



CHAPTER ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan, in its purest form, represents the synthesis of a community's vision for its growth and development. Far too often vision statements are never accurately translated into a detailed working plan with achievable action items, schedules, and budgets. Far too often Comprehensive Plans have been relegated to black and white policy documents that collect more dust than success.

Chapter Highlights

1.1 Priorities for Implementation

The modern plan balances the very best in planning and design. By articulating a vision and illustrating that vision in a real-world setting, the community has a better understanding of the plan's aspirations. Beaufort has begun this process with the undertaking of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The broad consensus generated by tapping into a wide cross-section of the community will help to ensure its usefulness for years to come.

As Beaufort enters our 4th century we recognize that a successful 21st century community is anchored by the triple-bottom line of environmental, social, and economic sustainability. As a result, the organization of this Plan breaks from the norm of the "element-based" comprehensive plan derived from the South Carolina Code of Law. Rather, it organizes itself around fully immersive ideas that integrate the triple bottom line in a fashion that is perhaps more consistent with a company's business plan than a regulatory document.

Unlike many of our peers across South Carolina we have chosen to focus not on a exhaustive analysis of what currently is and simply project trends of what was, but rather this plan is a true vision what we wish to become and what tools and resources are needed to achieve that vision. Most importantly, it focuses on implementation.

City leaders will be quick to stress that this plan is a convergence of visionary leadership, capital investments, and efficient delivery of government services. It is also through this mindset that the City continues to actively participate in discussions related to the growth and development in Northern Beaufort County. It is through these discussion that not only must the participating jurisdiction agree on land use considerations, but they have a singular opportunity to create a plan for the efficient and responsive delivery of government services the taxpayers deserve.

Beaufort has long been a community that valued the importance of plans and the planning process. This comprehensive plan seeks to bridge the importance of PLANNING with the important of DOING. It is this importance of DOING, as da Vinci suggests, that is prime amongst all things in Beaufort. And, as our plan suggests, it is DOING that will prepare us for our next 100 years.

*"I have been impressed
with the urgency of
DOING. Knowing is
not enough; we must
apply. Being willing is
not enough; we must
DO."*

~Leonardo da Vinci

"I think it's great when you get the community involved in the development process of the city because the people of the community will work with the developers in a much more favorable light. Meetings like this are important. Keeping not just the old buildings but the people and the neighborhoods intact—helping the entire city belong...I think that is what's important."

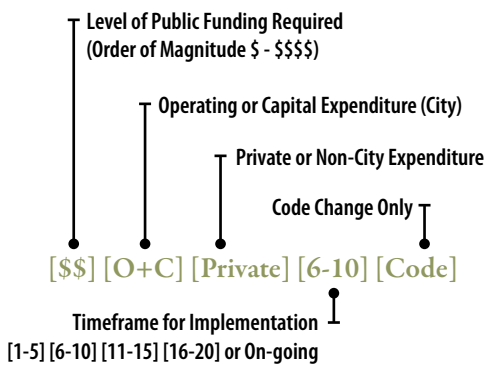
~Lifelong Beaufortonian

1.1 PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In order for the vision and recommendations expressed by this Plan to be realized, specific action items will need to be implemented by the City of Beaufort. Many of the action items seek to provide the conditions under which the vision can be achieved, by way of providing sensible land use regulation, necessary public investments, the development of appropriate programs and policies, encouraging catalyst projects and other actions. The list of high priority items, organized by major topic area, are shown on the next few pages. The complete list of recommendations for this plan can be found in Chapter 13.

The action items in the table below are prioritized based on the legend noted at the beginning of each Chapter and to the left. The Funding is listed as an order of magnitude as way to evaluate the relative costs of one action over another. As a means of attempting to quantify these relative costs over the twenty year period, the table below summarizes an estimated range of cost values that may be used. With the exception of those specific costs for Capital Projects that were identified in this Chapter, no other specific cost estimates have been provided.

