

IMAGINE 2040



HORRY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



FIVE YEAR REVIEW
WWW.HORRYCOUNTYSC.GOV



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



VISION

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.

CONTENTS

	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	10			
I	INTRODUCTION	16	V	HOUSING	138
	Vision	17		Housing Analysis	138
	Guiding Principles	17		Occupancy and Vacancy	139
	Plan Elements	18		Cost and Affordability	151
	Planning and Regulatory History	19		Short-Term Housing Assistance	159
	Planning Process	20		Revitalization Efforts	164
	Five-Year Review Process	28		Conclusions	166
II	POPULATION	34	VI	RESILIENCE	170
	Population Growth	34		Resilience Framework	171
	Population Projections	41		Hazards	171
	Demographics	43		Exposure and Vulnerability	185
	Households	48		Planning and Programs	191
	Income	51		Conclusions	200
	Health	56	VII	COMMUNITY FACILITIES	204
	Conclusions	58		General Government Facilities	204
III	CULTURAL RESOURCES	62		Utilities and Infrastructure	206
	History and Historic Preservation	62		Education Facilities	219
	Rural Culture	70		Recreation and Leisure Facilities	230
	Beach Culture	75		Health Care Facilities	233
	Arts Culture	83		Conclusions	237
	Faith-Based Culture	87	VIII	PUBLIC SAFETY	242
	Conclusions	89		Emergency Communication Center	242
IV	NATURAL RESOURCES	94		Emergency Management	244
	Ecosystem Services	95		Law Enforcement	247
	Water Resources	97		Court System	252
	Agriculture	112		Fire Protection and EMS	253
	Forestland	116		Conclusions	257
	Soils	119	IX	TRANSPORTATION	262
	Species Habitat	123		Regional Planning Efforts	262
	Energy	129		Existing Road Network	265
	Conclusions	133		Complete Streets	275
				Public Transit	284
				Planned Projects	292
				Funding Mechanisms	298
				Conclusions	302

X	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	306
	Existing Plans	306
	Labor force	307
	Economic Base Analysis	315
	Economic Opportunities	327
	Conclusions	331
XI	PRIORITY INVESTMENT	338
	Capital Improvements Planning	338
	Funding Sources	339
	Capital Project Needs	347
	Projected Funds and Gaps	351
	Conclusions	352
XII	LAND USE	356
	Planning and Regulatory History	357
	Development Trends	364
	Future Land Use	380
	Scenic and Conservation Areas	385
	Rural	387
	Rural Communities	389
	Rural Activity Centers	391
	Suburban	393
	Neighborhood Activity Centers	395
	Commercial Corridors	397
	Mixed Use	399
	Community Activity Centers	401
	Economic Development Center	405
	Community Engagement	406
XIII	GOALS AND STRATEGIES	412
	Overarching Goals of the Plan	412
	Objectives and Strategies	413
	RESOURCES	444

SPECIAL THANKS

Horry County would like to acknowledge 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:

IMAGINE 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Steven Neeves, *Chairman*
Marvin Heyd, *Vice-Chairman*
Chris Hennigan
Kimberly K. Hardee
Bo Ives
Rick Elliott
Al Jordan
Eric K. Sanford
Josh Kay
Pam Creech
Christy Everett
Joe Burch
Ruth Anne Ellis
Sammy Johnson

PLANNING COMMISSION

Steven Neeves, *Chairman*
Marvin Heyd, *Vice-Chairman*
Jerome Randall
Kimberly K. Hardee
Pam Cecala
Chuck Rhome
Joey Ray
Chris Hennigan
Burnett Owens
Martin Dawsey
Charles Brown

COUNTY COUNCIL

Johnny Gardner, *Chairman*
Harold 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*

Additional thanks to Horry County Planning staff, staff, elected, and appointed officials from partner jurisdictions, and the people of Horry County.

PLANNING STAFF

David Schwerd, *Planning Director*
John Danford, *Deputy Director*
Leigh Kane, *Principal Planner*
Lou Conklin, *Senior Planner*
Ashley Cowen, *Senior Planner*
Erica Silva, *Admin Assistant*
Janet Carter, *Former Director*

PARTNER JURISDICTIONS

City of Conway
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
Grand Strand Area
Transportation Study
Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments

SPECIAL THANKS

Horry County would like to acknowledge the following persons and organizations who have contributed time, knowledge and dedication to the Five-Year Review of the Comprehensive Plan. These include members of Planning Commission and County Councilpersons, staff of Horry County Planning, participating jurisdictions, and regional partners, and the people of Horry County.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Hunter Platt, *Chairman*
Kirk Truslow
Rob Edwards
Derek Harris
Joey Ray
Paul Stecker
Chris Hennigan
Matt McLaughlin
Bunky Ford
Jeremy Prince
Charles Brown

COUNTY COUNCIL

Johnny Gardner, *Chairman*
Jenna L. Dukes, *District 1*
Bill Howard, *District 2*
Dennis DiSabato, *District 3*
Gary Loftus, *District 4*
Tyler Servant, *District 5*
Cam Crawford, *District 6*
Tom Anderson, *District 7*
Michael Masciarelli, *District 8*
R. Mark Causey, *District 9*
Danny Hardee, *District 10*
Al Allen, *District 11*

PLANNING STAFF

Stevie Brown, *Planning Director*
Heather Davis, *Deputy Director*
Rajiv Myana, *Deputy Director*
Su Jo, *Senior Planner*
Yasmine Crawford, *Senior Planner*
Desiree Jackson, *Senior Planner*
Tierney Rosenstock, *GIS Planning Analyst*
Julien Ricou, *Associate Planner*

PARTNER JURISDICTIONS

City of Conway
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

REGIONAL PARTNERS

Grand Strand Area Transportation Study
Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
Myrtle Beach Convention and Visitor's Bureau
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

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 580,775 permanent residents. If residential growth patterns continue as they have

over the last few decades, more than 160,000 of the 211,000 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 367 new homes are permitted in Horry County monthly. These numbers were far exceeded in 2022, as an estimated 12,300 people moved to Horry County. Increased housing demand and a lack of available supply, compounded by a shortage in construction workers and materials following COVID-19, has resulted in higher home sale prices and a shortage of affordable housing.

From 2018 to 2023, the average single-family home price jumped from \$238,000 to \$260,500, exceeding sales prices prior to the economic downturn. The increase in home prices has forced working resi-

dents 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 41% of our population in comparison to 31% statewide and 29% 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 12% 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.

Since 2000, new development has consumed more than 64 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.

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.

VISION

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.



INTRODUCTION

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Horry County Council approved Ordinance 54-19 on December 10, 2019 adopting the Horry County Comprehensive Plan, IMAGINE 2040. The purpose of IMAGINE 2040 is to enable government officials and citizens to effectively manage natural, cultural, economic and fiscal resources in light of growth, change and an uncertain future. Additionally, IMAGINE 2040 establishes strategies for the County to pursue 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.

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. Planning Commission and County Council may opt to update the Plan or components of it if there are significant changes to the economy, development trends, or infrastructure. All area, communi-

ty, 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.

This document serves as the county's Five-Year Review of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan. This document was created in conjunction with Planning Commission and Staff and approved by County Council on January 6th, 2026. The Five-Year Review includes data from the 2020 Decennial Census the 2023 American Community Survey that were available at the time of this plan's creation. For this process, Planning Commission and Staff reviewed the previously adopted Goals and Policies and the Future Land Use Map for updates and changes.

Below are the vision and guiding principles from the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan. These were not changed for the Five-Year Review.

VISION

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 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.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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

1. Community Character: 'Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.'
2. Rural Preservation: 'Preserve rural areas and lifestyles, along with natural resources and assets, through land use decisions and policies.'

3. 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.'
4. 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.'
5. 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.'
6. 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.'
7. Mobility and Transportation: 'Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.'
8. 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.'
9. 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.'
10. 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

South Carolina’s Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, found in SC Code Title 6, Chapter 29, provides cities and towns with authority to undertake planning and adopt zoning and land use regulations as tools to guide their communities’ development. The law leaves local governments to pursue the 10 comprehensive plan elements in a way that best meets their communities’ needs. However, for each element, the law specifies that the planning process should include an inventory of existing conditions, a statement of the local government’s needs and goals, and implementation strategies with timeframes (MASC, 2021).

The Five-Year Review includes a resiliency chapter, a new element adopted in 2020 that amended Section 6-29-510 (D) of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act to require the development of a separate resiliency element for the Comprehensive Plan (MASC, 2021).

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.

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.

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. Topics analyzed include soil types; wetlands; coastal resources; agriculture; forestlands; plant and animal habitats; floodplains; scenic areas; and air and water quality.

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.

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, wastewater 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.

The Transportation Chapter offers strategies to maximize the efficiency of the county’s road network while promoting policies for alternative transporta-

tion 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.

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.

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.

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.

The Resilience Chapter considers the impacts of natural and man-made hazards on individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, economic development, public infrastructure and facilities, public health, safety, and welfare (MASC, 2021).

PLANNING AND REGULATORY HISTORY

The history of land use planning in Horry County has evolved over the past decades. 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.

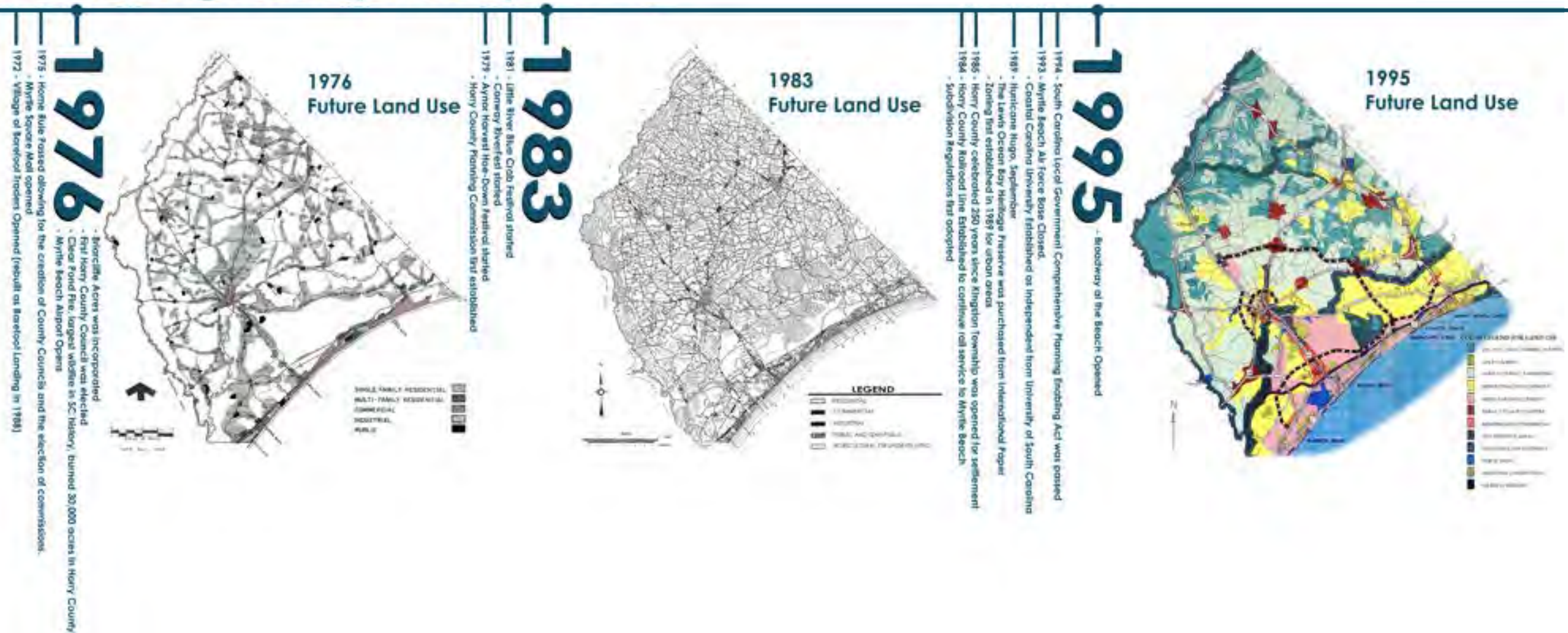
The 1976 Future Land Use Plan was followed by the 1983 Land Use Plan. Dividing the county into eight planning districts, this Plan outlined critical areas of concern in each district as well as outlining the current residential growth in each district. The 1983 Plan contained an even more detailed analysis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

History of Planning in Horry County



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.

PLANNING 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 and process graphic explain this in greater detail.

IMAGINE 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

The IMAGINE 2040 Steering Committee was estab-

Comprehensive Planning Process

Step 1

1. IMAGINE 2040 Committee and county planning staff research and develop drafts of each of the nine elements.
2. Inventory existing conditions
3. Update statistical data
4. Gather public input
5. Develop statements of needs, goals, and implementation strategies.



