforce is between 25 and 34 years old.

The chart to the left compares Horry County's labor force statistics to similar counties, South Carolina, and the United States. According to this comparison, Horry County has a higher percentage of persons under the age of 65 with disabilities. In addition, Horry County has a higher percentage of persons without health insurance. Similarly, Horry County has fewer persons with a Bachelors Degree or higher in comparison to all jurisdictions except for Volusia County, Florida. In relationship to per capita income, Horry County is lower than all comparisons, if only marginally.

### EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in Horry County, South Carolina is projected to grow 1.6% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 2.2% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 1.9% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 2.0% per year.

#### Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Training Required for Horry County



Source: JobsEQ, Data as of 2017 Q4

Horry County has a number of specialty programs and schools that cater specifically to certain industries. Coastal Carolina University's William L. Spadoni College of Education offers five undergraduate and three graduate programs with a total enrollment of over 1,200 students (roughly 12% of the entire student body). Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) offers high school students the opportunity for dual enrollment, which allows students to transition into higher education with existing credits. HGTC's International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach of-



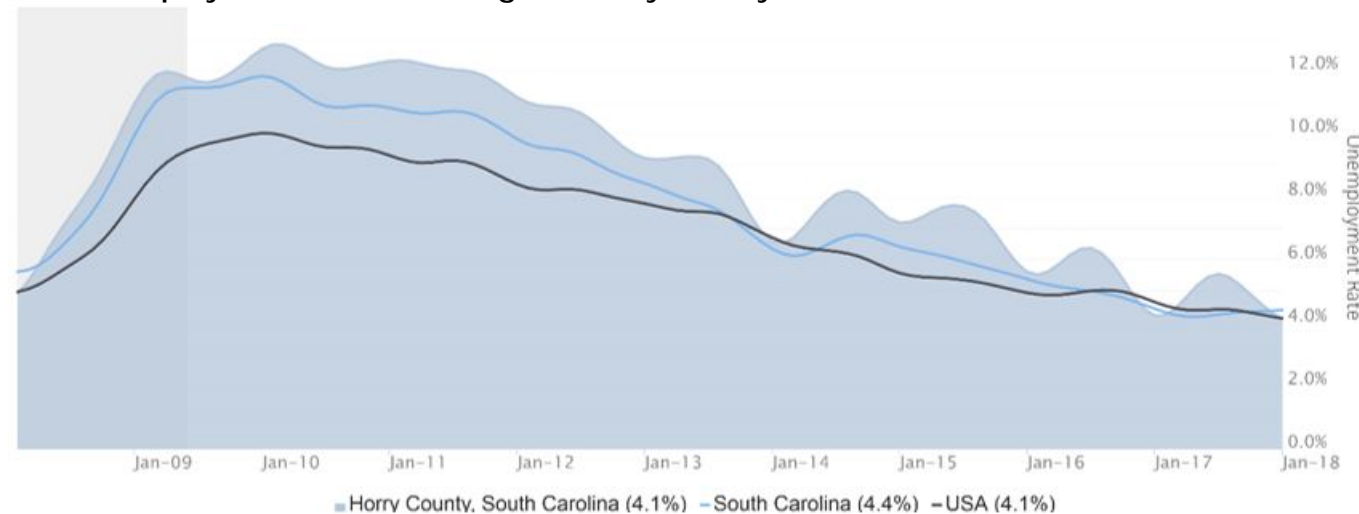


fers numerous certificates and associates degrees that can lead to career advancements in the culinary arts as well as many of the other tourism related industries that are abundant along the Strand. Horry County Schools has multiple specialty high school options which can lead students directly into technical careers or provides students with college credits.

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Unemployment rates provide a snapshot of the economic health of the region. The graph below illustrates how Horry County has compared to South Carolina and the United States in unemployment rate over a ten-year period from 2008-2017. For each year, there is an obvious fluxuation in unemployment between winter and summer months. The chart shows that historically Horry County has had much higher fluxuations in unemployment annually compared to South Carolina and the United States. These unemployment rates do not reflect people that are underemployed and working multiple jobs.

**Annual Employment Percent Change for Horry County, SC**



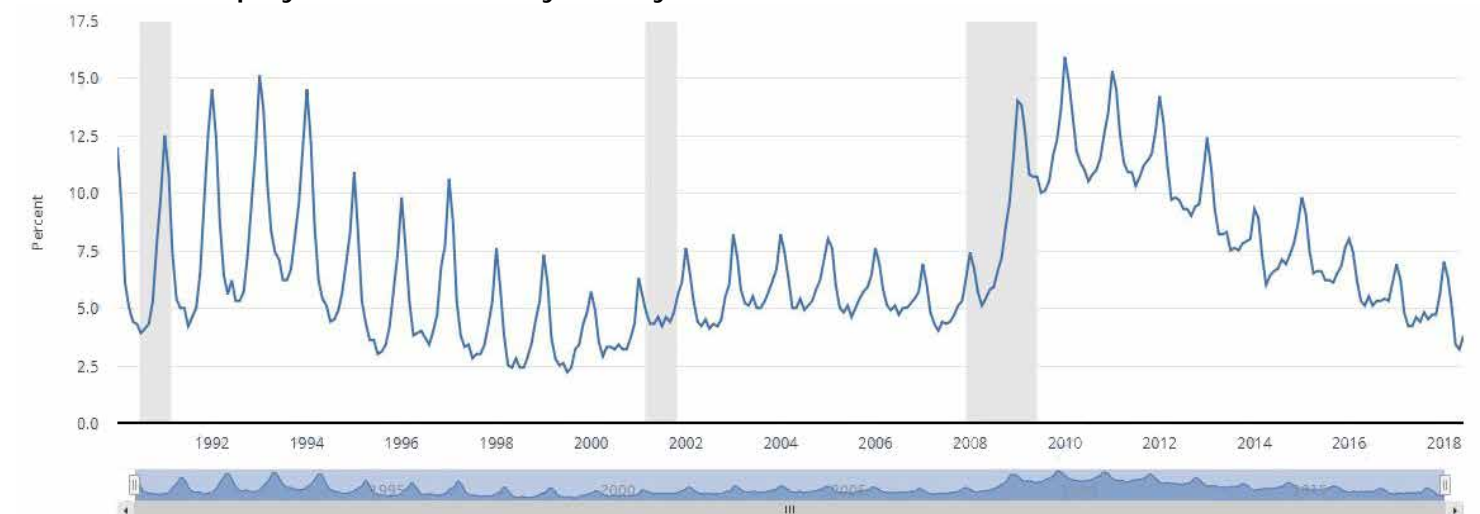
Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce

Immediately following the economic downturn in of 2008-2009, Horry County's unemployment rate spiked to an all-time high in January 2010 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). Between 2008 and 2010 there were a reported 58,769 layoffs state-wide, of which the industries with the top three highest layoff rates were manufacturing, administrative and waste services, and retail trade respectively). While state-wide layoff rates decreased from 2008 to 2010 in most industries, accommodation and food services layoffs increased extensively over that same 3 year period. Considering Horry County's high percentage of employment in the accommodation and food service, and retail trade industries, it is logical to assume that workers in the County experienced similar rates of layoff. By occupation, the majority of un-

employment claims in Horry County come from sales, management, food prep/serving, office/administrative support, and healthcare practitioners and technical. Horry County has higher rates, compared to South Carolina, in all of these fields except office/administrative support.

While the County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has improved since the Great Recession, it has not improved to pre-recession levels, nor has it improved at the same rate as the state or the US. By industry, the majority of unemployment claims in Horry County come from the retail trade, accommodations/food services, healthcare/social assistance, manufacturing, and construction. Horry County has higher rates, compared to South Carolina, in all of these fields except manufacturing. As of May 2018, Horry County's unemployment rates have fallen to 3.2%, the lowest monthly rates since the late 1990s when summer rates frequently fell to the 2-4% range (see the graph below).

**Historical Unemployment Rate in Horry County, SC**



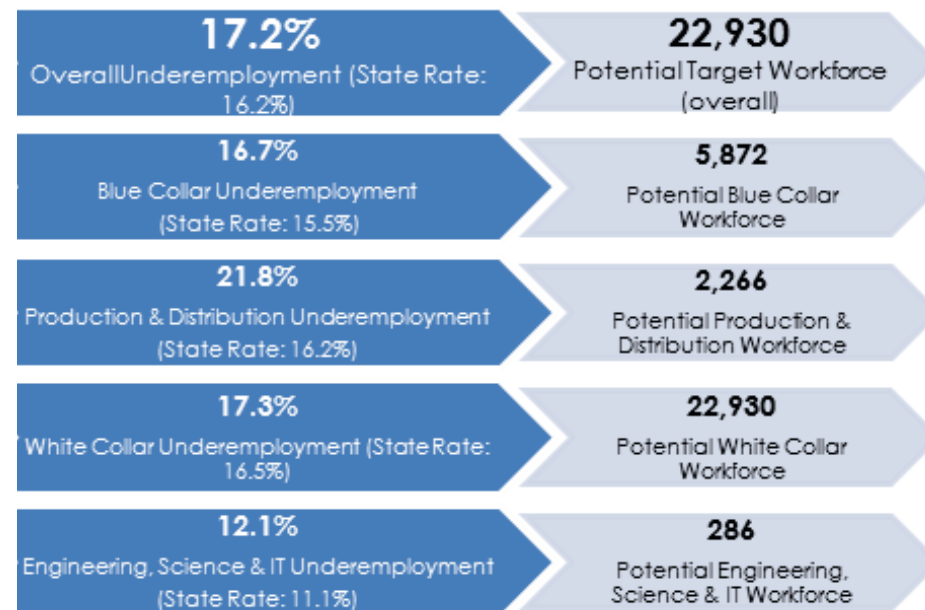
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

It is often quoted that most new jobs are created by businesses that are already located in a community. In 2016, almost 60% of the total new jobs in Horry County announced originated from existing industries (MREDC). As of 2017Q4, total employment for Horry County was 135,585 based on a four-quarter moving average). Over the year ending 2017Q4, employment increased 2.0% in the region. The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) states that employment has expanded significantly in Horry County growing from 19,760 in 1970, to 118,920 in 2005, to 133,177 in 2010, and to 145,663 in 2016. (DEWS, 2016 Q3).

Overall underemployment in the region's labor shed is 17.2%, almost a full point higher than that for the state overall at 16.2%. Given the strong seasonal employment presence, along with



## Underemployment Statistics for 40 Minute Drive Time Labor Shed in Horry County, SC



Source: 2017 SC Power Force Workforce Survey

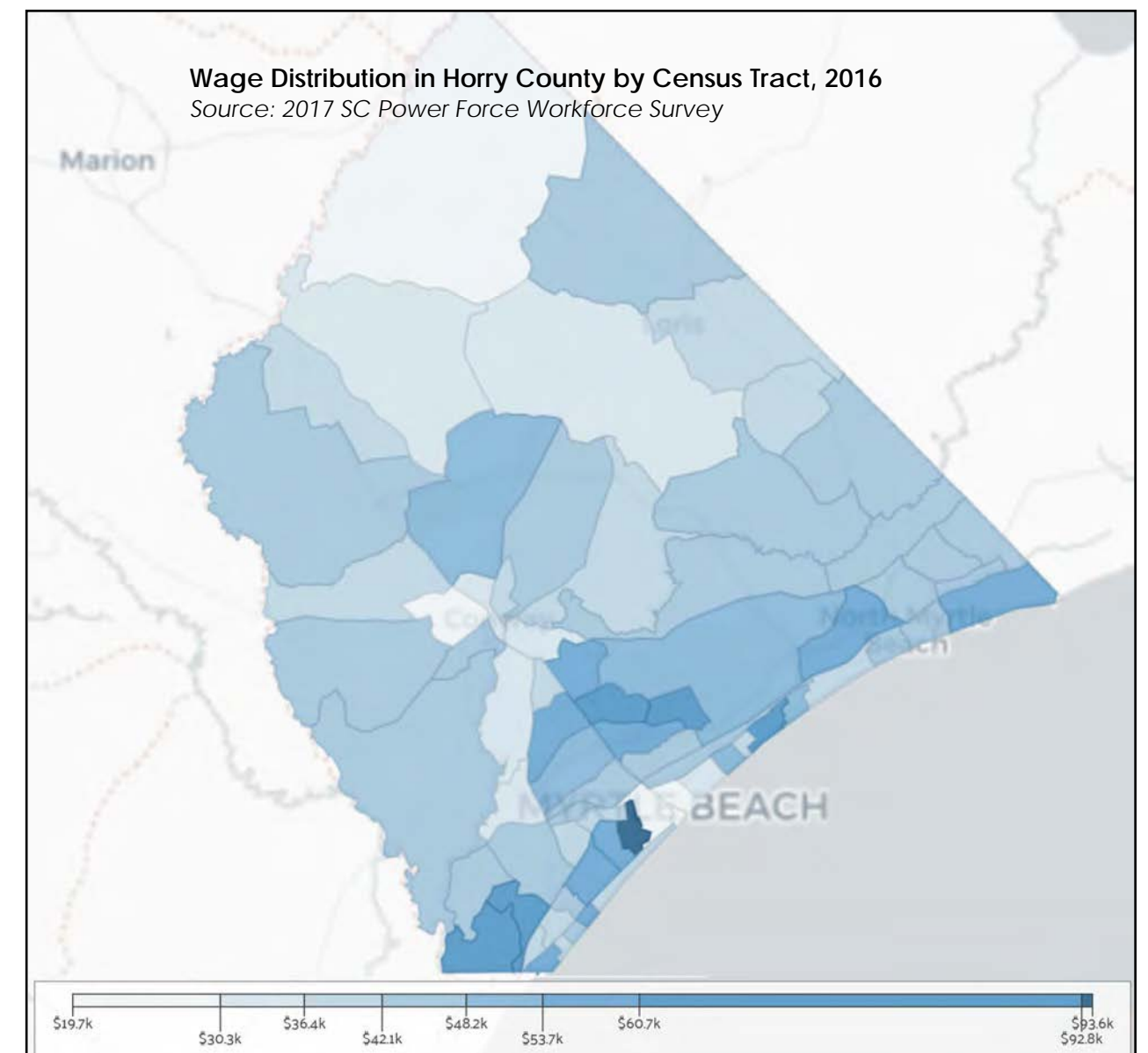
service related jobs, this comes as no significant surprise. Underemployment among production and distribution workers is also higher than state levels at 21.8% vs. 20.2%). In absolute numbers, this equates to approximately 5,872 potentially underemployed blue collar workers and 17,058 underemployed white collar workers within a 40-minute drive time. As a result, the region is poised for employment expansions.

Fueled by South Carolina's largest workforce development database, SC Works helps job seekers link to all of South Carolina's state and local workforce services and resources. SC Works partners with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce and SC 12 Workforce Investment Boards to help employers post positions and candidates find positions. Horry Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) has a blueprint for the future economic development in Horry County, which will strengthen our workforce and homegrown industry opportunities.

## WAGES AND EARNINGS

While employment data is closely linked to the health of the economy, wage and earnings data give some insight into how each sector contributes to individual and family incomes. The average worker in Horry County earned annual wages of \$33,684 as of 2017Q4 (not to be confused with the median Household income discussed in the Population Chapter). Average annual wages per worker increased 3.9% in the region during the preceding four quarters. For comparison purposes, annual average wages were \$54,343 in the nation as of 2017Q4. Sectors in Horry County with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$73,830), Utilities (\$65,959), and Finance and Insurance (\$58,287). Wage growth in Horry County saw a 5.5% year-over-year increase, which moved slightly ahead of the national rate of 5.4% and slightly behind the state which experienced 5.6% wage increases.

While the County's demographic data is very compelling for the recruitment and retention of industries, portions of the current economic condition may provide some level of concern for executives. The majority of the jobs in Horry County are related to services that support the tourism business. The County's largest employment sectors include: Accommodations and Food Services and Retail Trade, with an average weekly wage of \$315 (approximately \$7.87 per hour) and \$441 (approximately \$11.03 per hour) respectively. While these two work forces represent the largest employment sectors, the overall average hourly wage in Horry County is \$15.99.



Source: DataUSA

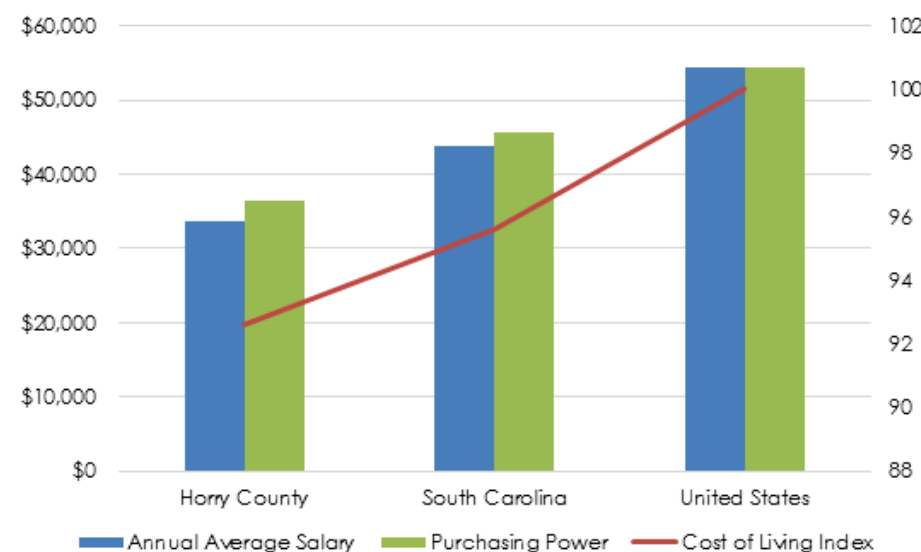




## COST OF LIVING

The Cost of Living Index estimates the relative price levels for consumer goods and services. When applied to wages and salaries, the result is a measure of relative purchasing power. The cost of living is 7.4% lower in Horry County than the United States average.

**Relative Purchasing Power in Horry County, compared to South Carolina and the United States**



Source: JobsEQ, Data as of 2017 Q4

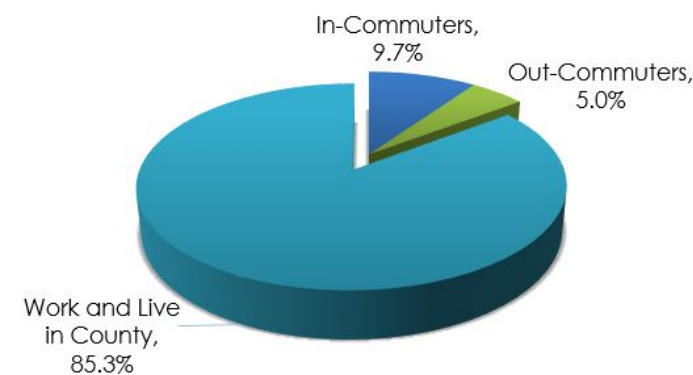
While cost of living is lower in Horry County in comparison to the state and the nation, Horry County's average annual salary is also lower. In addition, since the housing recession, there has been a significant increase in housing costs, both rental and home values, making it more and more difficult for people to live near their places of employment.

In addition, the majority of hospitality positions, with the exception of managers, typically are not provided with health benefits. Not only are these concerns for existing residents, it is also a concern for prospective residents that cannot find jobs in their field of expertise or with the benefits they need to support their families.

## COMMUTING PATTERNS

There are a large number of in-bound and out-bound commuters for employment in Horry County. According to the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, 9.7% of employees in the County commute into Horry County from other places and 5% of Horry County employment-age residents commute to work outside of Horry County, while 85.3% of workers work and live in Horry County.

**In and Out-Bound Commuting Patterns in Horry County, SC**



Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce

Per the US Census Bureau data, the majority of Horry County workers that commute out of the County drive to Georgetown County (over 3,600 commuters). The second and third most commuted-to counties are Marion County and Brunswick County (NC), with 876 and 874 commuters respectively.

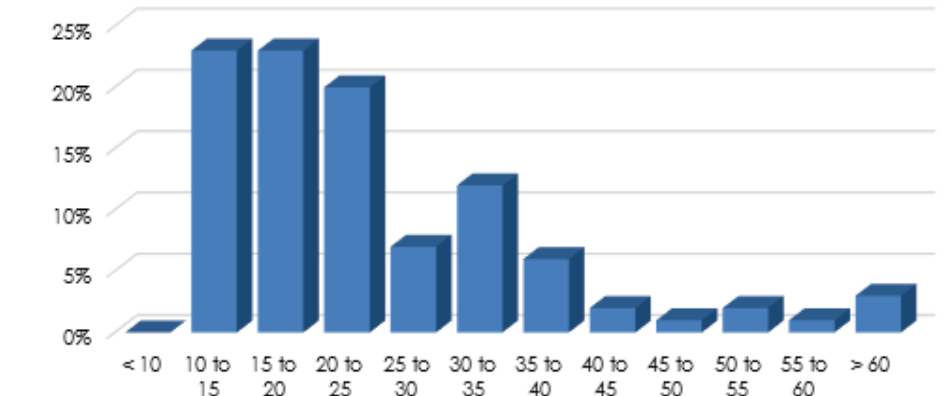
The majority of workers that commute into Horry County are commuting from Georgetown County, with over 4,400 workers. Also, 2,303 workers commute from Columbus County (NC), 2,180 workers commute from Brunswick County (NC), and 1,831 workers commute from Marion County.

Commuting patterns within Horry County and its neighboring counties provides information regarding job creation and regional pull. It appears that since the recession, more Horry County workers are commuting to other Counties. In 2005,

96.6% of employed Horry County Residents worked within the County. At that time, the percentage of employed Dillon County residents working in Dillon County was 72.4%, the percentage in Georgetown County was 74.8% and Marion County was 73.1%. This data indicated that within the region, Horry County was creating new jobs at a higher rate, which allowed for its own residents to work closer to home, while also providing jobs for workers from surrounding counties.

Nearly two-thirds of workers within a 40-minute labor shed travel less than 25 minutes to work. Approximately another 25% travel a moderate 25-40 minutes. Some employers noted salary workers may travel an hour-plus. Some employers noted challenges in terms of lack of public transportation options in the region, along with increased traffic congestion during tourism season.

**Overall Employer Reported Employee Drive Time**



Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce



## WORKFORCE FINDINGS

Horry County's high disability among those of workforce age, the prevalence of low paying positions, and the high numbers of those without health insurance are significantly limiting factors in the County's economy. Those who lack health insurance are more likely to be financially instable. With rising costs of out-of-pocket health care, any illness or injury can truly impact an individual's ability to maintain work and can severely strain a family's finances. These limitations create a scenario where a fragile population lives paycheck-to-paycheck or is only a few paychecks away from homelessness or economic destitution.

When compared to Richland, Charleston, and Greenville Counties, Horry County has fewer employers, fewer numbers of employed individuals, a lower percentage of labor force participation, and an annual payroll of between 1/2 and 1/3 of the other counties. This can be attributed to our tourism economy. While it attracts visitors and retail sales, those funds do not translate into livable wages. Accommodations and Food Service make up 23.1% of jobs; however, the average wage is approximate \$21,000 annually, while retail jobs make up 17.6% of the jobs, with an average wage of \$26,000/year. This has a substantial impact on the annual payroll in Horry County.

Horry County needs to focus economic growth on higher paid skilled jobs to help mitigate instability. In addition to maintaining low costs of living, focus on affordable housing is necessary. Staving off economic destitution will also deter crime amongst residents.

The region boasts strong projected population growth and overall high workforce participation among working age adults. However, age, income, and educational statistics

## Horry County's Labor Force and Payroll Compared to Other Jurisdictions

	Horry County	Richland County	Charleston County	Greenville County
<b>Employers</b>	8,629	8,918	13,321	12,909
<b>Employed</b>	107,915	161,532	202,114	224,915
<b>Labor Force Participation (16+)</b>	57.8%	63.6%	65.0%	63.7%
<b>Annual Payroll (\$1,000)</b>	\$ 3,239,373	\$ 6,923,076	\$ 8,776,547	\$ 9,941,011

Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce

are in line or below state averages, which may limit more highly skilled workforce requirements. While historic and projected occupational growth statistics are favorable, overall concentration and counts of key occupational sectors in the region is relatively low and again may hinder opportunities in the manufacturing and distribution space.

There is higher underemployment in the region compared to the state overall, which is an opportunity for companies to leverage those latent workers and skills. However, that is in large part contingent upon continued and enhanced interaction between employers, local training institutions, and the community at large.





ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS

Economic health and growth is dependent upon a balance between large and small businesses and a diversification of industries. This section identifies major employers and industries in the County. It also takes a more in depth analysis of important sectors of the County's economy.

Horry County has over 8,500 employers. Of these, 94% employ fewer than 50 people and only account for 44% of the active workforce. Employers with 50 to 250 people account for 34.54% of the workforce, while the remaining 21.07% are employed by large businesses or governments with over 250 employees.

Number of Employers Categorized by Number of Employees

Employees	Employers	% of Total Employers	Employees	% Total Employees
0 to 4	4,537	53.19%	7,412	5.62%
5 to 9	1,466	17.19%	9,781	7.42%
10 to 19	1,177	13.80%	15,979	12.12%
20 to 49	836	9.80%	25,344	19.22%
50 to 99	301	3.53%	20,643	15.66%
100 to 249	170	1.99%	24,889	18.88%
250 to 499	30	0.35%	10,261	7.78%
500 to 999	5	0.06%	3,409	2.59%
1000+	7	0.08%	14,111	10.70%
Total	8,539		131,829	

Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce - 2016 Q3

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

The top employers in Horry County include Horry County School District, second is Horry County Government, and the third largest employer is Coastal Carolina University. The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SC DEW) identifies the top 20 list of employers; however, they do not rank them or list employment numbers. Beyond governmental offices and utilities, Horry County's largest employers include hospitals and chain big box stores, hotels and restaurants.

Horry County's Top Employers

- Horry County School District
- Walmart
- Horry County Government
- Coastal Carolina University
- Conway Medical Center
- Grand Strand Regional Medical Center
- Food Lion
- McLeod Loris Seacoast
- City of Myrtle Beach
- Horry Telephone Cooperative
- City of North Myrtle Beach
- Embassy Suites Management LLC
- Hilton Grand Vacations LLC
- LOWES Foods
- OS Restaurant Services INC
- Southeast Restaurants Corporation
- Wyndham Vacation Ownership INC

Source: SC Department of Employment & Workforce - 2017 Q3, Jobs.SCWorks.org (via SC DEW)

Below are the top Industrial Employers reported by MBREDC. It is important to note that these are self-reported numbers and may not reflect all industrial employers in the County.

Horry County's Top Industrial Employers

- Conbraco Industries, Inc.
- New South Lumber Co, LLC
- Precision Southeast, Inc.
- UFP Mid Atlantic, LLC
- Metglas, Inc.
- Professional Plumbing Group (ie. Wolverine Brass)
- AVX Corporation

There are a number of large businesses in Horry County that have developed locally that have a major impact on em-

ployment in our region. Many large to moderately sized businesses in Horry County are directly tied to tourism and real estate. It is important to note that corporations often own multiple chains or brands, which they report separately. While there may be additional local companies that are large employers, the reporting method may inhibit their ability to make the largest employers list. The following are a few significant employers, not included in MBREDC and SC DEW's lists, in Horry County:

- SC Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Plantation Resort
- Lexington Memorial Condo
- Sun News
- Business Telecom Inc
- Embassy Suites
- Grand Strand Water & Sewer
- Landmark Resort
- Kingston Plantation Condos
- Dave & Buster's
- Crown Reef Beach Resort
- Legends Golf & Resort
- Sands Ocean Club Resort
- Marriott Resort
- Little River Medical Center
- Ocean Dunes Resort & Villas
- Ocean Lakes Family Campground

Source: MBREDC, Pee Dee Region Largest Manufacturing Employers 2008

STARTUP AND SMALL BUSINESSES

Small businesses make up 94% of all businesses in Horry County. In most cases, these businesses start as home occupations and blossom into thriving small businesses in need of commercial buildings. The Myrtle Beach Area Small Business Development Center is located at Coastal Carolina University. They promote the growth and development of small businesses by providing management training courses and one-on-one technical assistance to business owners who wish to start, grow or maintain their business in Horry and Georgetown counties. They offer marketing analysis, business plan preparation, financial feasibility studies and other valuable resources to the entrepreneur at little to no cost.



Home occupations are a large part of the local economy. In Horry County, a home occupation is defined as “a business conducted entirely within a residential dwelling and/or fully enclosed attached or detached structure that is an accessory use/structure to the residential dwelling. The business use must be owned and operated by the resident owner and/or occupant.”

In 2012, there were a total of 28,464 firms in Horry County. Of these, 9,050 were owned by women (32%); 3,804 were owned by minorities (13%); and 3,520 were owned by veterans (12%) (Quickfacts 2016). In order to improve the efficiency and encourage the creation of more small and minority businesses, the County must improve the availability and understandability of business ordinances and requirements. There are opportunities to improve availability of information on the County website in relation to business licenses. Clearer information about what types of businesses are allowable in each zoning district should also be available. In addition, more closely aligning government offices relative to business licensing and zoning compliance will assist in streamlining the process. Horry County can also work towards minimizing development requirements for temporary, seasonal uses in rural areas such as agritourism, ecotourism, guided hunting, paddle tours, and heritage tourism.

#### EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The largest industry sector in Horry County is Accommodation and Food Services, employing 31,317 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Retail Trade (23,842 workers) and Health Care and Social Assistance (13,219). The following chart shows that the breakdown in jobs by industry.

The *location quotient* is a technique used to identify the concentration of an industrial sector in a local economy relative to a larger reference economy. High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average (LQ=1). The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Accommodation and Food Services (LQ = 2.57), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation. While Accommodation and Food Services are the largest industry in Horry County, Charleston and Beaufort counties still employ more people within these sectors. Horry County is the third highest employer in this industry in the state. Two of the three of the Industries with the highest LQ also have the lowest average annual wages (\$20,193 and \$20,940 respectively). It is important to note that two industries that employ the greatest numbers, Accommodations and Food Services and Retail Trade, have two of the lowest four average annual wages (\$20,193 and \$26,070 respectively).

Industry NAICS, LQ, Employment, and Average Annual Wages

NAICS	Industry	Current Four Quarters Ending with 2017q4			5-Year History	
		Employment	Average Annual Wages	LQ	Total Change	Avg Annual % Change
					Employment	Region
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	611	\$28,671	0.32	26	0.9%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	84	\$47,972	0.15	45	16.4%
22	Utilities	583	\$65,959	0.81	-284	-7.6%
23	Construction	8,675	\$44,097	1.15	2,403	6.7%
31	Manufacturing	3,419	\$44,546	0.31	6	0.0%
42	Wholesale Trade	2,505	\$45,272	0.47	306	2.6%
44	Retail Trade	23,842	\$26,070	1.64	2,598	2.3%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	2,493	\$40,964	0.44	600	5.7%
51	Information	1,907	\$46,787	0.71	-20	-0.2%
52	Finance and Insurance	2,981	\$58,287	0.55	328	2.4%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4,978	\$35,472	2.16	105	0.4%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,622	\$50,070	0.52	935	4.6%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	526	\$73,830	0.26	-26	-0.9%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	7,933	\$31,857	0.91	1,999	6.0%
61	Educational Services	8,945	\$41,469	0.80	683	1.6%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	13,219	\$49,683	0.68	2,657	4.6%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,474	\$20,940	2.04	124	0.5%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	31,317	\$20,193	2.57	2,617	1.8%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,297	\$25,920	0.88	535	2.2%
92	Public Administration	6,175	\$39,894	0.96	944	3.4%
	<b>Total - All Industries</b>	<b>135,585</b>	<b>\$33,684</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>16,584</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

Source: JobsEQ, Data as of 2017 Q4, numbers provided by Bureau of Labor Statistics. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is used to classify business establishments according to the type of economic activity. The NAICS Code comprises six levels, from the “all industry” level to the 6-digit level. The first two digits define the top level category, known as the “sector,” which is the level examined in this report.





KEY EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

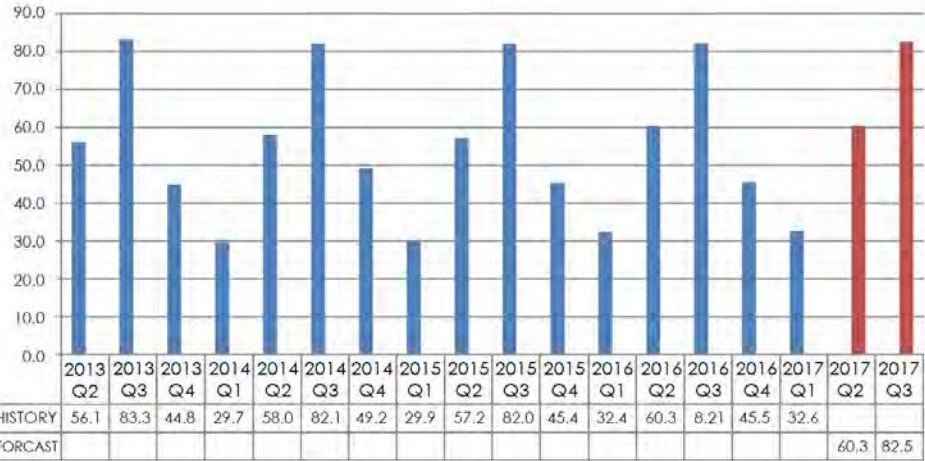
There are multiple employment sectors that are prominent in Horry County. The following employment sectors either play a role in Horry County's current or historic economic base. Some sectors present opportunities for expansion, while others may be emerging, or losing significance.

TOURISM

Tourism continues to be the most important industry on the Grand Strand. It drives accommodation and food services, in addition to retail sales.

The Grand Strand is considered one of the nation's top vacation destinations and hosts an estimated 17.95 million visitors annually (Myrtle Beach Economic Impact Study, 2016). According to an Economic Impact of Travel report produced by the US Travel Association, Horry County led all counties in South Carolina in travel expenditures in 2016. There are many industries that provide goods and services to travelers and tourists. In a study conducted by Coastal Carolina University, over \$4.8 billion in direct tourist related spending occurred in Horry and Georgetown counties in 2015. This led to a total economic impact of \$7.0 billion in the same year, supporting over 83,000 jobs. It generated \$2.2 billion in in-

Hotel-Condotel-Campground Occupancy Rate



Source: Grant Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, via Clay Brittain Jr. Center for Resort Tourism.

come for employees and business owners and a combined tax revenue of \$484.6 million for state and local governments. \$158.8 was local government tax revenue. Salvino, 2016).

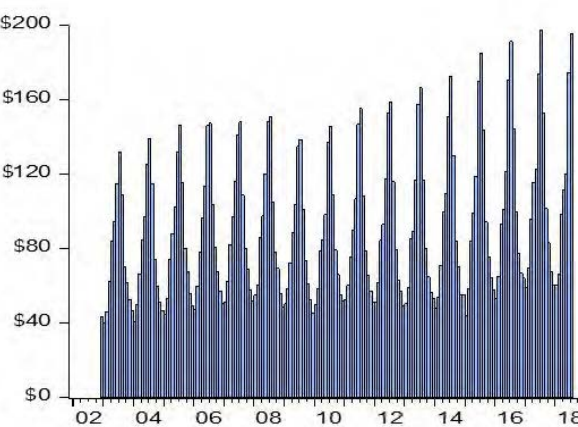
There are approximately 98,573 bedrooms available for rent along the Grand Strand including 58% in hotels/motels, 22% in vacation rentals, 11% in timeshares, and 9% in campgrounds (Horry County Finance Department 2017). Annual average hotel and motel occupancy rates on the Grand Strand, as reported by the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce was 55.1% in 2017 vs 54.4% in 2016. The annual average daily rate was \$107.40 in 2017 vs \$101.80 in 2016. During peak seasons, hotels reach more than 80% occupancy, while the off-season is approximately 30%. During this shoulder season, hotel rates are also significantly lower, resulting in less revenue per room. This is a key indicator of the need to offer exciting events during the shoulder season which will increase year round employment and spending.

According to the Chamber of Commerce, visitors to Horry County spend an average \$117 per person per day, while group business travelers spend an average of \$277 per person per day. This is significant considering the number of visitors to the County. The direct effects of visitor spending is apparent in hotels. Because Horry County's economy is so dependent upon tourism, it is susceptible to economic downturns. In addition, this industry can also be vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes, as travel can be impaired by flooded roadways, eroded beaches, and potential lack of power.

Following the 2008 economic recession, there was a \$1.2 billion dip in retail sales for businesses located in the Coun-

ty. Retail sales have not only recovered since then, but 2017 was a record-setting year.