Key to Action Items



Order of Magnitude	Estimated Cost Range
\$	\$1 - \$50,000
\$\$	\$50,000 - \$250,000
\$\$\$	\$250,000 - \$1 million
\$\$\$\$	\$1 million+

Reference Number	Project/Task	Page Number	Level of Public Funding Required	Operating or Capital Expenditure	Private or Non-City Expenditure	On-going	Year 1-5	Year 6-10	Year 11-15	Year 16-20	Year 20+	Code /Policy
FIVE: A FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH												
FG 2.3	Explore a service delivery model that employs a metro-like structure.	73	\$	0		X						
FG 2.1	Annexation areas should be contiguous to the primary service area or within a maximum of 2 miles.	73										X
FG 2.2	The provision of municipal services to previously annexed tracts or tracts beyond the 2 mile boundary shall be subject to adequacy and availability of municipal services.	73										X
FG 3.1	Require Incremental Growth to be Medium to High Density and Utilize the Traditional Neighborhood Unit.	76										X
FG 4.1	Update the UDO as a complete form-based code.	77										X
SIX: NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE												
NI 3.3	Continue to Partner with Regional Agencies/ Organizations and Land Owners to Aggressively Protect Open Lands	93	\$\$\$	O+C		X						
NI 3.4	Expand Use of Density Bonuses and TDR in Exchange for Preservation of Sensitive Environmental Features	93	\$\$	0		X						
NI 1.2	Revise Current Development Regulation to Require/ Incentivize Low Impact Development Using the Light Imprint Handbook	84	\$	0			X					
NI 1.3	Develop Regional/Small Area Storm Water Plans	85	\$	0			X					

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NI 1.5	Adopt Baseline Standards for Critical Line Setbacks and Natural Vegetative Buffers	85	\$	0			X					
NI 1.9	Adopt Baseline Standards for the Protection of Freshwater Wetlands	87	\$	0			X					
NI 4.1	Complete an Urban Tree Canopy Survey	94	\$\$	0			X					
NI 4.2	Establish a Baseline Tree Canopy Coverage and Set Key Goals for Preservation and Expansion of the Canopy	94	\$	0			X					
SEVEN: CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY												
CE 1.3	Prioritize Transit, Bike and Pedestrian Improvements with the Goal of Reducing VMT	100	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	0+C		X						
CE 1.4	The City will Seek Out Best Practices for the Reduction of GHG Emissions	101	\$	0		X						
CE 5.2	Endeavor to Make Sustainable Construction Practices Part of the Culture of Development in Beaufort	111	\$\$	0		X						
CE 1.1	Conduct an Emissions Inventory of City Operations	99	\$	0			X					
CE 1.2	Enact Land Use Policies and UDO Changes with the Goal of Reducing VMT	100	\$	0			X					
CE 2.2	Work with Beaufort County to Develop a Plan that Addresses the Potential Impacts of Sea Level Change	103	\$	0			X					
CE 3.1	Consider Conducting an Energy Audit	107	\$\$	0			X					
CE 3.3	Remove Regulatory Barriers to Renewable Energy and Provide Incentives for Their Use	107	\$	0			X					
CE 3.4	Protect Solar Access	107	\$	0			X					
CE 5.1	Establish a City Policy for Sustainable Building and Infrastructure Practices	110	\$	0			X					
CE 5.3	Establish Incentives to Implement Context-Sensitive Environmentally Sustainable Building and Development Practices	111	\$	0			X					
EIGHT: SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE												
SI 2.1	Prepare Small Area Plans for Neighborhoods and Districts	119	\$\$	0		X						
SI 2.2	Create a Dedicated Revenue Stream for Neighborhood Reinvestment	120	\$\$	0+C		X						
SI 1.1	Complete an Inventory of Needs for the Improvement of the Existing Neighborhood Parks	115	\$	0			X					
SI 1.2	Identify a Regular Funding Mechanism for the Maintenance and Improvement of the Park System	117	\$	0			X					
SI 1.3	Plan and Improve the Southside Park	117	\$\$\$\$	C	Private		X	X	X	X		
SI 4.1	Conduct Sector (Small Area) Planning & Implementation	133	\$-\$	0			X	X				
SI 4.10	Provide Technical Support to Historic Neighborhoods and Property Owners	136	\$-\$\$\$	0+C			X	X				
SI 4.12	Prioritize and Implement Recommendations for Infrastructure in Historic Districts	137	\$\$-\$\$\$	0+C			X	X				X