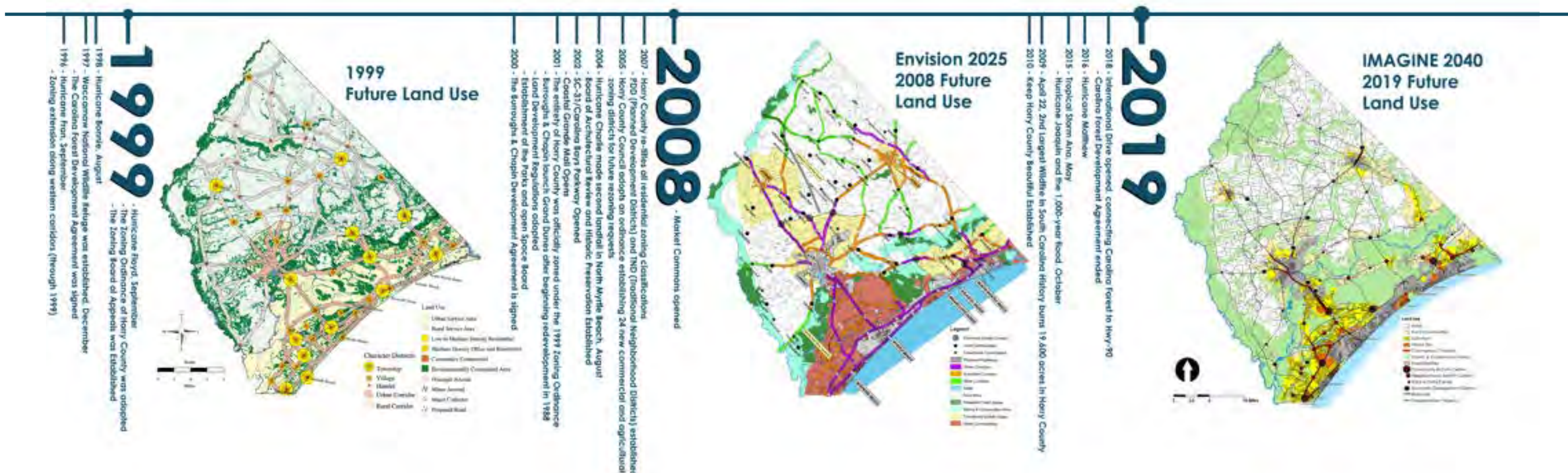
Step 2

1. IMAGINE 2040 Committee will present the Comprehensive Plan draft to the Planning Commission.
2. 30-day window for public comment
3. Planning Commission Public Hearing and Resolution to the County.



Step 3

1. The Comprehensive Plan draft will be presented to the County Council
2. Three readings at County Council Meetings and a Public Hearing
3. The process concludes with a County Council vote to adopt the Comprehensive Plan.



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

1. January 11th, 3:00-4:30pm
2. February 22nd, 4:30-6:00pm
3. March 29th, 4:30-6:00pm
4. April 19th, 4:30-6:00pm
5. April 26th, 4:30-6:00pm
6. May 31st, 4:30-6:00pm
7. June 28th, 4:30-6:00pm
8. July 12th, 4:30-6:00pm
9. July 26th, 11:00am-3:00pm
10. August 16th, 4:30-6:00pm

PUBLIC INPUT

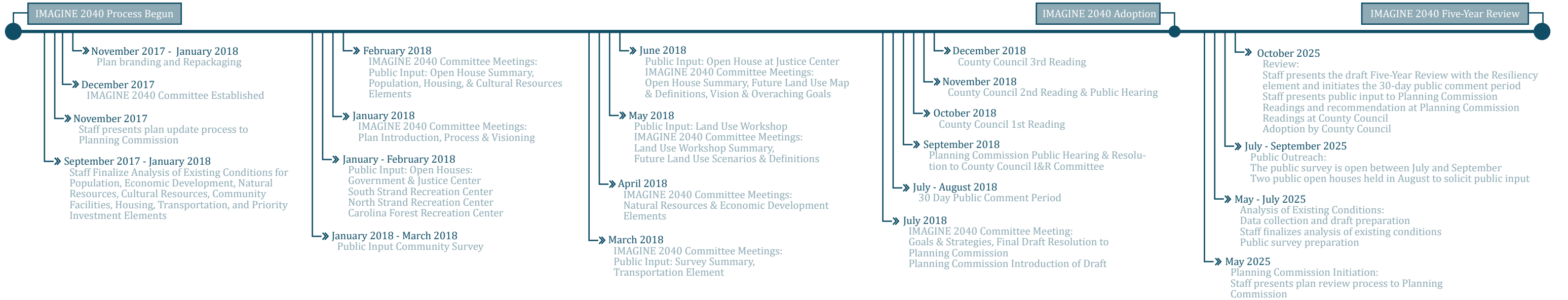
Public participation and community involvement are important components in the comprehensive planning process. The Public Input Summary details all of the key public participation findings. Public input for the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan was gathered via four main methods:

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:

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



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

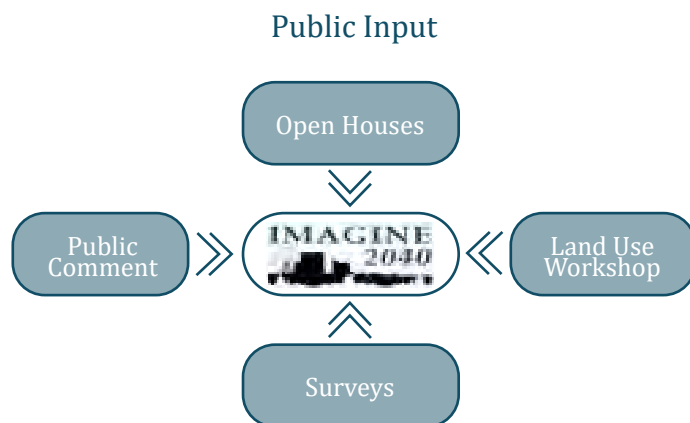
to distribute the survey link. The NCS was also used to influence the IMAGINE 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

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, 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 various institutions, corporations, industries, agencies, local governments, and the public. Approximately 143 potential participants were invited via email and/or letter. Of those 143,



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



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

104 participants RSVP'd 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 community 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 status of the comprehensive planning process. An email update list was created via a [surveymonkey.com](https://www.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 webpage as well as at various other public functions and community group meetings.

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:

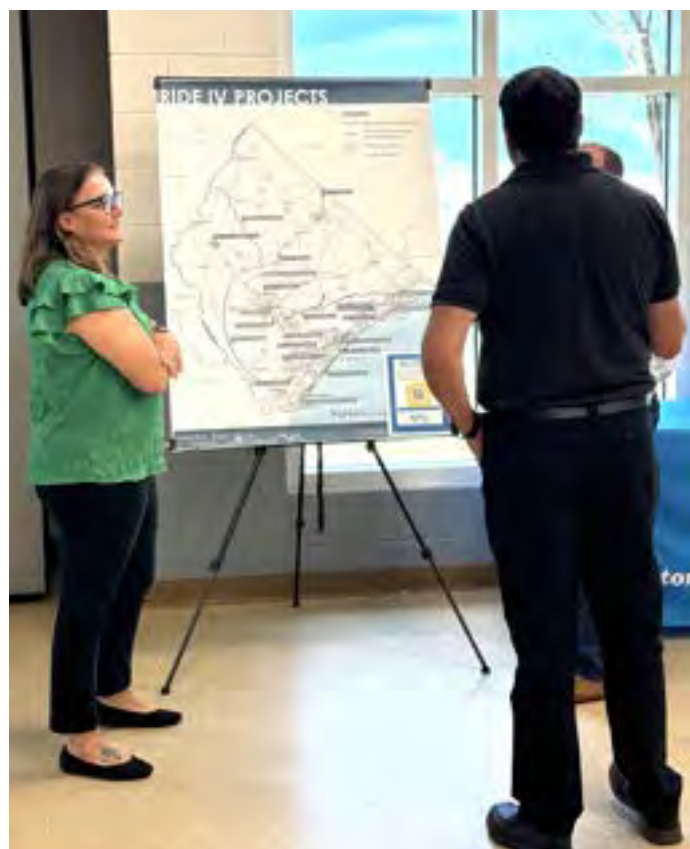
1. October 4th, 2018 5:30-7:00pm Draft distribution
2. October 25th, 2018 4:30-6:30pm Workshop
3. November 29th, 2018 3:00-4:30pm Workshop
4. December 6th, 2018 5:30-7:00pm Public Hearing

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

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

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW PROCESS

The five-year review of the comprehensive plan was initiated on May 1st, 2025 by Horry County Planning Commission. The review was initiated to maintain compliance with Section 6-29-510(E) of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act. The review process aimed to integrate updated data from federal, state, and local sources, collect public input on the state of the plan, and evaluate progress



August 5th Public Meeting in Carolina Forest.
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

on enacting IMAGINE 2040's goals and strategies.

The review process was led by Planning Commission and conducted in collaboration with local governments, county departments, key stakeholders, and the public. Staff collected updated data, created new visualizations and maps, and reviewed the plan text between October 2024 and August 2025. Text updates were made where appropriate, and progress on the plan goals and strategies was reviewed.

RESILIENCE SECTION

Section 6-29-510(D)-10 of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act, adopted in 2020, requires local governments to adopt a resilience section as part of the comprehensive plan. The resilience element was drafted with guidance from Horry County's Multi-Jurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan and the South Carolina Strategic Statewide Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan. Data was gathered from Federal, state, and local sources and reflects existing and future hazard conditions. Survey responses on resilience informed the element's focus on certain natural hazards.

To integrate the resilience element with existing resilience planning initiatives and organizations, planning staff presented the draft to Horry County's Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and Hazard Mitigation Task Force (HMTF). Staff presented data analysis, solicited questions from LEPC and HMTF members, and conducted a survey focused on resilience. Survey responses and feedback from LEPC and HMTF members were used to guide development of the resilience element.

PUBLIC INPUT

Public input for the plan review was solicited using three virtual and in-person methods:

1. Public Meetings.

Public open houses were held on August 5th in Carolina Forest and August 12th in Conway. Planning staff brought displays of plan materials, interactive mapping tools, and public comment forms to gather input on the plan review and emerging goals and issues. Staff engaged with attendees by explaining the displays and soliciting feedback. Approximately 15 members of the public attended the open house in Carolina Forest and 35 in Conway.

2. Online Survey.

An 83-question online survey allowed respondents to share input on housing, built form, public amenities, transportation, resilience, and development. Questions were sourced from the 2019 planning process survey to provide insight on changing opinions. Additional questions focused on resilience were added to guide the development of the resilience element. A storymap introduced the comprehensive plan and review process. The survey was open between May and September 2025 and received 661 responses.

3. Public Comments and Social Media.

Public comment forms were made available at open house events to collect open-ended comments on the plan review. Press releases with links to the survey, storymap, and public input sessions were issued in June, July, and August to solicit engagement throughout the planning process. Department contacts and social media engagement were included in public input materials.

The public was encouraged to engage with planners and provide feedback in posts on facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, and the county website. Public Information and Planning staff developed press releases, a social media reel, and engagement graphics to spread awareness of public input

opportunities.

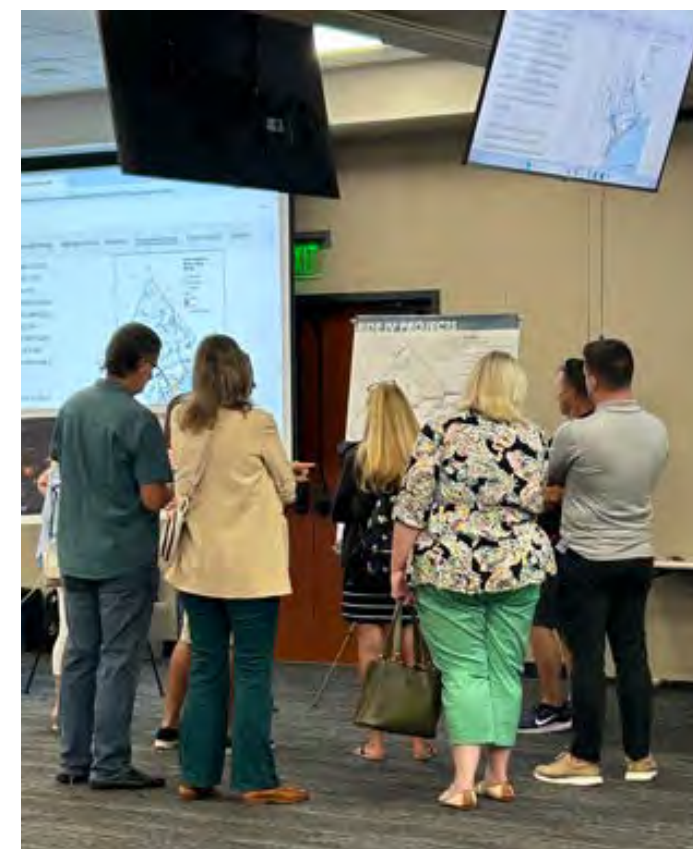
ADOPTION AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

The draft IMAGINE 2040 Five-Year Review was recommended for adoption by Planning Commission on November 6th, 2025. Planning Commission held one workshop in addition to a public hearing on the following dates:

1. September 25th, 2025 3:00pm: Workshop
2. October 2nd, 2025 5:30pm: Second Reading
3. November 6th, 2025 5:30pm: Third Reading

After recommendation by Planning Commission, the Five-Year Review was presented to Horry County Council on the following dates:

1. November 18th, 2025 6:00pm: Introduction



August 12th Public Meeting in Conway.
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

2. December 9th, 2025 6:00pm: Second Reading

3. January 6th, 2026 6:00pm: Third Reading

The five-year review to IMAGINE 2040 was adopted
by County Council on January 6th, 2026.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



HORRY COUNTY
IMAGINE 2040



POPULATION ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 2

POPULATION

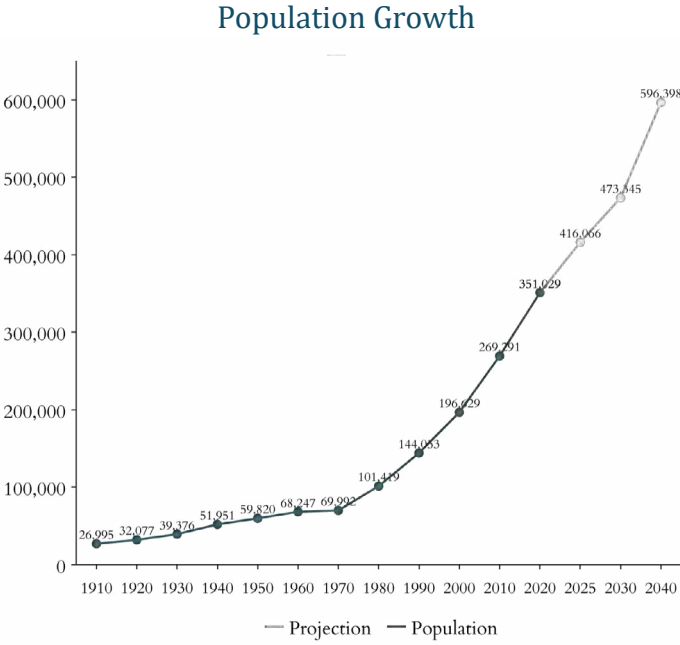
The population element examines population trends and describes the demographic composition of Horry County residents. Population growth and composition influences land use decisions, determines housing and infrastructure needs, and impacts the local economy. As Horry County’s population continues to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

POPULATION GROWTH

According to 2023 population estimates, Horry County has approximately 368,937 permanent residents. Its population has grown rapidly since the 1980s, adding over 267,000 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, after Greenville, Richland, and Charleston counties.