Average Nightly Accommodations Costs in the Grand Strand



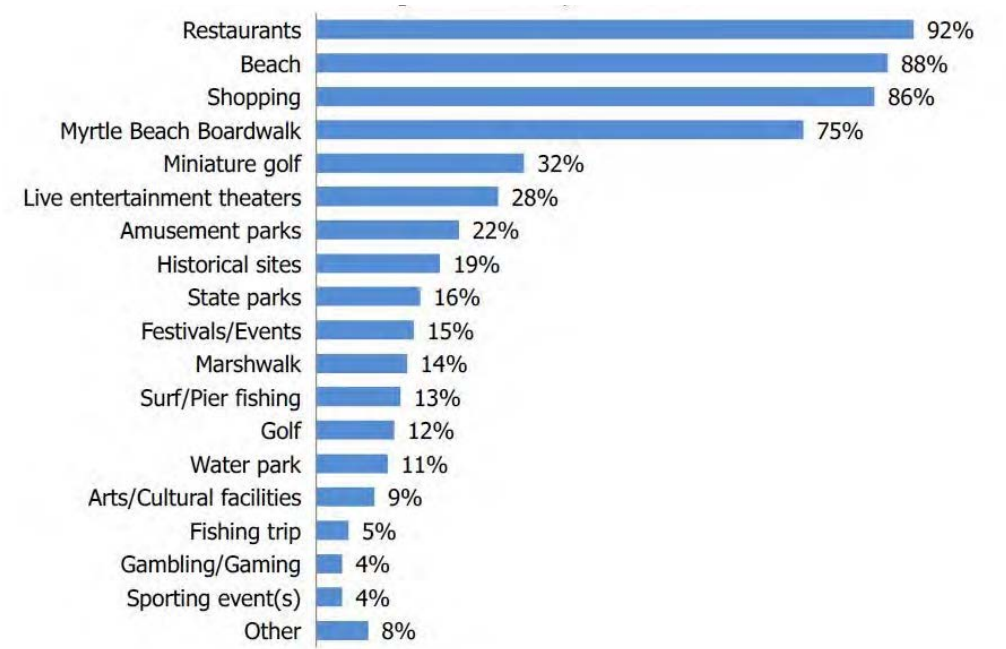
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Total Retail Sales Annually

Year	Total Retail Sales
2008	\$9,064,308,659
2009	\$8,212,831,863
2010	\$7,858,031,821
2011	\$8,291,304,481
2012	\$8,751,960,729
2013	\$9,011,131,130
2014	\$9,430,513,440
2015	\$9,999,531,153
2016	\$10,685,625,039
2017	\$11,297,018,127

Source: Horry County Finance Department, 2017

Activities Participated in at Myrtle Beach



Source: Grant Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, via Clay Brittain Jr. Center for Resort Tourism.



### Airport Travel

Horry County Department of Airports plays a tremendous role in the growing tourism economy. The South Carolina Aeronautics Commission recently released its Statewide Aviation System Plan and Economic Impact Study announcing that the Horry County airport system's total economic impact exceeds \$3 billion annually for all of its facilities, supporting 26,240 jobs and contributing \$122 million in annual tax revenue to the region. Myrtle Beach International Airport continues to expand the number of destinations and airlines coming in and out of the region. Continued expansion of the airport will be needed to accommodate passengers and freight. An airport master planning effort is currently underway.

#### Horry County Airports Employment and Spending

Total Employment		Total Annual Payroll	Total Annual Spending	Total Annual Economic Activity	Total Annual Tax Revenue
Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR)	25,781	\$779,878,690	\$2,193,821,310	\$2,972,700,000	\$119,872,710
Conway-Horry County Airport (HYW)	72	\$3,239,860	\$5,856,660	\$9,096,520	\$382,660
Grand Strand Airport (CRE)	385	\$12,334,580	\$31,173,930	\$43,508,510	\$1,824,820
Loris Twin City Airport (5J9)	2	\$70,450	\$125,520	\$195,970	\$7,850
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,240</b>	<b>\$794,523,580</b>	<b>\$2,230,977,420</b>	<b>\$3,025,501,000</b>	<b>\$122,088,040</b>

Source: SC 2017 Power Force

### Sports Tourism

What attracts sporting events to Horry County is primarily the availability of extensive attractions that offer sports tourists' more than just sports. Top area sports tourism opportunities include the NASCAR Speedpark, Myrtle Beach Pelicans, Ripkin Experience, and more than 30 area Golf Courses. In March 2015, the Myrtle Beach Sports Center opened its doors, featuring 8 basketball courts, 16 volleyball courts, and 100,000 square feet of configurable space for numerous indoor events. The Sports Center joined the extensive list of existing sports facilities, from Coastal Carolina University's Convocation Center to the North Myrtle Beach Sports Complex. The Grand Strand continues to expand its sporting opportunities.

### HEALTHCARE

Expanded population necessitates the need for expanded healthcare options and services. This includes a variety of healthcare service facilities, physician's offices, medical laboratories, information management firms, and even medical device manufacturers. With 37% of Horry County residents over the age of 55, healthcare services for seniors is of special importance.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of healthcare occupations is projected to grow 19% from 2014 to 2024, adding 2.3 million new jobs nationwide. This is much faster than the average for other occupations. This is due to an aging population and federal health insurance reform aimed at increasing the number of people with access to health insurance. The median annual wage for healthcare practitioners and technical occupations in Horry County was \$63,420 in May 2016, which is higher than the median annual wage for all occupations of \$37,040.

Healthcare-related businesses in Horry County work closely with HGTC, which offers dental and nursing programs, and CCU, which offers nursing, biology, and health administration degrees. Also, Horry County Schools, including the Academy for the Arts, Science, and Technology AAST) and the the Academy for Technology & Academics ATA) provide specific career majors like pre-medicine, nursing, and health sciences among several others.

To match healthcare options to the growing population in Horry County, Tidelands Health began a new Family Medicine Residency Program in partnership with the Medical University of South Carolina MUSC) in Fall 2016. This program is intended to provide quality healthcare in medically understaffed Horry County, as well as keep the residents as practicing doctors in Horry County once their three-year residency ends. However, local hospitals have expressed the challenges associated with recruiting professionals and their families to relocate to Horry County because of concerns over quality of life and lack of available jobs for their spouses.

### CONSTRUCTION

Building requires a vast amount of natural, fiscal and human capital. Real estate houses our population, provides places to work and play, places of worship, safety, wellness and security. In all, the construction industry is immense, its full economic impact is difficult to measure. Nonetheless, there are statistics that begin to describe the impacts that a built environment has on the economy. This industry, like tourism, is reliant upon national economic trends.

Prior to the recession, construction was booming in Horry County. Construction had been on the rise over the last couple of years. In the FY2015, County permit revenue increased 25% to \$3.9 million from FY2014 at \$3.1 million. New Single Family Residential SFR) structure permits increased 32% in FY2015 (SFRs 2,490) from FY2014 (SFRs 1,889). The construction value has increased 32% from FY2014 (\$405 million) to FY2015 (\$534 million). These trends in growth are





continuing to increase and are reflective of a strong economy. Additional information on housing growth can be found within the Housing Chapter (Coastal Carolina Association of Realtors).

Commercial development has also seen an uptick in recent years. In 2010, the greater Myrtle Beach areas was defined by the Census as a metropolitan statistical area. This has started attracting many national retailers to the region. As the population continues to grow, there will be growing demand for more information on appropriate siting locations for new commercial businesses.

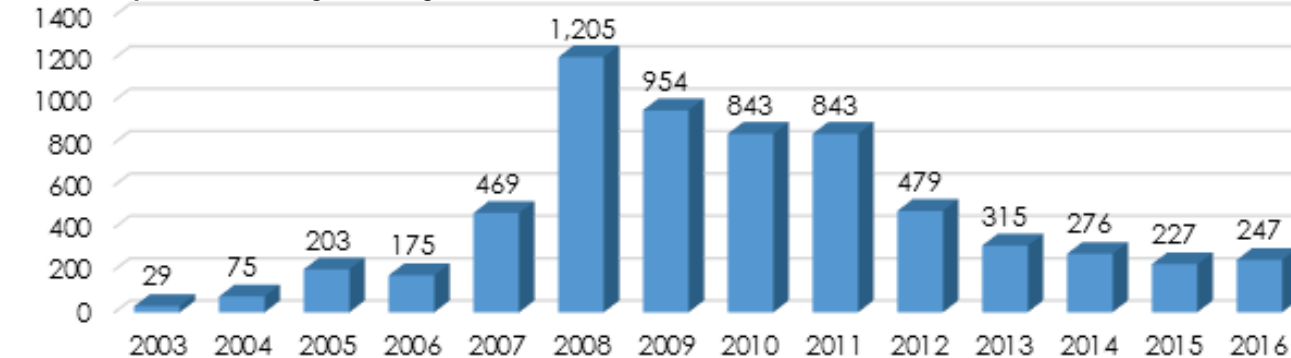
Zoning and land development regulations are a common concern of developers as they often change within overlay zones and can create hurdles. Conversely, there are still needed changes to the land development regulations to support the quality of life that people are seeking for their employees. See the Land Use Chapter for more information about zoning and land development regulations.

There are many implications in infrastructure that must be considered if redevelopment is to be encouraged. Development often leads to an increase in need for affordable construction materials which would necessitate expansion of local sourcing for sand, gravel, and lumber. Sourcing of skilled labor is also increasing in demand. WBTW News13 reported in August 2018, that the nationwide construction worker shortage is affecting Horry County. Horry Georgetown Home Builders Association have teamed up with Georgetown Tech and Horry County Schools to find solutions to this shortage.

In addition, the transportation network would undoubtedly be impacted. Increased pressure on urban streets would necessitate adherence to a complete streets network. Improvements to rail systems to import industrial goods, road networks for in-

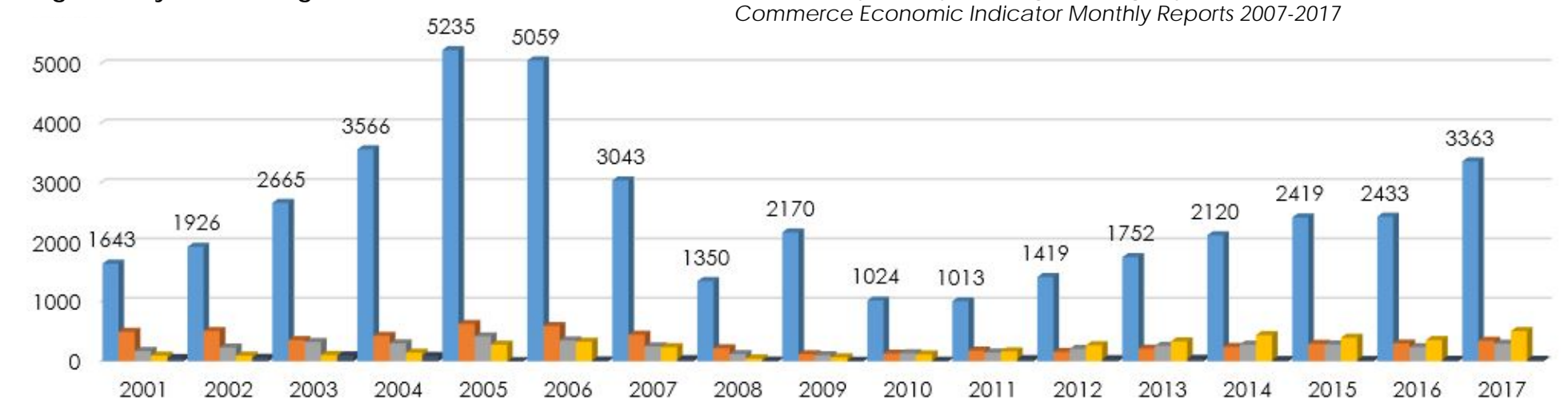
creased trucking traffic, as well as upgrades to older roadways would need to be examined on a case-by-case basis and in coordination with the redevelopment project. As has been done in other urban areas, the increase in tax revenue from redevelopment can be reinvested into infrastructure and resources for citizens.

**Unincorporated Horry County Commercial Plans 2001-2017**

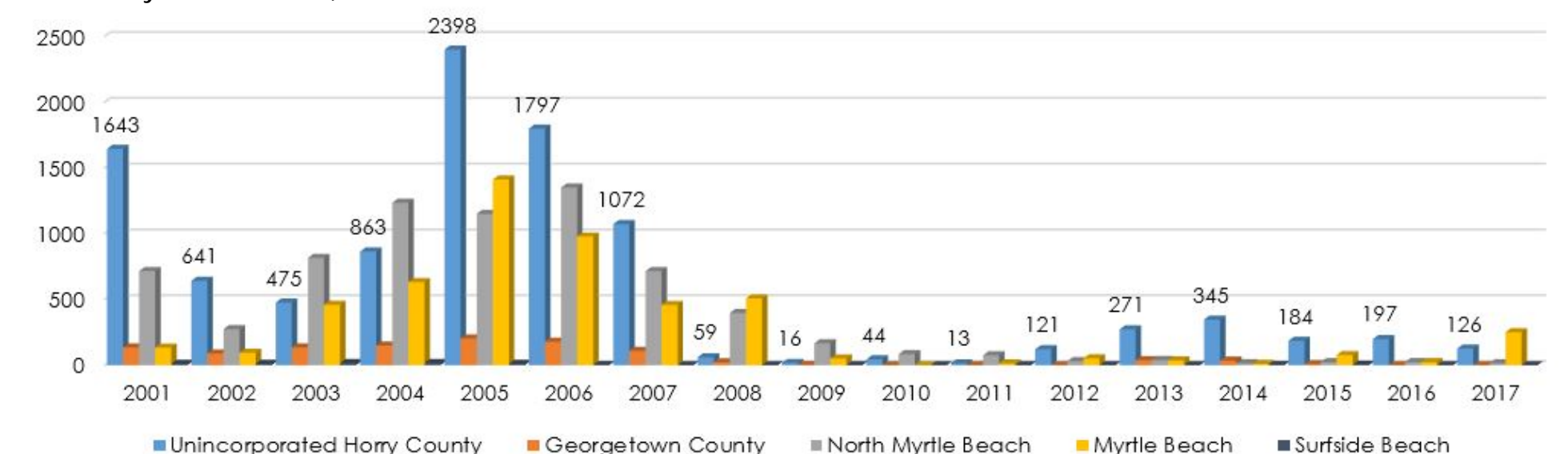


**Single Family Unit Building Permits, 2001-2017**

Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Economic Indicator Monthly Reports 2007-2017



**Multi-Family Units Permitted, 2001-2017**





## MANUFACTURING

Horry County is home to 25 international companies and US headquarters for such companies as SURTECO North American NA, DME. Manufacturing USA, Integra Fabrics, Teknoware, and Canfor Southern Pine are located in Horry County. Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development is the primary agency responsible for attracting manufacturing jobs to the County. There are a number of sites that are prime for the location of new manufacturing and distribution centers.

**Cool Springs Business Park** is made up of more than 60 acres of available land with access to nearby major roadways and is a short drive from I-95. The property is zoned for HI – heavy industrial use. PTR Industries, a firearm manufacturer, is currently the only user of the park. The site is equipped with water, sewer, electric, and telecommunications.

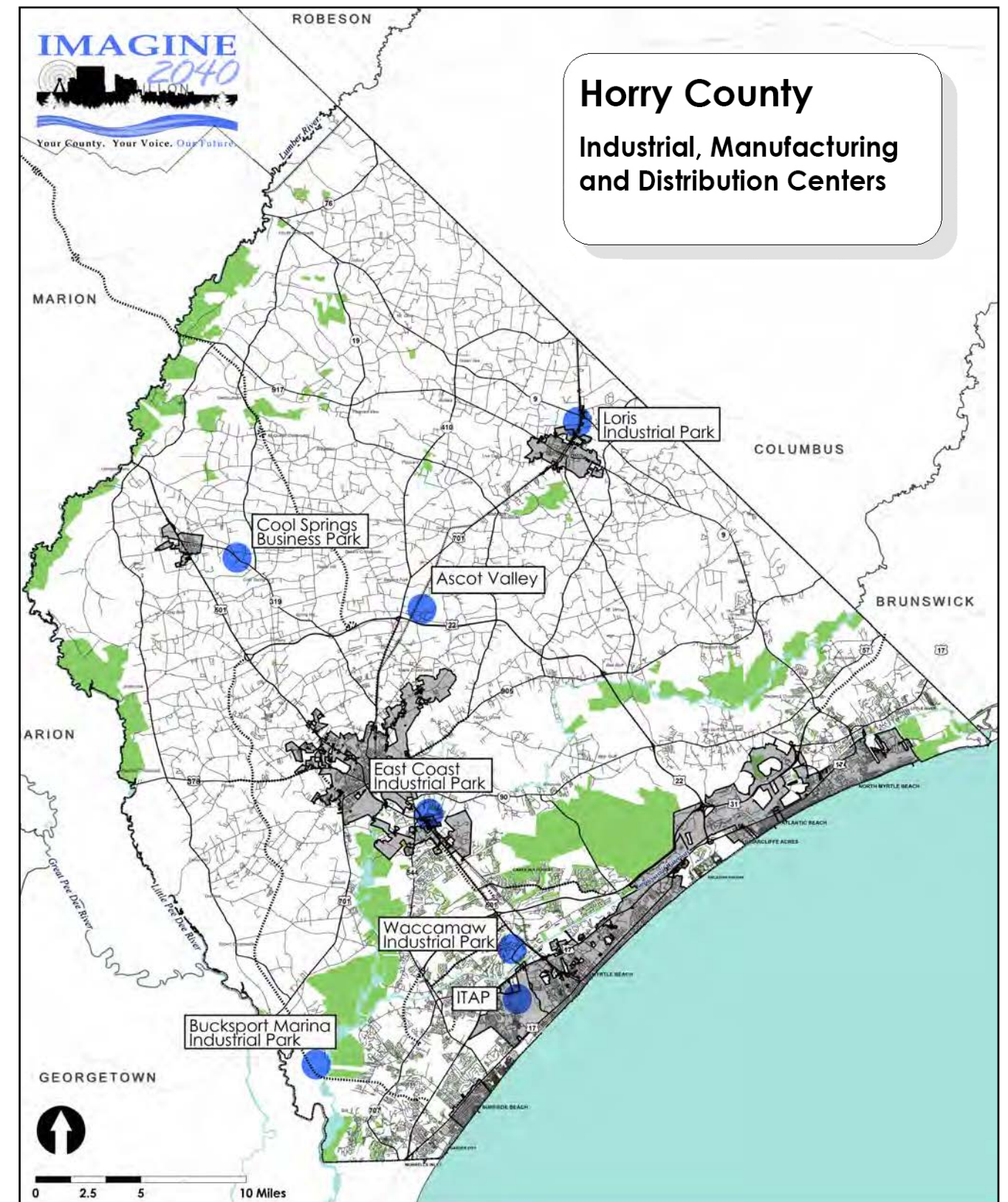
**The Loris Industrial Park** is made of up 100 acres located in the City of Loris. The property is zoned for LI – light industrial use. The site is equipped with water, sewer, electric and telecommunications. There are multiple buildings that are move in ready for new industry and distributors. Both Cool Springs Business Park and Loris Industrial Park are located within Opportunity Zones (see section on Opportunity Zones). Opportunity Zones are areas where reinvestment is encouraged through reduction in capital gains taxes for those looking to invest.

**Ascot Valley** is another industrial park site made up of over 220 acres of ready-to-build land. The property is located within one mile of Highway 22 and is zoned for industrial uses. The property is equipped with water, sewer, electric, and telecommunications.

**East Coast Industrial Park** is a privately owned industrial park. The building is ideal for distribution and warehouse needs. It is fully sprinkled, including dock, well lighted with trailer spotlights, substantial trailer and truck parking. The building is in excellent condition with offices ready to build to suit.

The **Waccamaw Distribution Center** is a perfect location for a business that is looking for a move-in-ready space with great accessibility, lots of space, and an abundance of other features.

The **Myrtle Beach International Technology & Aerospace Park (ITAP)** is the region's new hub for the aerospace and technology industry. ITAP is a prime 460-acre aerospace, technology, and aviation park, just off one of the longest runways on the East Coast, at more than 9,500 feet. This site is ideal for aviation related industry. The Myrtle Beach Academy of Aviation is a pilot training program that operates in ITAP. This will also be the location of a new 84,000 square foot Veterans Clinic in 2019.







The **Bucksport Marine Industrial Park** is located on the Waccamaw River. This site is zoned for marine industrial use. A new roadway from Hwy 701 is currently being constructed to access the site. In addition, dredging permits to improve water depths at the site have been approved by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Siting of new manufacturing facilities can be challenging in any community. New facilities require access to major roadways and interstates, need adequate utilities and infrastructure, and appropriate zoning, in addition to an available workforce to support the business. At this time, the greatest limitation to expanding manufacturing jobs is lack of interstate access. Further details on planned transportation projects are included in the Transportation Chapter. Until such time that the interstates are constructed, expansion opportunities for manufacturing will be limited. In addition, there is a need for industrial park siting along natural gas lines and for already available specific buildings in prime locations. To attract major manufacturers, large tracts of land over 500 acres is needed.

## AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

According to the 2013 Horry County Agribusiness Strategic Plan there are three main sectors of agribusiness in Horry County: farming or agricultural production, food processing, and forestry based business. While employment trends indicate only 611 employees in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, this number underestimates farmers that are operating without a business license, as USDA Farm numbers are all that is necessary to operate a farm.

In 2012 alone, Horry County generated over \$101 million crop and livestock sales. Agricultural sales continue to increase in Horry County. Between 2007 and 2012, there was a 54% in-

crease in agricultural sales with \$79.65 million in crop sales and \$21.64 million in livestock sales. In 2013, Horry County ranked 13th in the state in cash receipts solely from timber harvests with a total delivered value of \$34,439,543. While the total delivered value was higher in 2013 (up from \$31,379,566), the County's overall rank in South Carolina fell from 6th place and the total acreage of private forestland increased to 460,349 from 426,871 acres (Clemson, 2001 and SCFC, 2017). In 2011, Horry County dropped to 15th in the state with a total delivered timber value of \$19,478,434 (SCFC, 2011).

The Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development reported in the 2013 Horry County Agribusiness Strategic Plan the following statistics:

- 53% of Horry County's Crop Sales were from Tobacco, followed by Corn (19%) and Soybeans (11%)
- 49% of Horry County's Livestock and Poultry Sales were from Poultry and Eggs, followed by Hogs and Pigs (41%) and Cattle and Calves (9%)
- 28,700 acres of Horry County are planted with Soybeans, followed closely by corn (28,400 acres)
- The total economic impact of farming in Horry County in 2012 was \$23.186 million.
- Average earned income per farm worker (including owner operators) was \$17,331
- Average earned income from forest-based timber farms was \$42,528 per worker.

Despite decreases in cash receipts for timber harvests, forestry continues to have a strong impact on the local and regional economy. While few people are employed directly by agriculture, there is a significant economic impact to the region. In 2013, there were an estimated 386 direct

jobs in Horry County in forest-based products sector (all forest-based activity, wood product, paper product, and furniture production) with a direct economic impact of \$17.925 million in earned income and \$19.298 million in gross regional product. Total output generated \$59.749 million, while the total impact of the sector led to \$86.724 million in sales through the regional economy (Hughes, 2013).

Agritourism is the fastest growing segment of agricultural related business in South Carolina. Agritourism is defined as any agriculturally based activity that attracts visitors to farms and ranches. Horry County boasts 6 agritourism permits, the first being established in 2016. These farms primary agricultural uses include vineyards, cattle farms, and produce growing (like strawberries, melons, cotton, and soybeans) and have activities like you-pick-crops, special events, farm-to-table, weddings, harvest markets, farm tours, museums, educational classes, hay rides, barn dances, corn maze, wine tastings, and more.

Strawberries, sweet potatoes, tobacco, indigo, rice and corn all have historical roots in the County. While many farms still harvest these products, peanuts are emerging as an important commodity for farmers in the County. In addition, other land and water intensive industries continue to be an important aspect to the local economy. Early in the County's history, the inexhaustible supply of pitch, pine tar and turpentine provided a continuing source of naval supplies for the ever-growing City of Charleston. Agriculture is a strong economic driver in Horry County and the region, but remains an opportunity for economic growth and preservation of rural lifestyle.

The long tradition of living off the land is alive and well today. The greatest challenges to farming are aging farmers and



the cost to purchase and maintain equipment. Succession of farm operations may be an issue as future generations lose interest in farming, meaning heirs might decide to divide or sell the farm in light of increasing demand for raw land near urban areas. While these are constraints, the availability of prime farmland and the proximity of an available local consumer base presents an opportunity for economic growth. The core strategies to drive agribusiness development, as outlined by Clemson's Institute for Economic and Community Development's, Horry County Agribusiness Strategic Plan are as follows:

- Provide support infrastructure for developing local food system;
- Pursue a formal feasibility study for the development of a tourist oriented equestrian park;
- Work with regional peanut producers to pursue investment in peanut shelling facilities;
- Leverage existing export networks to develop a market for regionally grown sweet potatoes;
- Capitalize on the national trend of brew pubs and develop linkages with local agribusiness.

## PROJECTED INDUSTRY GROWTH

Regional sectors with the best job growth over the last five-years are Health Care and Social Assistance (+2,657 jobs), Accommodation and Food Services +2,617), and Retail Trade (+2,598). Over the next five-years, employment in Horry County is projected to expand by 10,904 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Health Care and Social Assistance with a +2.6% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Accommodation and Food Services (+2,369 jobs), Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,832), and Retail Trade (+1,406). This projection indicates no change in economic diversification (DEW).

In order to meet the needs of existing industries, there are sectors of the economy that are likely to see job openings due to retirement, yet may not have the local expertise to fill. Such areas include professions like engineering and teaching. While historic and projected occupational growth statistics are favorable, overall concentration and counts of key occupational sectors in the region is relatively low, and again, may hinder opportunities in the manufacturing and distribution space. However, there are steps that can be taken to foster business growth.

## ECONOMIC BASE FINDINGS

While specialized economic and strategic plans have been written by many groups, implementation remains an issue. With top employers in education, government, healthcare, and utilities, Horry County needs to work towards retaining and attracting highly skilled and educated residents. In addition, there needs to be a greater variety of jobs available to retain young couples and families and to increase economic vitality through diversity.

Horry County has an economy strongly driven by tourism. Continued growth in accommodations and food service and retail trade is expected. While Horry County has largely recovered from the 2008 downturn when unemployment spiked, diversification is desired to maintain economic stability and avoid large increases in unemployment. This can be accomplished through increased concentration in expansion of sports tourism, manufacturing, and agricultural opportunities in addition to small business growth and local training and education to meet employment needs and workforce development.





### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Achievement of Horry County's economic vision requires a long-term organized effort that goes beyond entrepreneurial successes. Any economic strategy that seeks to fulfill a balance in improved education, economic diversity, infrastructure, and natural resources must rely on both public and private partnerships with shared economic goals.

Assuming Horry County continues to grow along the population projection explained in the Population Chapter, it can reasonably be assumed that employment and business opportunities must expand at a similar rate.



Word Cloud highlighting the hierarchy of survey responses to the question "Are there places in Horry County that you would like to see redeveloped or reinvigorated?" Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning

### COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The health of a community is often tied to the number of vacant storefronts and the aesthetics of existing or former commercial centers. Revitalization is an approach that can stabilize residential communities and foster downtown redevelopment and investment. Not only does the construction, design, and implementation of revitalization efforts provide employment opportunities, but also the rejuvenated commercial and industrial centers can provide increased employment opportunities. This in turn can lead to reinvigoration of existing residential areas.

The Horry County IMAGINE 2040 Survey identified multiple locations that could benefit from rejuvenation or the redevelopment of community centers. Each of the following locations has unique opportunities which can strengthen sense of community and cultural experience, as well as economic reinvestment. These areas may be ideal opportunities for the integration of residential and commercial uses to create live-work communities. While there are many locations in area municipalities, the County still has a role to play in supporting community reinvestment.

**Downtown Myrtle Beach**, also known as the site of the "Old Pavilion", is a thriving oceanfront tourist destination with boardwalk, promenade, beach shops and restaurants. The area directly surrounding Downtown Myrtle Beach could benefit from increased redevelopment. The Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation is leading an aggressive implementation schedule for their Pavilion Area Master Plan which addresses much of the redevelopment potential of the area.

**Fantasy Harbor** was the home to the former Hard Rock Park and Freestyle Music Park. Besides the Waccamaw Factory Shops and a handful of hotels and area churches, the area largely sits vacant with abandoned buildings and parking facilities. This area has great potential, as it is located between two thriving areas and is located directly on the Intracoastal Waterway. Fantasy Harbor is in a Special Tax District for admissions. The Admissions Tax is authorized only for improvement of roads within this area (Horry County Budget, 2010-2011).

**Carolina Forest** has potential for redevelopment relating largely to resident interest in roadway and traffic improvements. These projects are already underway. There also remains opportunity for economic growth near Carolina Forest Blvd and Highway 501 and the Town Center area near River Oaks Drive and International Drive.

**The City of Loris** has potential for revitalization in the downtown commercial district. Crime prevention, street and sidewalk maintenance improvements and enhancement of the historical characteristics of the area would greatly enhance the sense of community in Loris and its surrounding communities. In addition, job growth at the Loris Commerce Park could also drive revitalization. The Main Street Program and Community Assistance Program may be of value to revitalization of the City of Loris.



**The City of Conway** has multiple revitalization and rejuvenation opportunities. Most frequently, participants in the survey called out the need for revitalization of the Downtown Conway area and the rejuvenation of the historic area and district around the area near the intersections of US-378 and US-701 with 501 Bypass.

**Socastee Boulevard** could benefit from commercial frontage revitalization, as well as rejuvenation of surrounding, aging neighborhoods. Repetitive flooding in the Hurricane Joaquin in and Hurricane Matthew in 2016 has led to a rapid deterioration of many neighborhoods directly adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway. Its proximity to Market Common in the City of Myrtle Beach makes this area prime for revitalization and reinvestment. It is also part of a low to moderate income area with high levels of Spanish speaking residents.

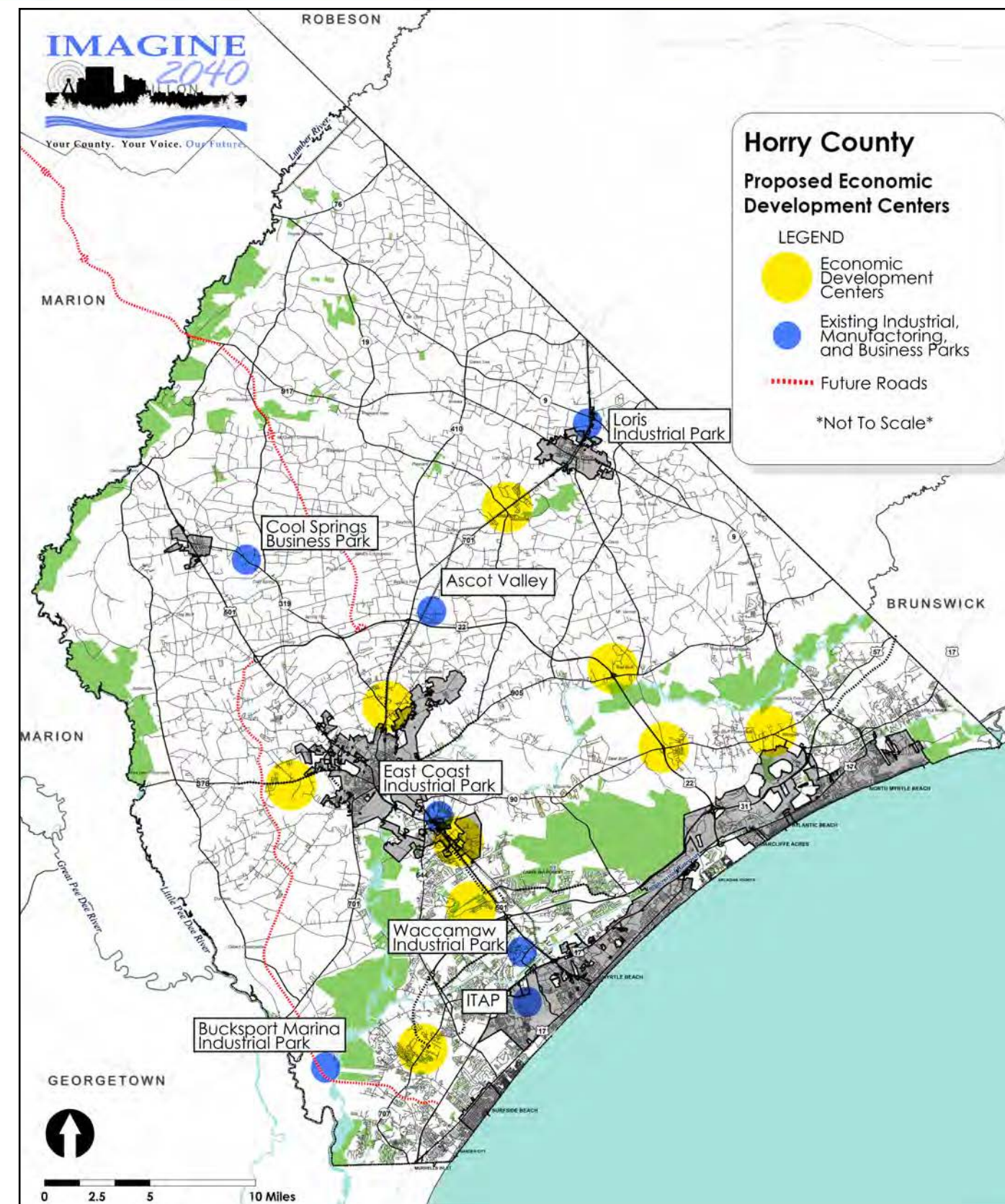
**The Inlet Square Mall** in Garden City was repetitively identified by survey participants as a revitalization and rejuvenation opportunity in the South Strand. Largely vacant with deteriorating external facade, this area already benefits from an active restaurant presence immediately surrounding the mall. Revitalization could increase the economic vitality of the entire area surrounding it. It could also serve as a significant destination when entering the County from the south.

**The Little River Waterfront** is another area that has been identified by the County and property owners as in need of revitalization. The redevelopment of the waterfront could not only increase the vitality of the fishing industry based in the area, but could also provide greatly needed commercial enhancements.

The revitalization and reemergence of economic activity in these areas are significant to improving character and sense of community. The Future Land Use Map encourages the revitalization of these areas and the preferred community form if redeveloped. Other tools, such as overlays, priority investment zones, and TIF districts may assist with the redevelopment of these areas.

## INDUSTRIAL AND MANUFACTURING CENTERS

Concentrated areas of high quality facilities that are adjacent to complementary retail, commercial uses and residential areas are needed in Horry County to further encourage industrial and manufacturing centers. These centers should have proximity to major roadways including proposed I-73 and I-74, as these will undoubtedly be critical components to lead to future jobs. Siting such centers can help Horry County become more economically diverse, moving away from being a place just for tourism and capitalizing on the tourism market to build complimentary



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning





manufacturing and service industries. It is important that these areas not be developed as low density residential or as commercial with low tax return. These sites need to be preserved for large employers as areas of economic growth. See the Land Use Chapter for more on these Economic Development Centers.

## OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Opportunity Zones are a new community development program established by Congress as a part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. They are designed to encourage long-term private investments in low-income communities. This program provides a federal tax incentive for taxpayers who reinvest unrealized capital gains into "Opportunity Funds," which are specialized vehicles dedicated to investing in low-income areas called "Opportunity Zones."

The zones themselves are comprised of low-income community census tracts and designated by governors in every state. South Carolina designated 25% of qualifying census tracts as an Opportunity Zone. Qualifying Zones are based on the 2011-2015 American Community Survey.

The Opportunity Zones program offers investors the following incentives for putting their capital to work in low-income communities:

1. Investors can roll existing capital gains into Opportunity Funds with no up-front tax-bill
2. A five-year holding results in a 10% exemption in capital gains owed
3. A seven-year holding results in a 15% exemption in capital gains owed
4. Investors can defer their original tax bill until December 31, 2026 at the latest, or until they sell their Opportunity Fund Investments, if earlier

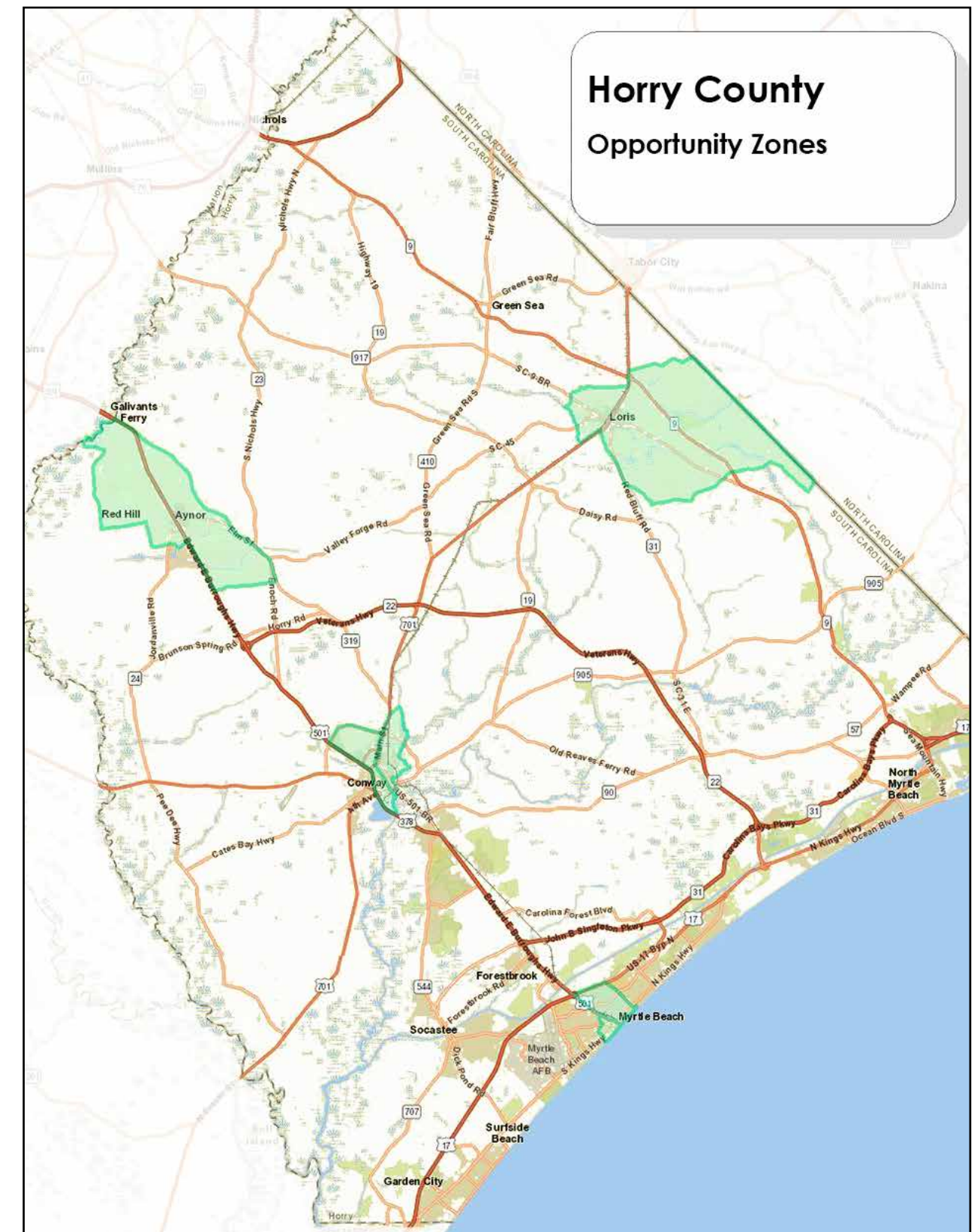
Opportunity Fund Investments, if earlier

5. If opportunity fund investments are held for at least ten-years, there will be no capital gain whatsoever on the appreciation of the investment

Horry County has 6 Opportunity Zones:

- 1) Tract 506 (Myrtle Beach – Pavilion/Superblock)
- 2) Tract 202 (Loris – Loris Commerce Park)
- 3) Tract 703 (Conway – West Downtown/Grainger Plant)
- 4) Tract 801 (Aynor – Cool Springs Industrial Park)
- 5) Tract 507 (Myrtle Beach – South Ocean Boulevard)
- 6) Tract 702 (Conway – Main Street)

Some of these sites are ideal for expansion of existing manufacturing, while others coincide with areas of the County that residents wish to see revitalization. The Opportunity Zones allow for a variety of reinvestment, not limited to manufacturing.