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NINE: ACCESS & MOBILITY												
AM 1.1	Establish an On-Going Multi-Jurisdictional Transportation Planning Process	145	\$	0		X						
AM 1.8	Prepare a Collector Street Plan for the Urban Growth Boundary	153	\$\$	0+C		X						
AM 2.4	Complete and Implement the Pedestrian Improvement Master Plan	163	\$\$	C		X						
AM 1.2/ PI 3.1	Implement the Current Planned and Committed Transportation Projects in the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan	145	\$\$\$\$	C			X	X				
AM 1.4	Evaluate the Re-designation of US 21 Around the City	149	\$\$	0+C			X					
AM 1.9	Develop Specific Plan/Recommendations for Strategic Community Corridors	153	\$\$	0			X	X	X			
AM 2.1	Implement the Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections Shown in the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan (Project #1)	161	\$\$	C			X					
AM 2.2	Create a Master Plan for Bikeways, Greenways, Sidewalks and Trails	161	\$\$	0+C			X					
TEN: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY												
EP 1.2	Take Leadership Role in Institutional Development	177	\$	0		X						
EP 1.4	Create Business License Program that is Tied to Economic Development Goals	177	\$	0			X					
EP 2.1	Refocus on the Downtown	179	\$\$	0			X					
EP 2.2	Continue Implementation of the Boundary Street Master Plan	179	\$\$\$\$	C			X					
EP 2.3	Complete Neighborhood and District Redevelopment Plans	179	\$\$	0			X	X				
EP 2.5	Target Sites for Redevelopment	180	\$\$	0			X	X				
EP 2.6	Replace the Current Redevelopment Incentive Program with a New Program	180										X
EP 1.1	Support the Expansion of the Current Economic Base - Higher Education, Medical Services, and the Military	176			Private							
EP 1.3	Focus on Small Business Recruitment and Retention	177			Private							
EP 1.5	Support Expansion of Higher Education	177			Private							
EP 1.6	Continue to Seek Ways to Expand Tourism	178			Private							
EP 2.4	Consider the Use of Municipal Improvements Districts (MID)	179			Revenue							
ELEVEN: SERVING OUR CITIZENS												
SC 1.1	Continue to Maintain a Strong Cash Position with a Well-Funded Fund Balance	199	\$	0		X						
SC 1.2	Balance Revenue from Tax Base and Other Operating Revenues	199	\$	0		X						
SC 1.3	Advocate for a Change in State Legislation to Ensure Fiscal Flexibility for Local Governments	200	\$	0		X						

Reference Number	Project/Task	Page Number	Level of Public Funding Required	Operating or Capital Expenditure	Private or Non-City Expenditure	On-going	Year 1-5	Year 6-10	Year 11-15	Year 16-20	Year 20+	Code /Policy
SC 1.4	Seek Revenue Sharing/Partnership Arrangements to Better Manage the Maintenance of SC DOT-Owned Rights-of-Way	200	\$	0		X						
SC 1.5	Consider Levying Impact Fees to Mitigate the Costs of Growth in Remote Annexation	201	\$	0		X						
SC 1.6	Further Develop Cash Flow Reporting	201	\$	0		X						
SC 2.1	Divest of Loss-Generating Enterprises	204										
SC 2.2	Audit Recurring Expenditures	204										
SC 2.3	Evaluate Government Service Delivery Options within the Northern Area Growth Boundary	204	\$	0		X						
SC 3.1	Expand the List of Business and Development Incentives	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.2	Balance the Regulatory Environment to Protect the City's Core Assets as well as Allowing for a Competitive Business Environment	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.3	Create Balance of Assets such as a Mix of Land Uses, Businesses, and Living Options for all Residents	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.4	Consider Service Delivery in the Design of our Community	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.5	Seek out Partnerships Wherever Possible	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.6	Evaluate Alternative Funding Sources for Capital, Operations and Maintenance Beyond the Current Taxing Structure	205	\$	0		X						
SC 3.7	Expand the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to Create a Comprehensive Capital Asset and Project Planning Program	205	\$	0		X						
THIRTEEN: SETTING PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION												
PI 1.1	Monitor and Report on Plan Implementation	235	\$	0		X						
PI 1.4	Explore New Institutional Arrangements	235	\$	0		X						
PI 2.2	Identify Existing Deficiencies and Future Capital Improvements Needs	235	\$	0		X						
PI 2.3	Work Cooperatively with the School District	236	\$	0		X						
PI 2.4	Develop an Overall Funding Strategy	236	\$	0		X						
PI 2.5	Focus First on Available Funding Tools	236	\$	0		X						
PI 2.6	Update the Fiscal Impact Analysis on a Regular Basis	236	\$	0		X						
PI 2.7	Consider Funding Tools that Require Changes in State Legislation	236	\$	0		X						
PI 1.2	Update the Plan	235	\$\$	0			X	X	X	X	X	
PI 3.2	Implement the Other Identified Capital Projects in the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan	237	\$\$\$\$	C			X	X				
PI 4.1	Annually Update the Ten Year Capital Imp. Plan	238	\$	0			X	X	X	X	X	
PI 4.2	Complete the Boundary Street Master Plan	238	\$\$\$\$	C			X	X	X	X		
PI 2.1	Adopt Regional Level of Service Standards	235										X