The county's 2023 population estimate reflects a 5.1% increase of 17,908 people from 2020. Despite the global downturn, strong population growth continued through the Covid-19 pandemic and has accelerated since it ended.

Population projections developed by the county anticipate its population will increase to 580,775 permanent residents by 2040. These projections do not account for the county's seasonal population of tourists and snowbirds that live in the area in the cooler months.



Source: Census Bureau, 2020. SCRFAO, 2024.

MUNICIPAL GROWTH

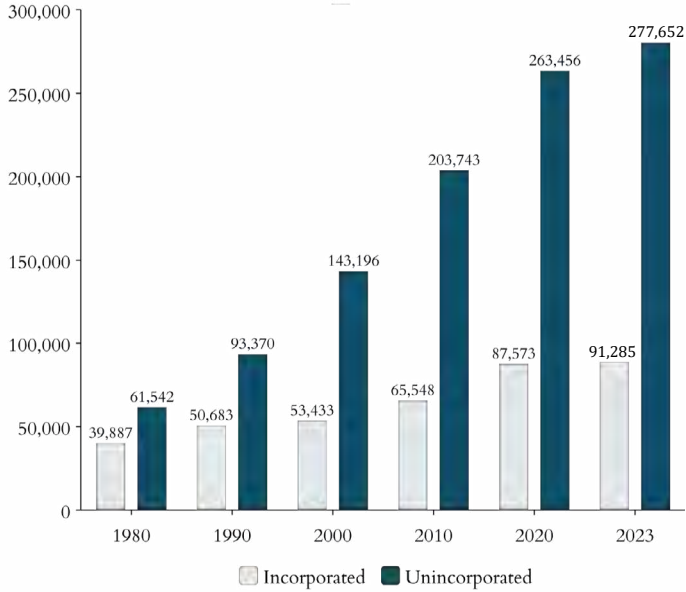
Over the last three decades, all municipalities in the county have continuously gained population, excepting some short-term declines from 1980 to 1990 and 2000 to 2010. With 37,214 residents, Myrtle Beach remains the county's largest municipality, followed by Conway with 26,082 residents. However, unincorporated Horry County accounted for 79.3% of the county's population growth and 14,196 new residents between 2020 and 2023.

In 2023, 91,285 people lived in area municipalities, while 277,652 lived in unincorporated Horry County, making up 75.2% percent of the total county population.

POPULATION CHANGE

Historically, Horry County’s population has primarily resided along the beachfront and near waterways. However, areas further away from the beach and along major highway corridors have seen increased growth since the 2000 Census. Burgess, Socastee,

Incorporated vs. Unincorporated Population Growth



Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023.

Forestbrook, and Carolina Forest have growth fastest since 2000, followed by Conway, Little River, and the Hwy 90 corridor. These same areas are expected to see an increase in development in the future as approved and new subdivisions are constructed in these areas.

Population growth is mainly driven by in-migration to Horry County from other counties in South Carolina, neighboring Southern States, and the Northeast. Since 2020, an estimated 84,490 people (22.9% of the 2023 population) moved into Horry County from other counties in South Carolina and neighboring states.

In 2023, 47,207 residents (12.9% of the total population) lived in a different house in the previous year. 23,203 (6.3% of the total population) moved houses within the county, 4,706 (1.3%) moved from another county in South Carolina, and 19,298 (5.3%) moved into the county from other states.

Most new residents from out-of-state moved from

the South and Northeast, as shown in the graph at right. 16,093 county residents (4.4% of the county population) moved out of the county, mostly to other states.

POPULATION DENSITY

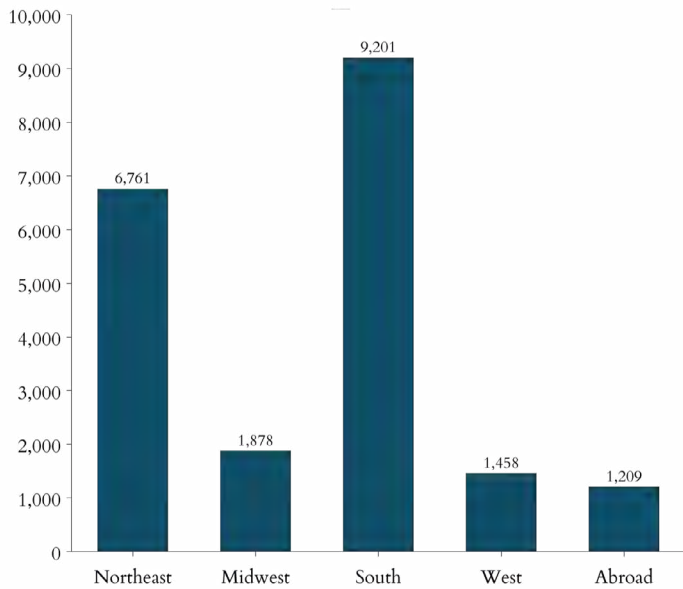
New residents are largely moving into the areas east of the Waccamaw River to be close to the beach. This is due, in part, to those areas' proximity to job centers, housing opportunities, and zoning regulations.

The map below delineates areas of high population density and urban land use resulting in a representation of the urban footprint. To qualify as urban, the Census Bureau requires an area to have 2,000 housing units or a population of over 5,000 residents.

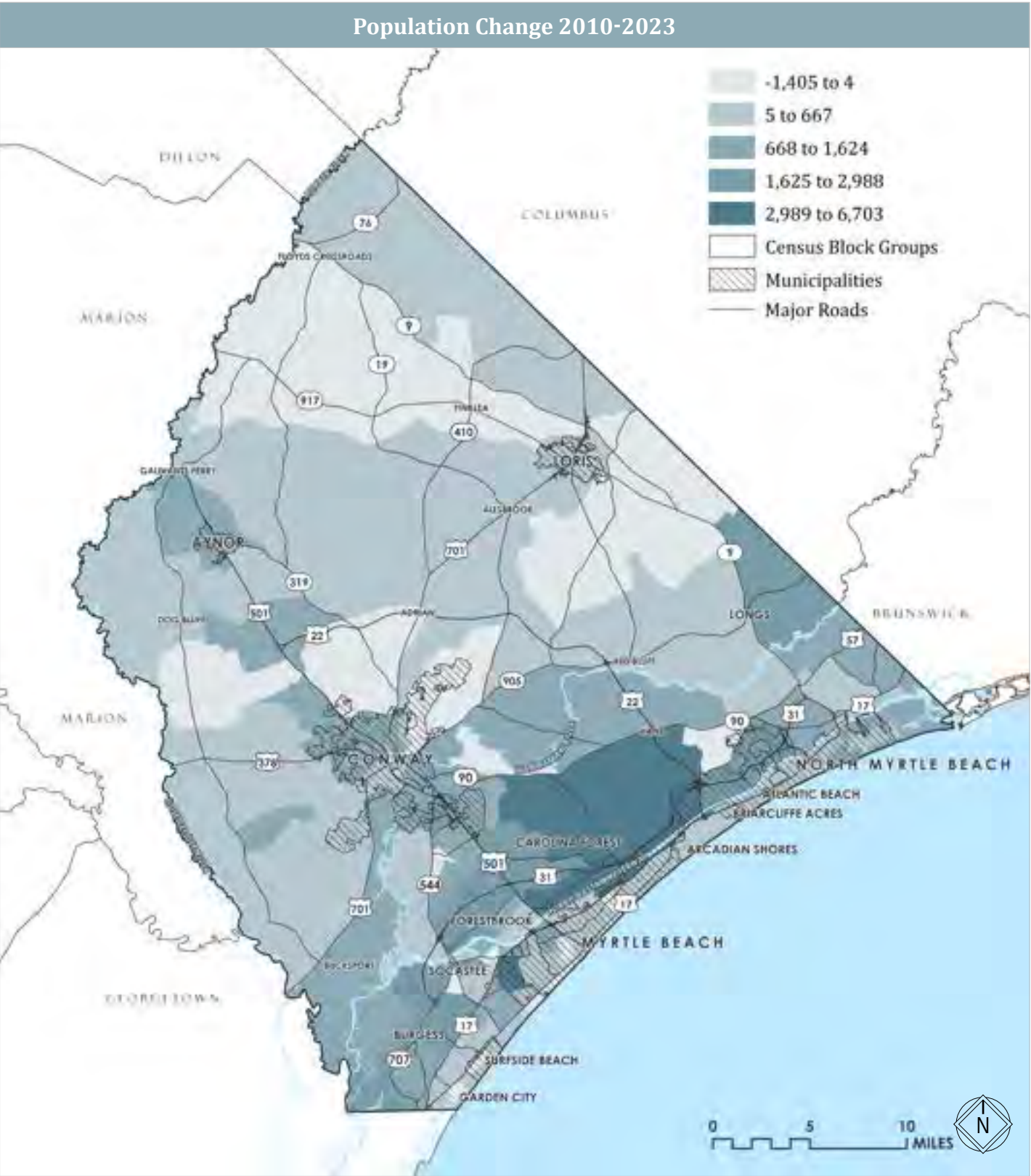
Municipal Population Growth 1980-2023						
Municipalities	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2023
Atlantic Beach	289	446	351	334	195	283
Aynor	643	470	587	560	974	1,077
Briarcliffe Acres	338	552	470	457	479	499
Conway	10,240	9,819	11,788	17,103	24,849	26,082
Loris	2,193	2,067	2,079	2,396	2,449	2,570
Myrtle Beach	19,702	24,848	22,759	27,109	35,682	37,214
North Myrtle Beach	3,960	8,636	10,974	13,752	18,790	19,343
Surfside	2,522	3,845	4,425	3,837	4,155	4,217
Municipal Population	39,887	50,683	53,433	65,548	87,573	91,285
Unincorporated Population	61,532	93,370	143,196	203,743	263,456	277,652
Total Population	101,419	144,053	196,629	269,291	351,029	368,937
Municipal Population as Percent of County	39.3%	35.2%	27.2%	24.3%	24.9%	24.7%

Source: US Census, Decennial Census. American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B01003).

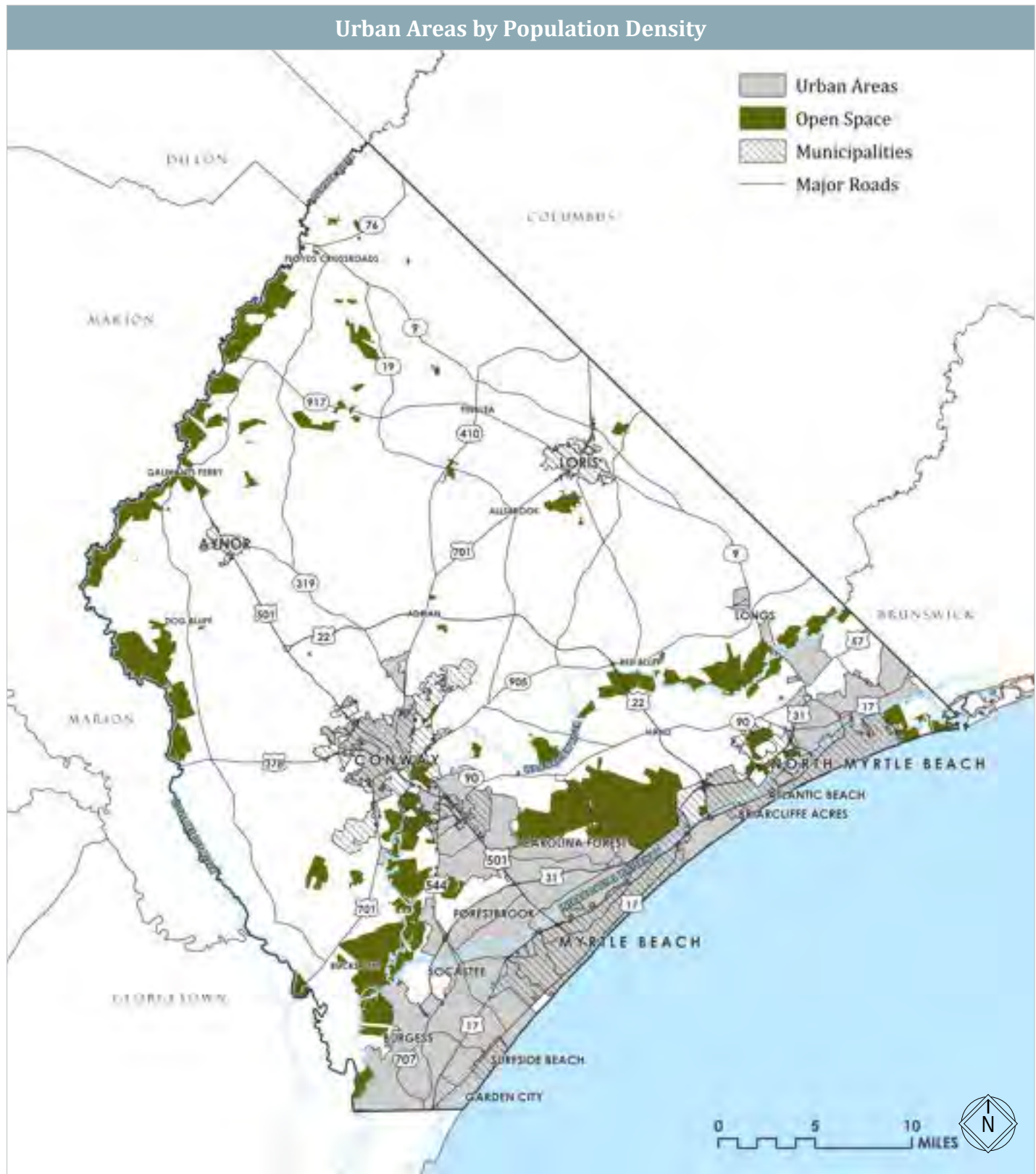
Relocation of Residents to Horry County in Past Year