Source: <http://www.grandstrandopportunityzones.com/>



## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FINDINGS

Economic diversification is considered essential for the general economic health of a community as it insulates the workforce from cyclical trends in the national economy while helping to maintain a broad base for egalitarian access to amenities. By encouraging small businesses through land use policy and lowering barriers for startups, Horry County can help to diversify the types and sizes of commercial and industrial offerings. Redevelopment is also essential to perpetuating a sustainable and stable economy. Horry County must not only encourage redevelopment in urban areas where available land is limited for new development, but also in rural and suburban areas where unsightly vacant and underutilized building shells discourage new growth and investment. Encouraging development in opportunity zones through the creation of industrial and manufacturing centers will not only create centralized hubs of large employers, but will create a loop of reinvestment into under privileged areas of the County.

## CONCLUSIONS

Horry County's economy is heavily dependent upon tourism, which is driven by the hospitality industry and retail sales. The warm climate and low cost of living has also attracted many people to relocate to the area, resulting in housing growth. Horry County's economic growth is dependent on the national economy and the availability of disposable income. Economic diversification is a necessity for any jurisdiction, as it can stabilize a community even during economic downturns or in case of a hurricane.

Horry County should foster a stable and competitive business climate to draw business to the region and should support and strengthen the economic viability of existing industries. The County should also encourage business start-ups, includ-

ing small business enterprises, minority owned businesses, high-technology and knowledge-based businesses, and attract new targeted industry sectors to our community. Appropriately sized acreage should be preserved at Economic Development Nodes to ensure space for industrial, manufacturing and business park uses.

Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Department should continue to promote the County and its trained quality workforce, evaluate new economic development opportunities as they arise, and support the other recommendations of this Plan as part of the comprehensive strategy for the future of the County.

A comprehensive economic development framework and an economic development plan with commitments to implementation is vital. Continued training will be pivotal in maintaining a living economic plan that has the adaptability needed in a changing economy. A strategic comprehensive growth plan is needed.

Horry County needs to improve the business climate by enhancing government services and communication processes. This can be accomplished by improving the Horry County website as well as simplifying the information distribution process to new small business and start-up owners. Along similar lines, Horry County must target the appropriate audiences for this information.

Horry County must continue to work towards the development of high quality industrial land and building products that attract new and expanding businesses. By utilizing public input for revitalization, the County can identify and develop targeted mixed-use revitalization areas. This includes

implementation of plans for areas that are deemed highest priority.

Airport travel service is essential to maintaining the tourism industry. Horry County should continue to cooperate with local municipalities to increase air service. The tourism industry can be further enhanced through continued beach renourishment and protection. Tourism niches should also be encouraged and strengthened in areas like the City of Conway, Little River, Garden City, and the surrounding areas. This can be achieved through improved sense of community and individual character as well as by tapping into existing and new sports tourism opportunities, existing and new agri-tourism opportunities, and future possibilities for ecotourism.



# CHAPTER 10: PRIORITY INVESTMENT



## INTRODUCTION

The Priority Investment Chapter outlines the recommended capital improvements that will be necessary over the next decade to meet existing and projected populations. It provides cost estimates of facilities, high cost equipment and vehicles that will be necessary to support public facility and service needs. Available funding sources and projected revenues are addressed in this plan, along with potential funding shortfalls. This information can be utilized to inform future revenue needs and the appropriate funding streams to meet those needs. While this element identifies many capital projects, it is by no means completely inclusive of all facility and equipment needs, as not all needs can be readily anticipated beyond a five year time frame. This element also does not prioritize the projects included herein, as it would be making an assumption regarding the local and national economy, and would not account for emergency needs, especially in the event of a disaster. This element is, however, intended to inform the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and those involved with its development.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING

It is the responsibility of the Finance and Planning Departments to develop a staff recommended Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) document. The CIP provides Horry County Government and the public valuable information on each capital project such as; the scope (size, capacity, etc.), the fiscal year in which the project will be undertaken and/or completed, the total amount of funding allocated for each project, the programmed amount to be expended each year, and the approved method of funding. The CIP also provides policies and guidelines, current bond rating, debt affordability through debt projections, and current revenue information on an annual basis.

On November 9, 2004, County Council passed Resolution 158-04 adopting a capital improvement program policy. This policy is revised by resolution as needed with the most recent revision Resolution 71-14 on September 16, 2014.

The CIP is a short-range schedule of public improvement projects planned to occur over a five-year period. The Capital Budget is the first year of the CIP and includes those projects for which funds have been appropriated. The subsequent four years included in the program reflect planned activity, subject to budget approval by the Council, in the respective future year. These four years are subject to change annually and should be reviewed each fiscal year.

Yearly, each department evaluates its needs and determines if any may be considered as capital improvement projects. The Comprehensive Plan and other adopted County plans also identify and propose many projects and programs requiring public funds along with areas for priority investment. The selection of projects from those submitted is based on several criteria. First, the project must be consistent with the most recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. Second, the project must meet the County's CIP policy guidelines. Last, there must be sufficient funds available to implement the project. The CIP is reviewed through several venues, including the Planning Commission and public hearings. County Council makes the final CIP decision and adopts it as part of the annual budget.

Per state law, the Planning Commission has the authority to appoint an advisory committee with representatives from all the affected agencies to assist in cataloging, ranking and developing the CIP and the annual list of priority projects. The CIP is also an excellent vehicle for coordinating bond issues

proposed by various public entities such as the Horry County School Board, Solid Waste Authority Board and other autonomous or semi-autonomous groups. Coordination between these entities should help eliminate public confusion when several groups propose bond issues at the same time. This process should occur prior to the development of the annual CIP, and should incorporate those needs and projects outlined within adopted plans. These projects can then be recommended to County Council.

Before Horry County develops a major capital improvement, the County estimates the impacts of the continued operations and maintenance of the proposed facility or piece of equipment on an annual budget. Expansion of capital improvements is often associated with increased operations and long-term maintenance costs. However, these factors should be weighed against the long-term maintenance cost of not replacing, maintaining or renovating an existing facility. In addition, some public service facilities must be staffed on a part-time or full-time basis, which can result in long-term budgetary impacts of planned capital improvements prior to engagement of construction of a project or purchase of equipment or land.

## FUNDING SOURCES

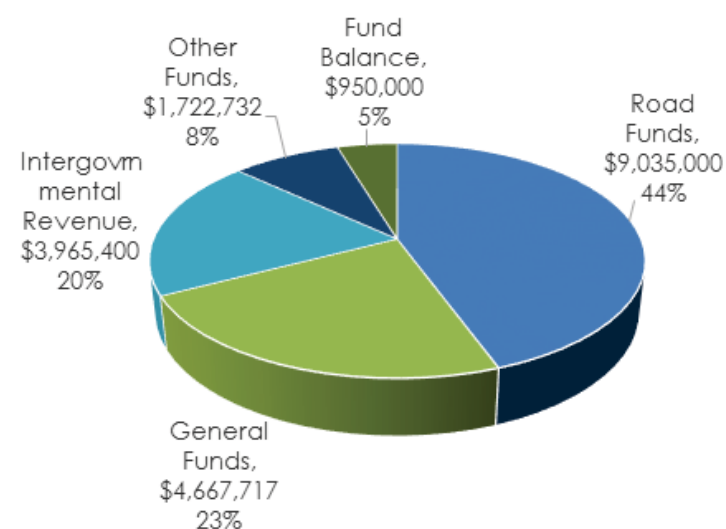
Capital improvements are funded through a variety of taxes and revenue streams including state and federal grants. For example, in FY2020, Capital Improvement Revenues are anticipated to be largely derived from the General Fund and Road Fund, indicating that Horry County relies heavily on a pay-as-you go form of capital improvement funding, as opposed to debt. This is to ensure that tax rates remain low. The following information describes available sources of capital improvement funds. However, only a small portion of these funds go towards capital improvements as they also support operations.



## GENERAL FUND

The General Fund is used to account for all revenues and expenditures necessary to carry out basic governmental operations in three divisions of the County: Administration, Public Safety, and Infrastructure and Regulation. It also is used to record all financial transactions not required to be accounted for in other funds.

### FY2019 BREAKDOWN OF TYPICAL REVENUES FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS - \$28,262,416



Source: Horry County CIP

## SPECIAL FUNDS

The revenues, expenditures and fund balance for all Special Funds are reported in the Special Revenue Fund for annual financial reporting purposes. The exception to this is the Capital Improvement Project fund which is maintained by the County Treasurer. Also Community Block Development Grants are only used for CIP projects based on the direction of the administration and as such are not addressed as special funds.

### Fire Fund & Fire Apparatus Replacement Fund

The Fire Fund represents revenue and expenditures for the purpose of providing fire protection and safety education in the unincorporated areas of the county. While the Fire Ap-

paratus Replacement Fund represents revenue and expenditures for the purpose of providing fire apparatus replacement (pumpers, air trucks, aerials (ladders), brush trucks, tankers and heavy rescue) in the unincorporated area of the County. Both funds have property taxes as the major source of their funding. This tax millage is only levied against areas of the County that are provided with fire protection.

### E-911 Emergency Telephone Fund

The Emergency Telephone System was established in order to comply with Title 23, Chapter 47 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which sets the system requirements for Public Safety Communications Centers. It mandates the collection and expenditure of funds for wireless and wireline telephones. Monies from this fund are totally restricted to use in the 9-1-1 system.

### Solicitor Fund

The Solicitor Fund accounts for revenue derived from the State, Horry County, Georgetown County, client fines and fees from intervention programs and seized monies from the Drug Enforcement Unit.

### Public Defender Fund

The Public Defender Fund accounts for revenue derived from the State, Horry County and Georgetown County.

### Road Maintenance Fund

The Road Maintenance Fund is used to account for the revenues collected or transferred in from the following: \$50 fee charged for each motorized vehicle licensed within the County, CTC Allocations, and Stormwater. Funds are earmarked for the maintenance and/or improvement of the County's road system, public works operation, and some funds are allocated to support COAST RTA.

## Beach Nourishment Fund

The Beach Nourishment Fund is used to account for revenues and expenditures for beach nourishment and re-nourishment projects on the unincorporated beaches of the County. Beach Nourishment is funded from Local and State Accommodations Tax and the General Fund.

## County Recreation Fund

The County Recreation Fund was established July 1, 2001. County Council established a separate millage to ensure that the current level of commitment to recreation was maintained in the future.

## Waste Management Recycling Fund

The Waste Management Recycling Fund was established in fiscal year 1993 to accumulate the revenues and expenditures related to solid waste collection and recycling. Operations of this fund are financed with property tax millage levied on the unincorporated areas of the County.

## Stormwater Management Fund

The stormwater Management Fund began operation July 1, 1999, to account for the revenues and expenses related to the project construction, maintenance, and development of the County's Stormwater Management Program.

## Sunday Liquor Sales

Sunday liquor sales licenses and permits are used for additional recreational improvements at various parks. The final determination of how this funding is disturbed occurs when received by the County.

## Capital Improvement Project Fund

The Capital Improvement Projects Fund is used to account for financial resources to be used for the acquisition or con-





struction of major capital projects other than those financed by the Airport, Road Maintenance, Fire Apparatus, Fleet Replacement and Heavy Equipment Replacement Funds.

Debt Service Funds

Debt Service Funds are used to account for the accumulation of resources for and the payment of general long-term debt principal and interest. The main source of revenue is taxes levied against real and personal property. Debt Service Funds have been established for the following functions: General Debt Service, Special Revenue Debt Service, and Ride Improvement & Development Effort (RIDE) Plan Debt Service.

Horry County Department of Airports (Airport Enterprise) Fund

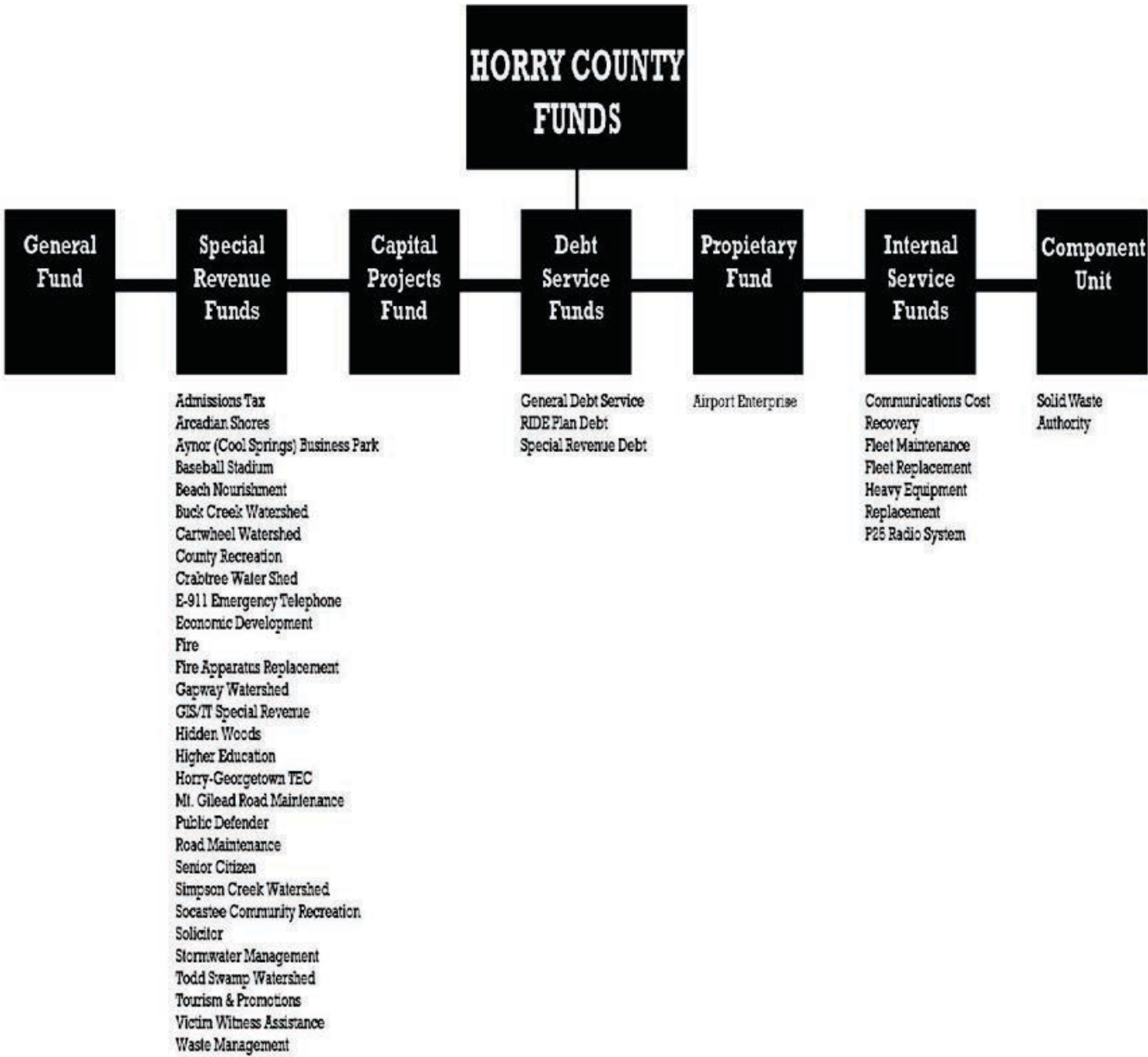
The Horry County Department of Airports Fund is used to accumulate the revenues and expenses related to the operation of the County's four airports. Operations are financed primarily with fees collected for services, leases, grants, and other airport related services.

INTERNAL SERVICE FUNDS

Internal Service Funds are used to account for the financing of goods or services provided by one department or agency to other departments or agencies of the County on a cost reimbursement basis. Expenses of these funds are included in the budgets of the respective departments and agencies that use the services. Internal Service Funds have been established for the following functions: Fleet Maintenance, Fleet Replacement, Heavy Equipment Replacement, and P25 Radio System/ Communications Cost Recovery.

Fleet Replacement Fund & Heavy Equipment Fund

The Fleet Replacement Fund accounts for the replacement of County vehicles including some light equipment. While the Heavy Equipment Replacement Fund accounts for the replace-





ment of heavy-duty vehicles and equipment. Financing of these funds comes from fees collected from other County departments based on the life of the asset to be replaced.

### P25 Radio System/Communications Cost Recovery Fund

The P25 Radio System and Communications Cost Recovery Fund began operation July 1, 2016, to account for the revenues and expenses related to providing a mission critical radio communications system compliant with Homeland Security Standards for Public Safety Digital Radio Communications while also providing interoperability with thousands of other responders in South Carolina. Operations of this fund are financed with fees collected for services from other County departments and municipalities. The system will also receive a portion of the annual revenue from the Host Fee paid to Horry County by the Solid Waste Authority (SWA).

### HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMMODATION TAXES

Hospitality and Accommodation tax revenue has steadily been on the rise as vacationers and the permanent population continues to increase.

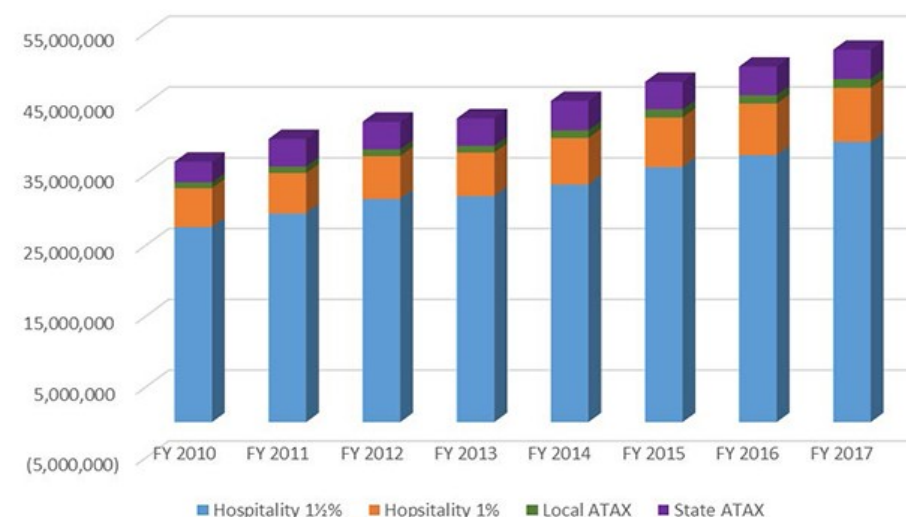
#### Hospitality Tax

The Hospitality Fee is a service charge imposed on sectors of the hospitality industry that provide accommodations to transients, collect admissions to places of amusement, sell prepared or modified food or beverages (including alcoholic beverages), or provide short-term rental of private passenger motor vehicles.

The Hospitality Fee rate is determined with consideration to the location of the business. Businesses located outside all city limits will calculate the fee at 2.5% of gross proceeds from the sale of food/beverages, 3% of gross proceeds from rental of transient accommodations and 2.5% of gross pro-

ceeds from paid admissions and/or amusements. This fee is currently pledged to the County's RIDE plan dept.

#### Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Revenue



Source: Horry County Government

The chart to the right shows the percent of taxes collected that is retained by Horry County within the unincorporated areas. In addition, the County receives 1.5% of both the hos-

#### Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Allocation

ITEMS BEING TAXED →	Prepared Food and Beverages		Accommodations	
	Remitted to the State	Remitted to the County	Remitted to the State	Remitted to the County
<b>TAXES IMPOSED</b> ↓				
State Sales Tax	6%		5%	
State Accommodations Tax			2%	
Local Hospitality Fee		2.5%		2.5%
Local Accommodations Fee				0.5%
Local Capital Projects Sales Tax <i>being used for road improvements</i> (effective May 1, 2017 and sunsets April 30, 2025)	1%		1%	
Local Education Capital Improvements Sales Tax (effective March 1, 2009 and sunsets February 28, 2024)	1%		1%	
<b>Taxes to be collected</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>3%</b>
<i>Indicates locally imposed taxes</i>	<b>10.5%</b>		<b>12%</b>	

Source: Horry County Government

pitality and accommodations tax collected by all municipalities within its jurisdiction. This money must be used for tourism-related expenditures which may include: construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities for civic and cultural activities including access and other nearby roads and utilities for the facilities; public facilities such as restrooms, dressing rooms, parks, and parking lots; control and repair of waterfront erosion, including beach nourishment.

### Tourism and Promotion (Accommodations Tax) Fund

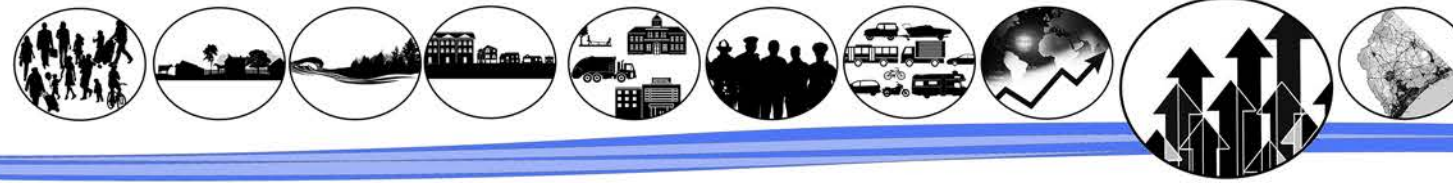
The Tourism and Promotion Fund is used to account for the revenues allocated to the fund by State law for the specific purpose of promoting tourism in Horry County and for other tourism related expenditures. Revenues are derived from a State-wide 2% room tax which is collected by the State and distributed to recipient counties, less the South Carolina Department of Revenue and Taxation administrative fee and funds withheld for other counties. The local accommodation tax for FY2018 was estimated at \$1,303,000, with \$1,000,000 slated for beach nourishment and the rest to the general fund for administration and services related to tourist events. From the State Accommodation Tax Council designated \$205,000 (there is no spending restrictions on this 5%) to be used for beach nourishment.

### RIDE TAXES

#### RIDE 1 (Riding-on-a-Penny)

On November 7, 2006, Horry County voters, by a 61.4% to 38.6% margin, supported a One-Cent Capital Projects Sales Tax for roads. This tax went into effect on May 1, 2007, and increased the level of sales tax in Horry County an additional penny on all retail sales, accommodations and prepared food and beverage. Horry County Council is slated to receive \$425,307,500 over the seven-year life of the one-cent Capital Projects Sales Tax. However in 2018, County Council





extended this tax as a fund, which is not limited like the following RIDE programs. They also voted to use \$23 million of it, annually starting in FY 2020, to fund the County's portion of I-73. This funding could go as high as \$25 million depending on tourism numbers and the annual increases the County can expect from this. It is estimated that the County will be making these payments from the hospitality taxes obtained for about 20 years.

## RIDE 3

On November 8, 2016, Horry County voters, by a 69.1% to 30.9% margin, supported a One-Cent Capital Project Sales Tax for roads. This tax went into effect on May 1, 2017, and will expire on April 30, 2025. The RIDE 3 initiative is slated to receive \$592 million over the eight-year life of the One-Cent Capital Project Sales Tax. The revenue generated will be used to pave 100 miles of County dirt roads, resurface 66.87 miles of County paved roads, resurface 33.13 miles of City paved roads, widen numerous roadways, and extend and develop a number of new roadways. Full details are identified within the Transportation Element of this plan.

## BONDING

Horry County utilizes General Obligation Bonds in order to finance major capital improvements when the funding has been identified, but not yet readily available. At this time, Horry County has bonds that were utilized to fund the construction of facilities, such as recreation centers and libraries. \$20 million in bonding capacity is anticipated to become available in FY2022.

## GRANTS

While grants may be utilized to help fund the CIP, there is no guarantee of their obtainability in the future. Grants are subject to available funding from State and Federal sources.

In addition, County funds need to be available for matching amounts required for most grants. Historically, Horry County has utilized a small portion of Community Development Block Grant funding for infrastructure projects identified in neighborhood plans. Parks and Recreation has also been able to secure funding through the State's Parks and Recreation Development and Land and Water Conservation Funds. Additional grants are available to assist with public safety equipment needs. While grant funding is an excellent way to secure funding, funds are often less than \$100,000, which is difficult to complete any major capital projects without substantial County contribution.

## DEVELOPER FEES

The cost associated with public facilities and other capital improvements necessary to meet the needs of new development can be conveyed to the developer, which ultimately trickles down to the purchaser.

## Development Agreements

The General Assembly adopted the South Carolina Local Government Development Agreement Act in 1993. (S.C. Code Title 6, Chapter 31, § 6-31-10, et seq.). The Act authorizes binding agreements between local governments and developers for the long-term development of large tracts of land. A Development Agreement gives a developer a vested right for the term of the agreement to proceed according to land use regulations in existence on the execution date of the agreement.

Horry County may enter into a Development Agreement with a contractor for the development of property as provided in this chapter provided the property contains 25 acres or more of highland. The General Assembly included a lengthy statement of findings, purpose and intent in the text of the

Development Agreement Act. Principal among these was the desire to provide some measure of certainty as to applicable land development law for developers who made financial commitments for planned developments. The Act also expresses the intent to encourage a stronger commitment to comprehensive and capital facilities planning, ensure the provision of adequate public facilities, encourage the efficient use of resources and reduce the economic cost of development.

## Impact Fees

The South Carolina Development Impact Fee Act (S.C. Code § 6-1-910, et seq.), enacted in 1999, assigns a significant role to the local Planning Commission in recommending to the governing body an impact fee ordinance. This Act, broadly stated, allows counties and municipalities to impose by ordinance a requirement for payment of "development impact fees" (as defined) by a land developer as a condition of development approval.

The Act defines "development impact fees" as payment for "a proportionate share of the cost of system improvements needed to serve the people utilizing the improvements." "System improvements" are defined as "capital improvements to public facilities which are designed to provide service to a service area." "Public facilities" are defined to include such things as water, wastewater, solid waste and stormwater services, roads, public safety, street lighting, capital equipment, and parks and recreation. The amount of impact fees must be based on actual improvement costs or reasonable estimates of the costs, supported by sound engineering studies and generally accepted accounting principles.

At this time, Horry County does not collect impact fees because state law requires that collected funds be expended



within three years of collection. Moreover these funds must be allocated towards new needs, not existing needs. In addition, impact fees cannot be allocated to fund ongoing needs, such as staffing and maintenance.

### Development Exactions

Negotiated development exactions may be used in the development approval process to assist in funding infrastructure and public services for a new development. These development exactions can take several forms. One example of this would be when a developer divides land along a sub-standard right of way. In this situation it is required that land or in some circumstances, an easement is given for the right of way to be upgraded to current standards.

### SPECIAL TAX DISTRICTS

There are a variety of special tax districts in place throughout the County. The creation of a special tax district requires a petition of the community or County Council in order to be added to a ballot, which is then formally voted upon by those living within it. In Horry County, special tax districts primarily exist to upgrade and maintain infrastructure, such as roads and drainage. In some areas, it is used to pay for street lighting. On the southern end of the County is the Murrells Inlet-Garden City Fire District which provides fire rescue services to Murrells Inlet and Garden City residents in both Horry and Georgetown County. Another type of special tax district is the Watershed Districts.

Special tax districts remain a viable option for the areas of the County that would like to have more urban level facilities and services. However, the tax rates associated with purely residential areas are often not enough to meet the demand for facilities and services, as it results in a significant tax

increase to meet the demand. While it can help pay for capital improvements, such districts are best to assist with staffing and ongoing maintenance needs.

### Watershed Fund

This tax in the various watershed districts is levied to help maintain the watersheds and improve drainage on adjacent land. The Watershed Fund accounts for the maintenance of Cartwheel, Buck Creek, Crab Tree, Gapway, Simpson Creek and Todd Swamp Watersheds.

### Mt. Gilead Road Maintenance Fund

The Mt. Gilead Road Maintenance Fund accounts for revenue derived from property taxes for road improvements in the Mt. Gilead Community.

### Arcadian Shores Fund

The Arcadian Shores Fund accounts for revenue derived from property taxes earmarked for infrastructure improvements within the Arcadian Shores Special Tax District.

### Hidden Woods Road Maintenance Fund

The Hidden Woods Road Maintenance Fund accounts for revenue derived from property taxes for road improvements in the Hidden Woods Community.

### Economic Development Fund

The Economic Development Fund began operation July 1, 1998, to account for the revenues and expenses related to the rental, maintenance, development and sale of property at the Atlantic Center and 701 industrial parks, which are owned and operated by Horry County. These industrial parks are marketed and maintained to encourage future economic development within Horry County.

### Cool Springs Industrial Park Fund

The Cool Spring Industrial Park was developed in 2005 through the County's Multi-County Business Park and Development Agreement with the Burroughs and Chapin Company. The park is marketed and maintained to encourage future economic development within Horry County.

### Admissions Tax Fund

Admissions Tax District established in the Fantasy Harbour area. These funds are earmarked by state law for infrastructure improvements in that area.

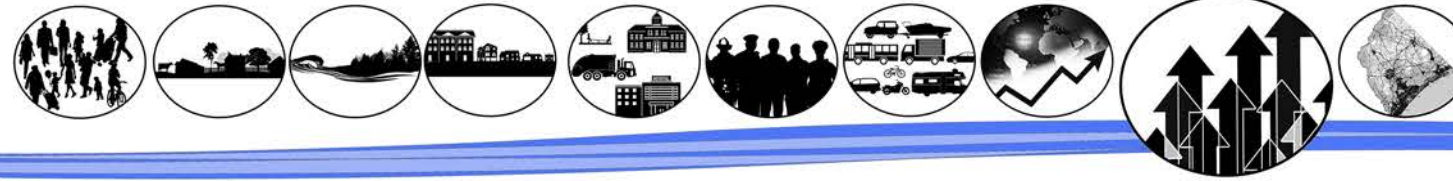
### FUNDING SOURCES FINDINGS

While there are many funding sources available, many of them limited as to what the funds may be spent on. Overall the County has more projects that need funding than the combined amount of funding that is coming in. As traditional methods of infrastructure financing become less feasible, local governments have turned to methods that place more of the financial burden of growth-related infrastructure on developers and new residents moving into the community.

### CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

On the following pages, the FY2020-2024 Capital Improvements Plan with total expenditure and total budgeted revenues charts, followed by charts with department, project and cost for the Capital Budget, with the remaining four years estimated cost are shown within one column. Each year, the County adopts a new Capital Improvements Plan. The list of projects within the FY2020-2024 time-frame have been adopted; however, those including FY2024 needs convey what is being requested in the FY2020 Budget. It does not guarantee that they will be funded. If they are not funded, they will then be added to the list of unfunded needs. The following capital improvements lists do not include road projects, which can be found in the Transportation Chapter. Most bicycle and pedestrian





DESCRIPTION	Budgeted Expenditures					
	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	Totals
Technology	\$1,742,375	\$1,747,375	\$3,172,375	\$1,672,375	\$1,472,375	\$9,806,875
General Facilities	\$2,611,715	\$22,224,000	\$1,250,000	\$25,150,000	\$1,250,000	\$52,485,715
Public Safety Facilities	\$27,128,326	\$7,930,400	\$2,623,500	\$7,089,400	\$2,413,900	\$52,000,526
Public Safety Equipment	\$1,279,875	\$6,479,875	\$979,875	\$979,875	\$979,875	\$10,987,716
Infrastructure	\$14,698,686	\$13,362,000	\$13,961,000	\$12,836,000	\$12,836,000	\$67,693,686

FY 2019 to FY 2023 Capital Improvement Plan						
DESCRIPTION	Budgeted Revenues					
	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	Totals
Fire Fund	1,402,000	465,000	465,000	465,000	465,000	5,677,000
Fire Bonds	\$828,375	\$3,439,200	\$2,173,500	\$3,384,900	\$1,963,900	\$11,789,875
Intergovernmental FEMA	\$1,600,000	-	-	-	-	\$1,600,000
Intergovernmental CTC	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$2,500,000
General Fund - Recurring	\$4,430,791	\$5,460,750	\$5,059,750	\$3,659,750	\$3,459,750	\$24,035,666
General Fund - Onetime Funding	\$5,000,000	\$1,395,000	-	\$1,225,000	-	\$7,620,000
E911	\$2,250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$3,250,000
Stormwater Fund	\$1695186	\$1,677,500	\$1,877,500	\$1,877,500	\$1,877,500	\$9,005,186
Waste Management Fund	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$1,430,000
CIP Fund Balance	-	-	-	-	-	\$1,563,341
Road Fund	\$10,900,000	\$10,150,000	\$10,150,000	\$11,550,000	\$10,150,000	\$52,900,000
Recreation Fund	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$1,754,870
General Bonds	\$1,000,000	\$20,474,000	-	\$22,500,000	-	\$43,974,000
Sunday Alcohol Permits	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$535,000	\$2,675,000
Lease Financing	-	\$5,000,000	-	-	-	\$5,000,000

projects are also outlined within various regional plans and within the Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The following does not address school needs, as the Horry County School District continues to monitor those needs.

### BUDGETED CIP PROJECTS

Public Safety Facilities	Prior - FY24 Total
Longs Fire Station Relocation	\$2,415,000
Lake Arrowhead Driveway	\$250,000
Fire Battalion Station Generators	\$204,000
Socastee FIRE/EMS Addition	\$971,750
Goretown Fire Addition	\$1,104,000
Shell Fire Rebuild	\$1,782,500
Nixonville/Wampee Fire Station Consolidation	\$2,300,000
Forestbrook Fire/EMS Relocation	\$3,249,900
Cherry Hill Fire Addition	\$977,500
Joyner Swamp Fire Addition	\$1,104,000
Finklea Fire/EMS Relocation	\$2,300,000
Prestwick Fire/EMS New Station	\$2,127,500
Antioch Fire Addition	\$1,104,000
Maple Fire Addition	\$977,500
Ketchuptown Fire Replacement	\$1,897,500
Emergency Operations Center	\$26,000,000



Public Safety Technology & Equipment	Prior - FY24 Total
IT-CJID Security Program	\$500,000
PS CAD & Records Software	\$5,250,000
Solicitor-Case Mngt Software	\$550,000
Police Body Cameras	\$588,000
EMS Stretchers	\$1,524,375
E911 Equipment	\$1,250,000
Fire SCBA Breathing Apparatus	\$1,325,000
General Government Facilities	Prior - FY24 Total
Conway Facilities Study	\$100,000
Conway Office	\$1,000,000
Central Coast Complex	\$20,000,000
Public Works Carolina Forest Satellite Facility	\$500,000
Historical Courthouse Renovation	\$3,000,000
Elm Street Renovation	\$3,500,000
Govt & Justice Expansion	\$10,000,000
Public Works Equipment Shed	\$3,800,000
Thompson Bldg. Renovation	\$250,000
Contingency	\$100,000
DSS Renovation	\$2,750,000

Information Technology	Prior - FY24 Total
IT Servers/Storage	\$1,895,000
IT Switches	\$2,350,000
IT Core Network Infrastructure	\$500,000
IT Software Upgrades	\$1,000,000
IT Data Backup/Disaster Recovery	\$1,465,000
IT Computer Replacements	\$150,000
IT-GIS Aerial Photography	\$871,875
Tax Billing Software	\$1,575,000
Stormwater Management	Prior - FY24 Total
Hwy 9 Culvert	\$700,000
Melody Basin – Oceanside Village	\$300,000
Private Construction	\$1,500,000
Contingency (TBD)	\$6,117,686
Parks and Recreation	Prior - FY24 Total
Tourism Related Capital	\$3,950,000

Public Transportation	Prior - FY24 Total
Repaving – Engineering (17 miles)	\$30,000,000
Drainage Improvements – Bay Road	\$750,000
Dirt Road Paving (3 miles)	\$8,750,000
Dirt Road Paving CTC (1 mile)	\$2,500,000
Dirt Road Paving – PW (4 miles)	\$12,000,000
Fiber Relocation	\$2,586,000
East Coast Greenway Phase II	\$600,000
Jetter/Vacuum Unit	\$300,000
Pipeline Inspection Unit	\$160,000





UNFUNDED PROJECTS

Many other chapters within this plan, and details within other adopted local and regional plans, helped inform the project list within this chapter. Tables on this page show the department, project and estimated cost from additional projects listed. Transportation projects are detailed in that element and within other County and regional plans. This list does not include all equipment, technology, or vehicle needs. As facility planning efforts are completed, this list will need to be revised. For a more detailed list of recreation projects see the **Parks and Open Space Plan**.