LOOKING BACK: TIMELINE

1562

French Huguenot Jean Ribaut named Port Royal and established Charlesfort on Parris Island. When Ribaut did not return with needed supplies, the Frenchmen abandoned the fort.

1554-87

Spaniards explored and settled From 1566-1587, Santa Elena on Parris Island was the capital of the Spanish province of La Florida.

1684

Yemassee from Florida relocated to the Port Royal area.

1684-86

Rise and fall of Stuart Town, a settlement of Scottish dissenters. The settlers there encouraged Yemassee depredations against Spanish missions. The Spanish at St. Augustine retaliated and wiped out the settlement.

1709

A delegation of early settlers asked the Lords Proprietors for a new town and port.

1711

The proprietors issued the charter of the town of Beaufort.

1712

South Carolina General Assembly created the parish of St. Helena.

1715

Yemassee War. The Yemassee, the Creek and other Native American groups mounted a major threat to the survival of the colony of South Carolina. The Yemassee destroyed the fledgling town.

1769

Circuit Court Act created administrative districts in South Carolina. Court for Beaufort District sat at Beaufort.

1772

Colonial legislature convened in Beaufort. This attempt by the Royal governor, Charles Montagu, to intimidate the rebellious Commons House was one of the royal abuses mentioned in the Declaration of Independence.

1779

Battle of Beaufort. Under William Moultrie, the Patriots repulse the invading British. Among the American militia were two signers of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Heyward Jr. and Edward Rutledge.

1779-82

British forces under Major General Augustine

Prevost occupied Beaufort.

1795

Beaufort College incorporated.

1803

The South Carolina General Assembly formally incorporated the town of Beaufort.

1850s

Time of economic vitality and construction. Residents built Beaufort College; homes such as the Castle, the Oaks and Tidalholm; and rebuilt the Arsenal.

1862

Battle of Port Royal; following the Union victory, white citizens abandoned the town and their plantations.

1862-65

Federal occupation. Port Royal Experiment brought education to the former slaves. Direct tax confiscations and sales provoked frustration and conflict for former owners and new purchasers.

1863

January 1, Emancipation Proclamation read at Old Fort Plantation near Beaufort.

1867-76

Reconstruction—a period of African American political involvement—and the beginnings of the phosphate industry in Beaufort County. African Americans maintained a political presence in Beaufort county into the early twentieth century.

1893

The storm of the century. A Category 3 hurricane and tidal wave struck the Sea Islands and left thousands dead and tens of thousands homeless.

1907

Major fire destroyed much of downtown Beaufort.

1924

Ku Klux Klan marched in Beaufort.

1956

Bridge to Hilton Head Island opened, inaugurating new era for the Beaufort area. Resort and retirement construction boomed on the Sea Islands.

1959

Hurricane Gracie (Category 4) struck Beaufort. The eye of the storm passed over St. Helena Sound.

1960s

Cold War fears fueled military construction and build-up in Beaufort County. Parris Island expanded; Naval Hospital added beds; Marine Corps air station upgraded; and Laurel Bay Housing Development for Military personnel opened.

1967

Beaufort elected its first African American city councilman since Reconstruction, Joseph M. Wright.

1970-71

Beaufort schools were totally integrated.

1971-2005

Beaufort's library system expanded country wide

1974

The United States Department of the Interior designated Beaufort's historic district as a National Historic Landmark.

1975

City held ground-breaking for the Henry Chambers Waterfront Park

2006

The Boundary Street Master Plan was completed and adopted.

2007

The Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan is completed and adopted by Beaufort County, the Town of Yemassee, Town of Port Royal and the City of Beaufort.

2008

Major renovations were completed to the Henry Chambers Waterfront Park

2009

The Municipal Complex on Boundary Street is completed, serving as an anchor for the redevelopment of Boundary Street.

2009

The City adopts the Vision Beaufort Comprehensive Plan.

LOOKING FORWARD: 2020



VISION BEAUFORT

2009 Comprehensive Plan