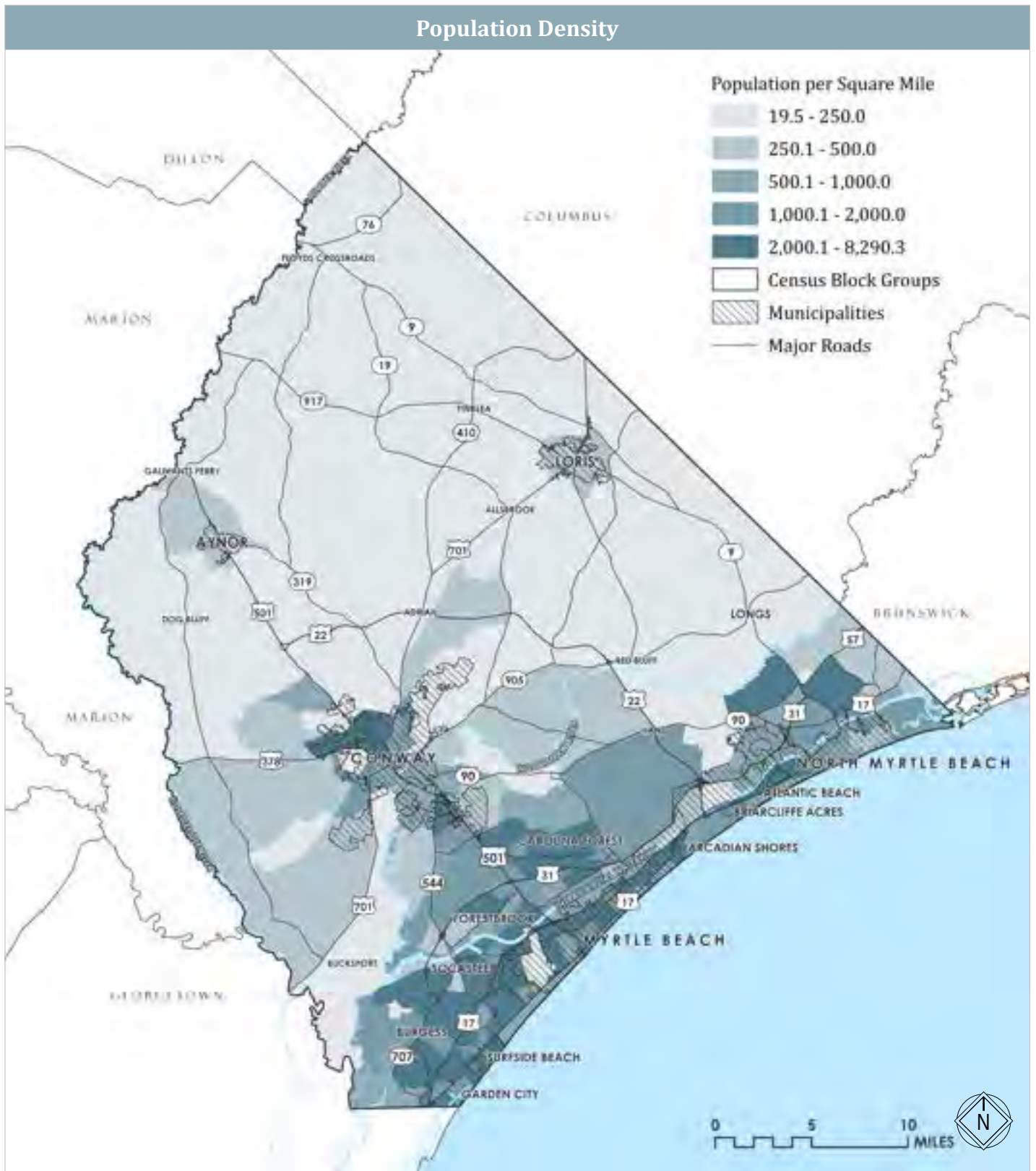
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B07204).



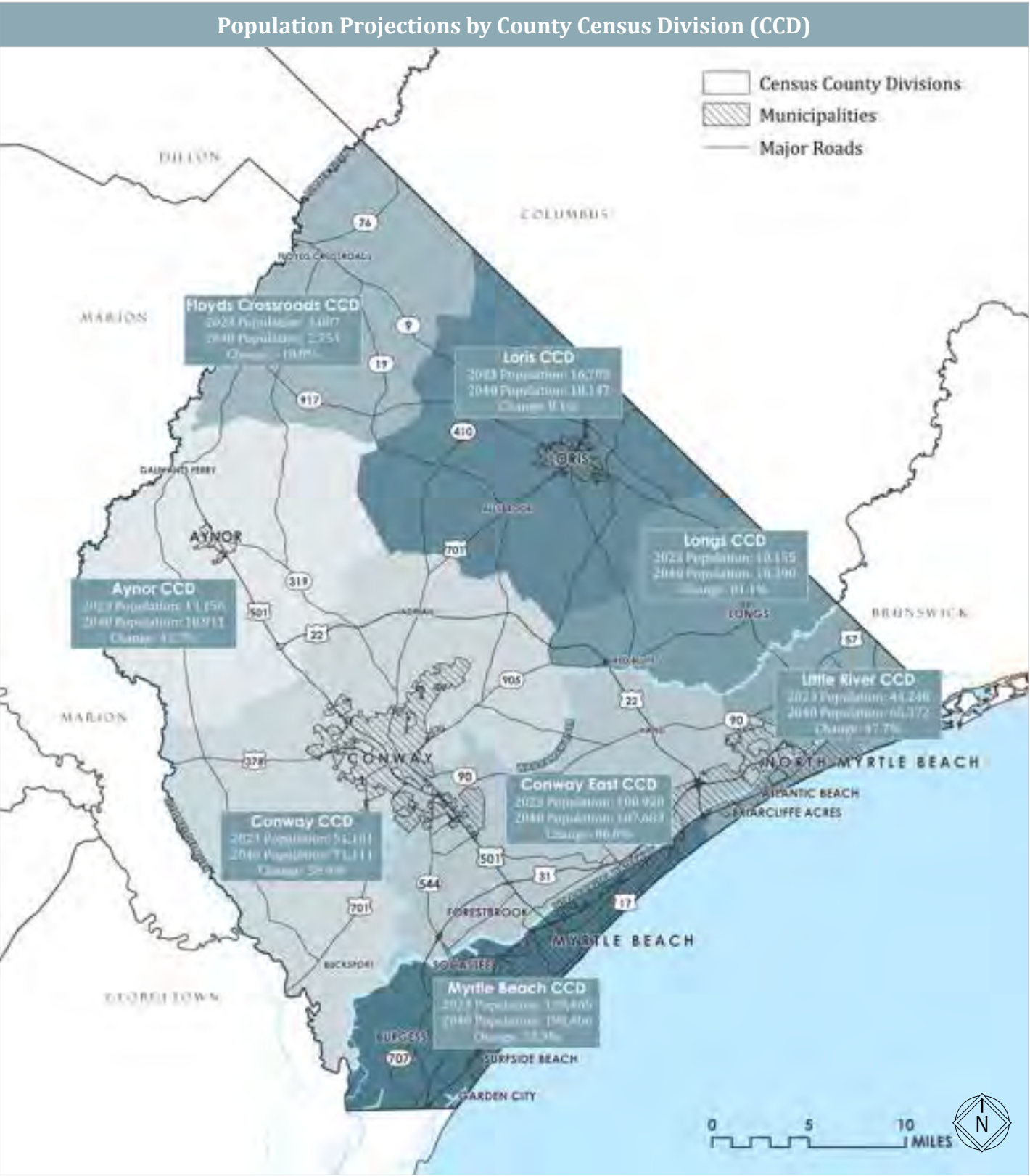
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #DP05). Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: US Census, TIGER/Line Shapefiles: Urban Areas 2020. Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B01001).



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #DP05). Horry County Planning & Zoning.

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. Horry County's 2040 population projections and distribution of growth are based on Census Bureau and South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs data refined by Horry County Planning and Zoning.

Though the county is projected to continue growing rapidly, local growth rates vary widely. Areas with the lowest projected growth rates include Floyds Crossroads County Census Division (CCD) (with a 0.8% decrease of 333 people), Loris CCD (with an 8.1% increase of 1,362 people) and Conway CCD (with a 38.9% increase of 19,930 people).

CCDs projected to have the highest population growth rates include Conway East CCD (with an 86.0% increase of 86,763 people) and the Longs CCD (an 81.1% increase of 8,235 people). Conway East and Myrtle Beach will remain the most populous CCDs, accounting for roughly 66.5% of the county's population by 2040. Including seasonal population estimates of short-term visitors and summer residents, the county's total population is projected to reach 1.1 million during peak visitation season in 2040.

SEASONAL POPULATION

According to the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, approximately 17.6 million tourists visited the Grand Strand (including parts of Georgetown

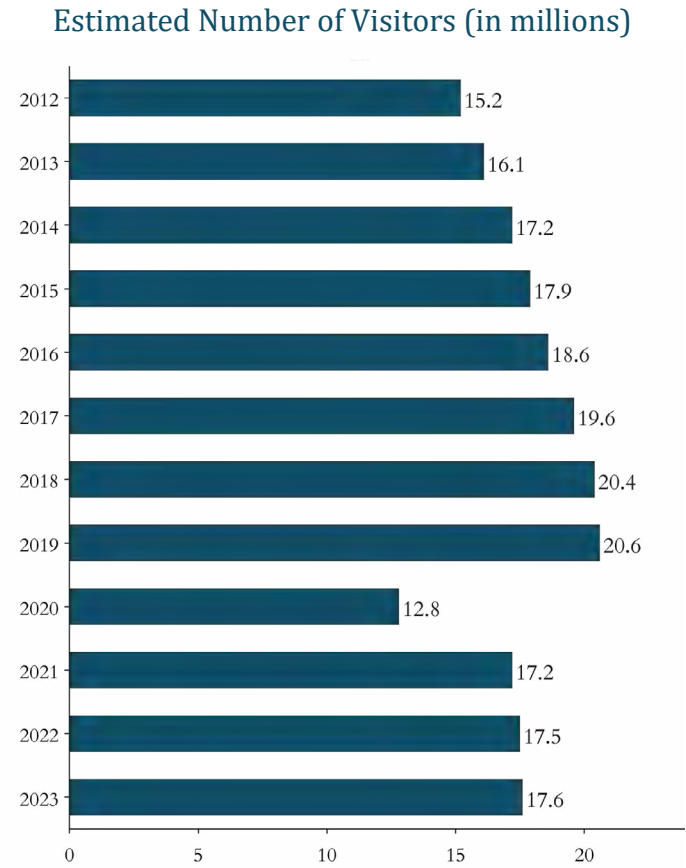
Population Projections 1970-2040												
County Census Division	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2023	Anticipated Growth After 2023				
								2030	2040	Total Increase	% Growth	Annual Growth Rate (%)
Aynor	5,634	7,190	6,844	8,908	10,052	12,420	13,156	15,325	18,911	5,755	43.7	2.57
Conway	18,665	23,868	26,881	33,575	39,715	47,206	51,181	57,939	71,111	19,930	38.9	2.29
Conway East	3,419	8,546	17,552	31,639	65,364	96,520	100,920	134,593	187,683	86,763	86.0	5.06
Floyds Crossroads	3,420	3,771	2,964	3,195	3,301	2,909	3,087	2,830	2,754	-333	-10.8	-0.63
Little River	4,960	8,781	17,988	26,315	33,652	43,545	44,248	53,354	65,372	21,124	47.7	2.81
Longs	2,788	3,299	3,371	5,625	6,645	9,523	10,155	13,234	18,390	8,235	81.1	4.77
Loris	9,895	11,137	11,290	13,785	15,878	16,770	16,785	17,445	18,147	1,362	8.1	0.48
Myrtle Beach	21,211	34,827	58,410	73,587	94,684	122,136	129,405	155,668	198,406	69,001	53.3	3.14
Total	69,992	101,419	145,300	196,629	269,291	351,029	368,937	450,388	580,775	211,838	57.4	2.56

Source: US Census, Decennial Census. American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B01003).

County) in 2023. 2019 saw an all-time high of 20.6 million visitors following consistent visitation growth since 2012. While visitation declined substantially during the Covid-19 pandemic, it has begun increasing towards pre-pandemic levels.

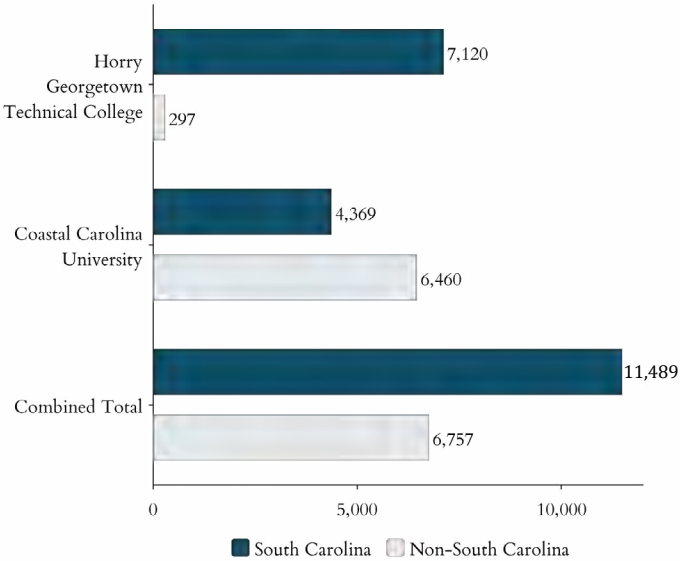
The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce survey shows that most visitors to the county originate from within a one-day car drive.