Infrastructure	
Waste Mngt - Carolina Forest/Postal Way	\$1,150,000
Waste Mngt – Longs Expansion	\$350,000
Waste Mngt – Arcadian Expansion	\$200,000
Waste Mngt – Property Purchase	\$1,000,000
Waste Mngt – Property Purchase	\$1,000,000
Waste Mngt – Property Purchase	\$1,000,000
Waste Mngt – Property Purchase	\$1,000,000
Multimodal Sidewalk Program	\$852,000
Multimodal Sidewalk Program	\$1,150,000
Multimodal Sidewalk Program	\$800,000
Multimodal Sidewalk Program	\$1,400,000
Multimodal Sidewalk Program	\$500,000
Total	\$10,402,000

General Government Facilities	
Saunders Building - Renovation	\$1,000,000
JP Stevens Building - Renovation	\$3,000,000
M.L. Brown Public Safety Building - Roof	\$950,000
Vote Reg & Election Complex - Reroof	\$300,000
Seven Up Building - Resheet outside walls	\$300,000
Government/Judicial Center - Roof	\$400,000
Government/Judicial Center Expansion	\$10,000,000
North Strand Recreation - Replace Flooring	\$150,000
CB Berry/Vereen Gardens - Walk-over Renovations	\$500,000
Conway Campus Facilities Analysis	\$1000,000
JRL Detention Bow-tie	\$5,700,000
Total	\$70,850,000
Public Safety Facilities	
EOC – 911 Office (Fiber)	\$2,000,000
Police Training Facility	\$1,500,000
Police 5th Precinct	\$3,000,000
Off-site Adoption Center	\$478,968
Animal Care Center Expansion	\$2,100,000
P1 Public Safety Software/CAD, Dispatch & Rec-ords	\$3,600,000
Firing Range/Training Center	\$2,750,000
Solicitor Office Expansion	\$250,000
Total	\$39,278,968

Trails & Greenways - Bike & Ped Plan	
Blackmoor Trail (Boardwalk)	\$4,881,000
Collins Creek Trail	\$469,000
Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve - East Coast Greenway Segment	\$500,000
Postal Way Multipurpose Path (adj to Railroad ROW or stormwater ditch)	\$798,743
Prince Creek Trail Phase I	\$1,333,000
Prince Creek Trail Phase II	\$1,779,000
Socastee Park Connector Trail	\$610,000
Tern Hall Connector Trail	\$286,000
Tournament Blvd Multipurpose Path Phase I	\$1,442,000
Wilderness Avenue Multipurpose Path Phase I	\$548,000
Wilderness Avenue Multipurpose Path Phase II	\$176,000
Total	\$12,822,743

FIRE/EMS Facilities	
Loris EMS Station Rebuild	\$1,985,000
North Conway relocation	\$2,000,000
West Conway Fire/EMS	\$2,000,000
Browns Swamp Fire/EMS	\$3,000,000
Scipio Fire - Driveway	\$250,000
Little River	\$1,299,100
Holmestown/Scipio	\$1,284,250
Allens	\$347,050
Hickory Grove/Reeves Ferry	\$361,900
Lees Landing	\$347,050
Ocean Bays/Carolina Bays	\$391,600
Carolina Forest 3	\$3,054,100
Bay Road	\$2,721,900
Atlantic Beach/EMS	\$1,104,000
Oak Street, Conway	\$2,127,500
Mt. Vernon	\$1,104,000
Floyds	\$1,104,000
North Myrtle Beach	\$1,104,000
Hwy 378	\$2,127,500
Training	\$1,104,000
Cates Bay	\$1,104,000
Mount Olive	\$1,104,000
Total	\$31,024,950



Parks and Recreation	
Socastee Recreation Park - 3 fields and building	\$3,000,000
Aynor Recreation Center	\$7,465,000
Loris Recreation Center	\$9,195,000
Socastee Recreation Park - other	\$9,112,500
South Strand Recreation Center	\$6,150,000
North Strand Park	\$5,670,000
Carolina Forest Recreation Center	\$9,950,000
Carolina Forest Bike and Run Park	\$1,865,000
Little River Waterfront Park (3 Phases)	\$7,525,000
Peter Vaught Sr Park and Landing	\$3,220,000
Vereen Memorial Gardens & CB Berry Center	\$3,105,000
James Frazier Community Center	\$730,000
Bayboro Park	\$255,000
Brooksville Park	\$2,135,000
Collins Creek Park	\$2,182,500
Forestbrook Park (2 Phases)	\$5,515,000
Green Sea Floyds Park	\$2,090,000
Greenwood Park	\$1,300,000
Loris Nature Park	\$56,300
Michael Morris Graham Park	\$3,185,000
Myrtle Ridge Park	\$1,140,000
Pee Dee Park	\$1,355,000

Poplar Park	\$1,730,000
River Oaks Park	\$1,170,000
Sandridge Park	\$270,000
Simpson Creek Park	\$440,500
Surfside Park	\$1,327,500
White Oak Park	\$165,500
Bennett Loop Park	\$180,500
Garden City Park	\$1,445,000
Frink Park	\$152,000
Lewis Ocean Bay Trailhead	\$192,500
Mt. Vernon Tennis Courts	\$155,000
Racepath Park	\$245,000
Stalvey Creek Boardwalk & Park	\$1,560,000
Boat Landing Ramp Upgrades and Signage (approx. 2 Projects/Annually until 2040)	\$3,500,000
Soft Launches (4 New)	\$312,500
Little River Waterfront Park	\$7,525,000
Michael Morris Graham Park	\$3,185,000
Huckabee Park	\$1,700,000
Carolina Forest Bike & Run Park	\$1,865,000
New Town Park	\$100,000
Enterprise Landing	\$550,000
Chris Anderson Boat Landing	\$100,000

Socastee Landing Park	\$570,000
Rosewood Landing	\$250,000
Peachtree Landing	\$150,000
Cochran Building	\$350,000
Waccamaw Park	\$695,000
McNeil Park	\$825,000
Aynor Tennis Courts	\$110,000
New Town Park	\$100,000
International Drive Fields	\$700,000
Riverside Park	\$200,000
Socastee Beach & Street	\$250,000
<b>Recreation Total</b>	<b>\$118,272,300</b>
<b>Total or all unfunded projects listed</b>	<b>\$309,213,011</b>





REOCCURRING AND LIFECYCLE MAINTENANCE COSTS

Horry County is continuing to assess reoccurring and lifecycle maintenance needs. This information will continue to fluctuate as equipment replacements are needed, as new staff are added to divisions like public safety, and as Horry County buildings and properties need repairs and major maintenance.

Lifecycle Maintenance	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
Lifecycle Maintenance (Fire)	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Lifecycle Maintenance (Detention)	\$389,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Lifecycle Maintenance (Government Facilities)	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000
Lifecycle Maintenance (Solid Waste Management)	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000	\$286,000
Lifecycle Maintenance (Parks and Recreation)	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974	\$350,974



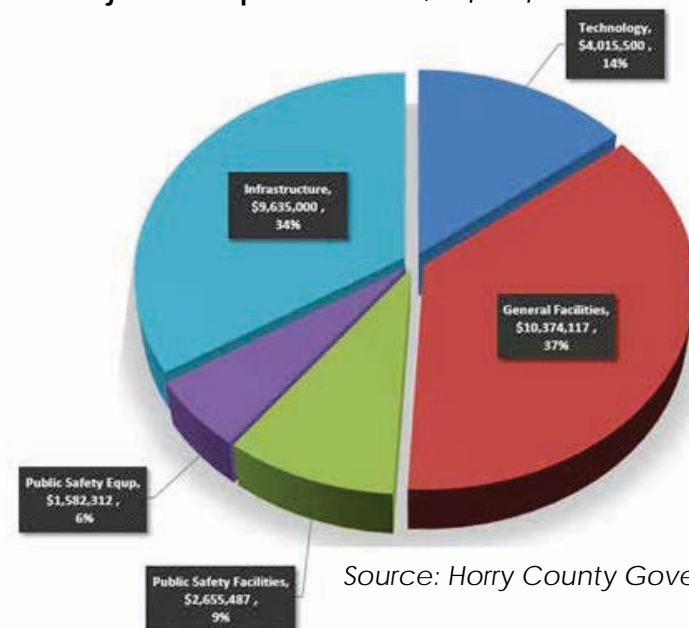
## PROJECTED FUNDS AND GAPS

In FY2019, the majority of capital improvement expenditures were be allocated towards infrastructure and general government facilities as shown in the chart below.

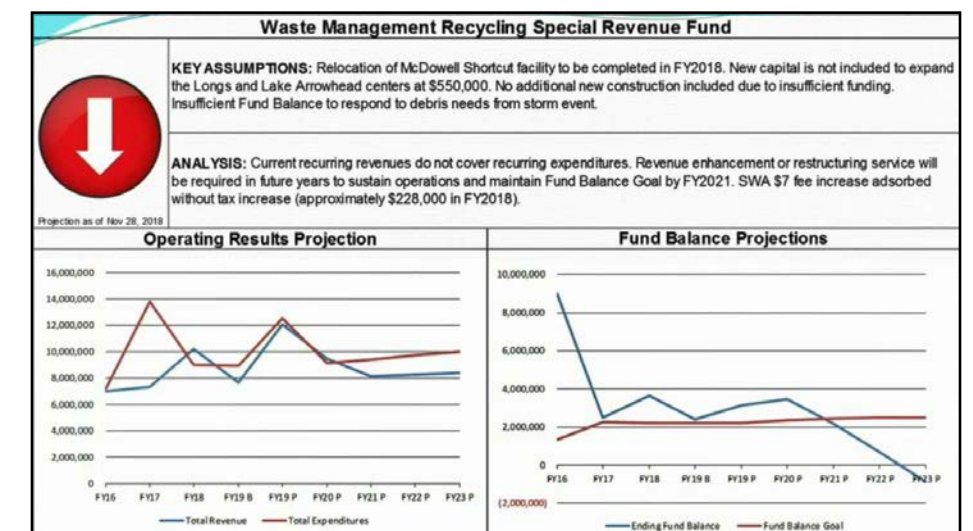
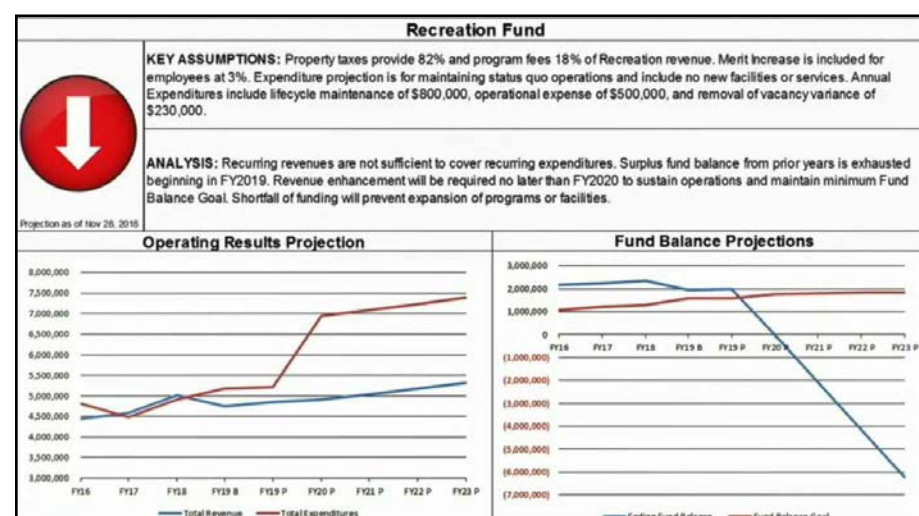
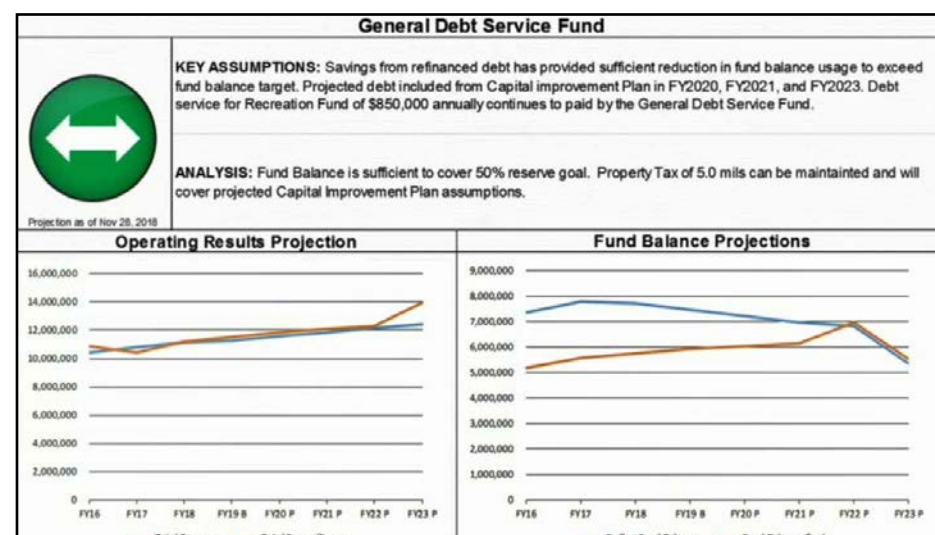
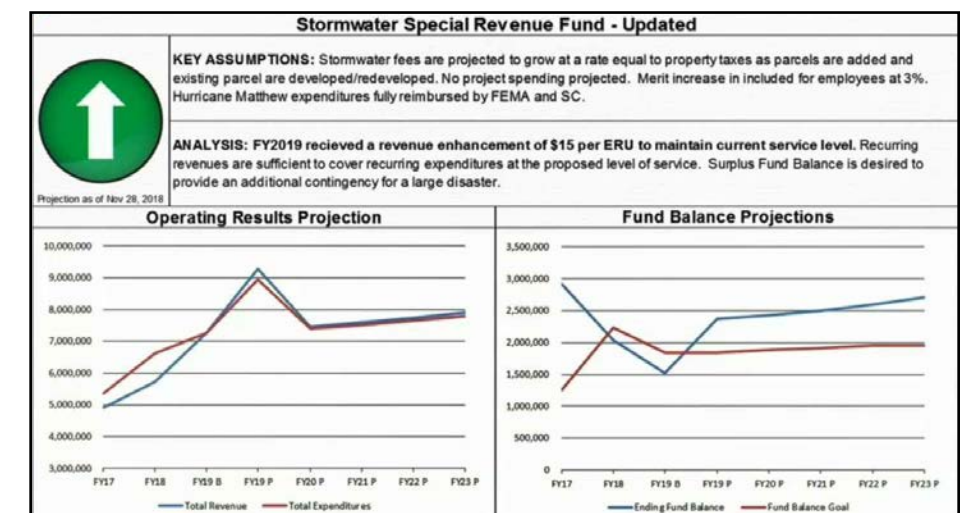
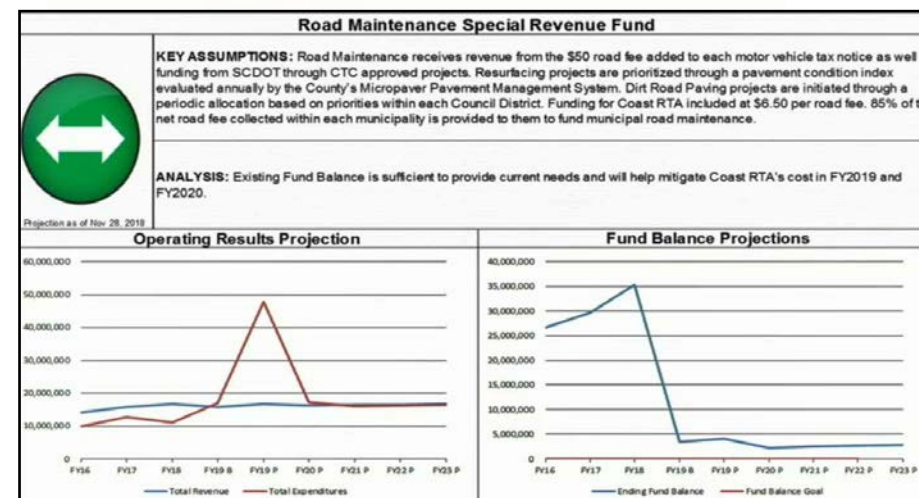
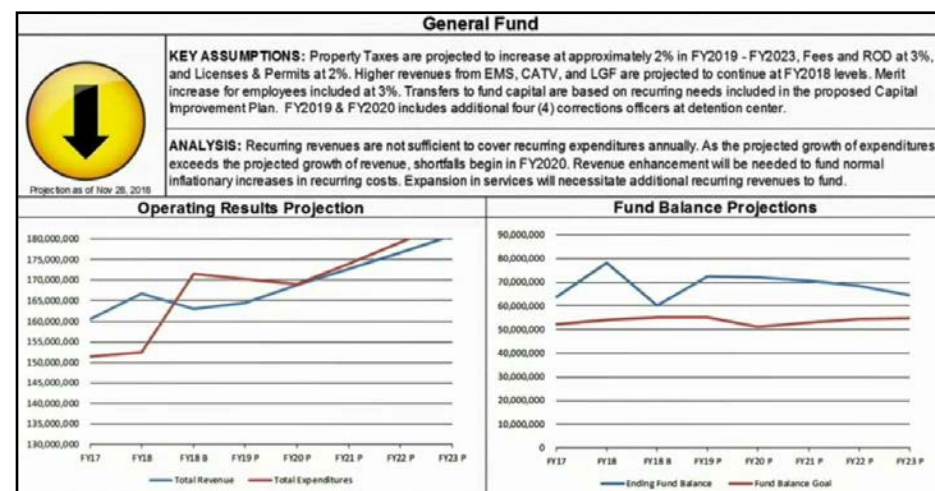
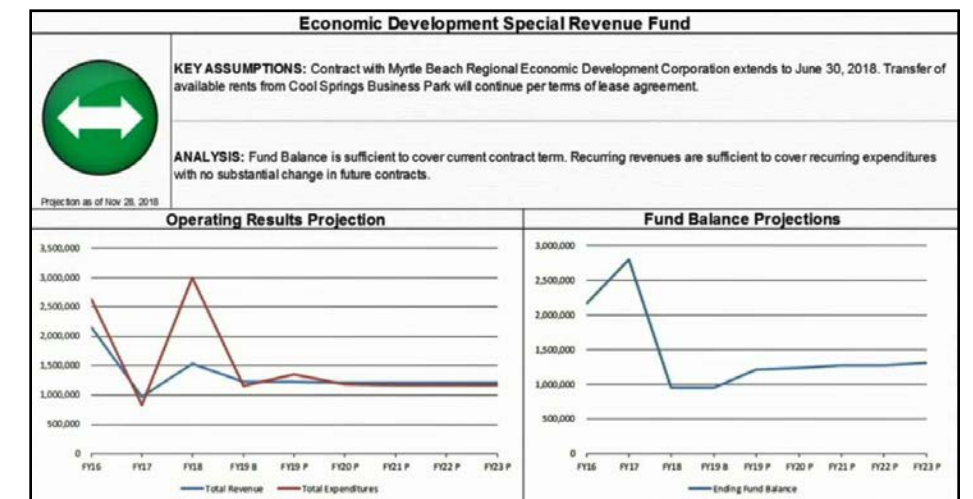
At this time, Horry County's CIP only looks out 5-years to project revenues. At FY2019 funding levels, it was anticipated that there would be a shortfall in the General Fund, Fire Fund, Waste Management, and Recreation Fund Revenues in the near future. This would have a direct impact on the ability to maintain or expand existing facilities and limit the ability to construct new facilities. Individual Fund Charts showing these projected shortfalls are below and to the right.

## Individual Fund Charts

## FY 2019 Projected Expenditures - \$28,262,416



Source: Horry County Government







### CONCLUSIONS

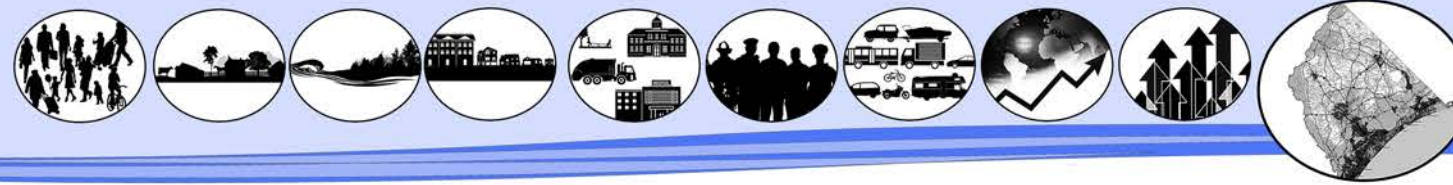
Horry County has a tradition of sound financial management. The County generally uses the pay as you go method, which generally means that the County does not borrow money or use operational bonds. However, Horry County is in need of a facilities master plan to identify both its projects and complete needs. Such information is necessary if pursuing impact fees or development fees and to accurately identify millage rates to support existing needs. While the County should be able to fund a portion of its future growth-related infrastructure requirements from growth-related revenue increases, this may not always be the case. The County should proactively identify or explore development of additional sources of revenue to fund the gap between anticipated revenue and identified requests.



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# CHAPTER 11: LAND USE



## INTRODUCTION

Horry County's present land use pattern is a reflection of a myriad of influences, including, but not limited to its agricultural heritage, the construction of bridges, major highways, and railroads in the region providing access to the County and the beach, the development of the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, the emergence as a tourist destination, and the recent surge in suburban development that has been built to accommodate both full time and seasonal residents. The existing land use pattern is also largely influenced by development that preceded zoning and land development regulations, as zoning is still a relatively new planning function in unincorporated Horry County, having only started in the late 1980s and not fully encompassing the County until 2001.

Over the course of the last three decades, Horry County's population has more than doubled. This rapid growth has consisted largely of residential subdivisions with commercial development and services following slowly behind it. These subdivisions primarily consisted of single-family neighborhoods that emerged from former timberlands and farmland that were in close proximity to the beach, but within the unincorporated areas of the County.

Horry County now is part of the second fastest growing Metropolitan Statistical Area in the nation, according to the US Census Bureau. Unincorporated Horry County is growing faster than the municipalities within it, and the availability of undeveloped land in close proximity to city centers and major destinations is decreasing. Because development has largely consisted of a monoculture of single-family subdivisions and large tracts of land are no longer available, new development proposals are being requested further and further away from centralized communities and job centers. This has a direct impact on the road network, public services, affordability, and quality of life.

Updating the County's Comprehensive Plan at least every ten years provides an opportunity to not only address the location and intensity of future development, but to truly focus on maintaining the features of the unique landscape that make Horry County a cherished place to live, work, and play. Land use serves as the foundation of the built environment. It defines the type, mix, and general location of uses within communities. It ultimately defines the boundaries for neighborhoods, commercial activity, and employment centers.

The Land Use Chapter provides background information on planning and zoning history in Horry County. In addition, it identifies recent development trends and current land uses. It then provides Horry County officials with direction for future growth, which is based off of analysis from all previous chapters, citizen preferences, and through the planning process.

The Land Use Chapter defines a future growth strategy that emphasizes the principles of sustainable development, maximizes and efficiently expands public infrastructure and services, brings people closer to job centers, and encourages thoughtful development and redevelopment in existing urban centers. The implementation of the future growth strategy will need to be supported through policy and land use decisions. It will require strategic updates to zoning and land development regulations. It will also require continual evaluation for the need of more specific land use, area, and neighborhood plans. In order for this future land use vision to be implemented, it must also coincide with strategies defined in the final chapter of this plan, which target public services, infrastructure, safety, and other quality of life factors beyond land use decisions and policies.



### **Horry County Rural-to-Urban Land Use Transect**

*This plan aims to more clearly define the human environment from rural to urban, in a left-to-right sequence from the rivers to the beach. It was adapted from the rural-to-urban transect developed by Andres Duany.*



## PLANNING & REGULATORY HISTORY

The Grand Strand began to grow rapidly in the 1970s. Coinciding with that growth was the establishment of the first Horry County Council election in 1976. This marked the beginning of planning in the County, which has and continues to evolve as the community changes and grows.

### LAND USE PLANS

The **1976 Land Use Plan** was the first land use plan adopted by Horry County Council. This plan was intended to provide a framework for the growth and development of the County with recommendations for which areas should be reserved for specific types of development and preservation. The 1976 plan divided the County into 14 planning districts, for which a detailed analysis of existing conditions and future potential was outlined.

The 1976 Future Land Use Plan was followed by the **1983 Land Use Plan**. Dividing the County into eight planning districts, this Plan outlined critical areas of concern in each district as well as outlining the current residential growth in each district. The 1983 Plan contained an even more detailed analysis of existing land uses and their future potential. This Plan was the first to include a Future Land Use Map and future land use designations as well as outline for potential policy guidance.

The **1995 Comprehensive Plan** was developed and adopted in order to be compliant with comprehensive plan requirements outlined in the 1994 Planning Enabling Legislation. This was the first of the “modern” Comprehensive Plans, and it addressed population, economic, natural resources, cultural resources, community facilities, housing, and land use elements. It was quickly amended with the **1999 Comprehensive Plan**. This was the first Plan to outline goals and implementation strategies. This plan set the stage for the adoption of zoning throughout the County.

The latest Comprehensive Plan, **Envision 2025**, contains many of the same elements as the 1999 Plan. The Land Use Element from Envision 2025 followed a corridor strategy which highlighted urban, suburban, and rural roadways as well as urban, transitional, and rural areas for future types and intensities of development. An important component of Envision 2025 was the designation of Economic Activity Centers. Amendments were made to Envision 2025, including the addition of the newly required Priority Investment and Transportation elements. Additionally, multiple elements of the Plan were updated; however, the Future Land Use Map and definitions were not amended, with the exception of the adoption of area and neighborhood plans.

### Area & Neighborhood Plans

Because Horry County is so large and diverse, Horry County has a number of community area plans and neighborhood plans that are intended to guide growth and redevelopment in those communities. The Planning Commission and County Council continue to refer to these plans for guidance, as they were adopted as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. The following are those plans that continue to be relevant today and may need to be updated in the future if conditions change:

- **Bennett Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Plan** (2015)
- **Burgess Community Area Plan** (2012)
- **Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan** (2011)
- **Mount Vernon Rural Area Management Plan** (2008)
- **Racepath Neighborhood Revitalization Plan** (2014)

The **Waccamaw Pottery and Hwy 501 Area Plan** (2003), **Highway 17 Business and Highway 17 Bypass Area Plan** (2004), and **Highway 57 and Highway 9 Area Plan** (2004) are no longer relevant, as their recommendations have been incorpo-

rated into regulations or adopted as part of this plan through the Future Land Use Map. Additionally, the **Little River, SC Neighborhood Area Plan** (2002) and the **Garden City Area Plan** (2006) both resulted in the development of overlays and have helped retain the character of these communities; however, these plans, specifically, the Future Land Use Maps need to be revisited to ensure they still represent the desires of the residents and business community.

### Specialty Plans

Beyond land use plans, Horry County has a number of plans that target cultural and natural resources, such as the **Historic Preservation Plan**, **Parks and Open Space Plan**, and **Beachfront Management Plan**. These plans, along with the **Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**, aim to preserve and create a strong quality of life and sense of place for our residents and visitors. These plans remain relevant, but will need to be updated periodically to account for changing needs and conditions.

## DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Land development requires a great deal of regulatory oversight to ensure that public safety and the surrounding community are taken into consideration. These regulations include, but are not limited to building codes, floodplain regulations, and stormwater design standards. It also includes land development regulations and zoning, which impact the character, form, and use of a property and are further discussed in this chapter.

### Land Development Regulations

Land development regulations, including the traditional subdivision regulations, are police power regulations. The general intent of land development regulations is to provide for the harmonious, orderly and progressive development of land





as required by considerations of public health, safety, economy, good order, appearance, convenience and general welfare. S.C. Code § 6-29-1120. Land development regulations govern the change of land use characteristics when raw land is developed and when previously developed land is redeveloped. Current planning practice utilizes land development regulations to control site design, street layout, provisions for water and sewer service and other matters related to the development or redevelopment of land.

Local governments are authorized to adopt land development regulations for the following purposes, among others:

1. to encourage the development of economically sound and stable municipalities and counties;
2. to assure the timely provision of required streets, utilities, and other facilities and services to new land developments;
3. to assure the adequate provision of safe and convenient traffic access and circulation, both vehicular and pedestrian, in and through new land developments;
4. to assure the provision of needed public open spaces and building sites in new land developments through the dedication or reservation of land for recreational, educational, transportation and other public purposes; and
5. to assure, in general, the wise and timely development of new areas and redevelopment of previously developed areas in harmony with the comprehensive plans of municipalities and counties. (SC Comprehensive Planning Guide, 2018).

Horry County first adopted "Subdivision Regulations" in 1984. The regulations were updated in 2001 and again in 2008. The most recent revisions were adopted by County Council in 2019.

The Planning and Zoning Department is the division of Horry County Government that administers the Land Development Regulations (LDR); however, Horry County Stormwater, Engineering, and Code Enforcement are involved in the review of phasing and master plans, major subdivision plats, minor plats, and construction plans. No plat or other land development plan can be filed or recorded unless it is approved by Planning and Zoning in accordance to the LDR. Additionally, no building permit may be issued until a plat or plan is approvable. Similarly, a property cannot transfer title of any lots or parts of a development unless the lot is approved and recorded in the Register of Deeds. In order to ensure that all infrastructure is installed or will be installed as required by the LDR, a developer must provide a letter of credit as collateral until such a time that the infrastructure has been installed.

- 1976 - First Land Use Plan Adopted
- 1979 - Horry County Planning Commission Established

## 1980

- 1983 - 1983 Land Use Plan
- 1984 - Subdivision Regulations Adopted
- 1987 - Urban Zoning Adopted around Conway and east of Waccamaw River

## 1990

- 1991 - Horry County Beach Management Plan Adopted
- 1994 - SC Planning Enabling Legislation Passed
- 1995 - 1995 Comprehensive Plan Adopted
- 1996 - Zoning Adopted along Major Corridors in Rural Areas
- 1999 - 1999 Comprehensive Plan Adopted
  - Zoning Adopted in Mount Vernon and Red Bluff Areas
  - Horry County Zoning Board of Appeals Established

## 2000

- 2001 - Remaining Rural Areas Zoned
  - Land Development Regulations Adopted, Replacing Subdivision Regulations
  - Establishment of the Horry County Parks and Open Space Board
- 2002 - Little River Neighborhood Plan Adopted
- 2003 - Waccamaw Pottery and Hwy 501 Plan
- 2004 - Hwy 17 Business and Hwy 17 Bypass Area Plan Adopted
  - Hwy 57 and Hwy 9 Area Plan Adopted
  - Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Established
- 2006 - Garden City Area Plan Adopted
- 2008 - Envision 2025 Comprehensive Plan Adopted
  - Mount Vernon Rural Area Management Plan Adopted
- 2009 - Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan Adopted
  - Land Development Regulation Revisions

## 2010

- 2011 - Hwy 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan Adopted
- 2012 - Burgess Community Area Plan Adopted
- 2013 - Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Adopted
  - Horry County Beach Management Plan Revised
  - Horry County Historic Preservation Plan Adopted
- 2014 - Racepath Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Adopted
- 2015 - Bennett Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Adopted
- 2016 - Burgess Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan - Amendment



## Zoning

As an extension of land use, zoning determines the intensity of any given use. Zoning is a government regulation developed to protect lower impact uses and the people who engage in those uses (for instance housing), from higher impact uses, such as industry and commerce. Zoning is a legislative land-based tool, which has derived from the general police functions as defined by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution. A zoning ordinance consists of two parts: the text and a map. The text sets forth the zoning districts, the uses permitted in each district, general and specific standards, and procedures for administration and enforcement. The zoning map sets forth the location and boundaries of the zoning districts. The regulations must be uniform for each class or kind of building, structure or use throughout each zoning district. However, the requirements in one zoning district may differ from the requirements for the same use in a different district. Within each zoning district, a local governing body may use the zoning ordinance to regulate the following:

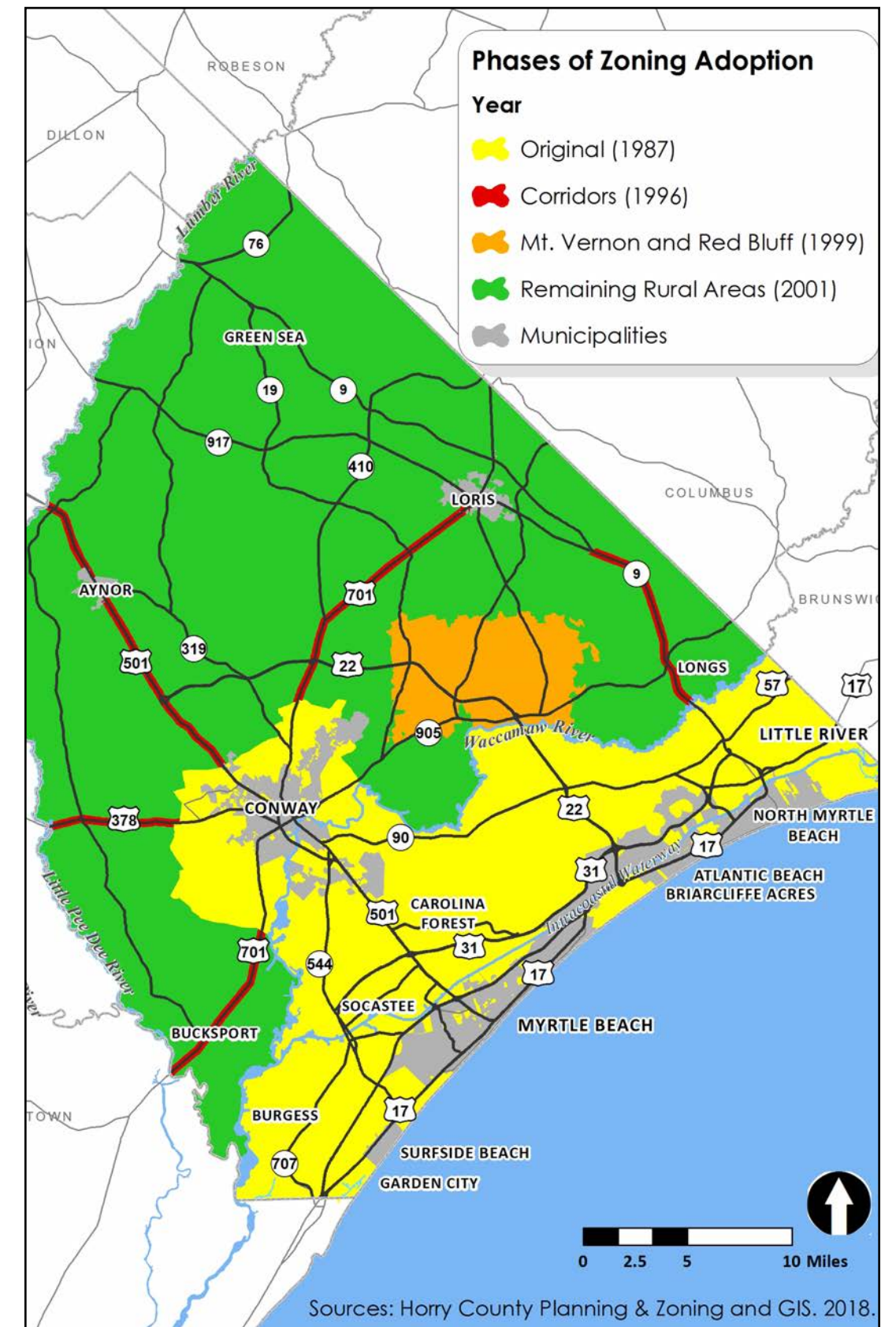
1. use of buildings, structures, and land;
2. size, location, height, bulk, orientation, number of stories, erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, demolition or removal in whole or in part of buildings and other structures, including signage;
3. density of development, use or occupancy of buildings, structures or land;
4. areas and dimensions of land, water and air space to be occupied by buildings and structures, and the size of yards, courts and other open spaces;
5. amount of off-street parking and loading that must be provided, and the restrictions or requirements related to the entry or use of motor vehicles on the land;
6. other aspects of the site plan including, but not limit-

ed to, tree preservation, landscaping, buffers, lighting and curb cuts; and

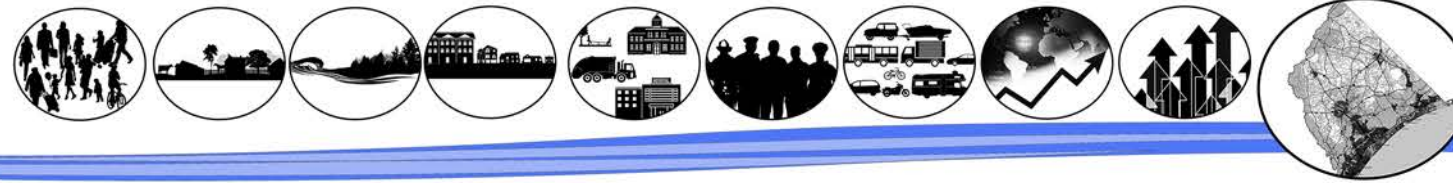
7. other aspects of the development and use of land or structures necessary to accomplish the purposes set forth throughout the Comprehensive Planning Act.