27% of visitors are North Carolina residents, and another 16% travel from New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio (MBACC, 2023). The average travel party includes 2.6 adults and 0.9 children and stays 3.8 nights. 25% include individuals over 65 and 20% include children, exceeding national averages. Approximately 75% of visitors are under the age of 65, with 63% aged between 35 and 54.



Source: MBCVB, 2024.

Student Enrollment by Geographic Origin



Source: CCU, 2024. HGTC, 2025.

Horry County’s Solid Waste Authority (HCSWA) calculates the equivalent full-time tourist population for a six day stay to be roughly 89.2% of the resident population (HCSWA, 2022). HCSWA projects that the peak tourist population in 2040 will be roughly 531,800 people. Adding the projected full-time tourist population to the full-time resident population projection for 2040 shows a total seasonal population of over 1.1 million people.

STUDENT POPULATION

In addition to the tourist population, Coastal Carolina University (CCU) and Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) continue to increase their enrollment. The traditional academic year starts at the end of August and continues until the beginning of May. For the academic year 2024-2025, CCU and HGTC had a combined total enrollment of 19,148 students.

Students typically reside in Horry County during the academic year. 40% of CCU's 11,225 students in 2023 were South Carolina residents (CCU, 2024).

CCU anticipates enrollment of 11,974 by 2033 (a 6.7% increase). HGTC has campuses in Georgetown, Conway, and Myrtle Beach and enrolls 7,923 students (HGTC, 2025). 96.0% of students are from South Carolina, and many live year-round in Horry County. 58.1% of HGTC's students in 2024 attend part-time, and 90.3% of graduates join the local workforce in Horry County.

POPULATION GROWTH FINDINGS

Between 2000 and 2023, Horry County's population grew twice as fast as South Carolina's.

Population projections anticipate that this high growth rate is expected to continue over next several decades. By 2040, Horry County is projected to grow by 211,838 people.

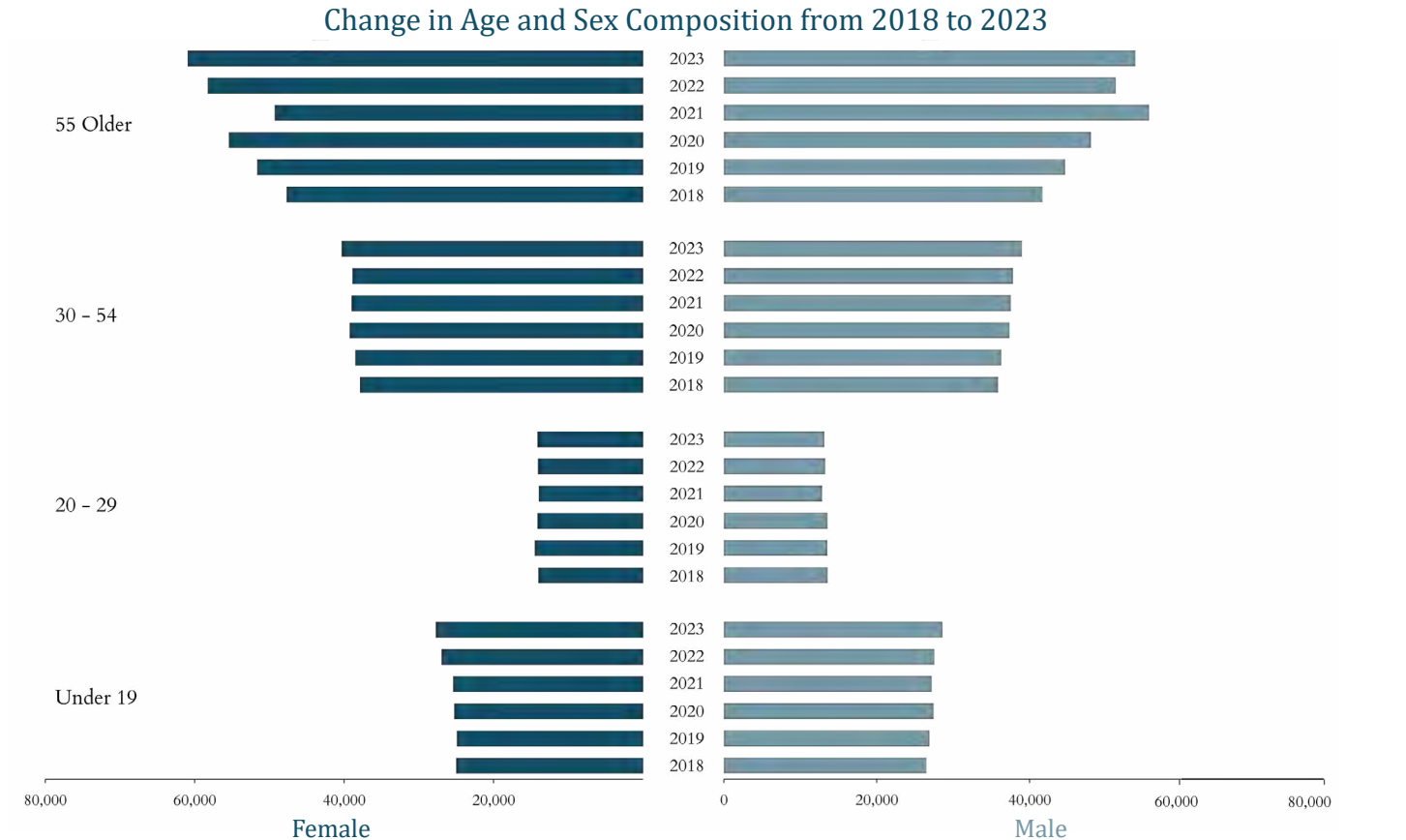
As population density and sprawl increase in urban and suburban areas, services and facilities will need to expand to meet growing demand. Horry County will also need to continue to address the needs of seasonal and student populations.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population composition is an important part of this chapter because it considers special populations with unique needs. Sex, race, ethnicity, age, household composition, education, income and poverty help describe county residents and their needs.

AGE AND SEX

Consistent with national trends, baby boomers make up a large portion of the county's population.



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2018-2023, (ID #S0101).

*According to 2023 population estimates, **41.7%** of the county population is aged 55 and older, compared to **31.8%** in South Carolina and **29.7%** in the United States.*

Horry County has roughly 13.4% more females age 55 and older compared to males. The county's birth rate in 2022 (8.9 per 1,000) was lower than its death rate (11.1), indicating that in-migration is responsible for most population growth (SCDPH, 2022).

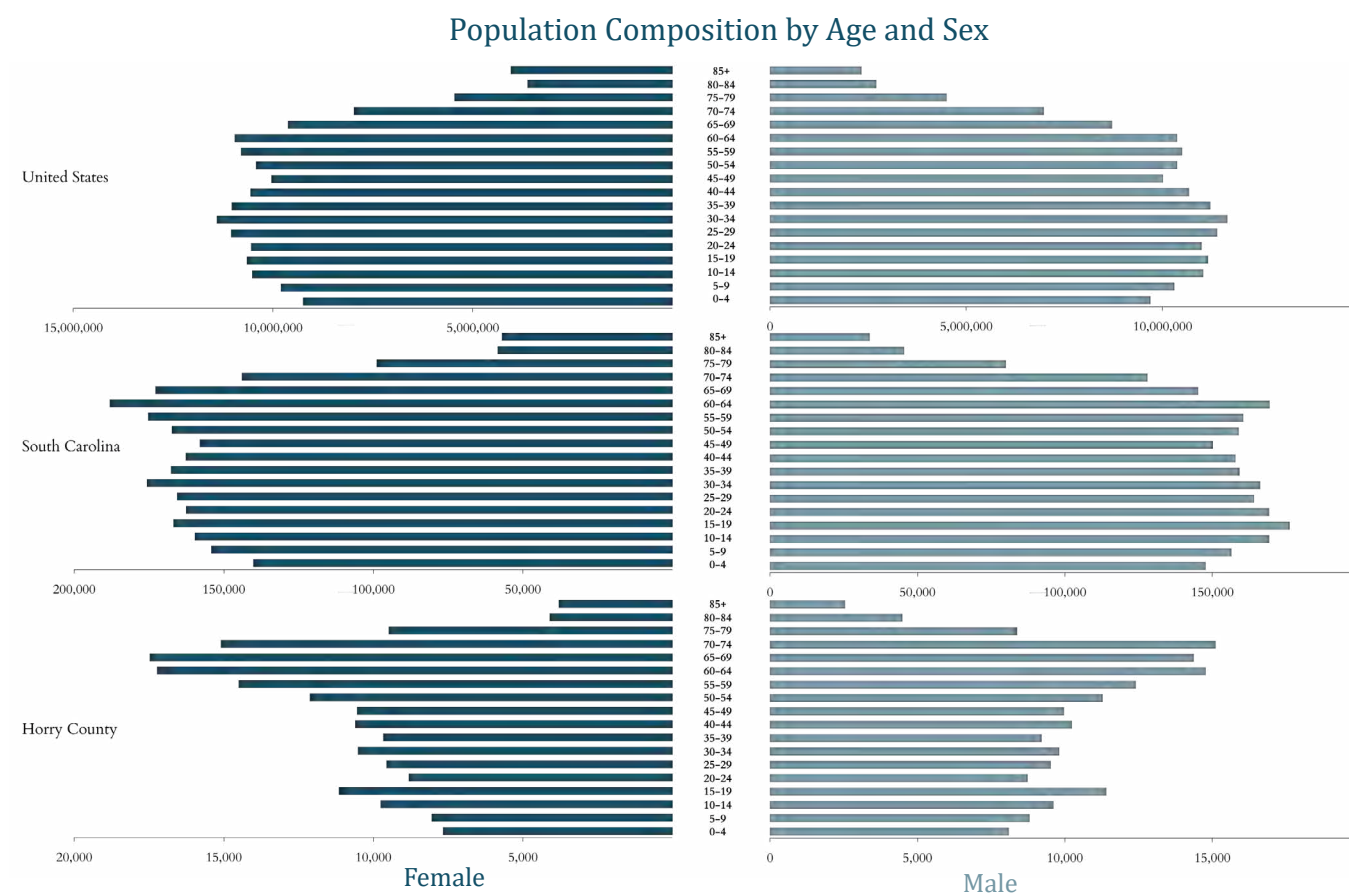
The county's population aged 20 to 29 years old remained relatively stagnant between 2018 and 2023. This could be due to the fluctuation of student population, the desire for college age young adults to move elsewhere for higher education, and the Census' difficulty in counting non-local college students. In addition, the sharp contrast in population

aged 20 to 29 and 30 to 54 could indicate former residents moving back to the area after completing college or an influx of non-locals.

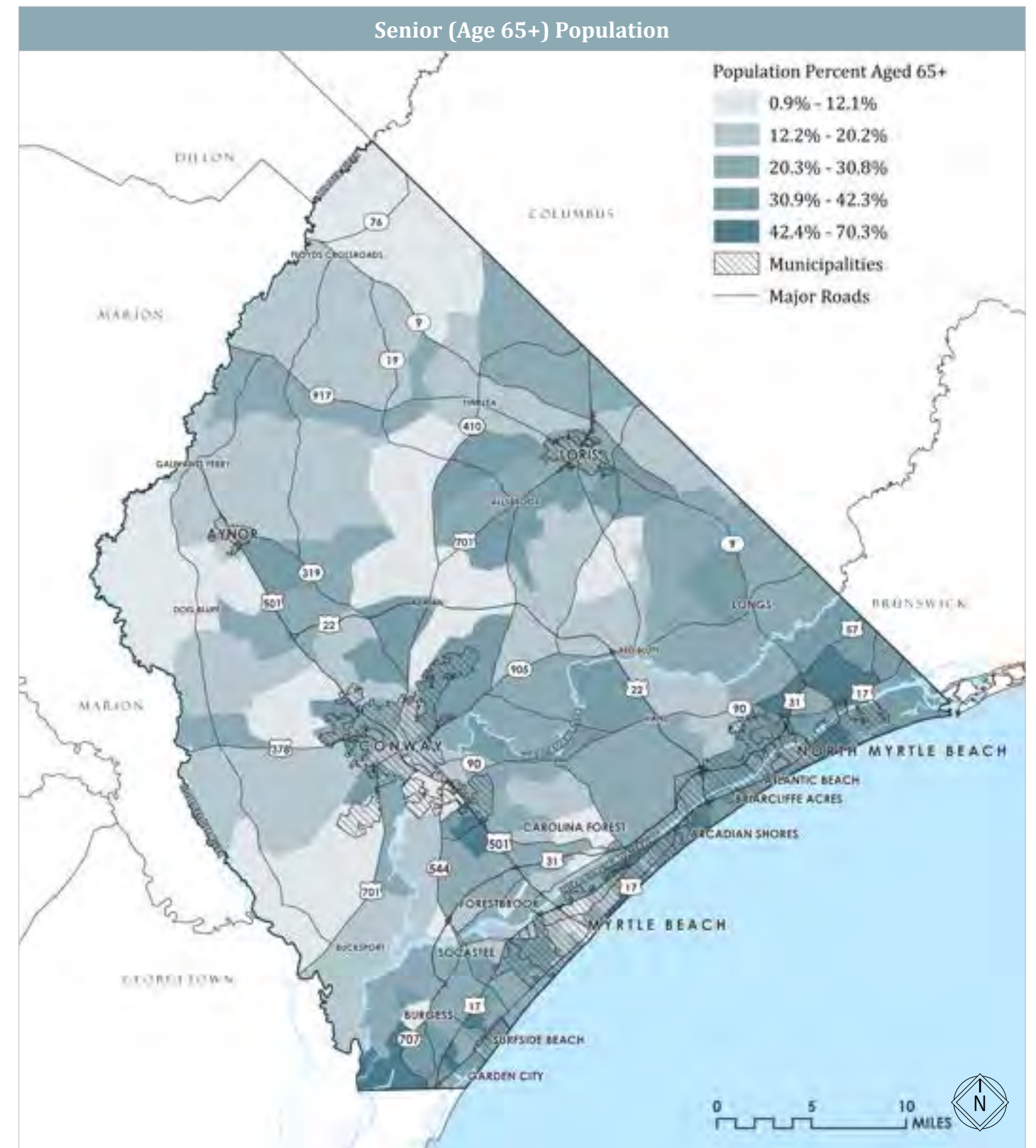
In 2011, the county's population aged 55 and older exceeded its population aged 30 to 54 for the first time.

*Compared to other tourist and retirement destinations, Horry County's **median age is slightly lower** than Florida destinations and **slightly higher** than South Carolina destinations.*

The map at right illustrates the population density of residents ages 65 years and older. These residents tend to live along and near the coast in recently developed and developing areas. Many county retirees choose their retirement locations based on proximity to tourist amenities, service facilities,



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #DP05).



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #DP05).

and the beach.

The map at right illustrates the concentration of children under the age of 18. Mapping density helps determine where services (such as schools and playgrounds) are needed. Male children ages 19 and under outnumber female children, consistent with national trends. Areas with higher concentrations of children are typically consistent with development trends. These areas are in greater demand and can place a higher demand on services and facilities.

These statistics help Horry County predict and provide needed services for children, families, and seniors.

According to estimates of average life expectancy, the overall population of the Baby Boomer generation

Median Age Compared to Peer Destinations				
	Horry County, SC	Sarasota County, FL	Volusia County, SC	Charleston County, SC
Median Age	48.2	57.3	46.6	39

Age Distribution in Horry County, 2018-2023					
	0-19	20-29	30-54	55+	Total
2018	67,208	37,841	95,685	120,181	320,915
2019	68,369	37,976	97,647	128,180	332,172
2020	69,719	38,021	99,815	136,631	344,186
2021	69,420	36,329	99,673	139,443	344,865
2022	72,285	37,028	100,930	146,335	356,578
2023	74,553	36,636	103,964	153,784	368,937

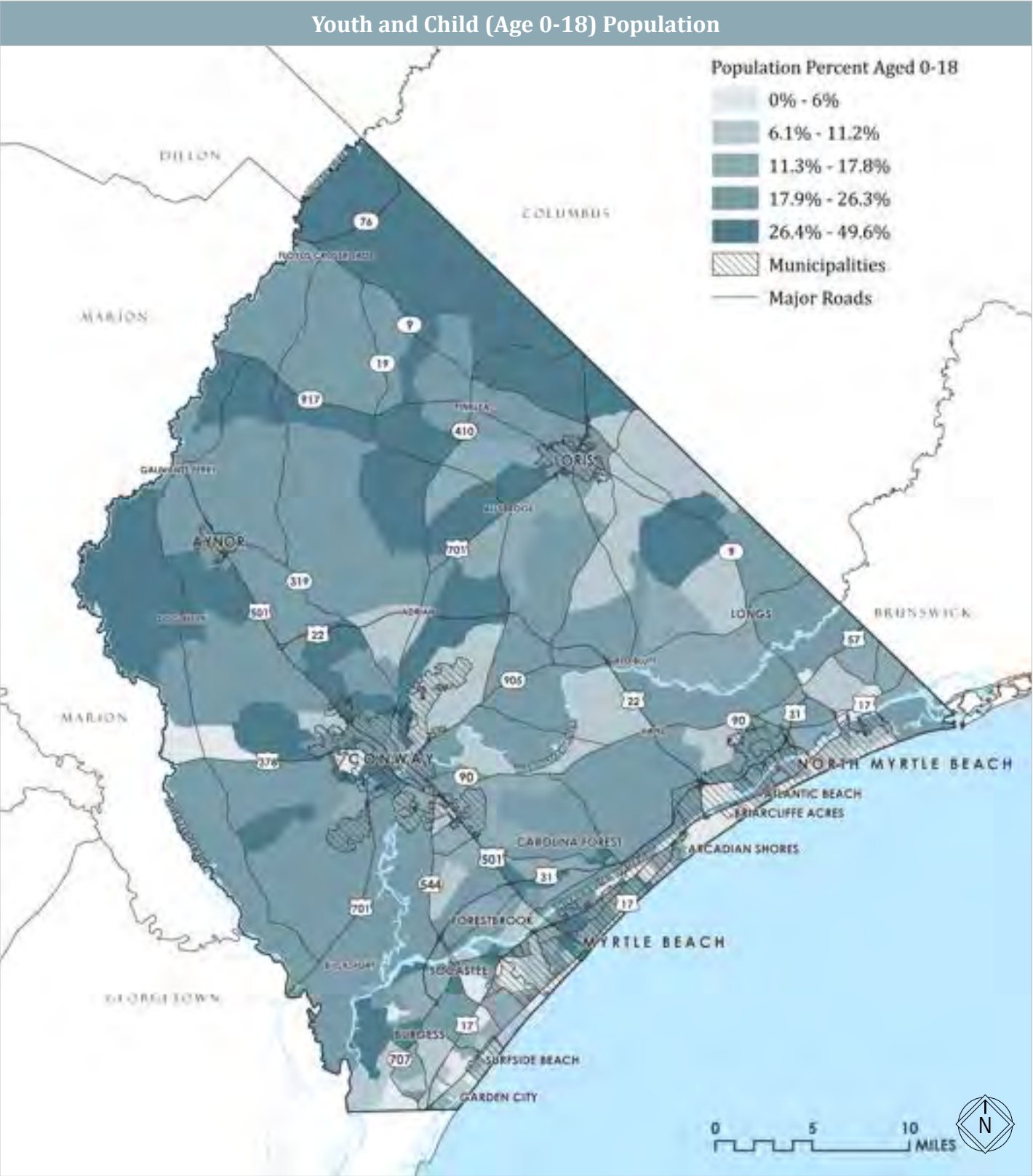
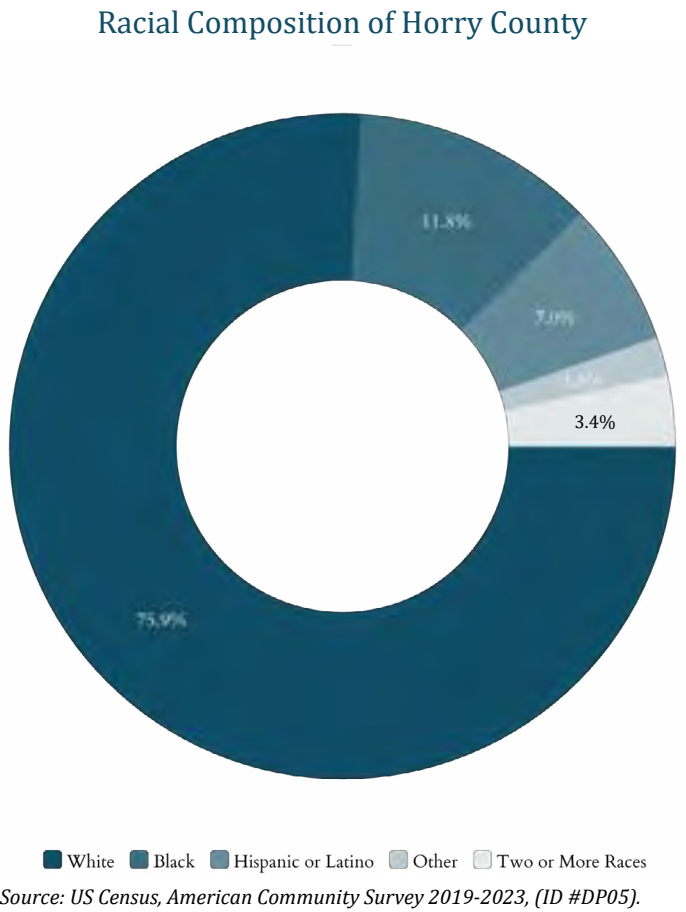
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2018-2023, (ID #S0101).

born between 1945 and 1965 will decline between 2033 and 2048. While this trend may significantly impact the state and nation, it is expected to have less of an impact on Horry County. This is mostly due to the probability that the county will remain a retirement destination for future generations as they age.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Horry County’s racial diversity changed relatively slowly between 1990 and 2023. The White population steadily decreased from 81.3% of the population in 1990 to 75.9% in 2023, even as the total population grew. The Black and African American population decreased from 17.5% to 11.8% of the population, though it grew by 18,195 individuals.

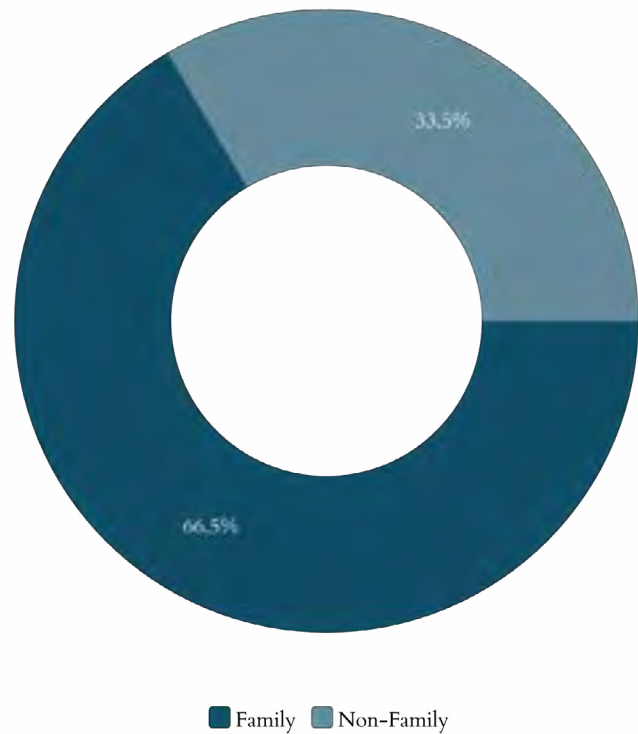
The Hispanic and Latino populations increased from 0.9% of the population in 1990 to 7.0% in 2023. Individuals of two or more races increased from 1.1% in 2000 (when the census category was established) to 3.4% in 2023. Some of the decrease



Racial Composition of Horry County from 1990 to 2022										
Race	1990	%	2000	%	2010	%	2020	%	2023	%
White	117,098	81.3	159,363	81.1	200,920	79.8	265,729	78.6	280,046	75.9
Black or African American	25,160	17.5	30,468	15.5	35,510	13.7	39,367	11.6	43,355	11.8
Hispanic or Latino	1,259	0.9	5,057	2.6	14,430	5.6	24,304	7.2	25,961	7.0
Other	1,507	1.03	4,693	2.4	4,685	1.8	1,422	0.4	7,119	1.9
Two or More Races	N/A	N/A	2,105	1.1	2,722	2.0	7,477	2.2	12,456	3.4

Source: US Census, Decennial Census. American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #P9 and #DP05).

Percentage of Family and Non-Family Households



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023 (ID #DP02).

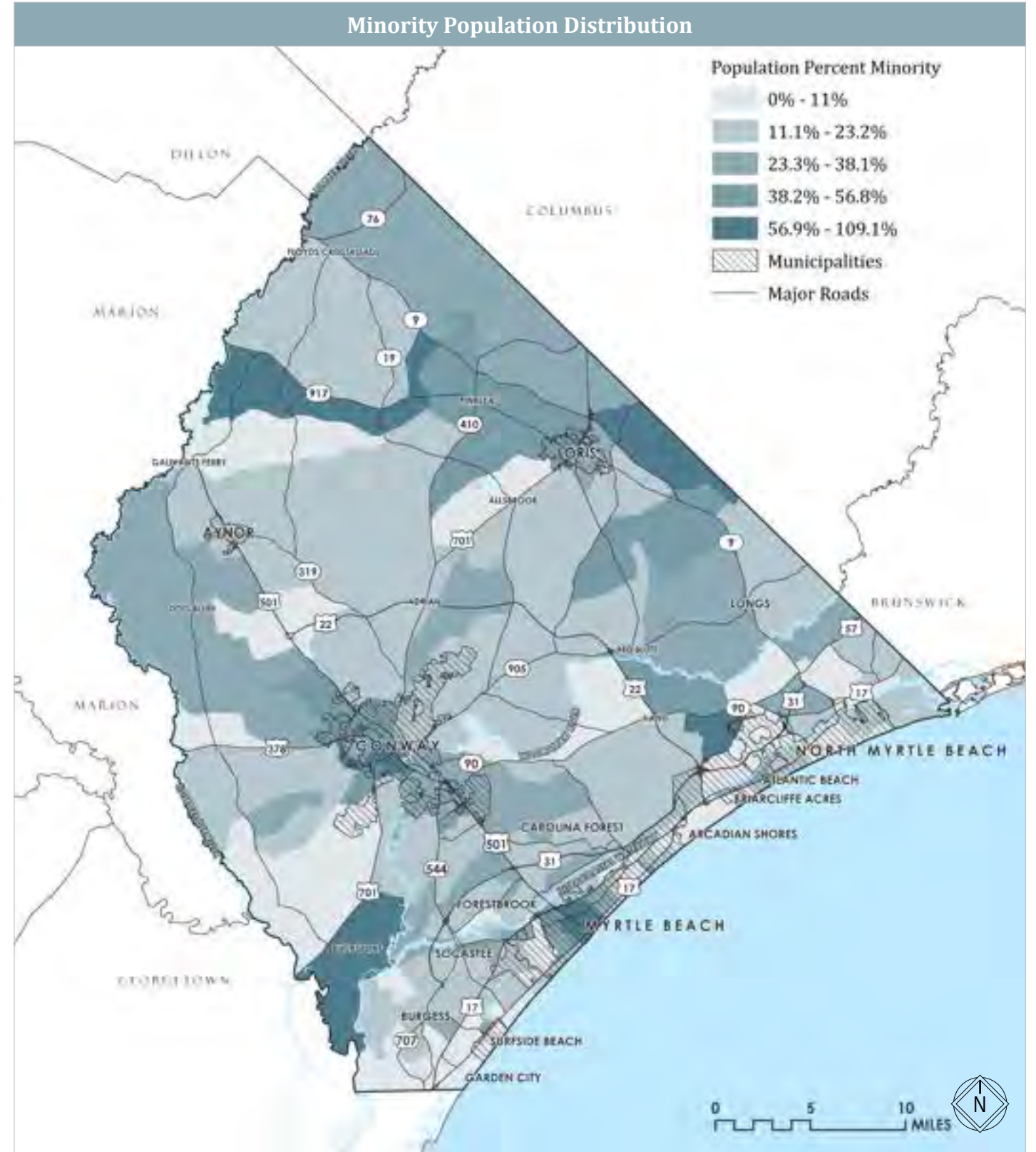
in the proportion of White and Black populations could be attributed to the inclusion of the Two or More Races and Other categories and the increase of Hispanic populations.