In 1987, Horry County adopted zoning east of the Waccamaw River and around the City of Conway. By 1996, County Council decided to expand zoning in Horry County, starting with the major highway corridors of U.S. 501 West, U.S. 701 North and South, the western segment of S.C Highway 9, and U.S. 378. In 1999, zoning was adopted in the Mount Vernon and Red Bluff areas. And in 2001, the remaining rural areas of the County were zoned. Zoning did not come easy, especially in the rural parts of the County. Very generalized zoning that encompassed a myriad of uses were adopted in these areas; however, Forest Agriculture (FA), Commercial FA (CFA), and Limited FA (LFA) zoning districts did limit densities and concerning land uses, such as industrialized hog farms.

In 2000, the County introduced a “green card” like system, where property owners could determine and officially request their specific zoning. Some critics say that this procedure helped undermine later comprehensive planning efforts. For example, the many changes to the original “FA” (Forest Agriculture) zoning classification allows for too many possible residential and commercial land uses and therefore, under long-range planning aspects is considered unfavorable to sensibly plan for explosive population growth. Without a clear land use vision and strategy at the time when zoning was initially adopted, the County had little control over the resulting development pattern and the impact to the natural environment, infrastructure, economy and quality of life.







## Overlays

Overlay zones are applied only in conjunction with other zoning districts, and may impose a set of additional requirements or relax a set of requirements imposed by the underlying zoning district. Overlay zones are established to provide unified development that promotes a sense of place and provides opportunities to develop or redevelop areas to be compatible in appearance and use. Overlay zones can help protect special features, such as historic buildings, wetlands and waterfronts, or establish a set of stricter design standards to address public safety issues.

The County has a number of overlays, each with their own sign, landscaping, façade criteria, and design standards. While this can improve and preserve community character, it can also be cumbersome for developers, especially those seeking to develop commercially.

The following are currently adopted overlay zones in Horry County:

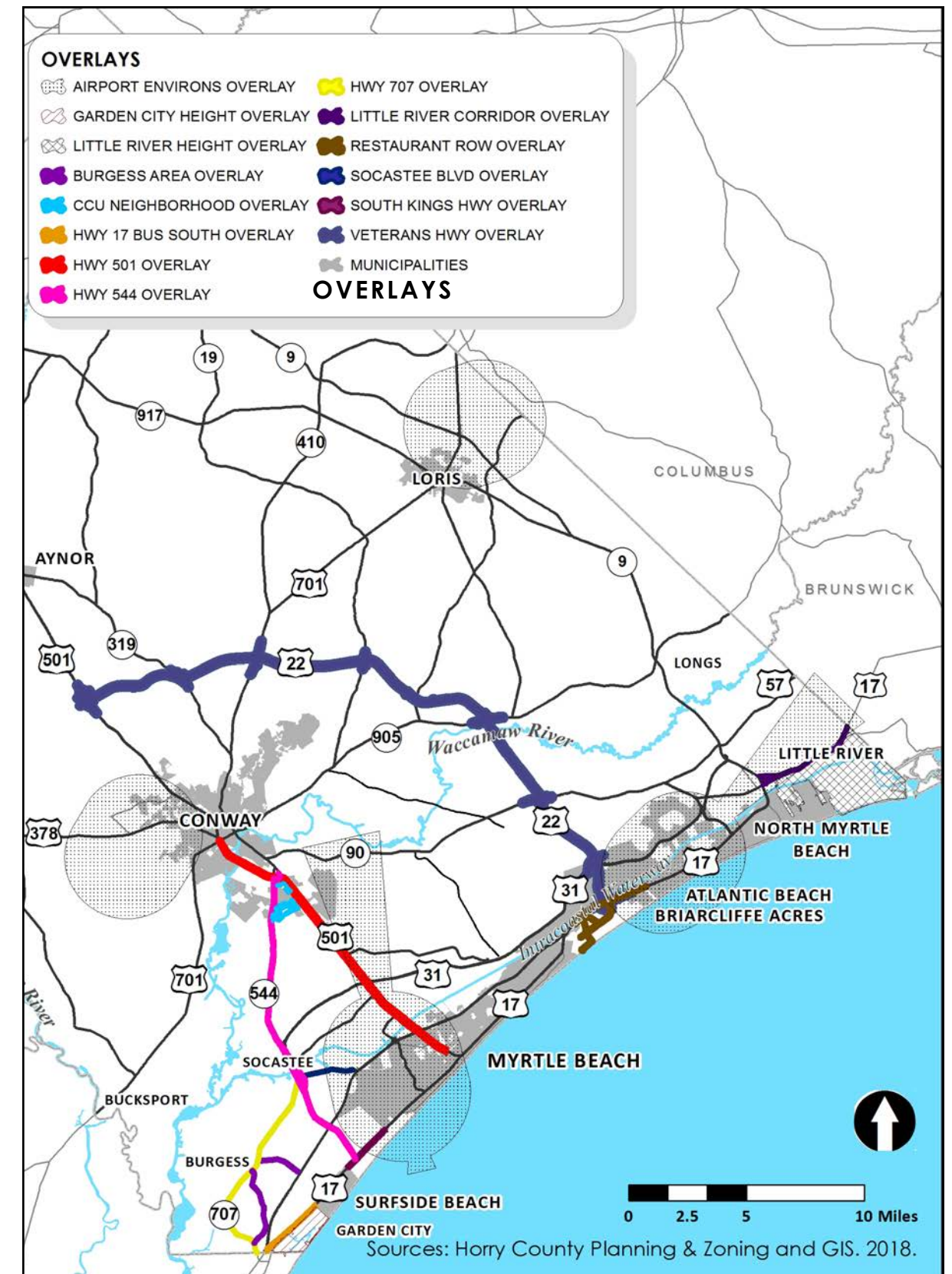
- Airport Environs Overlay
- Burgess Overlay
- CCU Neighborhood Overlay
- Garden City Height Overlay
- Hwy 17 Business South Overlay
- Highway 501 Overlay Zone
- Highway 544 Overlay District
- Highway 707 Overlay District
- Little River Corridor Overlay District
- Little River Height Overlay District
- Restaurant Row Overlay District
- Socastee Boulevard Overlay Zone
- South Kings Hwy Overlay
- Veteran's Highway Overlay Zone

There is also a Temporary Vending Overlay Zone to manage the number of vendor permits that can be issued for particular areas of the County during special events, like the numerous motorcycling events throughout the year.

Because there are so many overlays within the unincorporated areas of the County, many of which have minor variations, consolidation of similar overlays should be considered, in an effort to simplify the Zoning Ordinance, improve the review process, and ensure that the regulations are clear to the business community. Additionally, future overlays should be considered in order to preserve the rural corridors leading into the County and their beach destinations. Overlays for agricultural preservation or wildfire vulnerability reduction should also be considered if further study merits.

## PLANNING AND REGULATORY FINDINGS

Zoning and development regulations are still relatively new in Horry County. Rapid development, makes it critical that the County remain on top of needed changes to our land use plans, zoning ordinance, and land development regulations. Continual evaluation of the development review process, zoning violations, business challenges, and ever changing community are necessary to ensure that the County is intentionally planning for our future.

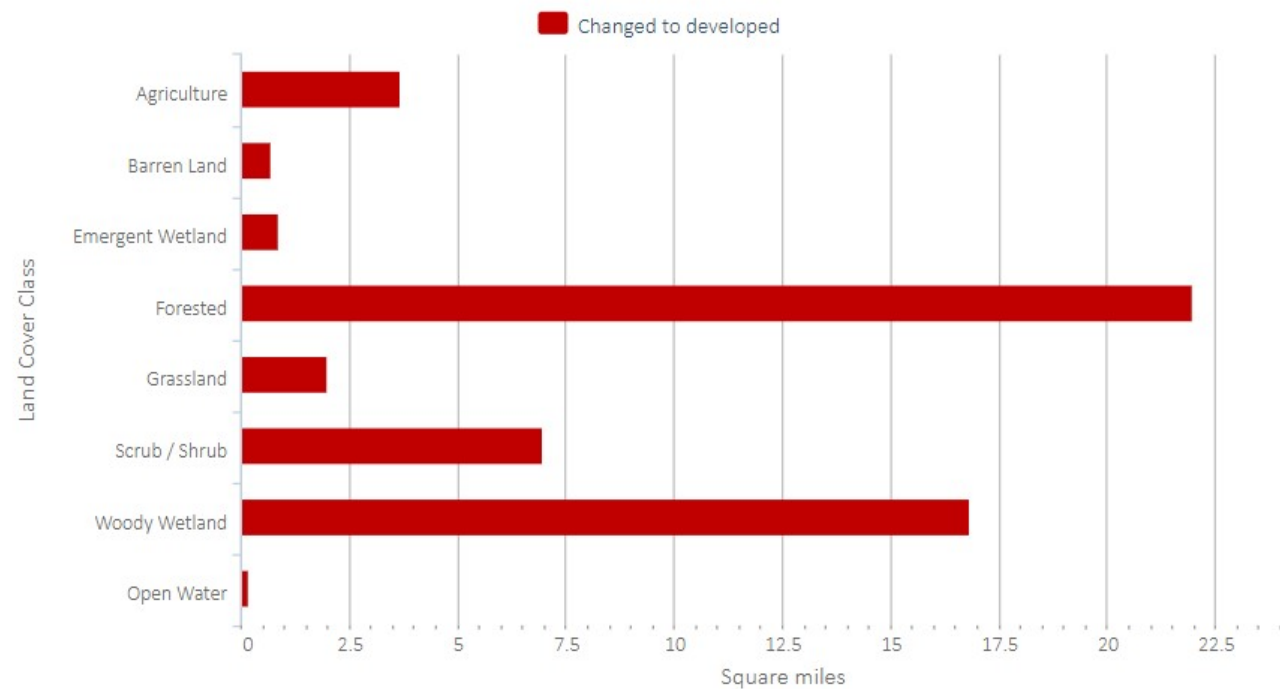




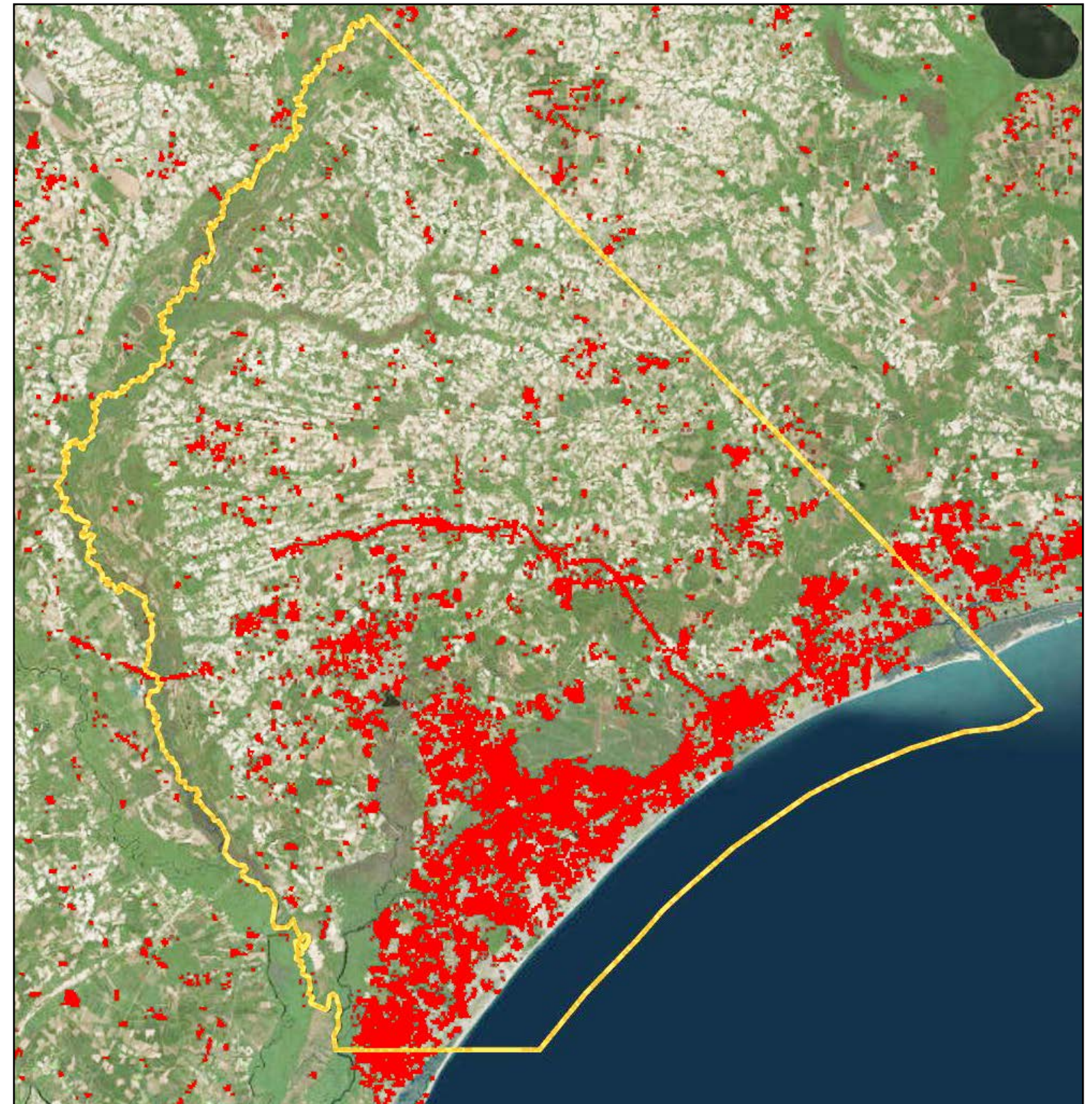
## DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Since 2000, the County's permanent population has increased by more than 100,000 people. By 2040, an additional 275,000 are expected to call Horry County their home. Development has been increasing to keep up with the demand of retirees relocating to the area as well as working families to support the tourism, healthcare, and construction industries. From 1996 to 2010, approximately 53 square miles of the County were developed. As new land cover data becomes available, this information should continue to be updated to better understand how the County's landscape is changing.

### Land Development Between 1996 - 2010



Source: NOAA, <https://coast.noaa.gov/ccapAtlas/>



Land Development Between 1996 - 2010  
Source: NOAA, <https://coast.noaa.gov/ccapAtlas/>

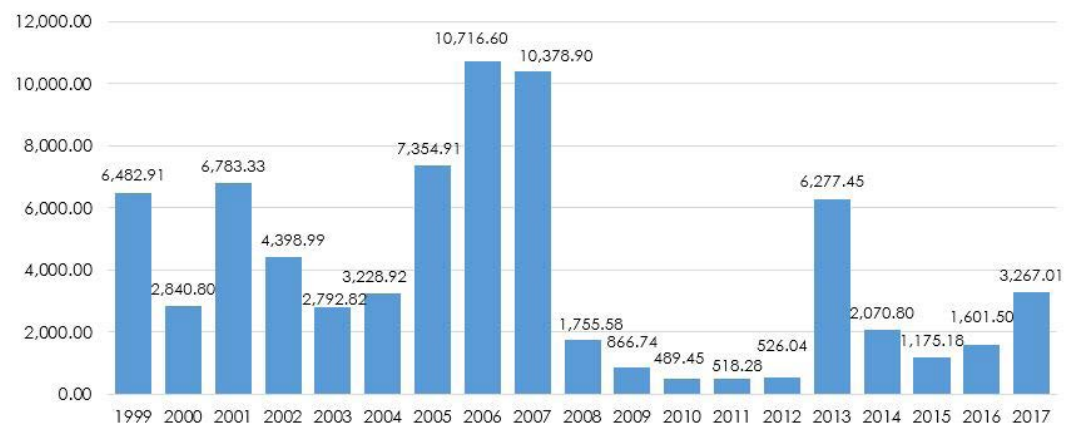




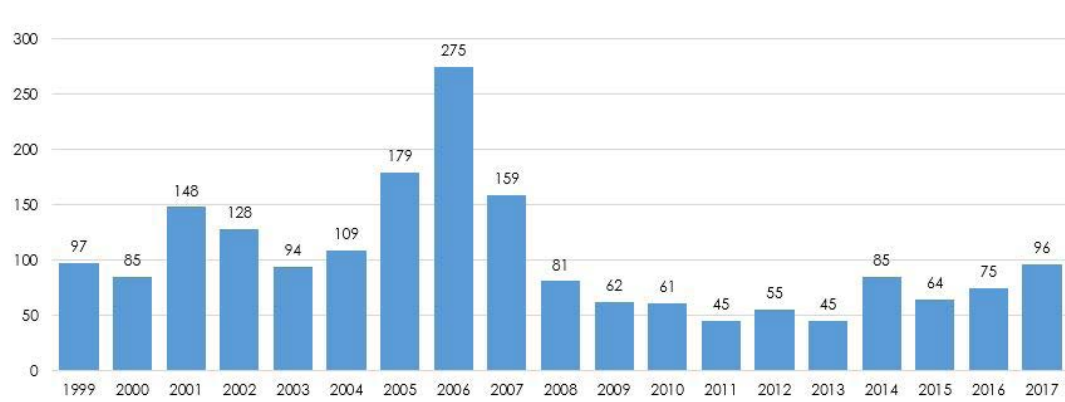
REZONING TRENDS

Rezoning applications and the acreage of rezoning requests can provide the County with insight on development and future development trends. To date, the peak in rezoning requests was in 2006, prior to the economic downturn. At that point in time, housing was rapidly being constructed throughout unincorporated Horry County. Many of the large tracts of land that were rezoned before the Recession are now in the process of being developed or are seeking amendments to their development plans so they can begin moving forward again. The graphs below indicate rezoning trends over time, while the map to the right conveys the areas with the most rezoning requests. Understanding rezoning trends can help inform the future and indicates the need for a comprehensive approach to land use planning and zoning.

Rezoning Applications Total Acreage

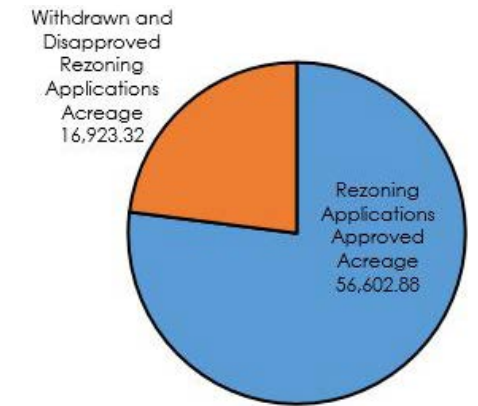


Number of Rezoning Applications

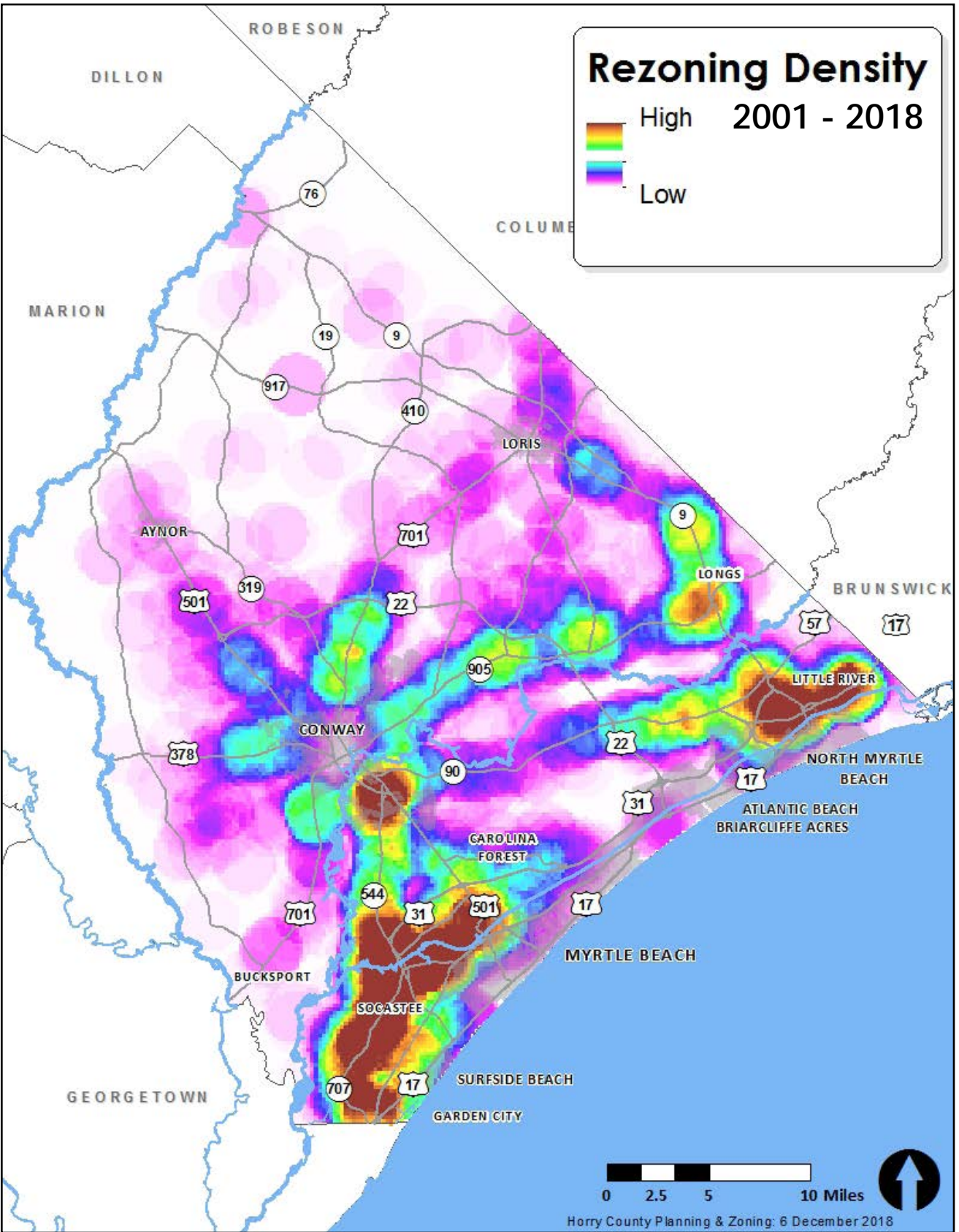
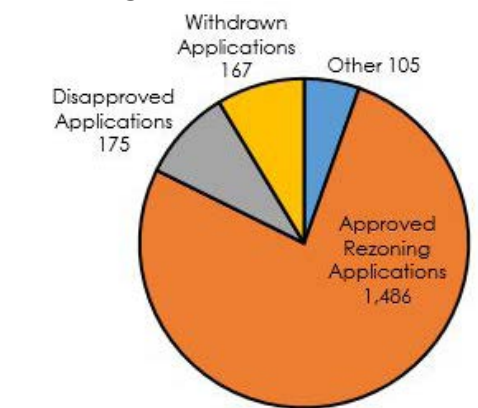


Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning

Rezoning Application Acreage



Rezoning Application Results





## URBAN AND SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

### Municipal Development

While the majority of residential growth is occurring in unincorporated Horry County, Conway and Myrtle Beach have recently seen an increase in residential development. The cities remain the primary location for commercial development and jobs, which presents challenges to infrastructure and public services, including their funding, in unincorporated Horry County. Major road construction, inclusionary housing policies, and economic development projects will have an impact on future growth and reinvestment in area municipalities. In addition, allowances for development in unincorporated Horry County may actually disincentivize infill development in the cities.

### Suburban Development and Density

Research shows perceived density usually is not related to actual density and the same density or intensity can look and feel quite different based on the building or neighborhood's scale and design. For instance, the majority of the major residential subdivisions in unincorporated Horry County are comprised of 5,000 – 7,000 sq ft lots. While this may seem dense, many of these subdivisions include recreational and natural open space, resulting in the entire development being 3 – 4 units per acre. More environmentally constrained sites may even be as low as 2 – 3 units per acre. While low density subdivisions are not a cause for a concern when evaluating their impact on a case-by-case basis, the cumulative impacts of multiple low density subdivisions can put a strain on infrastructure and services, and in fact, require more infrastructure and services than more densely developed areas of the County.

Many people cringe at references to density because they envision traffic problems, decreased property values, and increased crime; however, appropriately sited density and dis-

tinct areas for higher density development can actually result in variation in housing styles, improved traffic, increased economic activity, and even more walkable communities. These are the same components that many working families, millennials, and even seniors are seeking, yet not readily available in our region.

### Golf Course Redevelopment

As the Golfing industry wains in the region due to extensive regional competition, lifecycle maintenance costs, and the rising cost of land values, many golf courses have or are seeking to redevelop as residential communities. Redevelopment is complicated for many golf courses due to the narrow and linear nature of previous golf fairways. While an excellent opportunity for infill development in urban and suburban areas, golf course redevelopment should be looked at on a case-by-case basis, examining the ability to develop according to the Land Development Regulations as well as addressing potential for safety concerns and disturbance to existing residents.

### RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Currently, rural areas are seeing an insurgence of seemingly misplaced suburban subdivisions. These medium density neighborhoods do not match the existing character of surrounding farms and single-family homes which have largely developed based on inheritance and subdivision for immediate family. In most cases, existing homes in rural areas range from ½ acre lots to large 5-20 acre farms. It is the desire of many of these communities to maintain their rural character. The availability of low priced land, however, presents easier means of development than pursuing redevelopment or infill development in already established parts of the County. This plan aims to preserve the rural character of western Horry County, while encouraging infill development in suburban and municipal parts of the County where public facilities and services are readily available.



Source: Northeast Area Transportation Plan





CURRENT LAND USE

Understanding current land uses can inform future development trends and zoning compatibility. The following land use inventory is the result of an analysis of zoning, tax assessor use codes, and verification through aerial imagery. It provides an inventory of residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, institutional, public, environmentally sensitive and recreational land uses. The Current Land Use component establishes a baseline understanding of the interaction that Horry County residents and visitors have with built and natural environments.

Current land use classifications include:

- 1. **Single-Family Residential:** Land area used for residential structures with a single dwelling unit that is not attached to any other dwelling unit.
- 2. **Multi-Family Residential:** Land area used for residential structures which contain two or more attached dwelling units.
- 3. **Transient Lodging:** Land area used for commercial building(s) with guestrooms for sleeping. Rooms are occupied by transients renting on a daily basis and usually staying less than seven days. Examples include hotels, motels, condos, and campgrounds.
- 4. **Business/Commercial:** Land area used to conduct businesses, administrative, trade, and professional activities or services. Uses include establishments for retail sale of goods and services, restaurants, and entertainment facilities. Examples include gas stations, barbers, grocery stores, dry cleaners, clubs, liquor stores, sports/tennis shops, furniture, antique and clothing stores, car sales, and tour offices. Uses also include wholesale and retail of goods and services on or off the premises. Examples include law offices, doctor offices, CPAs, landscape offices, real estate offices, construction offices, lumber

- sales, electric and plumbing equipment, and other building product sales.
- 5. **Industrial and Utility:** Land area used primarily for the manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, utilities, warehousing, and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction facilities, or similar uses.
- 6. **Public or Institutional:** Land area used primarily for private, public, quasi-public, eleemosynary, philanthropic, or other activity undertaken for providing for the social, cultural, educational, health, or physical betterment of the community. Examples include schools, colleges, churches, synagogues, museums, hospitals, parks, and cemeteries.
- 7. **Agriculture and Forestland:** Land area used primarily for agricultural purposes, such as cropland, livestock production, pasture, and commercial timber.
- 8. **Conservation/Preservation:** Land area that is permanently protected areas of natural and manmade landscapes. Ownership is typically in the form of a governmental entity or non-profit organization.
- 9. **Golf Course:** Land area used primarily for private and public golf courses.
- 10. **Vacant Land:** Land area not developed for a specific use or assigned a land use classification.

These ten predefined land use classifications broadly define the broad spectrum of the natural and built environment. The Current Land Use Map is one tool used to determine where future growth will be appropriately accommodated within the Future Land Use Map in this Chapter. It is important to note that approximately 7% of the County consists of municipalities and the majority of the urban uses that many of those living in the unincorporated area rely upon for shopping, dining, recreation, and work. The remaining area of the

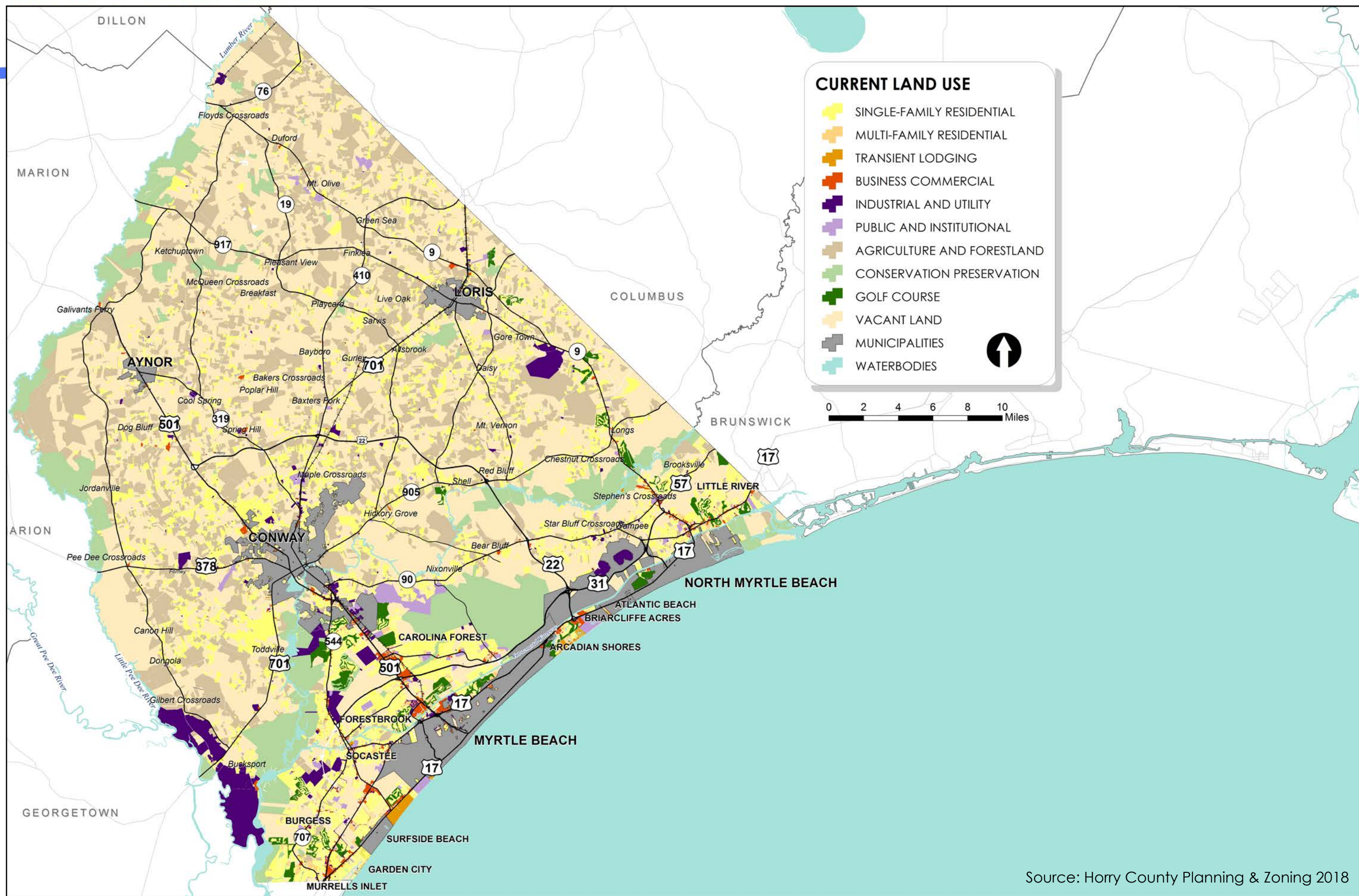
County is largely comprised of rural land uses, such as farms, timberland, and large single-family estates. The remaining residential areas are located closer to the beach in areas like Garden City, Burgess, Socastee, Forestbrook, Carolina Forest, and Little River. Newly emerging residential subdivisions are beginning to appear on portions of Hwy 9, 90 and 905 and along major roads such as Hwy 701, 378, Kates Bay, and others around Conway.

Land Uses in Unincorporated Horry County

Land Use	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of County
Single-Family Residential	98,248.7	153.51	13.46%
Multi-Family Residential	3,271.1	5.11	0.45%
Transient Lodging	1,414.9	2.21	0.19%
Business/Commercial	5,564.6	8.69	0.76%
Industrial and Utility	17,118.6	26.75	2.35%
Public or Institutional	7,796.8	12.18	1.07%
Agriculture and Forestland	152,551.7	238.36	20.91%
Conservation/Preservation	62,907.9	98.29	8.62%
Golf Course	8,560.6	13.38	1.17%
Vacant Land	296,678.8	463.56	40.66%
Municipal Land Area	48,295.1	75.46	6.62%
Other (Road Right of Way, Rivers, etc.)	27,267.1	42.61	3.74%
Total	729,676.0	1140.12	100.00%

Note that land use acreage was based upon the size of the parcel and that an individual parcel was not assigned or divided into multiple land uses for the purpose of this analysis.



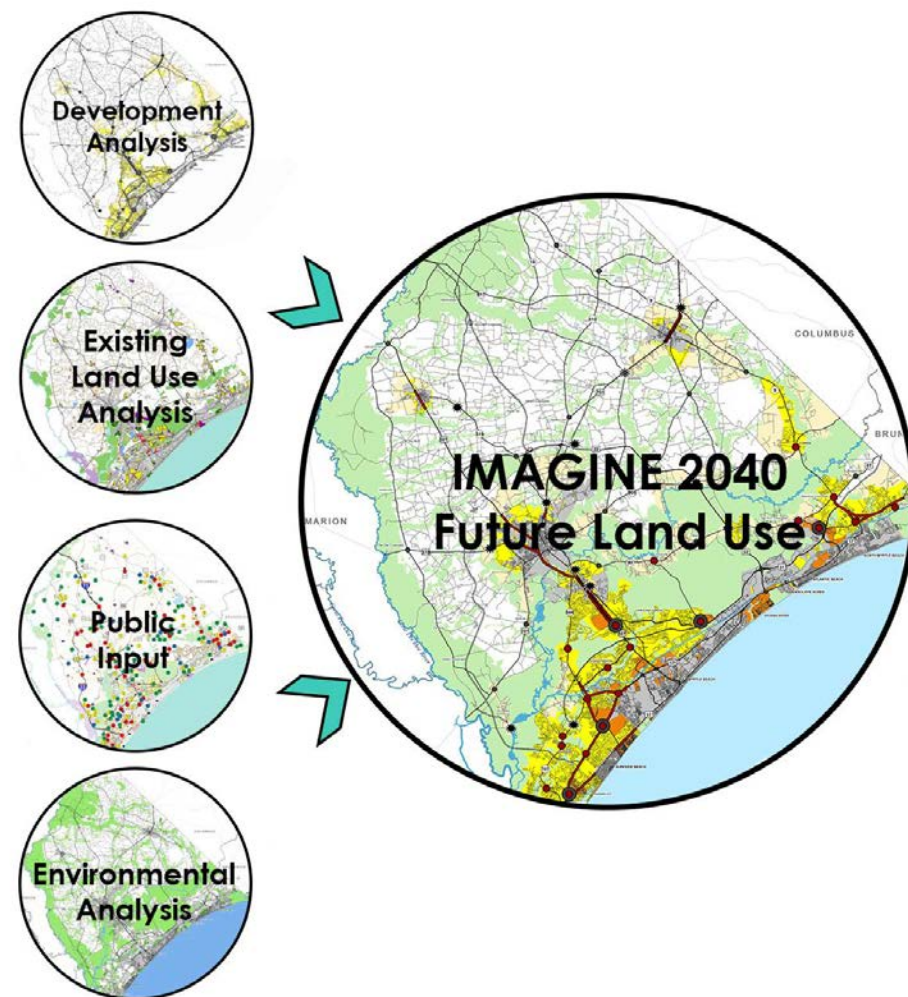






## GROWTH STRATEGY

The Future Land Use Strategy brings together all of the elements of the Plan and incorporates public input to define desired growth patterns and community form. It addresses all of the overarching goals of the plan, and ultimately conveys the community's vision for the future. The Future Land Use Strategy expresses the need to establish and proliferate sensible growth patterns that preserve and promote a high standard of living for existing and future residents. This chapter seeks to proactively guide future development through infill development, providing a variety of housing types, encouraging economic development, and ensuring safe communities with quality public facilities and services.



The Future Land Use Map and the contents of this plan are designed to accommodate the needs of physical growth until the year 2040 and provide a set of Goals and Implementation Strategies that serve as a checklist to accomplish the Plan. The collective long-term goals and objectives of the Future Land Use section are to achieve responsible growth and fiscal efficiency in the delivery of all public services to the current and future inhabitants of Horry County.

The Future Land Use Strategy was developed through public input, an assessment of existing land use and upcoming development, assessment of flood hazard areas and other environmentally constrained lands, and the anticipated demand for growth as defined by population projections and other trends recognized within previous chapters of this plan. Population trends and changes in public preferences and development trends should continue to be evaluated over the course of the next decade. When significant changes occur in all or parts of the County, the Future Land Use Strategy should be revisited to determine if any changes are necessary.

The implementation of the Future Land Use Strategy will occur through density and design elements required within the zoning ordinance and land development regulations. It will also occur through overlays, development agreements, and efforts of the development community. Putting this plan into action will allow the County to have a natural progression from rural to suburban to urban development with defined areas preserved for economic and community activity, thus creating a greater sense of place and attachment.

## COMMUNITY INPUT

Horry County had multiple means of collecting public input in order to inform the development of this plan, especially the future land use map and definitions. Community engagement efforts entailed a countywide survey, numerous public open houses, a hands-on land use workshop, public comments, and public hearings. The different public input mechanisms allowed for people to provide their recommendations ranging from the community scale to the parcel level. It also allowed for similar questions to be asked in different forums and in different ways to better understand the needs of the citizens. For instance, asking about desired growth patterns in a survey versus asking through a hands-on mapping effort with other members of the public.