The map at right illustrates areas of high minority population density. Though minorities live throughout the county, large population concentrations are located in Conway, Myrtle Beach, Bucksport, and Floyds Crossroads.

HOUSEHOLDS

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a Family Household as a household in which at least one member is related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Non-Family Households consist of individuals living alone or households with members without natural or marital kinship to the householder.

South Carolina's household composition is largely similar to North Carolina and Georgia. Fewer South Carolina households have children under age 18

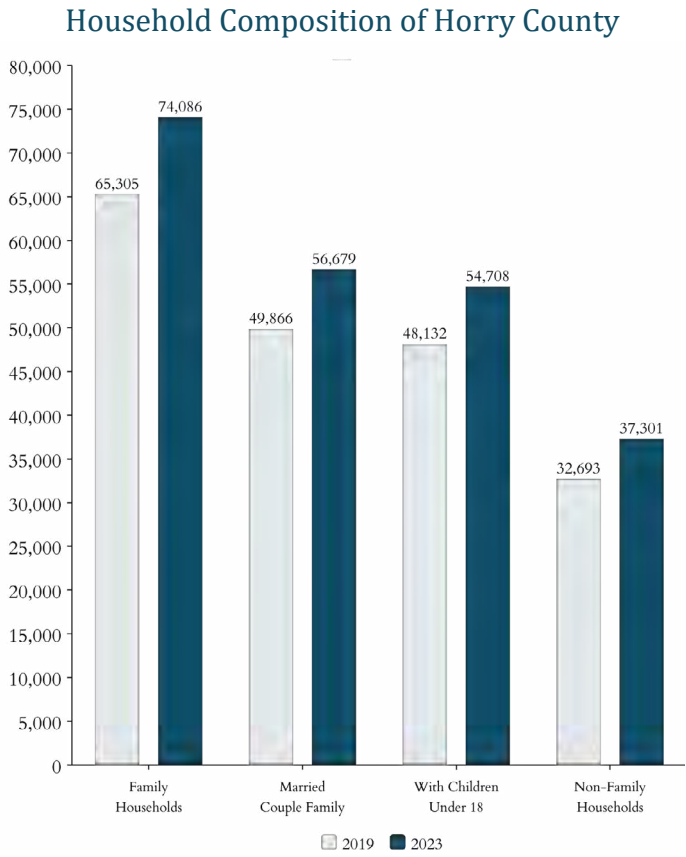


Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B02001).

(29.1%, compared to 29.9% in North Carolina and 32.9% in Georgia).

Horry County’s household composition is largely consistent with national averages. In 2023, 97,093 households (66.5%) were considered family households, compared to 64.5% of US households. 37,301 (33.5%) were considered non-family households, compared to 35.5% of US residents. National and county family household rates have both steadily declined over the last forty-five years. The chart below illustrates the household composition of Horry County in 2019 and 2023.

The average household size declined from 2.43 in 2016 to 2.41 in 2023, a strong indication that family sizes and non-traditional households are growing in our area.



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023 (ID #DP02).

Retiree populations impact household sizes across the county, as they typically do not have children at home. Average household size ranges from less than 2.3 people in the Little River and Myrtle Beach CCDs to 2.78 in Floyds Crossroads.

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 residents aged 20 to 29 years old in Horry County has remained flat while other age brackets have steadily increased. The fact that this population has not grown likely indicates that graduating high school

Household Size by CCD			
	Average	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied
Aynor	2.77	2.72	2.98
Conway	2.69	2.69	2.71
Conway East	2.56	2.56	2.62
Floyds Crossroads	2.78	2.67	3.03
Little River	2.12	2.07	2.36
Longs	2.49	2.38	2.96
Loris	2.56	2.65	2.37
Myrtle Beach	2.27	2.22	2.38

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023 (ID #DP02).

Educational Attainment		
	Males	Females
Less than High School	10,495 (10.15%)	8,830 (7.96%)
High School Graduate	36,698 (35.48%)	35,260 (31.77%)
Some College or Associates Degree	32,097 (31.03%)	41,091 (31.03%)
Bachelor’s Degree	17,501 (16.92%)	16,036 (14.45%)
Graduate or Professional Degree	6,656 (6.43%)	9,761 (8.80%)

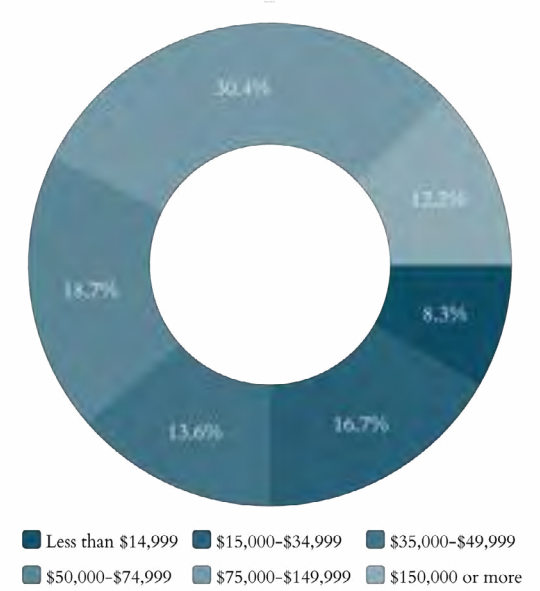
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023 (ID #S1501).

and college students move away to begin their careers or seek higher education.

The chart above describes the educational attainment of Horry County. 91.4% of Horry County residents 25 years and older hold at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, compared to the national average of 89.4%. In comparison, 26.6% of the population of 25 years and over possessed a bachelor’s degree or higher in 2023, compared to the national average of 35.0%.

Horry County Schools reported an 86.3% on-time graduation rate in 2024, an increase from 83.4% in 2019 (HCS, 2024). The graduation rate is based on the percentage of students enrolled in 9th grade four years earlier, meaning roughly 13.7% of students drop out, are held back, move away, or do not complete the full diploma after 4 years. South Carolina drop-out rates are higher for Black (2.6%), Hispanic (3.5%), homeless (11.2%), and disabled students (4.1%) than average (2.3%) (SCDOE, 2023).

Median Household Income Distribution



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #S1903).

INCOME

While income levels in Horry County have increased substantially from 1989 to 2023, most of this increase is due to inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the dollar experienced an average inflation rate of 4.7% per year between 1989 and 2023 – a cumulative 149.2% increase. In other words, the county median income of \$24,959 in 1989 was equivalent in purchasing power to \$62,209 in 2023, a difference of \$37,250 in 34 years. This means that the median income’s purchasing power has increased 3.8% since 1989.

In 2023, Horry County’s median household income was \$64,623, slightly lower than the state’s median income of \$66,818. Although the county has gained overall population, the median household income remains below the state average.

A more precise way of analyzing and comparing local, regional and state incomes is per-capita. While the median household income represents a middle

value that results in two evenly distributed income groups, the per-capita income reflects the average obtained by dividing the county's total income by its total population. Within a more diverse society it represents a more suitable variable.

In both 1999 (with a per-capita income of \$19,949) and 2009 (\$24,790), Horry County had the highest per-capita income in the six-county area of north-eastern South Carolina. However, in 2023 (\$36,572), it dropped to second highest.

While the county's per-capita income rose by \$12,478 between 2015 and 2023, it lagged the statewide increase of \$13,389.

Some of these changes can be attributed to high nationwide inflation rates between 2020 and 2025 and local rising cost of living due to the influx of new

residents. With an economy reliant on tourism and visitation, the Covid-19–related downturn had a significant impact on county wages and employment.

Income distribution is reflected in the pie chart above. In 2023, 32.3% of households fell into the income bracket between \$35,000 and \$74,999, the group considered middle class. 25.0% of households made less than \$35,000, and 8.3% made less than \$14,999 annually. 12.2% have incomes of more than \$150,000.

Another element of income to note is the pay disparity between sexes. The chart at right 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

Income by Educational Attainment and Sex		
	Males	Females
Less than High School	\$30,038	\$22,315
High School Graduate	\$36,704	\$25,978
Some College or Associates Degree	\$45,762	\$33,838
Bachelor's Degree	\$55,014	\$44,741
Graduate or Professional Degree	\$71,048	\$59,216

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #S1903).

expendable money decreases, which can have negative economic impacts on 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, children may qualify for full Medicaid even in families with incomes above the state poverty level.

Poverty is not solely an urban issue. It also impacts rural communities with limited access to jobs.

This fact is well illustrated in the map below, which shows large low-to-moderate income areas throughout rural Horry County, Socastee, and within the cities of Conway and Loris.

Regional Median Household Income					
	1989	1999	2009	2015	2023
Dillon	18,365	26,630	27,588	28,938	44,038
Florence	24,264	35,144	41,142	42,080	56,088
Georgetown	23,981	35,312	42,283	42,835	66,734
Horry	24,959	36,470	42,642	43,299	64,623
Marion	17,825	26,526	29,626	29,874	34,501
Williamsburg	18,409	24,214	25,948	28,297	43,471
South Carolina	26,256	37,082	43,572	45,483	66,818
Brunswick, NC	23,480	35,880	44,321	46,859	74,034
Columbus, NC	18,468	26,805	32,283	39,949	48,184
North Carolina	N/A	46,335	45,069	46,868	69,904

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #S1903).

Regional Household Per-Capita Income					
	1989	1999	2009	2015	2023
Dillon	8,077	13,272	14,074	14,736	23,016
Florence	11,007	17,876	21,538	22,877	31,803
Georgetown	11,084	19,805	24,147	25,216	43,928
Horry	12,385	19,949	24,790	24,094	36,572
Marion	8,185	13,878	15,892	17,553	22,676
Williamsburg	7,632	12,794	14,636	16,344	24,533
South Carolina	11,897	18,795	23,196	24,604	37,993
Brunswick, NC	11,688	19,857	25,993	27,586	44,565
Columbus, NC	9,134	14,415	18,189	19,814	26,755
North Carolina	N/A	20,307	24,547	25,920	39,616

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #S1903).

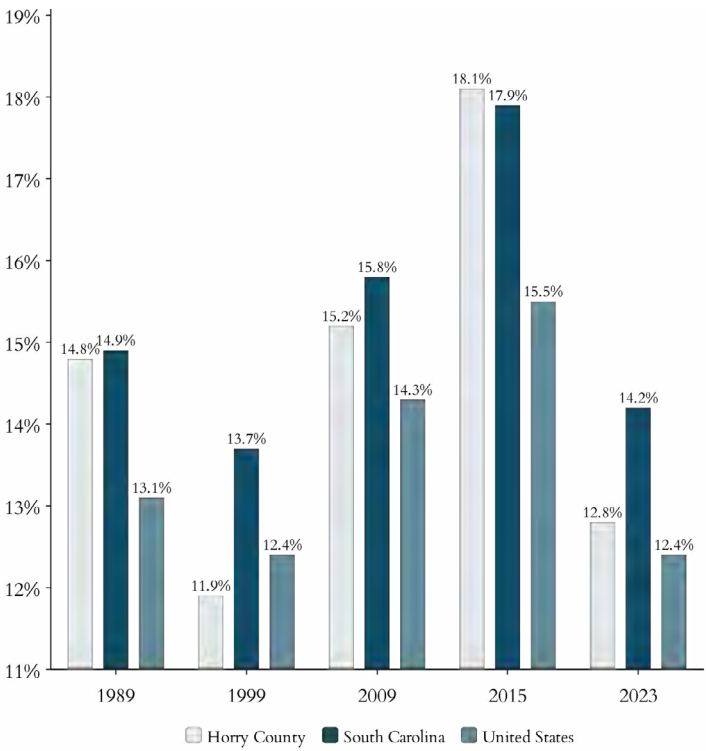
racial income disparities is available for Horry County, nationally, and in South Carolina, there are income disparities between races.