### Surveys

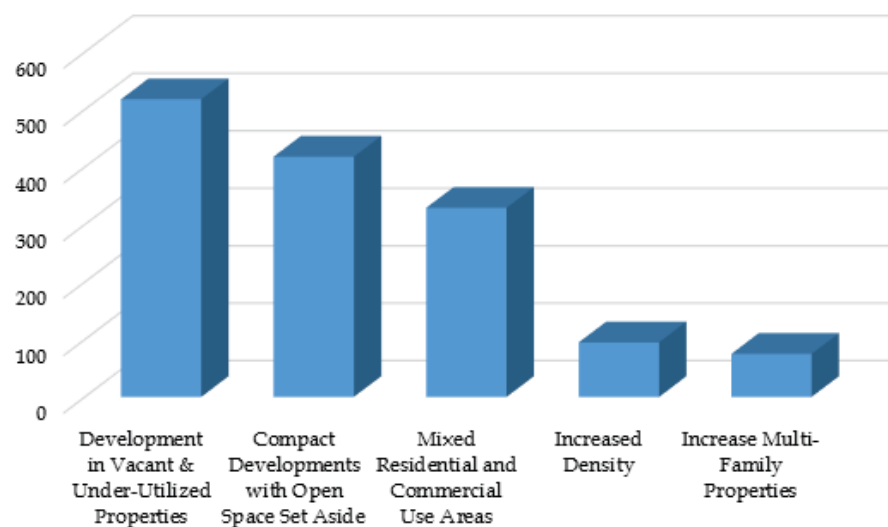
The countywide survey allowed staff to obtain generalized responses on the overall desires of the County, but it also allowed for responses to be evaluated by the different regions of the County. Not surprisingly, there were some questions with relatively consistent answers even when assessed by geography. For example, how to accommodate population growth or where to target redevelopment and revitalization. As highlighted in the Economic Development Chapter, respondents identified the following locations for redevelopment, among others:

- Downtown Myrtle Beach
- Fantasy Harbor
- Carolina Forest Roadway and Traffic Improvements
- The City of Loris
- The City of Conway
- Socastee Boulevard
- Inlet Square Mall



Other questions, such as the preferred size and type of residential development near one's home, varied by geography. This information provided powerful insight into the recommended future land use patterns within this plan. It was then coupled with additional input received through other public forums.

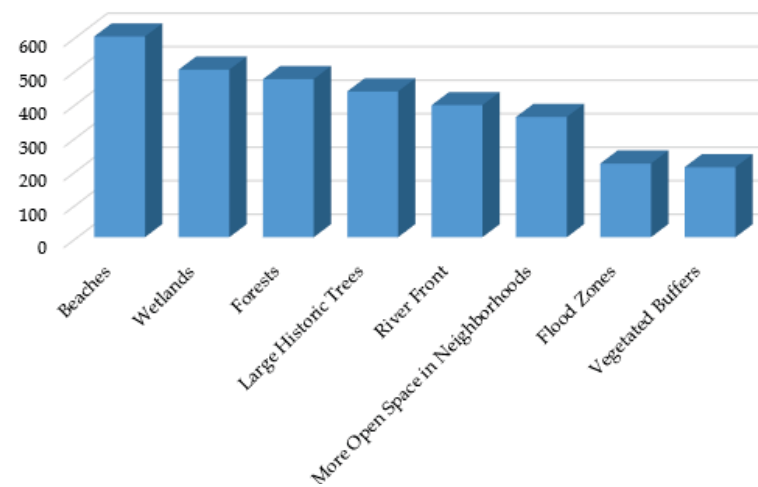
**Horry County's population is expected to grow by approximately 100,000 people by 2040. Knowing this information, how would you prefer to primarily accommodate future population growth?**



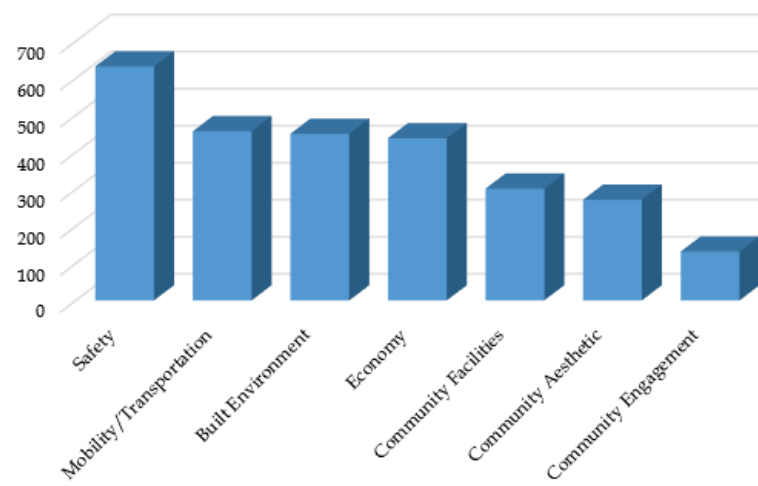
The survey showed that most respondents preferred future population growth be accommodated through development in vacant and under-utilized properties and via compact developments with open space set aside (see chart above). In addition, respondents largely showed preference towards future commercial development that resembled a downtown main street and roadside farm stands (see chart to right).

Respondents also agreed on which features of the natural environment should be protected (beaches, followed closely by wetlands and forests) and which issues would be the most concerning in the next 20 years (safety, followed by mobility, the built environment, and the economy).

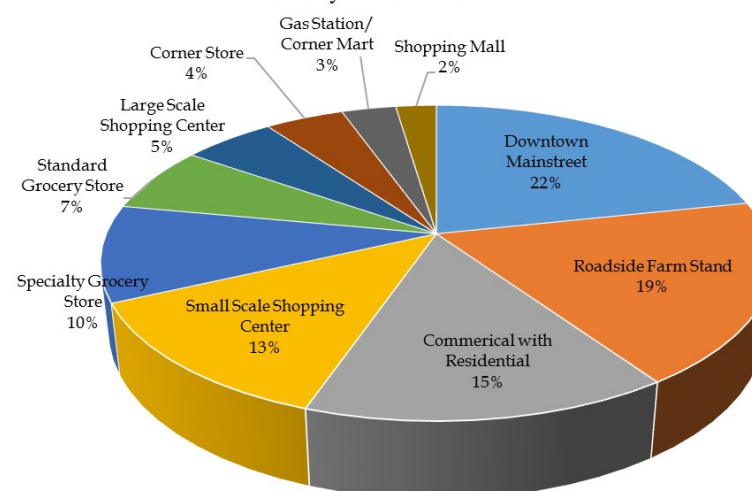
**Which features of the natural environment would you like to have protected?**



**In the next 20 years, what do you think will be the MOST concerning issue in your community?**



**What would you like the future commercial development near your home to look like?**



Not Surprisingly, the survey respondents from rural areas, such as Green Sea and Aynor, showed a strong preference towards large single-family residential lots whereas those respondents in more urbanized areas, such as Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach, showed interest in residential mixed with commercial and small-size single-family lots. In the suburban areas, such as Carolina Forest, Burgess, Forestbrook, and Socastee, there was a large portion of respondents who showed interest in single-family mid-size lots. Interestingly, the Garden City and Surfside areas showed a higher interest in Tiny Homes than any other area.

Respondents from different geographic areas also had varying preferences for open space near their homes. Most geographic areas showed preference for increased walking paths and trails, however, a few areas had differing opinions. Aynor and Galivants Ferry prefer that future open space remain farmland. The Green Sea area showed equal preference between additional walking paths and trails, passive park areas, athletic fields, and playgrounds. Interestingly, the respondents from the Loris and Longs areas showed preference for farmland over additional athletic fields, parks, playgrounds, and an amenity center.



IMAGINE 2040 Survey Question: What would you like future residential development in your neighborhood or near your home to look like? this question asked respondents to identify preferences of lot size and density for future residential in their area.





Open Houses

Attendees of the first four open houses were asked to identify locations where they desire future residential, commercial, industrial, and open space or recreational uses. Each participant was given eight quarter-inch colored dot stickers two blue representing industry, two red representing commercial, two green representing open space or recreation, and two yellow representing residential. Countywide and local maps were provided based on the open house attendance area. Maps included current land uses, as well as estimated single-family and multi-family units in already approved subdivisions.



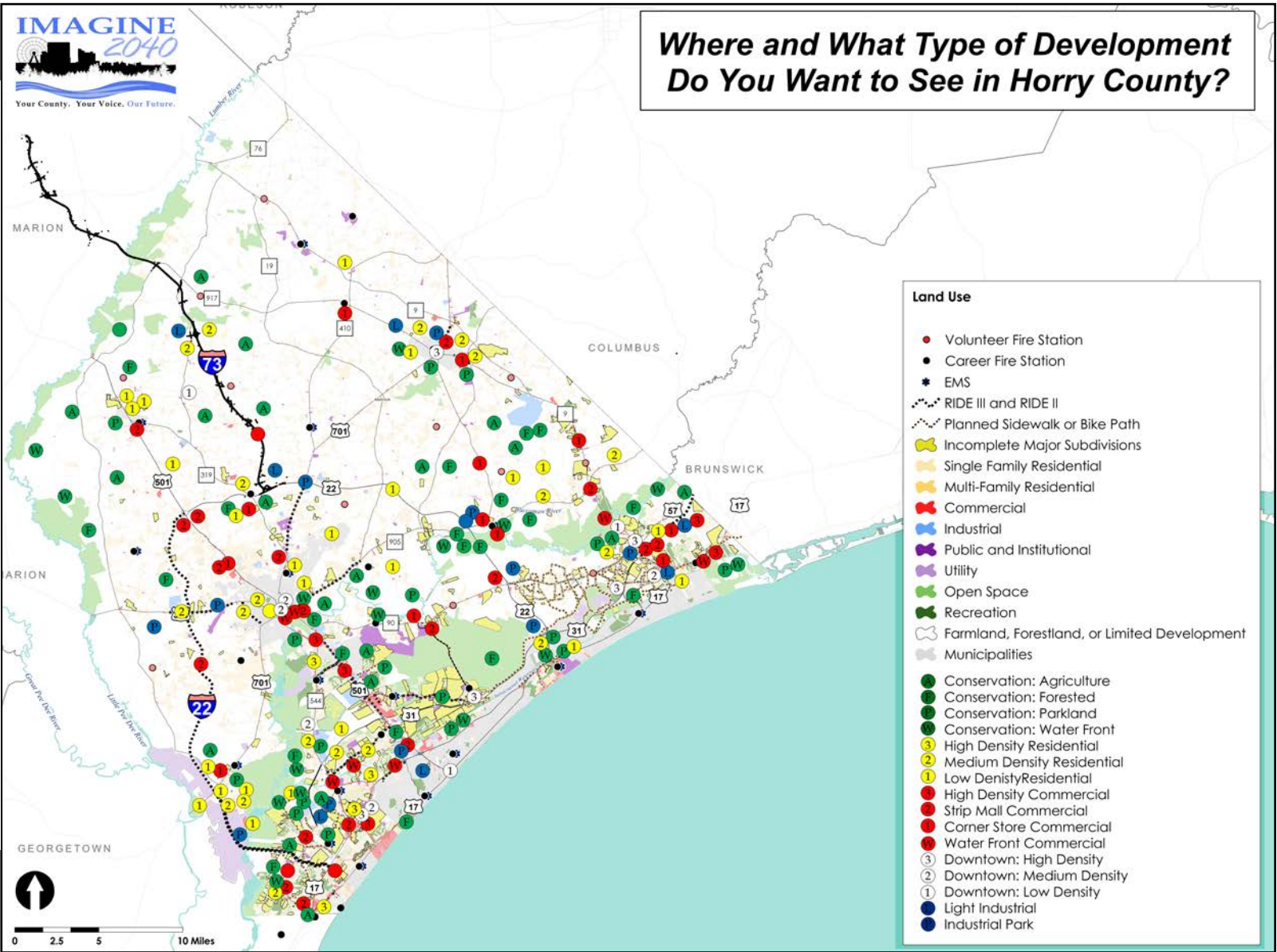
Resident participating in the Open House Mapping Exercise

Land Use Workshop

Over 100 members of the public attended the IMAGINE 2040 Land Use Workshop in May 2018. Participants were grouped at 11 tables with representatives from a variety of backgrounds and knowledge to consider future land use patterns and the potential land implications of growth in the unincorporated areas in which they live or work. Attendees were asked to identify locations on a map where they desire future residential, commercial, industrial, downtown districts, and conservation or recreational uses. Maps included current land uses as well as approved housing developments and numbers for estimated to-be-built multi-family and single-family units in each approved development.



County officials, city officials, residents, and community leaders discuss the future of the Burgess community.





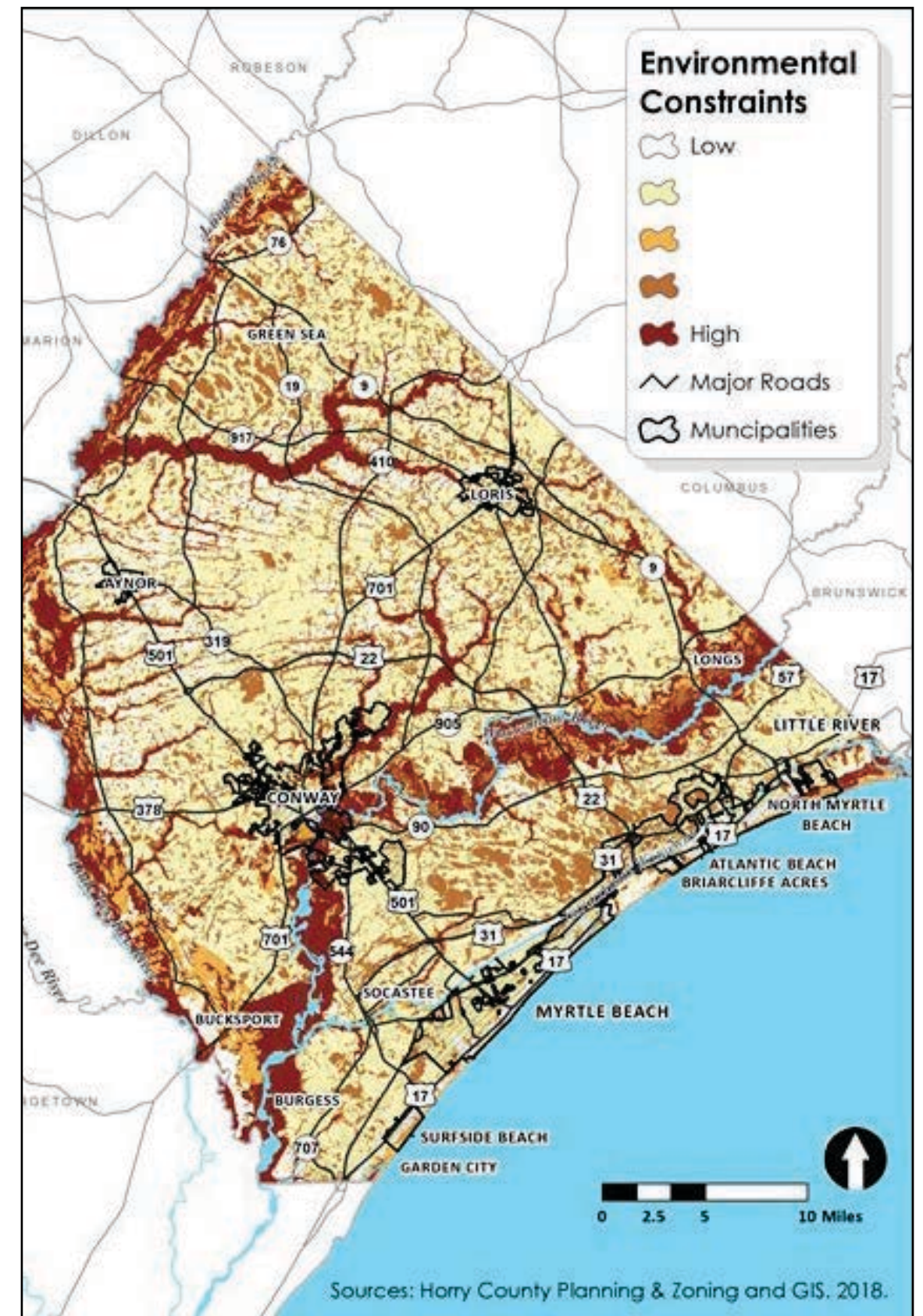
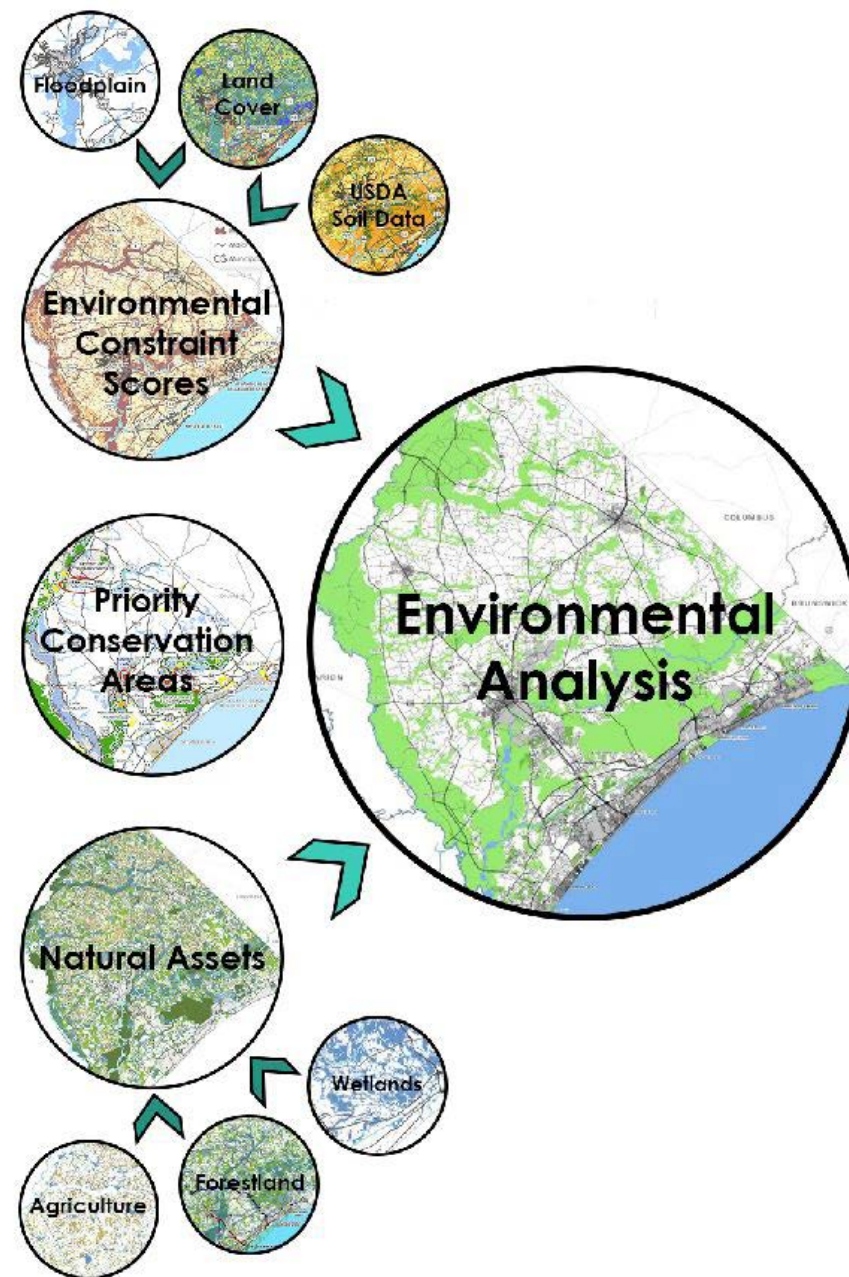
## LAND SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

As Horry County grows, development should occur in a manner that is consistent with the vision and goals of the plan. Conducting a land suitability analysis is one of the necessary steps to identify areas that are appropriate for future growth and where growth areas may conflict with environmental constraints. The following conveys the spatial analysis that was completed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) utilizing existing data and input collected in the previous chapters of this plan.

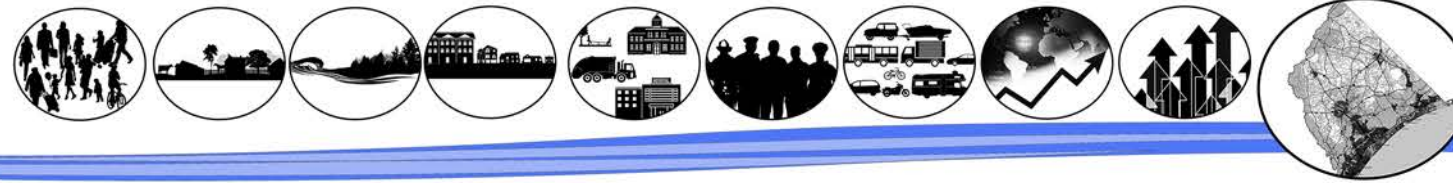
Spatial analysis is a process in which you model problems geographically, derive results by computer processing, and then explore and examine those results. This type of analysis has proven to be highly effective for evaluating the geographic suitability of certain locations for specific purposes. The following analysis was conducted to inform decision-makers of land areas that are likely environmentally constrained and areas that are best suited for growth in the near future. This information is then compared to the public input that was obtained to guide growth in a manner that coincides with the community's desires, but is also the most practical in terms of likelihood for future growth. Those areas that are naturally constrained but also poised for growth have been evaluated to determine the most appropriate future land use.

### Environmental Constraints

Horry County is encumbered by wetlands and floodplains. It is also vulnerable to wildfires. In order to protect properties and lives from natural hazards, the following environmental development constraints were assessed to determine some of the most naturally constrained







areas within the County. The following factors were taken into consideration when developing this analysis:

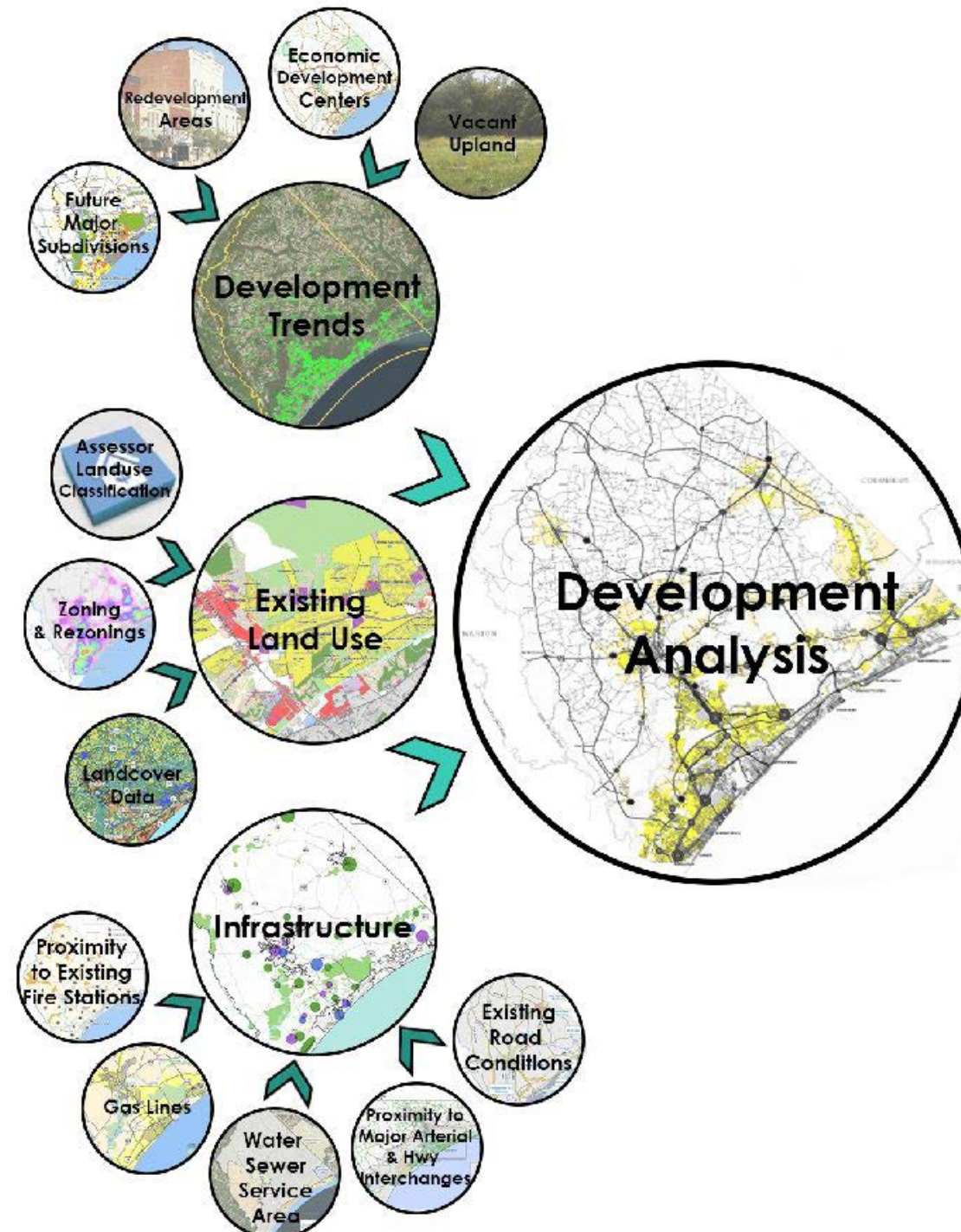
- Regulatory Floodzone
- Poorly Drained Soils (NRCS, Soils Data)
- Vegetation Indicative of Wetlands (HC Landcover, 2008)

The following map identifies areas are likely environmentally constrained. Because all of data sources utilized in this analysis have not been evaluated at the parcel level and the landscape changes over time, there is a continued need to update this analysis as new data becomes available. In addition, wetland delineations of a site may be utilized to determine the exact location of a wetland.

## Development Potential

A number of factors were taken into consideration when defining areas that have the most potential for growth. The following factors were considered when determining where to focus future growth; however, it was not used to define the most appropriate type of growth:

- Proximity to major arterial roadways and proposed roadways;
- Roadway capacity;
- Proximity to existing and future major highway interchanges;
- Water and Sewer Service Areas;
- Areas along major gas lines;
- Well drained soils;
- Vacant properties in close proximity to other development;
- Land that falls within a five mile coverage area of existing fire stations;
- Properties zoned for major residential subdivisions that are incomplete or have not commenced construction; and
- Redevelopment areas, as defined by public input





## FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map is used to guide decisions on rezoning requests, changes to the zoning ordinance and development regulations, capital improvements, and other regulatory and planning initiatives. The Future Land Use Map, as seen on the next page, translates the vision, goals, and policy recommendations in the rest of the Plan into a map form. It represents a vision for the desired uses in the future and illustrates where new housing, community and employment centers, and services should locate over the next twenty years in order to achieve that vision. It does not convey the ultimate build out of Horry County.

The Future Land Use Map defines where future development in neighborhoods, districts, along corridors, infill development, or in any defined planning area is most appropriate. The land use pattern and recommended uses are outlined in the definitions, and the mechanisms to achieve the desired form is found within the goals, objectives, and strategies of the next chapter. Because Horry County's landscape and community form is so diverse, the Future Land Use Map and definitions allow for variation in community form. This is done by addressing density, recommended land uses, transportation recommendations, and policy guidance for each Future Land Use Definition. A list of associated plans and example zoning districts of similar character are also within each definition. The recommended land uses provide a breakdown of primary, secondary, and conditional uses in order to convey a myriad of uses, but also identify those uses that may need further review. The Policy Guidance serves as a tool on how to address various land uses, including their design and appropriateness.



Example of Land Use Patterns intended by the Future Land Use Map

## Recommended Future Land Uses in Horry County

Future Land Use	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of County
Scenic & Conservation Areas	284,090.2	443.89	38.93%
Rural	257,477.0	402.31	35.29%
Rural Communities	54,244.6	84.75	7.43%
Rural Activity Center	502.7	0.79	0.07%
Suburban	64,916.9	101.43	8.90%
Neighborhood Activity Center	2,010.6	3.14	0.28%
Commercial Corridors	326.8	7.15	0.63%
Mixed Use	9,168.5	14.33	1.26%
Community Activity Center	2,513.3	3.93	0.34%
Economic Development Center	1,991.6	2.94	0.26%
Municipal Land Area	48,295.1	75.46	6.62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>729,676.0</b>	<b>1140.12</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The Future Land Use Map and Definitions, along with the other chapters of the plan must be reviewed every 5 years to determine if updates need to be made to account for changing conditions. It is required to be fully updated at least every 10 years to ensure that the Plan is consistent with the desired direction of the community and accounts for changing trends and conditions. The Plan may, however,

be amended through Planning Commission and County Council approval, as necessary, according to procedures defined by the state. There are common misconceptions on what the Future Land Use Map and Definitions are and can result in, for instance:

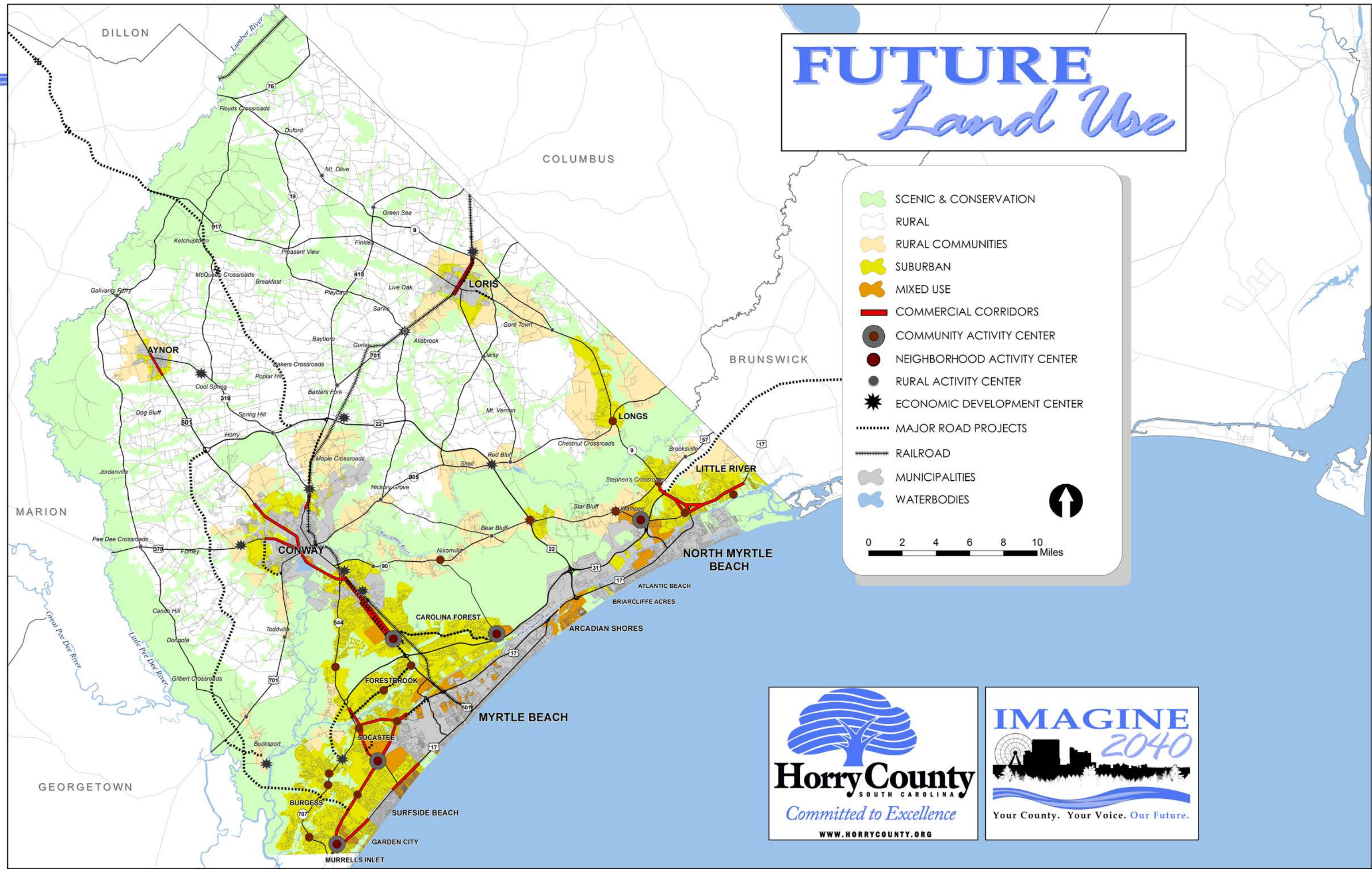
- It is not a zoning map nor does it change existing zoning, unless requested. When a rezoning application is submitted, the Future Land Use Map and Definitions are used as a tool in the decision making process.
- Does not take away existing development rights granted through current zoning nor does it take away vested development rights; therefore, does not constitute a takings.

The completion of major transportation projects and major developments are examples of when the Future Land Use Map should be revisited by Planning Commission and County Council. Other examples may include the completion of fire rescue stations, schools, or the development of a major employment center.

### 3rd Reading Amendment:

**Recognizing the fact that the Comprehensive Plan is a living document that requires modification and change, those involved in evaluating requested changes in zoning districts on the zoning map shall take into consideration the surrounding zoning and existing land uses when deciding whether the requested land use districts shall be approved, whether it may or may not be precluded elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan document. Additionally, all zoning requests approved or disapproved by the Planning Commission shall be presented to Council for a vote and final approval or disapproval.**





# FUTURE *Land Use*

- SCENIC & CONSERVATION
- RURAL
- RURAL COMMUNITIES
- SUBURBAN
- MIXED USE
- COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS
- COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER
- NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTER
- RURAL ACTIVITY CENTER
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER
- MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS
- RAILROAD
- MUNICIPALITIES
- WATERBODIES

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles



**Horry County**  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
*Committed to Excellence*  
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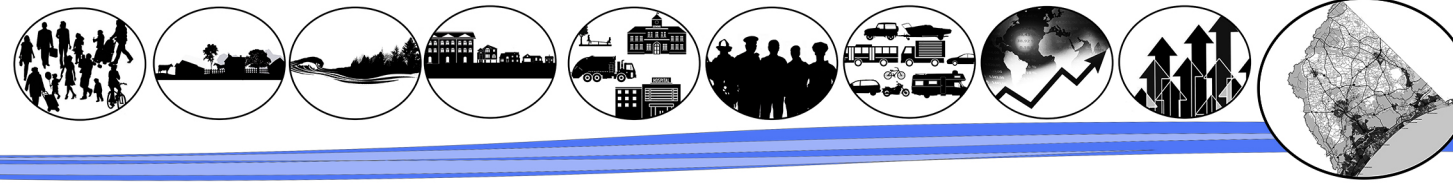
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Your County. Your Voice. Our Future.



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## Scenic & Conservation Areas



### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Environmentally sensitive and scenic areas, such as Carolina Bays, estuarine and forested wetlands, undeveloped beachfront, forestlands, floodplains, agricultural lands, and natural recreational and open spaces. Example properties include the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Heritage Preserves, and numerous privately preserved lands. These areas are important for the ecosystem services (flood control, stormwater filtration, clean air), educational and research opportunities, and for nature-based recreation. Many of these areas are either flood or wildfire prone, so development within and adjacent to these areas should take these hazards into consideration.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Limited development. If developed, design should use low-impact designs principles to support environmental preservation and avoid natural hazards. Subdivision of land into lots less than 5 acres in size for new development is discouraged. In suburban and urbanizing areas of the County, these areas should be considered for dedication as open space in new development.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Open space, nature-based recreation, timberland, agriculture and agricultural/forestry support uses.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Permanent and temporary educational and research facilities, eco-tourism and agritourism operations.

**Conditional Uses:** Outdoor shooting ranges, campgrounds.

### TRANSPORTATION

These areas have limited opportunities for alternative transportation, unless an identified project within a transportation plan or integrated as open space within a major residential subdivision or public recreation facility.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

1. If Scenic & Conservation Areas make up a portion of a property, it should not prohibit the remaining portion of the property from being developed.
2. These areas should be considered to meet or mitigate open space criteria within major residential subdivisions, as defined within the Land Development Regulations.
3. If the County pursues the development of a Density Bonus Program, Scenic & Conservation Areas should be identified as "sending" areas for transferring out development rights to higher density "receiving" areas.
4. If outdoor shooting ranges are pursued, an evaluation of the surrounding natural resources and communities should strongly be taken into consideration.
5. If campgrounds are pursued, an evaluation of the surrounding natural resources and communities should strongly be taken into consideration. Tree canopy and natural assets should be incorporated into the design. Full-time residency should not be supported.
6. In cases where more site specific information, such as wetland delineations and soil data, is available to show that a property or a portion of a property is not environmentally constrained, that information may be presented to the Planning Commission to be considered for uses other than those defined within the recommended land use list or described development pattern. The proposed development would need to be consistent with character of the community and not adversely impact the surrounding landscape. Development would need to address natural hazards, stormwater, public safety, access management,

and wildlife through design, mitigation measures, capital improvements, or other necessary tools.

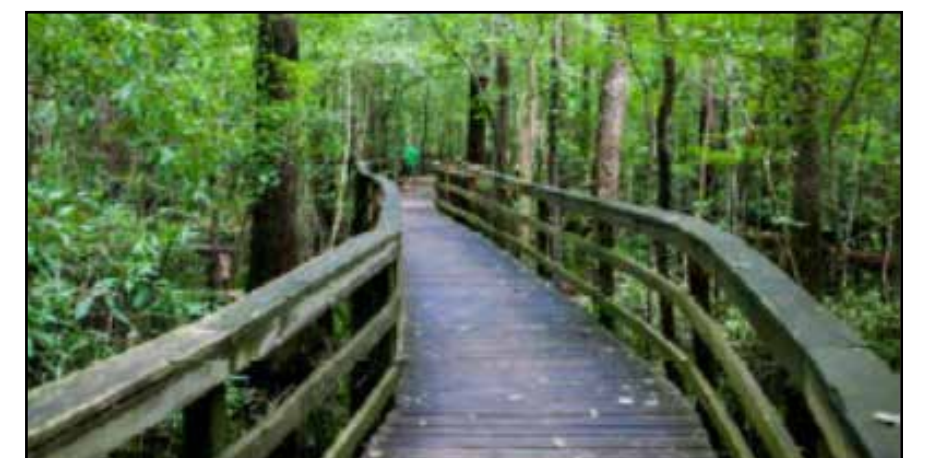
7. If development is deemed appropriate, it should incorporate best management practices for protecting environmentally sensitive areas and water quality, in addition to avoiding natural hazards and addressing public safety issues.

### RELEVANT PLANS

Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

CP, CO1, AG1, AG4, AG5







## LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Rural areas should support the preservation of farmland and prime agricultural soils, in addition to the preservation of other natural resources, scenic views, and cultural and historic resources. Land development should retain the rural character by retaining large tracts of land, preserving wide natural buffers between differing land uses, and discouraging land uses that are incompatible to adjacent agricultural uses. Commercial development and services are allowable in Rural Activity Centers, primarily located at historic rural cross-roads.

## DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Active working lands, such as farms and forests, and large single family lots or family subdivisions with a minimum lot size of ½ an acre or maximum of 2 net units per acre.

## RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Agriculture, timberland, and their support uses and services, including, but not limited to crop and livestock processing facilities, stables, veterinary services and farm equipment sales. Single-family detached houses, including mobile homes, on individual large lots.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Agritourism and eco-tourism uses.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Rural amusement, outdoor shooting ranges, campgrounds.

## TRANSPORTATION

These areas have limited opportunities for alternative transportation, unless an identified project within a transportation plan.

## POLICY GUIDANCE

1. Protect active agricultural and forestry operations, prime farmland, and erodible soils, in addition to other important natural features.
2. Major residential subdivisions are discouraged to minimize the impact on public services and infrastructure.
3. If rural amusement, outdoor shooting ranges, or campgrounds are pursued, an evaluation of the surrounding natural resources and communities should strongly be taken into consideration.
4. If the County pursues the development of a Density Bonus Program, Rural Areas should be identified as "sending" areas for transferring out development rights to higher density "receiving" areas.

## RELEVANT PLANS

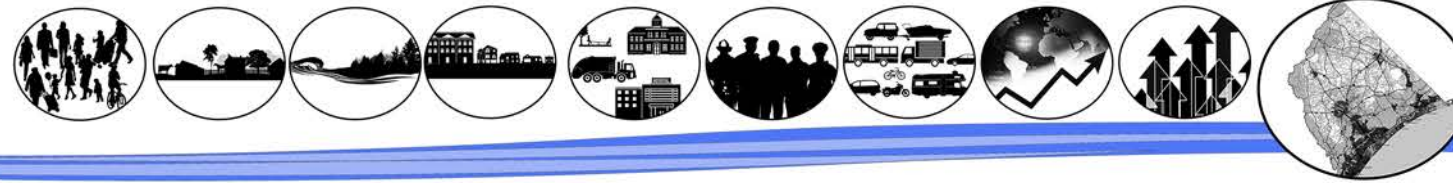
Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, Mount Vernon Rural Area Management Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

## EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

AG1, AG2, AG4-7, RE, CP, CO1, SF/MSF40, SF/MSF 20







## Rural Communities

### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Rural communities that have historically grown at a higher density than surrounding rural areas due to land being subdivided for relatives. Many of these communities are experiencing transition because they are located in close proximity to municipalities, high growth areas, and/or major road corridors. Individual single family lots and subdivisions are allowable as long as they do not adversely impact the existing character of the community. Neighborhood commercial and services are located along major arterial roadways and within historic Rural Activity Centers and at new highway interchanges.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Single-family residential developments, including minor and major subdivisions, with lot sizes greater than 14,500 sq ft or with a maximum of 3 net units per acre. New master planned subdivisions are allowable, but should minimize impacts to natural and aesthetic resources, avoid natural hazards, and provide large buffers between differing land uses. Neighborhood commercial and services are allowable along major arterial roadways and SCDOT designated business routes if compatible with the community and the property can adequately support the proposed use and development requirements. Otherwise, commercial development and services should be located in designated Activity Centers to minimize sprawling development patterns.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Single-family detached housing, including mobile homes, individual lots or within subdivisions.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Neighborhood commercial uses and services, including tradeshops.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Rural amusement, campgrounds, mobile home parks.

### TRANSPORTATION

These areas have limited opportunities for alternative transportation; however, projects specified within adopted transportation plans should be incorporated into future projects.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

1. Subdivision of land for single-family detached housing units are allowable, as long as it coincides with existing residential development patterns and do not impede on adjacent farming operations.
2. Infill residential neighborhoods should provide large natural buffers between differing land uses and along collector and arterial roadways to limit the visual impact on the existing community, agricultural lands, and other surrounding natural, historical, and cultural assets.
3. Infill residential neighborhoods preserve substantial open space, natural features and buffers, and viewsheds, as opposed to developing a conventional suburban neighborhood in a rural setting. Infill development utilizing MRD1 zoning may allow for slightly increased density and lot sizes, as small as 10,000 sq ft lots, in exchange for the protection of large, contiguous open spaces and other sustainable development criteria.
4. New residential subdivisions, lots, and new accessory dwellings should be served by public water and sanitary sewer service to protect water quality and minimize impacts to those still utilizing wells and septic tanks.
5. The availability of adequate public infrastructure and services, especially in regards to public safety and schools,

should be taken into account prior to the approval of rezoning requests.

6. Housing rehabilitation and redevelopment is encouraged within these areas to address properties in need of reinvestment.
7. Neighborhood commercial and tradeshops should be allowable along arterial roadways and business routes when the parcel is deep enough to support the use, can meet development requirements without variances, and does not impact existing residential uses, historic and cultural resources, and nearby farming operations.
8. If rural amusement, campgrounds, or mobile home parks are pursued, an evaluation of the surrounding natural resources and natural hazards, historic and cultural resources, and communities should strongly be taken into consideration.

### RELEVANT PLANS

Bennett Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

AG1-AG7, RE, SF/MSF 14.5-40, MRD1



Traditional Development Pattern



Infill Neighborhood





## LAND USE AND CHARACTER

A Rural Activity Center provides opportunities at major rural crossroad locations for commercial development and services to meet the needs of the surrounding rural community. This can include small feed stores, restaurants, convenience grocery markets, and similar smaller scale retail uses and services. Residential uses are not encouraged within these activity centers in order to preserve these areas for economic activity.

## DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

These centers are located at major intersections within rural areas of the County. They typically already have some commercial uses and services. Rural Activity Centers are intended to have a 1/8 mile radius and be 1/4 mile across. In cases where there are environmental constraints, impacts to these areas should be avoided.

## RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Feed stores, restaurants, convenience stores, gasoline and automobile service stations, and produce stands.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Grocery and general stores, hardware stores, auto and farm equipment sales, tradeshops, and other commercial uses.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Rural amusement, ecotourism and agritourism operations, campgrounds.

## TRANSPORTATION

These areas have limited opportunities for alternative transportation, unless an identified project within a transportation plan.

## POLICY GUIDANCE

1. Rural Activity Centers should incorporate context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential properties and active farmland to protect them from negative impacts, such as light, sound, and traffic.
2. Development should be limited to one or two story commercial establishments on individual lots.
3. Large scale commercial development that requires significant road capacity improvements and numerous curb cuts are not appropriate, unless access management best practices are utilized.
4. Commercial development should not promote a strip commercial development pattern or fragmented "leap frog" development pattern along road corridors.

## RELEVANT PLANS

Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

## EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

AG2, AG3







### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Suburban areas include a mixture of housing types at suburban densities, providing a transition from low-density rural communities to more intense high-density urban environments. Major subdivisions should support healthy lifestyles through active recreation, open space, bicycle and pedestrian access, and walkable block lengths. Multi-family developments are encouraged near Neighborhood Activity Centers, within Community Activity Centers, and within unincorporated areas within municipalities where there is adequate road capacity and potential for public transit options. Neighborhood and regional commercial uses and services are encouraged at Activity Centers and within Mixed-Use areas. Smaller commercial uses and services are allowed along major arterial roadways if compatible with the community and the property is adequately sized to support the proposed use and development requirements.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Residential development should have a density between 3 - 7 gross units per acre within major subdivisions and as small as 6,000 sq ft for individual, single family lots. A mix of residential uses and densities is appropriate within neighborhoods; however, greater densities and commercial activities are encouraged near Neighborhood Activity Centers and within Community Activity Centers and Mixed-Use areas. Developments should support walkability and be designed around significant natural resources and account for natural hazards. Neighborhood commercial and services may also be located along major arterial roadways, along SCDOT business and bypass routes and along Commercial Corridors, provided that the property is adequately sized to support the proposed use and development requirements.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Single-family detached houses, duplexes, townhomes.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Commercial uses, services, and professional offices. Multi-family development and condos.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Outdoor amusement and resort uses.

### TRANSPORTATION

New residential development should support multi-modalism through walkable block lengths and an integrated road and pedestrian network. Upgrades to arterial and collector roads may be necessary based upon the scale of the development and any associated transportation plans for the area. Vehicular and pedestrian connectivity between adjacent developments and commercial areas is encouraged. Developments should be designed to provide bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout, either through conventional sidewalks or through greenway and trail access.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

1. Major, master planned developments are encouraged to minimize fragmented development patterns and support an internally and externally interconnected road and bicycle and pedestrian network, while also minimizing the need for multiple curb cuts along major arterial roadways. The road network should be developed in a gridded pattern or modified grid pattern with connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial uses to support walkability and healthy lifestyles.
2. Major, master planned development should provide a mixture of housing types and lot sizes.
3. Neighborhood open space should be interconnected when feasible, and recreational open space should be easily accessible to all residents.

4. The protection of mature tree canopy is encouraged within major subdivisions, on private residential lots, and within commercial developments.
5. Floodplains, wetlands, and water quality should be protected by using no adverse impact and low impact development practices.
6. Mitigation of open space may be utilized to support higher net densities through the use of MRD 2 and MRD 3, provided that multiple sustainable development standards also met.
7. Commercial uses, services, and professional offices may be appropriate at entranceways to major, master planned developments, along major arterial roadways, SCDOT business and bypass routes, and Commercial Corridors, provided that it fits within the character of the community, the property is appropriately sized to meet development requirements, is buffered from dissimilar uses, and addresses traffic concerns.
8. If outdoor amusement or resort uses are pursued, the impact on the surrounding communities should be evaluated. The property should be adequately sized to meet development requirements, substantially buffered from dissimilar uses, and address traffic, noise and nuisance concerns.

### RELEVANT PLANS

Burgess Community Area Plan, Garden City Area Plan, Little River Neighborhood Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

SF/MSF 6 – 14.5, MRD 2, MRD 3, PDD, TND, PR1, ME1





## LAND USE AND CHARACTER

A Neighborhood Activity Center should provide the commercial and institutional uses necessary to support the common day-to-day demands of the surrounding neighborhood, including neighborhood commercial, services, and office space. A grocery store shopping center is a typical anchor establishment in Neighborhood Activity Centers, but may also include medical offices, restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, small banking facilities, and other convenience retail.

## DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Neighborhood Activity Centers are located at major intersections on arterial roadways and in close proximity to residential areas that can support commercial uses. They have a ¼ mile radius and are up to ½ wide. Neighborhood commercial uses include, but are not limited to, grocery stores, small scale drycleaners, professional offices, coffee shops, bakeries and restaurants, drug-stores, and convenience stores. These Activity Centers are intended to minimize “leapfrogging” development patterns along corridors. These uses should be integrated to better serve surrounding residential properties through pedestrian access and mitigate noise, light, or traffic impacts to adjacent neighborhoods. Higher density residential uses may be allowable near these Activity Centers.

## RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Grocery store, restaurant, bar, personal service, professional office, financial institution, small format medical office, personal service, drug store, drive-through restaurants, convenience stores, gasoline stations, and smaller-scale retail shopping.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Multi-family housing, amusement, storage facilities.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Tradeshops and other uses that require outdoor storage or repair.

## TRANSPORTATION

A complete streets approach should be taken into consideration to allow for people to walk and bike to meet their daily shopping needs. Upgrades to arterial and collector roads may be necessary based upon the scale of the development and any associated transportation plans for the area. Best practices for access management should be utilized.

## POLICY GUIDANCE

1. Neighborhood Activity Centers should be designed to integrate with adjacent neighborhoods, providing safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access, as well as accessibility for automobiles.
2. Neighborhood Activity Centers should use context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential neighborhoods and protect adjacent residential properties from negative impacts such as light, sound, and traffic.
3. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
4. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred, along with shared parking when feasible.
5. To increase the vitality of Neighborhood Activity Center, these nodes should be oriented to face the fronting road corridor, and provide a “face” to neighboring developments. Where feasible, the buildings should be located

closer to the roadway with parking to the rear or centralized to surrounding uses.

6. Uses that require outdoor storage, such as those allowed within HC. RE4, may be allowable, provided that they do not interfere with the character of a community.
7. New development and redevelopment within aging commercial areas should improve visual character within the area through tree plantings and landscaping, architectural features, location of parking, and signage.

## RELEVANT PLANS

Burgess Community Area Plan, Little River Neighborhood Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

## EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

RE1-2, ME1, ME2, PR1, ME1







### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Commercial corridors include arterial roadways that have historically developed with commercial, office, and service uses. They do not include established single-family residential subdivisions that may back up to the corridor. Commercial Corridors may provide a vertical and horizontal mix of suburban scale retail, commercial, office, service and institutional land uses. These corridors are punctuated by higher intensity development located at Activity Centers and within Mixed Use areas where the highest intensity and integration of uses should occur.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Commercial development along existing commercially-developed corridors with opportunities for infill and redevelopment. Unique design criteria may be defined within Overlays to ensure that redevelopment and infill consistently results in a similar community appearance and character. New development and redevelopment should minimize access management issues, aesthetics and landscaping, and support pedestrian-scale, mixed use formats when feasible.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Retail shopping, drug stores, restaurants and bars, drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations, automobile sales, professional offices, financial institutions, medical offices, personal services.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Hotels and amusement activities. Services, storage, and light industrial.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Townhomes and multi-family developments are appropriate along the corridor, but are preferably developed within Mixed-Use areas and Community Activity Centers.

### TRANSPORTATION

Transportation improvements should address the need for access management improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, bus stop standards, streetscaping and lighting, and corridor widths identified within transportation plans.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

1. New development and redevelopment within aging commercial corridors should improve visual character along the corridor through site orientation, tree plantings and landscaping, architectural features, location of parking, and signage. Development of standardized site design requirements to create unique corridors is recommended to facilitate a unified character and clear transition into Activity Centers.
2. Larger master-planned developments, as opposed to single parcel infill and redevelopment projects, are encouraged to result in consistent design themes throughout, including architectural features and signage, promote shared parking, and consolidate points of ingress and egress.
3. To increase the vitality of corridors and their adjacent Activity Centers, new development should create a "main street" pattern of development, with buildings being closer to the road and having reduced front setbacks with parking to the rear where feasible.
4. Vertical mixing of uses along the corridor is allowable up to 5 stories tall with the tallest buildings being closer to Activity Centers. This does not override any Height Overlay standards.
5. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.

6. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.
7. The location of parking to the side or rear of developments is encouraged. Consideration should be given to reduce parking requirements to facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties.

### RELEVANT PLANS

Northeast Area Transportation Plan, South Kings Highway Transportation Plan, GSATS 2040 Transportation Plan.

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

RE1-4, MRD 2, MRD 3, PDD, AM1, AM2, ME1, PR1, PR2







## LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Areas include established commercial, office, and medium to high-density residential developments. It also includes large undeveloped sites in close proximity to existing urban areas or as unincorporated 'donut-holes' within municipalities. These areas are typically located along or off of arterial roadways and exclude low-density single-family residential subdivisions. These areas also include prime opportunities for redevelopment projects. Mixed-use areas should provide a vertical and horizontal mix of retail, commercial, office, moderate to high-density residential, and institutional land uses. Open spaces and parks are also important uses within Mixed-Use Areas and often serve as focal points of major developments. These areas are punctuated by higher intensity development located at "nodes" called Community Activity Centers where the highest density and integration of mixed uses occurs. Outside of these nodes, development intensity decreases and the fringes of these Mixed-Use areas should integrate into the surrounding, established Suburban areas. Some light industrial uses may be appropriate, but industrial uses and services that may have adverse impacts on the community are discouraged.

## DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Mixed Use areas are encouraged to be developed as large master planned developments that integrate a variety of land uses that support both local residents and our local economy. Grid and modified grid development patterns with short block lengths are preferred over curvilinear and cul-de-sac designs to support interconnectivity, walkability, and pedestrian scale development. Master planned developments are encouraged to utilize large available tracts or

to consolidate smaller tracts into a larger tract in order to encourage a cohesive development design and feel. Infill lots within municipalities should be developed to encourage their incorporation into the municipality. Residential development greater than 7 gross units per acre are encouraged near Community Activity Centers. Residential development less than 7 gross units per acre is more appropriately located along the fringe of Mixed Use areas, closer to Suburban areas.

## RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Resorts, hotels, dense multi-family housing, professional offices, restaurants and bars, financial institutions, medical offices, personal services, drug stores, large and small-scale retail shopping.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Single-family, detached and attached, drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Light industrial and tradeshops.

## TRANSPORTATION

Developments are encouraged to be planned as larger master planned developments to increase access management opportunities and reduce the number of driveways on serving roads. Internal connectivity between commercial, office, and residential developments should occur. As feasible, new road improvements and suburban commercial centers should provide safe and easy access to travelers riding the bus and walking from adjacent developments.

## POLICY GUIDANCE

1. New development and redevelopment should be large master-planned developments that improve character of the community through site orientation, road and pedestrian network, and through consistent design themes

throughout, including architectural features, landscaping, and signage.

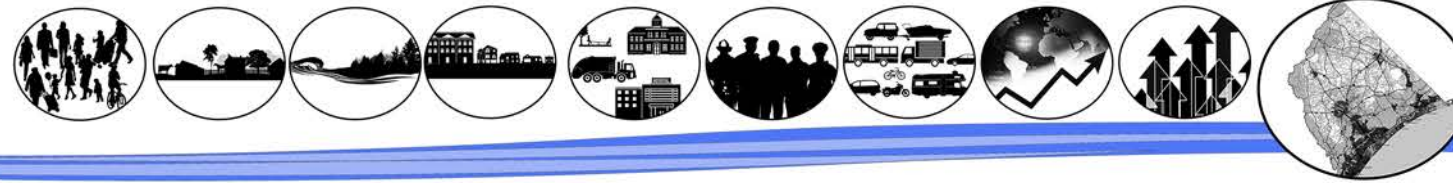
2. To increase the vitality of this area and their adjacent Activity Centers, new development should be sited with fronts facing the road or other site orientations to create a "main street" pattern of development.
3. Vertical mixing of uses "stacking") is the preferred form of development within the area and generally should range from 2-5 stories, with the tallest buildings within Activity Centers and tapering off. Infill development should be consistent with the surrounding heights and setbacks.
4. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
5. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.
6. The location of parking to the side or rear of developments is encouraged. Consideration should be given to reduce parking requirements to facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties.

## EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

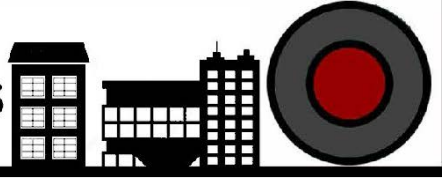
PDD, TND, MRD 3, RE1-3, ME1, PR1







## Community Activity Centers



### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

A Community Activity Center should include an integrated mix of commercial (shopping, services), office, and residential uses, arranged in a walkable pattern with an active pedestrian realm where buildings front streets. The center may include both vertically (within multi-story buildings) and horizontally mixed uses, with ground floor retail and offices and housing on upper floors. The height and greatest intensity of Mixed-Use areas should be located within Community Activity Centers.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Community Activity Centers should serve as a central location for community activity, including high density residential units that are integrated into areas of commercial activity and civic space. These centers are ½ mile in radius and up to 1 mile across, transitioning into less intense uses. Development should be in the traditional grid pattern fashion and be focused on outdoor civic space and commercial uses. The center should be surrounded by residential areas that support the inner core. The inner core may support building heights up to 5 stories high.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Large and small format retail centers and shops, grocery stores, restaurants, bars, personal services, multifamily housing located above non-residential uses on the ground floor, and public gathering spaces such as plazas.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Stand-alone multi-family housing, professional offices, and other commercial uses, including amusement, entertainment, and tourism related uses.

**Conditional Land Uses:** Light industrial and tradeshops.

### TRANSPORTATION

Developments are encouraged to be planned as large master planned developments to increase access management opportunities, reduce the number of driveways on serving roads, and support use of bus transit. Internal connectivity between commercial, office, and residential developments is encouraged. As feasible, new road improvements and commercial centers should use the "complete streets" approach to provide safe and easy access to travelers riding the bus and walking from adjacent developments.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

1. New development and redevelopment should be large master-planned developments that improve character of the community through site orientation, road and pedestrian network, and through consistent design themes throughout, including architectural features, landscaping, and signage.
2. To increase the vitality of this area and their adjacent Activity Centers, new development should be sited with fronts facing the road or other site orientations to create a "main street" pattern of development.
3. Vertical mixing of uses ("stacking") is the preferred form of development within the area and generally should range from 2-5 stories, with the tallest buildings within Activity Centers and tapering off. Infill development should be consistent with the surrounding heights and setbacks.
4. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
5. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.

6. The location of parking to the side or rear of developments is encouraged. Consideration should be given to reduce parking requirements to facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties.
7. Density bonuses and reduced development standards, such as parking, should be considered to encourage focused development within Community Activity Centers.
9. Public-private partnerships should be undertaken on catalyst projects to trigger the redevelopment process in underutilized commercial areas. Public investments may include the sale or conveyance of lands and public infrastructure improvements.
10. Centers should use context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential neighborhoods and protect adjacent residential properties from negative impacts such as light, sound, and traffic.

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

PDD, TND, MRD 3, RE1-3, ME1, PR1



An illustration of the prototypical development pattern assumed for a community activity center.



## Economic Development Center

### LAND USE AND CHARACTER

Concentrated areas of high quality employment facilities, adjacent to complementary retail and commercial uses and/or residential uses. This category encourages development of manufacturing, industrial, distribution, services, and office uses in locations that will minimally affect surrounding properties. Commercial uses are secondary to major employment uses.

### DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

Master planned industrial and business parks should include a mix of uses within single developments, including employment, convenience commercial and dining, and housing. These mixed use employment “campuses” provide opportunities for employees to conveniently shop and dine during normal business hours. Smaller scale, single-use employment developments located along major roads should be designed to appropriately buffer manufacturing and industrial uses from adjacent properties. Secondary commercial and residential uses should be located along primary road corridors proximate to employment centers.

### RECOMMENDED LAND USES

**Primary Land Uses:** Manufacturing, warehousing and logistics centers, light and heavy industrial, research and development facilities, business parks, and other major employers.

**Secondary Land Uses:** Personal service, financial institution, small format medical office, personal service, drug store, smaller-scale retail shopping, and restaurants. Resorts, large sports tourism or amusement facilities, and other commercial uses, such as drive-through restaurants, convenience stores

and gasoline stations, are more appropriately located near highway interchanges.

**Conditional Uses:** Multi-family housing, schools, and other uses that may inhibit the development of these sites for major economic development initiatives.

### TRANSPORTATION

Maintaining vehicular access and capacity is the primary goal within these areas to ensure that trucks and industrial vehicles have adequate road capacity to and from employment centers.

### POLICY GUIDANCE

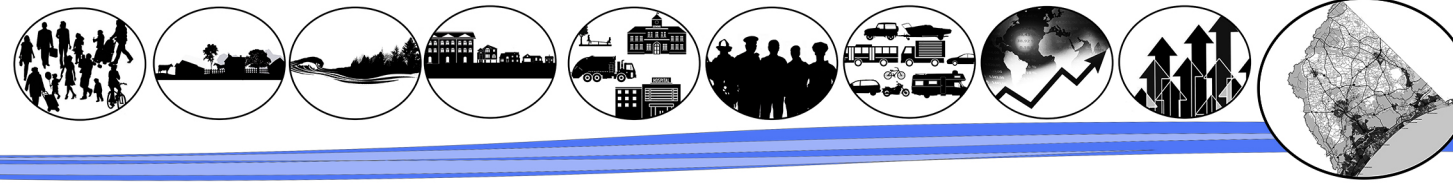
1. Industrial and business park uses are the preferred land use for these areas. Other developments should be adequately buffered from industrial uses to eliminate incompatibility issues.
2. To the extent possible, employment centers should be designed to function as “campuses” with integrated pedestrian facilities and transitions to adjacent, less intensive uses.
3. Light and heavy industrial and manufacturing uses should be designed to mitigate impacts on adjoining lower intensity uses, such as business parks.
4. To preserve industrial uses, residential uses within these areas should exceed 7 gross units per acre.
5. All areas along the railroad that are currently zoned for industrial uses should be preserved to allow for the return of industrial activities. Residential and commercial uses should be deterred from locating along this transportation corridor.

### EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS OF SIMILAR CHARACTER

MA1, MA2, ME1, ME2, MI, PDD, PA1, PR1, PR2





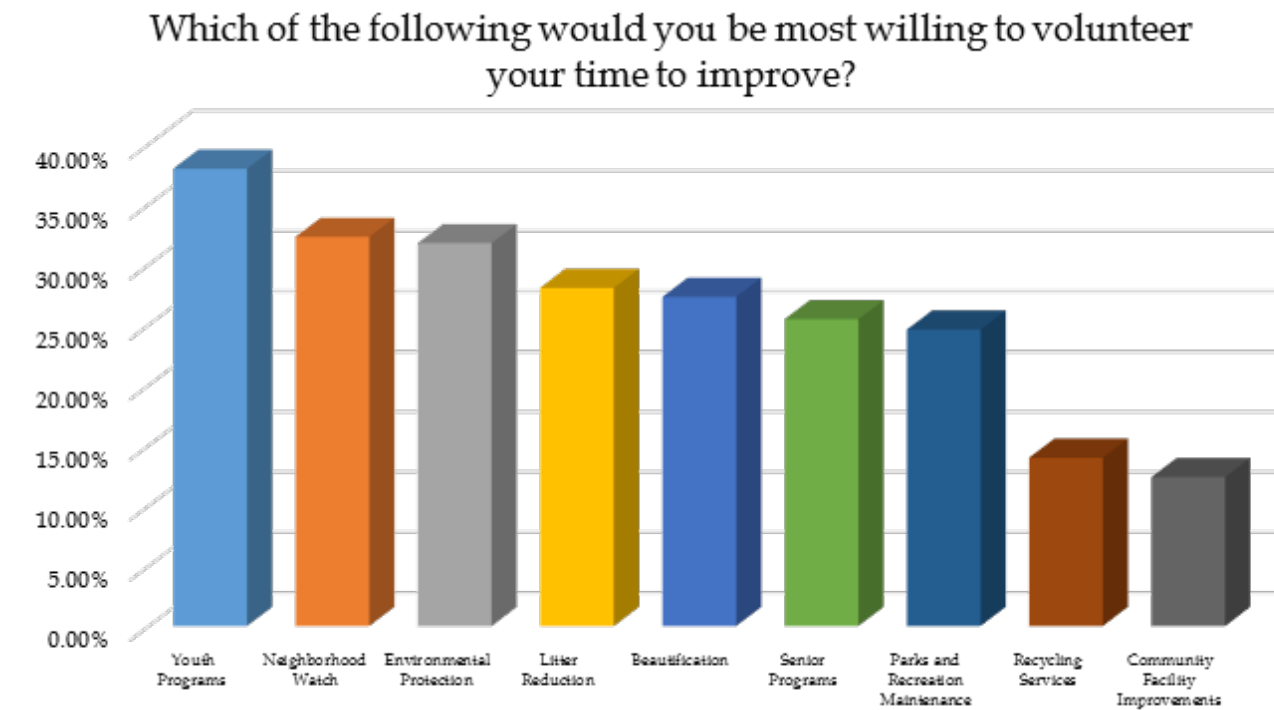


## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Keeping the public informed about County initiatives is a necessity in order to keep people engaged in the public process and to determine the needs of the community. Long-range planning is one facet of County engagement. In addition, communication with the public regarding rezoning, variance, telecommunications, and other such requests is imperative.

In order to improve public engagement and knowledge of County efforts, the County has many opportunities to expand its outreach. Such improvements should include information available on the County's website, engaging the public through social media, and communicating through personalized information on HCCConnect, the County's mobile app. Traditional forms of communication also need expansion, such as press releases announcing upcoming capital projects and projects that are being completed. Communication with the public during the development of a major project is also important, as it lets them know how things are progressing, even when they do not see any work underway. Public engagement through outreach events like community forums, community meetings, workshops, summits, and open houses are also critically important. The Planning and Zoning Department has committed to attending many of these such events annually in an effort to not only improve public knowledge but also to elicit public participation in the planning process.

Respondents of the survey conducted for this Comprehensive Plan revealed that many are willing to volunteer their time for the betterment of our community. Overwhelmingly, respondents were willing to dedicate their time to youth programs, neighborhood watches, environmental protection, litter reduction, and beautification. Respondents were also



willing to volunteer for senior programs and assisting with Parks and Recreation Maintenance. Utilizing these volunteers could not only help with facilitating future community engagement and participation in future planning efforts, but it would also help foster a greater sense of community amongst volunteers.

As the County continues to grow, it will be necessary to host community forums, charrettes, and special events that engage people in the planning process and better inform them on how to provide their input. Keeping people engaged after a first impression can be challenging, but is a critical step building upon past outreach successes. Through continual engagement, grassroots organizations and initiatives will develop, which are critical to creating a better sense of community and will grow future community leaders. These principles not only apply to the Planning and Zoning Department, but to many County departments. Coordination and creative approaches with other departments, agencies, and community groups is necessary to effectively engage the public and continue to remain informed of the community's needs, concerns, and desires. The information gathered through such outreach will keep County staff and officials informed of when there are changes in the community that should trigger changes in the Comprehensive Plan and other associated plans.



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# CHAPTER 12: GOALS AND STRATEGIES



## VISION STATEMENT

*"Horry County will sustain and enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by fostering healthy and safe communities, preserving our natural assets and rural heritage, encouraging business growth and economic diversification, and providing services and public facilities that will protect and strengthen our future."*

The vision statement for the IMAGINE 2040 Plan is intended to inspire and guide future growth and policies in Horry County. While the statement reflects high ideals and challenging ambitions, it reflects the needs, desires, and values of our community. This statement is a promise that Horry County will support until such a time that the vision is achieved or the Plan revised.

## OVERARCHING GOALS OF THE PLAN

The following overarching goals further perpetuate the Vision of IMAGINE 2040. These principles serve as the foundation of the objectives and strategies within the plan and should be referenced when making land use and policy decisions to ensure that they are consistent with the vision of the community. They are listed in no particular order of priority.

### COMMUNITY CHARACTER

*'Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.'*

### RURAL PRESERVATION

*'Preserve rural areas and lifestyles, along with natural resources and assets, through land use decisions and policies.'*

### REVITALIZATION, REDEVELOPMENT, AND INFILL

*'Encourage and support community revitalization, redevelopment, and infill development that stabilizes and improves property values, promotes additional reinvestment, and enhances quality of life for our residents.'*

### HEALTHY, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

*'Foster the development of healthy, livable communities in which residents and visitors alike have access to a variety of housing and transportation options, facilities and services, culture and arts, and recreational and natural assets.'*

### SAFE COMMUNITIES

*'Protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors by providing adequate public safety facilities and services, enforcing and improving regulations, and minimizing incompatible land uses.'*

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

*'Coordinate growth and infrastructure improvements to efficiently and equitably meet the public facility and service needs of our existing and future populations.'*

### MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

*'Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.'*

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

*'Encourage and incentivize sustainable development activities that minimize and mitigate the impact on the natural environment and avoid adverse impacts on existing development.'*

### ECONOMIC GROWTH

*'Develop a more diversified and resilient economy that supports the recruitment and retention of businesses, encourages new investments, capitalizes and expands upon our existing niches, and ultimately results in greater economic stability of our residents and local businesses.'*

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*'Create an environment in which residents, businesses, and other stakeholders are engaging and informed of planning efforts, regulatory changes, infrastructure projects, and volunteer and partnership opportunities.'*



## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

It is recommended that Horry County implements the following strategies within either a short-term (one-to-two years), mid-term two-to-five years) or long-term five-and-more years) time frame. These strategies are intended to be attainable within the lifetime of IMAGINE 2040. They are serve as strategic guidance for Horry County and other governing bodies, departments and partners responsible for implementing this plan. The goals, objectives, and strategies should be reevaluated at least every five years to ensure that the County is progressing as planned and that evolving needs of the community can be met.

### COMMUNITY CHARACTER

*'Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.'*

As Horry County grows, new communities are emerging and historic and rural communities are experiencing change. In order to retain and foster community identity and pride, the County should work to strengthen the individualism of our communities by preserving and enhancing their aesthetics and land use form, preserving and conveying their history, retaining rural and beach cultures and lifestyles, and cultivating new and emerging community identities.

**Objective:** Develop and implement a community beautification and branding program.

- Develop and adopt a countywide Gateway Beautification Plan to improve roadway aesthetics along major corridors. [short-term]
- Continue to implement low maintenance beautification projects at Horry County facilities. [continuously]

- Expand the County's capacity to maintain and expand its corridor beautification program through dedicated funding and staffing. [mid-term]
- Pilot a branding and beautification plan in the Burgess Community. [short-term]
- Develop individualized community branding and beautification plans, as requested, to create distinct community identities. [mid-to- long-term]
- Assist community groups with implementation of their branding and beautification plans. [mid-to- long-term]

**Objective:** Develop and amend regulations that contribute towards distinct community character.

- Revise rezoning criteria to ensure rezoning requests are evaluated in accordance to the guidance in this Plan. [short-term]
- Revise the MRD zoning district to align with the Future Land Use definitions. [short-term]
- Revise Horry County's Corridor Overlays to ensure they positively influence community aesthetics and result in quality design. [short-term]
- Consolidate and simplify existing Overlays when feasible and appropriate. [short-term]
- Consider the establishment of an overlay for the Sea Mountain Highway, portions of Hwy 9, and Hwy 90 to Wampee leading into North Myrtle Beach. [mid-term]
- Explore the creation of gateway corridor overlays, extending into rural segments of the County, to ensure that main thoroughfares to our tourist destinations remain inviting and aesthetically pleasing. [mid-term]
- Host charrettes to capture the preferred form and design that can be translated into regulations that accurately reflect the desires of individual communities. [continuously]

**Objective:** Develop, update, and implement plans to ensure the character and form of communities are preserved and enhanced.

- Revise the Garden City Area Plan [mid-term]
- Develop a Garden City Downtown Master/Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, incorporating design and hazard mitigation options. [mid-term]
- Revise the Little River Neighborhood Plan. [Imid-term]
- Reauthorize the Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, Mt. Vernon Area Management Plan, Burgess Community Area Plan.
- Develop other plans and studies, as needed, to establish and preserve distinct community character.

**Objective:** Revise and simplify Horry County's sign regulations.

- Consolidate sign regulations to minimize duplication of content and inconsistencies between applicable ordinances. [short-term]
- Ensure that Horry County's sign ordinance can be upheld to Reed vs Town of Gilbert. [short-term]

**Objective:** Increase the number of designated historic properties in Horry County.

- Revise the Horry County Historic Preservation Plan. [short-term]
- Maintain a database of properties, structures, and districts that are eligible for the Horry County Historic Register and National Register of Historic Preservation. [continuously]
- Distribute information on the Horry County Historic Register and National Register of Historic Preservation to eligible property owners. [continuously]
- Host community education programs on how to obtain an historic property designation and to restore and protect their historic structures. [mid-term]





**Objective:** Expand efforts to educate residents and visitors about Horry County's history.

- Coordinate efforts between the Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation, the Horry County Historical Society, the Horry County Museum, and other appropriate partners to identify priority educational signage projects and lead organizations. [continuously]
- Pursue the installation of new historic markers. [continuously]
- Add storyboards conveying Horry County history at appropriate public facilities. [mid to long-term]
- Implement the Horry County Museum's Strategic Plan. [mid to long-term]
- Ensure that communities and public facilities are appropriately named and signed according to their geographic location or historic figures. [continuously]
- Recognize local businesses that have been in operation over 50 years through the Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation's "Legacy Business Program." [continuously]

## RURAL PRESERVATION

*'Preserve rural areas and lifestyles, along with natural resources and assets, through land use decisions and policies.'*

While Horry County is rapidly growing, the vast majority of its landscape remains comprised of agricultural and forest-lands. Residents in these areas would like to retain their rural lifestyle and community character without impeding their ability to grow their businesses. To preserve these rural areas and minimize the need for further expansion of public facilities and services, the County should avoid sprawling development patterns and leapfrogging of development along major corridors. It should also promote economic growth in agriculture, forestry, and agri-tourism and eco-tourism industries.

**Objective:** Preserve the historic properties, agrarian and natural landscapes, and way of life in western Horry County.

- Avoid suburban sprawl and leap-frog development patterns from encroaching into rural areas through zoning and land development regulations. [continuously]
- Continue to work with rural communities to develop individualized area plans, as needed.
- Establish a list of priority properties and structures in western Horry to consider for the Horry County Historic Register. [short-term]
- Add at least 10 properties in western Horry County to the Horry County Historic Register by 2025. [mid-term]
- Assist with the establishment of at least 5 new Century Farms by 2025. [mid-term]
- Pursue the designation of Pee Dee Highway as a SC Scenic Byway. [long-term]
- Encourage agricultural landowners to protect their property's agricultural use through conservation easements. [mid-term]
- Define Rural Amusement uses within the Zoning Ordinance

to support existing uses and minimize potential nuisances from intense amusement activities that may impact rural areas. [mid-term]

- Utilize identified priority conservation areas in rural areas for open space mitigation and density bonus derived from more densely developed areas of the County. [long-term]

**Objective:** Promote, expand, and protect the agricultural heritage of Horry County.

- Distribute information to farmers, Clemson Extension, and the local USDA on Horry County's agritourism permitting application. [short-term]
- Support agricultural, ecotourism, and heritage tourism by developing special provisions within the Zoning Ordinance. [mid-term]
- Partner with area Chambers of Commerce to promote agricultural and heritage tourism. [continuously]
- Develop a farmland preservation plan. [long-term]
- Revise roadside stand language within the Zoning Ordinance to support local agricultural activities and maintain the character of Horry County. [mid-term]
- Provide educational opportunities for youth and the public to learn about current and historical farming practices used in Horry County. [continuously]
- Pursue a formal feasibility study for the development of a multi-use agricultural facility to support local and regional farmers, equestrian activities, and expand tourism niches. [mid-term]
- Provide support infrastructure for local farmers markets at County facilities. [continuously]



## REVITALIZATION, REDEVELOPMENT, AND INFILL

*‘Encourage and support community revitalization, redevelopment, and infill development that stabilizes and improves property values, promotes additional reinvestment, and enhances quality of life for our residents.’*

Established neighborhoods and commercial centers are the backbone of Horry County. To counteract the cycle of disinvestment and decline that can occur in aging communities, the County will promote investment and redevelopment through its land planning and policies. It will also coordinate with municipalities to ensure that unincorporated areas within their boundaries are developed to meet the future growth pattern identified within their comprehensive plans, thus encouraging future annexation of these ‘donut holes.’

**Objective:** Develop, update, and implement neighborhood plans to encourage stabilization and revitalization.

- Implement the Bennett Loop and Racepath Neighborhood Plans. [mid-term]
- Develop and adopt a Bucksport Neighborhood Plan. [short-term]
- Develop and adopt a Socastee Area Plan. [mid-term]
- Develop and implement plans for other highly distressed neighborhoods, such as, but not limited to, Cedar Branch and Freemont. [long-term]

**Objective:** Decrease the number of blighted residential properties throughout Horry County.

- Establish and maintain an inventory of abandoned and blighted residential structures. [short-term]
- Continue to implement the emergency homeowner repair program. [continuously]
- Pursue abatement orders on uninhabitable residential structures. [continuously]

- Enforce and track property management and illegal dumping citations. [continuously]
- Continue the Horry County Residential Nuisance Abatement Program. [continuously]

**Objective:** Identify and develop targeted commercial revitalization areas.

- Create an inventory of potential commercial revitalization areas and establish a priority. [short-term]
- Develop and begin implementing revitalization plans for the highest priority areas. [mid-term]
- Support efforts to pass legislation allowing counties to demolish blighted commercial properties to reduce unsafe, nuisance properties. [mid-term]
- Consider the establishment of Priority Investment Zones that will incentivize commercial redevelopment and infill. [long-term]
- Promote the Economic Opportunity Zones for commercial and mixed-use infill development in urban areas. [continuously]

**Objective:** Promote revitalization and infill efforts.

- Minimize urban densities in unincorporated Horry County beyond those allowable within Mixed-Use and Community Activity Centers in an effort to encourage revitalization in municipalities. [continuously]
- Support TIF Districts or provide other incentives that will spur revitalization of unincorporated blighted commercial areas and municipal downtowns. [continuously]
- Support municipal efforts to provide safe, affordable housing through partnerships and funding assistance provided by Community Development. [continuously]

## HEALTHY, LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

*‘Foster the development of healthy, livable communities in which residents and visitors alike have access to a variety of housing and transportation options, facilities and services, culture and arts, and recreational and natural assets.’*

As Horry County continues grow, there will be an increased need to provide a variety of housing types and affordable housing options especially within suburban and urbanizing communities. Community design and infrastructure play a strong role in supporting and welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds, in addition to attracting economic development. Horry County’s land use policies and regulations, in addition to its capital improvements and services, serve as the foundation for creating healthy, livable communities.

**Objective:** Revise the Horry County Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to support a full range of land uses and form.

- Revise the Multi-Residential Zoning Districts to allow for greater variation in residential form and density that will coincide with the Future Land Use Map. [short-term]
- Remove obsolete and unutilized zoning districts from the Zoning Ordinance. [short-term]
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to encourage traditional neighborhood design components for both major developments and infill development, especially within Suburban, Mixed Use and Community Activity Centers as designated on the Future Land Use Map. [mid-term]
- Discourage residential down-zoning and encourage a vertical mixture of land uses, especially in Mixed Use and Community Activity Centers, to promote more urban form and support the Future Land Use Map. [continuously]
- Revise the zoning ordinance to allow for vertical mixture of residential and commercial uses.





**Objective:** Continue to monitor changes in population and demographics, in addition to trends in seasonal populations.

- Update the Comprehensive Plan upon the availability of the decennial Census data and the release of new population projections. [mid-term]
- Coordinate with local governments, the Chambers of Commerce, state agencies, Veteran's Affairs, Coastal Carolina University, and other service providers to better understand the numbers, composition, and influences of on the permanent and seasonal population. [continuously]
- Share population and housing trend information with County Council, area utilities, Horry County Solid Waste Authority, Horry County Schools, and others. [continuously]

**Objective:** Encourage safe, affordable housing throughout Horry County.

- Create developer incentives to incorporate affordable housing into new developments. [mid-term]
- Direct HUD funds towards the purchase of homes in existing and new developments that are in close proximity to public facilities, transportation, and job centers. [mid-term]
- Assist with the establishment of a non-profit organization dedicated to fair housing education and assistance in the region. [mid-term]
- Host a fair housing and first time home buyer education program annually. [mid-term]
- Encourage multi-family infill and redevelopment in urban areas by providing a mechanism to reduce or eliminate parking requirements, especially when public parking, transit options, and bicycle and pedestrian networks are available. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Increase the number of cultural and performing arts facilities, programs, and displays.

- Work with schools, galleries, and artisans to display artwork and other exhibits in Horry County government buildings. [continuously]
- Expand the use of the Horry County Museum, Parks and Recreation facilities, and Libraries to host additional cultural events, performances, public art, and exhibits throughout the year. [continuously]
- Incorporate art and exhibit display space into new County buildings that are open to the public. [continuously]
- Support the development of a regional public-private performing arts facility. [long-term]
- Consider the creation of an Arts Commission to assure that arts and culture are addressed in County decision making. [long-term]

**Objective:** Identify active and passive recreation needs throughout unincorporated Horry County.

- Adopt the Parks and Open Space Plan. [short-term]
- Maintain a Recreation Inventory, cataloging and mapping all recreational facilities, trails, and properties in Horry County. [continuously]
- Develop a Recreational Facility Maintenance and Expansion Plan. [mid-term]
- Develop and adopt a comprehensive countywide Greenways and Blueways Master Plan which will replace the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. [mid-term]
- Develop a standardized park and directional signage plan for all County recreation facilities. [mid-term]
- Develop one conceptual recreation facility master plan annually to inform cost estimates, phasing options, and to leverage grant funding and donations. [continuously]

**Objective:** Ensure recreational amenities and programs are accessible for all residents.

- Revise the open space criteria within the Land Development Regulations to ensure that open space is more integral to neighborhood design. [short-term]
- Acquire 100 acres for new parks, park expansions and open space by 2025 through land donations, coordination with developers, and the use of existing County-owned property. [long-term]
- Add 10 miles of trails and greenways by 2025. [long-term]
- Coordinate with federal and state agencies and conservation organizations to identify passive recreation opportunities on existing conservation land. [mid-term]
- Coordinate with area developers and businesses on the donation of land and equipment to support future recreational facilities. [mid-term]
- Maintain and enhance existing boat landing and beach access sites. [continuously]
- Consider the development of waterfront parks, walking trails, scenic overlooks, picnic sites, fishing docks, boardwalks, and eco-learning experiences where space allows. [continuously]
- Actively seek grants to help fund the development of new recreational facilities and programs. [continuously]
- Ensure that playgrounds, parks, and other recreational spaces meet the latest National Safety Guidelines and ADA accessibility regulations. [mid-term]
- Conduct recreational programming assessment and fee evaluation to ensure effective use of available public space and staffing for recreation. [mid-term]
- Create a County Parks and Recreation class and program membership that will allow for reduced costs for unlimited participation in programs; thus allowing for other fee increases for one-time participation. [mid-term]
- Develop an advertising plan to increase public awareness of facilities, programs and leagues. [short-term]



## SAFE COMMUNITIES

*‘Protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors by providing adequate public safety facilities and services, enforcing and improving regulations, and minimizing incompatible land uses.’*

As the County continues to grow, it will need to ensure that the public safety needs of our residents and visitors are taken into consideration. Traditional public safety needs should be accounted for to ensure that the County can prevent, minimize, and respond to emergencies of all scales. In addition, future losses should be avoided through regulations and design standards, in addition to enforcement of existing construction and zoning standards.

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**Objective:** Improve Public Safety response times.

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- Ensure that public safety departments are adequately staffed and properly equipped to meet the needs of the existing and growing population.
- Develop and implement a Text to 9-1-1 system. [short-term]
- Educate the public about when to call 9-1-1 and availability of non-emergency phone numbers. [short-term and ongoing]
- Ensure that the 9-1-1 Center is informed of large special events occurring throughout the County. [continuously]
- Establish an adequate level of service for all public safety departments to inform funding needs and inform staff rezoning recommendations. [short-term]
- Add and staff a 5th Police Precinct to accommodate future growth. [mid-to-long term]
- Add a 5th Fire Rescue Battalion to accommodate future growth. [mid-to-long term]

- Develop a public safety facilities and staffing assessment to inform existing and projected capital improvement and funding needs. [short-term]
- Strategically add EMS service throughout the County to improve coverage. [continuously]
- Transition Volunteer Fire Rescue Stations into Career Stations as merited and funding is available. [continuously]
- Limit new major residential subdivisions in areas of the County that do not have Career Fire Rescue Stations. [continuously]
- Ensure that new development has an interconnected road network, both internal and external, to allow for faster public safety response. [continuously]

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**Objective:** Improve the overall feeling of safety throughout Horry County.

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- Train officers, building inspectors, and planners in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. [short-term]
- Develop and implement a comprehensive environmental design crime prevention assessment and plan for Horry County facilities and public spaces. [mid-to-long term]
- Conduct environmental design community assessments in high crime areas and undertake activities to mitigate identified challenges. [continuously]
- Horry County Public Safety departments will attend at least 20 HOA and Community meetings each year. [continuously]
- Horry County Public Safety will conduct at least four active shooter trainings for the community each year. This includes tactical training, table tops, community meetings and school tours. [continuously]
- Horry County Police Department will increase traffic enforcement contacts by 5% more than previous year. [continuously]

- Each Horry County Police precinct will implement and update their community problem solving plans annually. [continuously]
- Increase the social media presence and communications from departments in the Public Safety Division. [mid-term]

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**Objective:** Reduce the degree of risk to life and property from disasters through adequately trained staff, educated public, and adequate facilities.

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- Construct a new emergency operations center to meet the existing and growing needs of the County. [mid-term]
- Conduct staff training for Horry County’s disaster response and recovery operations. [continuously]
- Ensure that staff are trained and equipped to rapidly assess damages after a flood, fire, or other disaster. [continuously]
- Conduct public education events on natural disaster preparedness and recovery annually. [continuously]
- Establish a Disaster Fund Reserve so the County does not need to wait on state and federal assistance to begin recovery efforts. [mid-term]
- Establish a Waste Management Fund Reserve of a minimum of \$10 million for debris clean up in the event of a disaster. [mid-term]

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**Objective:** Minimize future flood losses through regulations, policies, education, and training.

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- Adopt a revised flood hazard ordinance that includes State model language and coastal A-zone regulations. [short-term]
- Adopt policy or regulation to prohibit new critical facilities from being constructed in the 100 and 500 year flood-zone. [short-term]
- Adopt revised flood maps as part of the flood ordinance. [short-term]





- Develop a Floodplain Management Plan and Repetitive Loss Area Analysis that meets the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System scoring criteria. [mid-term]
- Develop and implement a Flood Resiliency Plan. [short-to-long term]
- Improve the County's Community Rating System Score to 6 or lower. [mid-term]
- Evaluate the feasibility of prohibiting fill within the flood-zone. [mid-term]
- Maintain at least six Certified Floodplain Managers on staff. [continuously]
- Host at least one internal and one external floodplain management training annually for staff and the public to be aware of available flood mitigation resources, construction alternatives, changes in regulations, and best practices. [continuously]
- Update the Land Development Regulations to require the installation of "Know Your Zone" evacuation areas signs at the entrance of all new neighborhoods within evacuation zones. [short-term]
- Decrease grade changes between existing and planned development as an amendment to the Land Development Regulations and Stormwater Ordinance. [mid-term]
- Update the Stormwater Ordinance and Design Manual. [mid-to-long term]
- Adopt a riparian and wetland buffer ordinance between development and water resources to allow for flood retention and the natural filtration of pollutants. [mid-term]
- Provide incentives for developers to preserve contiguous areas of natural vegetation and wetlands in residential communities for flood retention. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Become a Fire Adapted Community through wildfire education, mitigation, development regulations, and improved interagency coordination.

- Coordinate with SC Forestry Commission to host a bi-annual Community Wildfire Education Day. [continuously]
- Assist SC Forestry Commission on the establishment of additional Firewise Communities. [continuously]
- Coordinate with SC Forestry and residential communities to identify wildfire fuel reduction opportunities and assist with grant funding applications that support mitigation and community education efforts. [continuously]
- Work with SC Forestry, existing Firewise communities, and relevant agencies to develop a Countywide Wildfire Prevention Plan. [mid-term]
- Support community led initiatives to establish burn ban and firework free zones in wildfire risk areas of the County and where public safety concerns are objectively identified [continuously]
- Develop a floating overlay zone with construction and development criteria that result in communities that are safer from the start. [short-term]
- Amend the Land Development Regulations to address defensible space as a wildfire mitigation technique when new development is proposed in close proximity to large areas of forestland. [short-term]
- Discourage the approval of design modifications that reduce the required number of improved points of ingress and egress, result in longer block lengths, or smaller cul-de-sacs than required by the Land Development Regulations, especially in areas of the County that include or are in close proximity to Carolina Bays and other wildfire prone forestlands. [continuously]
- Support SC Forestry and SC Department of Natural Resources efforts to conduct controlled burns of Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. [continuously]

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

***'Coordinate growth and infrastructure improvements to efficiently and equitably meet the public facility and service needs of our existing and future populations.'***

To achieve our Future Land Use vision and to maximize use of existing resources and infrastructure, Horry County will ensure that our public safety, transportation, education, recreation, and utility infrastructure and services are adequately planned for and funded to meet and support a high quality of life for our residents and business community.

**Objective:** Regularly assess Horry County Government's facility and staffing needs.

- Evaluate the five-year Capital Improvements Plan annually to ensure that it is consistent with the facility recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and the changing needs of the community. [continuously]
- Develop a Facilities Master Plan to better inform existing and projected facility needs, including lifecycle upgrades, in an effort to inform priorities and cost estimates of existing and projected needs. [mid-term]
- Analyze and establish base service levels for all county-wide services and associated costs. [mid-term]
- Consider the development of an Adequate Public Facilities ordinance. [mid-term]
- Consider coinciding the establishment of tax districts and development agreements with the approval of major developments to ensure that public facilities and services can be met. [continuously]



**Objective:** Identify funding opportunities or efficiencies to support capital improvements and services.

- Utilize Development Agreements when appropriate. [continuously]
- Evaluate the feasibility of special tax districts within suburban and urban areas to fund higher service levels for public safety, recreation, drainage, and other services. [mid-term]
- Evaluate the feasibility of impact fees. [short-term]
- Evaluate franchise feasibility for curbside waste and recycling pick up in suburban and urban areas. [long-term]
- Decrease the need for foot traffic in government buildings by improving the availability of information and services on our website. [continuously]
- Consolidate County buildings to provide better customer service and reduce maintenance costs. [continuously]

## MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION

*'Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.'*

Horry County's quality of life, safety, and opportunities for economic diversification are strongly tied to having a transportation network that can easily provide access in and out of the County while also ensuring that residents and businesses have multiple modes of transportation available to their needs. As new development occurs, it should take into account both the local and regional impacts to the transportation network and adequately provide infrastructure to meet those needs. All means of transportation should be taken into consideration with future development, including the road network, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and mass transportation. In addition, the long term maintenance needs should be accounted for when developing new projects or adding to the transportation network.

**Objective:** Provide long term transportation safety and capacity solutions.

- Develop a list of transportation projects and cost estimates encompassing GSATS, Rural Transportation Study, Road Plan, Safety/Capacity Program, as well as other mobility needs. [short-term]
- Modify the local road plan to include vehicular and pedestrian related safety/capacity enhancements. [mid-term]
- Allocate local funds for the construction of I-73 and SELL. [continuously]
- Establish a permanent source of funding to support the construction of planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities in unincorporated Horry County. [mid-term]

- Conduct traffic counts annually for Horry County maintained collector and arterial roadways. [mid-term and continuously]
- Ensure that all planned road projects are integrated into the Official County Map as soon as designs are completed to minimize development from occurring in these future Right of Ways. [continuously]
- Revisit the Future Land Use Map after the completion of major road projects. [continuously]
- Host public meetings to ensure the community is informed of the progress of planned transportation projects. [continuously]

**Objective:** Complete the RIDE 3 Program on schedule.

- Keep the public informed of the progress of the design and construction of all RIDE 3 projects. [continuously]
- Post highly visible RIDE 3 signage along all major roadways that will experience improvements. [short-term]
- Create a wetland mitigation bank to support RIDE 3 and other transportation projections. [short-to-long term]

**Objective:** Maintain County road and transportation infrastructure.

- Update local road plan regularly. [continuously]
- Review local road plan to ensure equitable distribution of road user fee revenues. [short-term]
- Repair signage deficiencies as identified by inspections. [continuously]
- Repair potholes within three-days of identification [continuously]
- Mow road Right-of-Ways at least two-times per year. [continuously]
- Repair and replace major drainage crossings as needed. [continuously]
- Scrape unpaved roads as needed. [continuously]





- Perform formal evaluations of every County roadway every three-years (rotating basis). [continuously]
- Utilize pavement management system to develop annual resurfacing program. [continuously]
- Repair local pavement failures to prevent expansion of damages. [continuously]
- Clip paved road shoulders every three-years. [continuously]
- Resurface roads as programmed each year. [continuously]

**Objective:** Pursue Complete Streets policies and regulations to support an integrated road network and transportation options.

- Update Horry County's Land Development Regulations to support shorter block lengths in Suburban Communities, Mixed-Use, and Community Activity Centers. [mid-term]
- Update Horry County's Land Development Regulations to establish provisions for the development of public transportation pull-offs or official bus stops on major and minor arterial roadways that coincide with COAST RTA routes. [mid-term]
- Allocate funds towards COAST RTA annually. [continuously]
- Update Horry County's Land Development regulations to clarify where sidewalks are required external to new commercial and residential developments. [short-term]
- Update the Horry County Land Development Regulations to require pedestrian connectivity both internal and external to public and private school properties, in addition to requiring flashing school zone signs to improve safety. [short-term]
- Revise the Land Development Regulations to require that developers make traffic improvements based on future planning horizon of area and corridor capacity. [short-term]

- Require complete streets within unincorporated donut holes within municipalities when development and redevelopment is pursued. [continuously]

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

*'Encourage and incentivize sustainable development activities that minimize and mitigate the impact on the natural environment and avoid adverse impacts on existing development.'*

Horry County is rapidly growing, in large part to the attractiveness of its beaches and waterways, outdoor recreation, and warm climate. These same natural assets that attract people to move to our County should be protected as development occurs. Future development should avoid flood and wildfire hazards and minimize adverse impacts to water quality, flooding, habitat and wildlife. In addition, new development should minimize their impacts on adjacent developments and surrounding communities. In order to do so, the County should encourage and incentivize better site design through its policies and regulations.

**Objective:** Improve the aesthetics and environmental quality of development through the preservation of trees and installation of native landscaping.

- Simplify the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance and landscape requirements within Overlays. [short-term]
- Remove all invasive plant species from the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance and Overlays. [mid-term]
- Expand the list of protected tree species within the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance beyond live oaks. [mid-term]

- Promote the use of native plants by distributing the County's landscaping guide to developers and property owners. [short-term]
- Amend the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance to require the planting of tree on every residential lot within a major subdivision prior to the CO of a new home. [mid-term]
- Revise the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance to increase the width of vegetated buffers for major residential subdivisions along major roadways. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Minimize habitat fragmentation in environmentally sensitive areas.

- Consolidate the conservation preservation zoning districts. [short-term]
- Rezone all state and federal conservation lands to a conservation preservation zoning to better reflect their use. [short-term]
- Update Horry County regulations to encourage contiguous open space within new major developments. [short-term]
- Update the Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan to identify priority conservation areas and future recreation sites. [short-term]
- Utilize density bonuses and the use of the Open Space fee-in-lieu program in Community Activity Centers, Mixed Use, and Suburban Communities to encourage increased development in exchange for targeted offsite open space preservation, as identified within the Parks and Open Space Plan. [continuously]
- Identify and maintain a list of priority properties to preserve the County's green infrastructure network. [mid-term]
- Distribute conservation easement information to priority conservation properties. [mid-term]



- Mitigate the impacts of existing and future transportation corridors to ensure that wildlife habitat fragmentation is minimized. [continuously]

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**Objective:** Improve the County's understanding of water quality and drainage problems.

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- Continue to implement a countywide water quality monitoring program through the Waccamaw Watershed Academy and the Waccamaw Riverkeeper's Volunteer Monitoring Program. [continuously]
- Continue to cooperate with local universities in understanding the effects of our land use decisions on watersheds. [continuously]
- Prepare comprehensive drainage maps for the County using up-to-date stormwater infrastructure, landcover and elevation data. [mid-term]
- Coordinate with SCDHEC, Grand Strand Water and Sewer, and local governments to identify and map the location of septic systems throughout the County and require connection to sewer systems when septic systems fail to perform properly. [long-term]
- Develop a Stormwater Capital Improvements Plan. [mid-term]

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**Objective:** Maintain and improve water quality in Horry County.

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- Continue to implement an illicit discharge detection and elimination (IDDE) program based on the County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Stormwater Management Plan. [continuously]
- Continue to implement a Construction and Post-Construction Site Runoff Program based on the County NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Plan. [continuously]
- Work with known sources of point source water pollution to maintain and reduce pollutant discharges. [continuously]

- Coordinate with SCDHEC and local governments to develop and implement TMDL and 319 watershed plans to provide a course of action to improve impaired water bodies. [continuously]
- Continue to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Farm Bureau and local agricultural landowners to address issues that affect water quality, including confined animal feeding operations, buffering, and irrigation. [continuously]
- Seek grant funding from SCDHEC and federal agencies to remediate known water quality and flooding problems, such as failing septic systems, leaking underground storage tanks, and brownfield sites. [continuously]

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**Objective:** Encourage development techniques which maintain and improve water quality and drainage maintenance.

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- Cooperate with public education providers through the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium to provide water quality education, workshops, technical trainings, and publications to a variety of audiences. [continuously]
- Incorporate low impact design techniques into future County facilities to serve as a model for private developers. [continuously]
- Provide for the inclusion of low impact development techniques in the Zoning Ordinance, Overlays, and Stormwater Design Manual. [continuously]
- Provide incentives for developers to incorporate low impact development techniques into their developments. [mid-term]
- Reduce the use of impervious surfaces and encourage the use of pervious surfaces through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. [long-term]

- Update major subdivision regulations to ensure that drainage on the periphery of a subdivision is platted as common area and prohibited from being located within residential parcels. [short-term]

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**Objective:** Conserve the essential pollution filtering, groundwater recharge, and habitat functions of wetlands and floodplains.

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- Work with conservation partners to strategically conserve land along the Waccamaw and Little Pee Dee Rivers for the dual purpose of protecting ecologically significant habitats and minimizing future flood losses. [continuously]
- Encourage the establishment of local wetland mitigation banks for local developers and road construction projects to mitigate their wetland impacts within the County. [continuously]
- Continue to apply the Horry County Open Space Inventory to earn credits with the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System; thereby, reducing flood insurance rates. [continuously]
- Encourage the creation of interstate and intergovernmental compacts which address watershed issues for the Pee Dee, Little Pee Dee, Lumber, and Waccamaw Rivers. [long-term]

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**Objective:** Preserve and enhance existing dune systems, beaches, and marshes to provide habitat for wildlife and protect coastal property.

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- Update the Horry County Beach Management Plan. [short-term]
- Work closely with property owners and Government Agencies to maintain the protective, ecological and recreational functions of the beach/dune system. [continuously]





- Develop strategies for erosion control and beach/dune restoration that will protect, preserve, restore and enhance the natural character of Horry County's beach/dune system. [mid-term]
- Pursue available state and federal funding for beach and dune restoration. [continuously]
- Coordinate with natural resource agencies and trained volunteer organizations to protect and restore critical habitats for threatened or endangered species. [long-term]
- Partner with local rental agencies and hotels to develop an outreach program to educate tourists on Horry County's unique and fragile coastal ecosystem. [long-term]

**Objective:** Reduce litter to protect the County's habitats, wildlife, and recreation spaces.

- Track County and volunteer litter reduction efforts annually to assess changes litter patterns and the need for targeted community education and enforcement. [continuously]
- Maintain year-round litter reduction crews and enforcement efforts. [continuously]
- Support volunteer-led litter cleanups by providing clean up supplies and safety training. [continuously]
- Educate residents and visitors about the impacts of litter on the environment and property values. [continuously]
- Actively engage businesses, churches, and community groups to lead and support litter reduction and beautification initiatives of roadways, parks and other open spaces. [continuously]
- Establish minimum dumpster sizes and the inclusion of recycling dumpsters within the general provisions of the Zoning Ordinance for commercially reviewed developments, including multi-family developments. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Identify renewable energy opportunities that may be harnessed by local businesses, industries, and residents.

- Identify incentives, credits and opportunities related to the installation and use of solar panels, wind turbines, or other types of renewable energy sources. [mid-term]
- Explore off-shore wind industries as an economic opportunity for the Grand Strand. [continuously]
- Adopt language in the Zoning Ordinance to clarify the regulations for the installation of solar panels, solar farms, and small wind energy systems. [mid-term]
- Participate in the regional Air Quality Coalition led by the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments. [continuously]

## ECONOMIC GROWTH

'Develop a more diversified and resilient economy that supports the recruitment and retention of businesses, encourages new investments, capitalizes and expands upon our existing niches, and ultimately results in greater economic stability of our residents and local businesses.'

Horry County is highly dependent upon the tourism industry and should continue to foster its growth. In addition, the County and its partners should work to diversify its employment base and provide the infrastructure to support such growth. By expanding employment sectors, Horry County will offer livable wages, support retention of a skilled labor force, and ensure that the local economy can bounce back more readily in the wake of a national economic downturn or natural disaster.

**Objective:** Develop a comprehensive economic development framework for Horry County with a consortium of key stakeholders and County staff.

- Formalize a group of key economic development stakeholders to analyze and inform the County of economic opportunities. [short-term]
- Develop a comprehensive Economic Development Plan. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Improve the business climate by enhancing government services and communicating processes to the business community.

- Improve County website by adding/maintaining businesses and economic development pages. [mid-term]
- Training and resources for new business, such as 'How to Open a Business' flow chart. [mid-term]
- Map out and review business services, zoning, plan and construction approval processes and identify potential impediments to business growth. [mid-term]



**Objective:** Improve awareness of the local impacts of economic development activities.

- Develop an economic indicator report and present annually to County Council. [continuously]
- Present economic trend analysis every quarter. [continuously]
- Share economic trend reports and analysis to interested parties. [continuously]
- Make information available and easily accessible on County website. [continuously]

**Objective:** Develop a variety of high quality industrial land and building 'products' that can attract new and/or expanding business.

- Continue to work with GSWSA and Santee Cooper on the development of the Bucksport Marine Park. [continuously]
- Continue to work with Santee Cooper on the development of Ascott Valley. [continuously]
- Seek additional strategically located properties and construct spec buildings to attract new industries. [short-term]
- Attract new industry, expansions, and reinvestment to locate in Economic Opportunity Zones. [continuously]
- Preserve areas of the County, as identified on the Future Land Use Map, for development of new and expansion of existing industrial, manufacturing, and distribution centers and uses. [continuously]

**Objective:** Assist in infrastructure investment and development efforts that spur economic development.

- Work to establish interstate highway connectivity. [long-term]
- Complete and implement the Horry County Department of Airports Master Plan. [short-to-long-term]
- Complete the TIGER Grant to upgrade the R.J. Corman rail line improvements. [mid-term]

**Objective:** Continue to foster the development of tourism throughout the County.

- Increase air service to Myrtle Beach International Airport. [continuously]
- Continue to aggressively market MYR to prospective airlines. [continuously]
- Keep costs and fees as competitive as possible. [continuously]
- Complete the Arcadian Shores and Reach III renourishment projects. [short-term]
- Continue working to secure funding for future beach renourishment. [continuously]
- Support resort and tourism uses that are appropriately sited according to the Future Land Use Map. [continuously]

**Objective:** Diversify tourism niches throughout Horry County.

- Tap into the sports tourism market by adding lighting to County athletic fields that could host tournaments. [mid-term]
- Expand the number of agritourism permits to foster our agricultural industry and heritage. [continuously]
- Establish conditional uses within the zoning ordinance to allow for seasonal, temporary uses, such as guided hunting expeditions, agritourism, and paddling tours, within rural areas of the County without requiring typical commercial development standards that are inconsistent with the uses and character of the area. [mid-term]
- Coordinate with area Chambers of Commerce to promote area agritourism, ecotourism, and heritage tourism businesses, attractions, and events. [continuously]
- Explore the development of franchise agreements at boat landings and beaches for the rental of non-motorized boats, fishing equipment, and guided tours. [mid-term]

- Consider the development of a Multi-Purpose Agricultural/Equestrian Center to host large scale equine events. [long-term]
- Serve as a partner and host of major events to attract tourism to areas beyond the beach. [continuously]

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

'Create an environment in which residents, businesses, and other stakeholders are engaging and informed of planning efforts, regulatory changes, infrastructure projects, and volunteer and partnership opportunities.'

Because Horry County is a changing and dynamic community, there is a constant need to engage the public in planning efforts, regulatory changes, and infrastructure projects and inform the community of ongoing County efforts in which they may be interested in being involved in. By engaging the public through meetings, public forums, and online resources, Horry County will create a more inviting and transparent atmosphere in which the community feels more engaged in the process, is educated about important topics, and likely to be involved in volunteer and partnership opportunities.

**Objective:** Increase community engagement and communications.

- Maintain and coordinate Horry County's social media pages. [continuously]
- Develop and maintain a listserv of community groups and businesses that can be shared with all departments for communication and public engagement. [short-term]
- Conduct or participate in four community meetings annually to ensure that concerns can be addressed and that the County can provide updates on important capital projects. [continuously]





- Maintain the Capital Improvements Dashboards on the Horry County website so the public can follow the progress of major projects. [continuously]
- Install signage in areas where major capital improvements are being conducted so the public is aware of how their tax dollars are working to make improvements. [continuously]
- Conduct community surveys to gauge public opinions and obtain input on important planning efforts. [continuously]
- Begin advertising volunteer opportunities on the County's employment website. [short-term]

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**Objective:** Make information readily available to the public in regards to future development and development proposals.

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- Create an online map showing all active rezoning, variance, and telecommunications proposals. [short-term]
- Develop and track all major subdivisions and remaining units to be constructed in tabular and GIS format and make publicly available. [short-term]
- Upgrade Municode Contract by FY20 to allow for immediate upload of regulatory changes to minimize the lag time between Council approval and reflection in online code. [mid-term]
- Revise the public noticing mailing process to include noticing of all addresses, in addition to the current process of noticing property owners within a specified distance of rezonings, variances, telecommunications, and agritourism applications. [mid-term]



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Marion D. Foxworth III  
HORRY COUNTY, SC REGISTRAR OF DEEDS

COUNTY OF HORRY )  
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA )

ORDINANCE 54-19

**AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT THE HORRY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, IMAGINE 2040 AND REPEAL CHAPTER 15, ARTICLE 1, SECTIONS 15-1 AND 15-2 OF THE PLANNING CHAPTER OF THE HORRY COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES.**

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County must continually plan for the physical, social and economic growth, development and redevelopment in order to promote public health, safety, morals, convenience, prosperity, general welfare, as well as the efficiency and economy of the County in accordance the Title 6, Chapter 29 of the South Carolina Code of Laws; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County must evaluate and update the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years, and must prepare and recommend a new plan, including all of its elements every ten years in accordance to S.C. Code § 6-29-510(E); and,

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County Comprehensive Plan, Envision 2025, was adopted by Horry County Council in 2008 and has had minor revisions since its initial adoption; and,

**WHEREAS**, Horry County has experienced extensive growth and change over the last decade and there is need to ensure that growth is occurring in a manner that is consistent with the desires of the community and occurs in a fiscally responsible manner, as required by S.C. Code § 6-29-510(C and E); and,

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County Planning Commission initiated the development of a new comprehensive plan in 2017 by establishing an ad-hoc steering committee to guide the Plan's development; and,

**WHEREAS**, Horry County ensured broad-based citizen participation and the involvement of various governmental and quasi-governmental entities in the planning process to ensure the plan reflects the desires of the community and does not conflict with other jurisdictions, regional plans and other issues in accordance with S.C. Code § 6-29-510(B), § 6-29-520(A) and § 6-29-530; and,

**WHEREAS**, the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan includes an inventory of existing conditions and projected trends in population, cultural resources, natural resources, housing, community facilities, public safety, transportation, economic development, priority investments, and land use as required by S.C. Code § 6-29-510(D); and,

**WHEREAS**, the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan conveys the community's vision that Horry County will sustain and enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors by fostering healthy and safe communities, preserving our natural assets and rural heritage, encouraging business growth and economic diversification, and providing services and public facilities that will protect and strengthen our future; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County Planning Commission by Resolution No. PC-2018-01 recommended the adoption of the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan, including all maps, appendices, and other descriptive material contained within by ordinance as required by S.C. Code § 6-29-520(B) and § 6-29-530; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Horry County Planning Commission resolved that the following plans remain as valid components of the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan and are subject to periodic review or updates as necessary in response to changes in growth or direction of development in Horry County: the Burgess Community Area Plan, Mt. Vernon Rural Area Management Plan, Racepath Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Bennett Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, the Horry County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Horry County Historic Preservation Plan, Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan, and the Horry County Beachfront Management Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 15, Article 1, Sections 15-1 and 15-2 of the Horry County Code of Ordinances are obsolete and no longer accurately reflect our comprehensive planning process and operations.

**NOW THEREFORE**, by the power and authority granted to the Horry County Council by the Constitution of the State of South Carolina and the powers granted to the County by the General Assembly of the State, it is ordained and enacted that:

1. **Adoption of the Horry County Comprehensive Plan, IMAGINE 2040:** Horry County Council hereby adopts the Horry County Comprehensive Plan, superceding the Envision 2025 Comprehensive Plan and all other preceding comprehensive plans.
2. **Repeal of Chapter 15, Article 1, Sections 15-1 and 15-2 of the Horry County Code of Ordinances:** Horry County Council hereby repeals Chapter 15, Article 1, Sections 15-1 and 15-2 of the Horry County Code of Ordinances, as they are obsolete chapters of the Planning Chapter.
3. **Severability:** If a Section, Sub-section, or part of this Ordinance shall be deemed or found to conflict with a provision of South Carolina law, or other pre-emptive legal principle, then that Section, Sub-section, or part of this Ordinance shall be deemed ineffective, but the remaining parts of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.
4. **Conflict with Preceding Ordinances:** If a Section, Sub-section or provision of this Ordinance shall conflict with the provisions of a Section, Sub-section or part of a preceding Ordinance of Horry County, then the preceding Section, Sub-section, or part shall be deemed repealed and no longer in effect.
5. **Effective Date:** This Ordinance shall become effective upon third reading.

**AND IT IS SO ORDAINED, ENACTED AND ORDERED** this 10th day of December, 2019.

HORRY COUNTY COUNCIL

Johnny Gardner, Chairman

Harold G. Worley, District 1	Bill Howard, District 2
Dennis DiSabato, District 3	Gary Loftus, District 4
Tyler Servant, District 5	Cam Crawford, District 6
Orton Bellamy, District 7	Johnny Vaught, District 8
W. Paul Prince, District 9	Danny Hardee, District 10
Al Allen, District 11	

Attest:

Patricia S. Hartley  
Patricia S. Hartley, Clerk to Council

First Reading:	July 29, 2019
Second Reading:	August 13, 2019
Third Reading:	December 10, 2019



Ordinance 106-2020. Mining Operations. Adopted 12.8.2020

Ordinance 122-2020. Preservation Plan. Adopted 1.19.2021