POVERTY

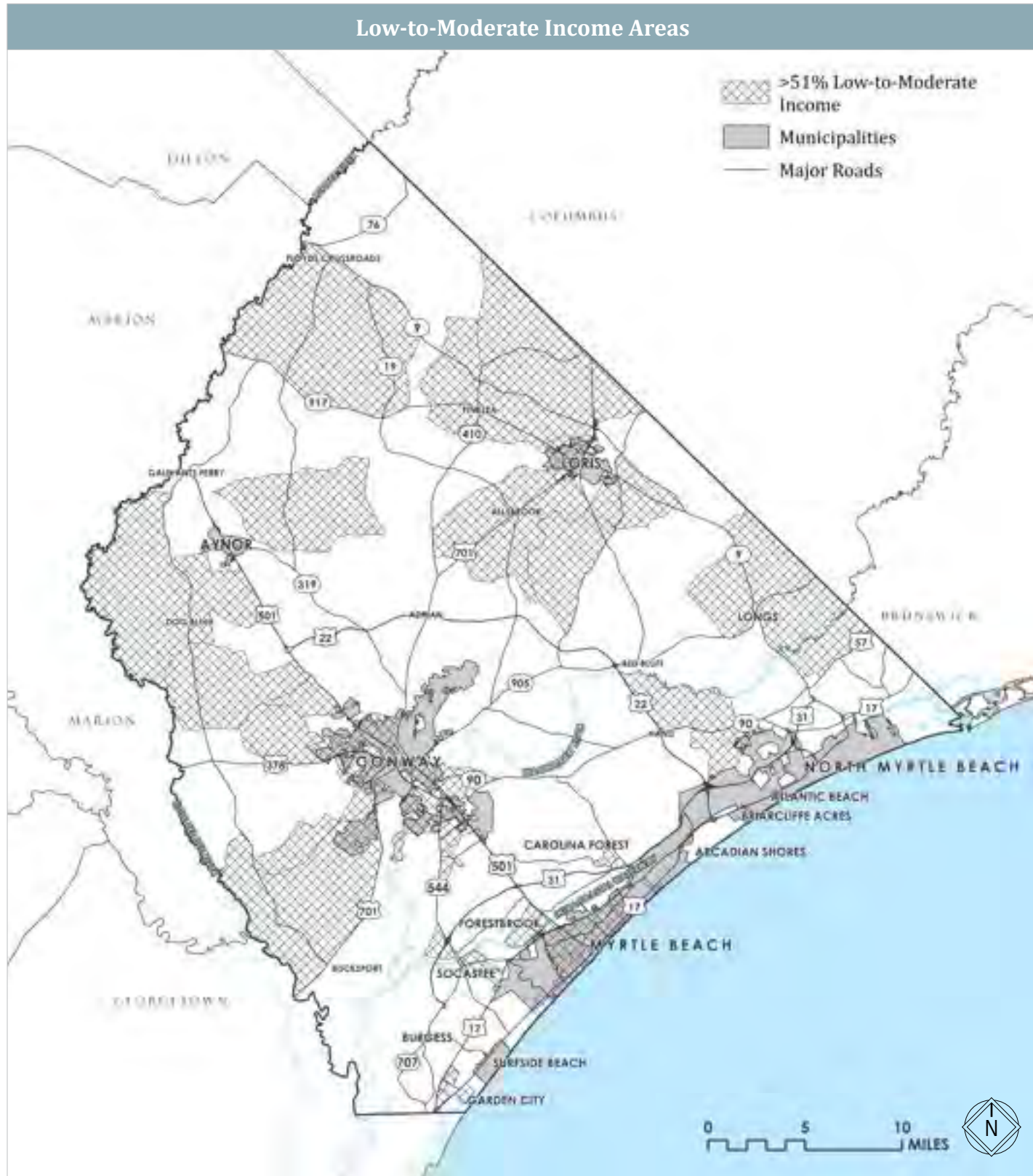
In 2023, the official poverty threshold for a family of four in South Carolina was \$30,000. 12.8% of Horry County residents (46,454 people) and 14.2% of state residents (761,557 people) live below the poverty level, higher than the national average of 12.4%. South Carolina’s poverty rate is the 9th highest nationally, though Horry County’s is 9th-lowest in the state. The county’s poverty rate is second lowest in the region following Brunswick County (10.3%), and similar to the North Carolina average (12.8%).

4.5% of Horry County residents below the poverty level worked full-time, year-round in the past 12 months, 33.7% worked less than full-time, year-round in the past 12 months, and 36.5% did not work. As the number of residents below the poverty level or unemployed increases, the amount of their

Percent of Population Below Poverty Level for Horry County and South Carolina



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B17026).



Source: HUD FY 2024, American Community Survey 2016-2022 (ID #S1903).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

One of the most important elements of analyzing population data is recognizing trends and overlaps. In order to prevent negative public health impacts or environmental effects on vulnerable and minority populations, Horry County must first determine where these populations are concentrated and where these impacts are likely to exist.

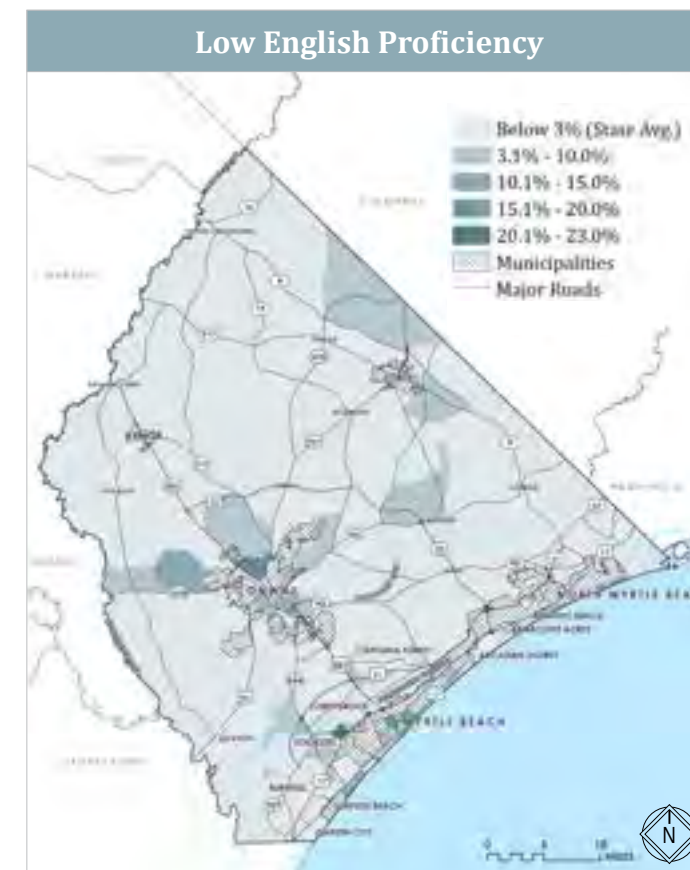
It is important to note that these areas are not framed in negative terms and should not be considered an obstacle to potential growth.

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 com-

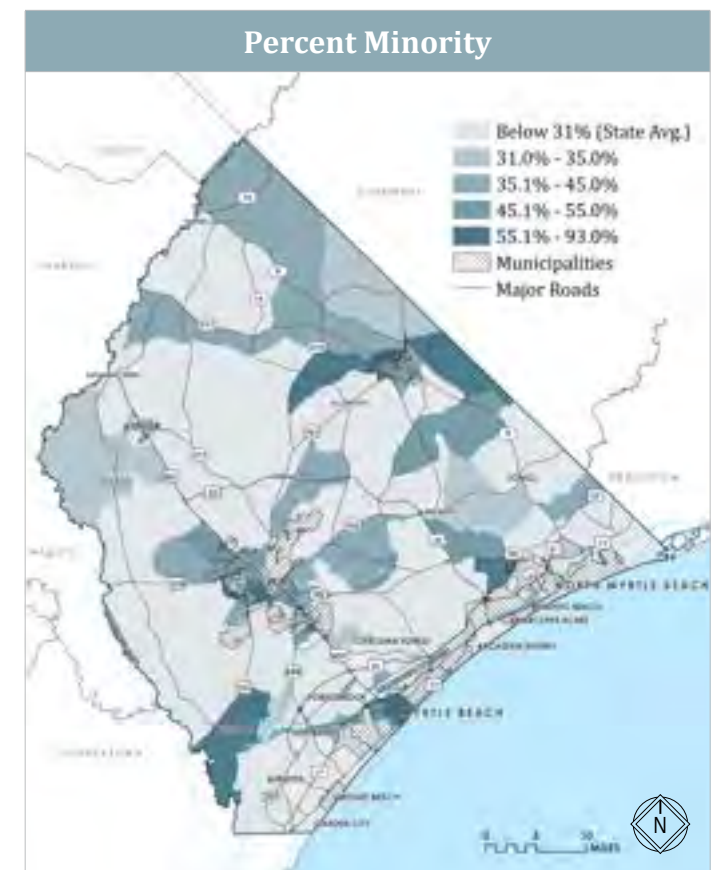
munity character and quality of life standards.

The following maps show a correlation between the percent minority and the percent of low-to-moderate income households. 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 programs, housing, and infrastructure improvements. It is also an important qualifying factor for many grant applications.

Limited English proficiency refers to anyone above the age of five who reported speaking English less than very well, as classified by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Limited English population represents 8.3% of the US population, 2.4% of South Carolina residents, and 2.9% of Horry County residents



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B16004).



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #DP05).

(10,510 individuals). 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 evaluates population and environmental concerns when evaluating rezoning requests. Staff also work to identify when areas exceed state percentages. The trends in this population data are 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 home to roughly 25,455 male and 2,801 female veterans. Horry County Veterans Affairs reports that 22,758 veterans in the county receive Veteran Benefits, and 92.5% are male.

The highest number of veterans served in the Vietnam era (14,207) and the second highest in the Gulf War (5,353). When compared to similar southern tourist and retirement destinations, Horry County has more veterans than other South Carolina destinations and fewer than Florida destinations.

HEALTH

In 2024, the Centers for Disease Control estimated that 34.6% of adults in Horry County were over-

weight, while 37.4% were obese and 13.9% had diabetes (CDC, 2024). 36.0% of South Carolina adults are overweight, and 13.3% have diabetes. While fewer Horry County adults are overweight, its diabetes rate is 4.5% higher than the state average.

The availability of parks and access to natural spaces is proven to positively influence physical and mental health. Community design and the accessibility of open spaces and recreation areas strongly influence individuals' level of physical activity, which directly correlates to weight. Individuals that live in walkable communities spend more time physically active than those that live in neighborhoods that are not.

In addition, living close to recreation facilities correlates to higher activity levels for adults and youth, resulting in lower obesity rates.

Designing walkable communities with access to outdoor spaces is important to consider in future development, as obesity rates 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 to the county.

MENTAL HEALTH

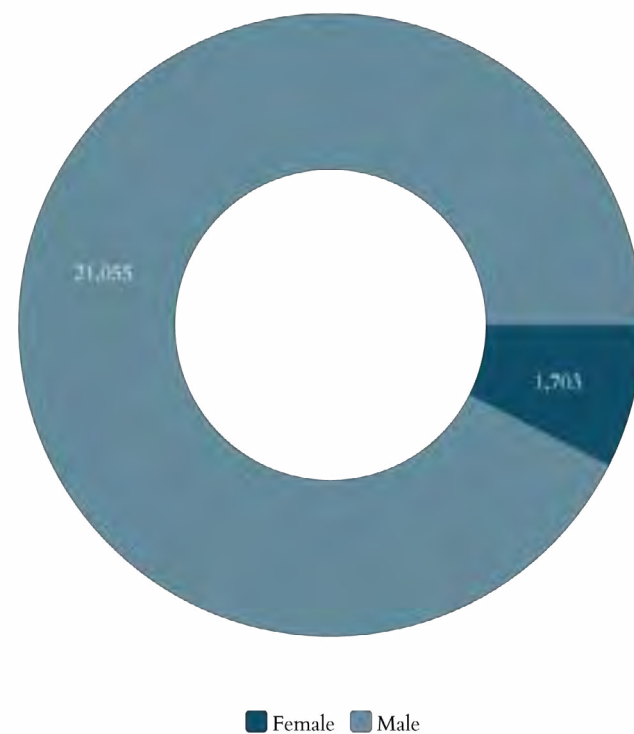
While there are many physical health benefits of living near and utilizing recreational assets, the mental health benefits of spending time in nature do not always require the same physical activity. Scenic views, such as the beach or waterways, are known to have restorative and mental health benefits (Lothian, 2010). For 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, 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 2023, 13.2% of the county population (52,467 people) had a disability, compared to 10.1% of South Carolina and 9.1% of US residents. Most residents with a disability are age 65 or older (86.8%), and the county's growing elderly population explains growing disabled populations in the past 25 years.

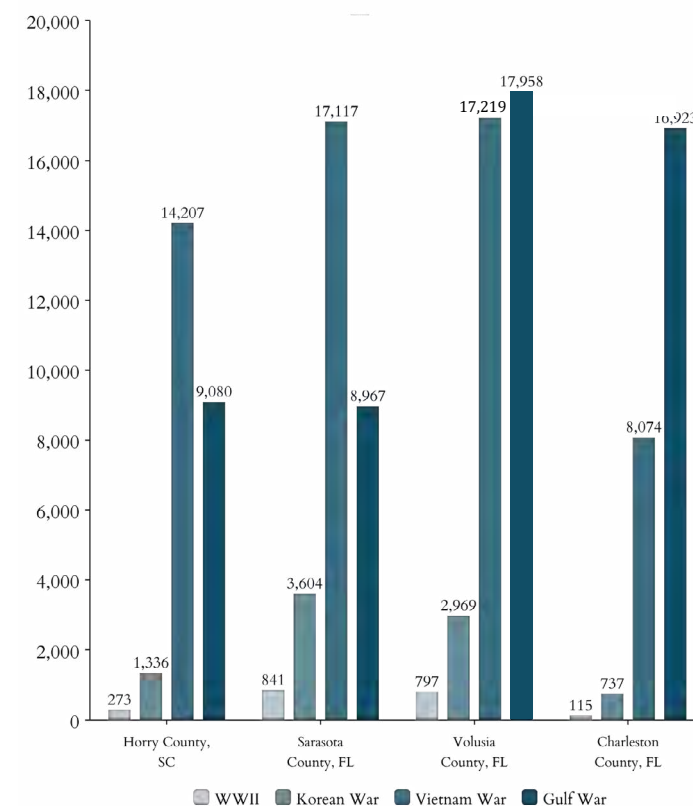
The chart below illustrates the employment status of the Horry County population with a disability. Of the disabled population, 47,353 (74.3%) were not in the labor force in 2023. As the number of residents not in the labor force increases, the amount of money expendable by residents decreases and the amount

Veterans Benefits by Sex



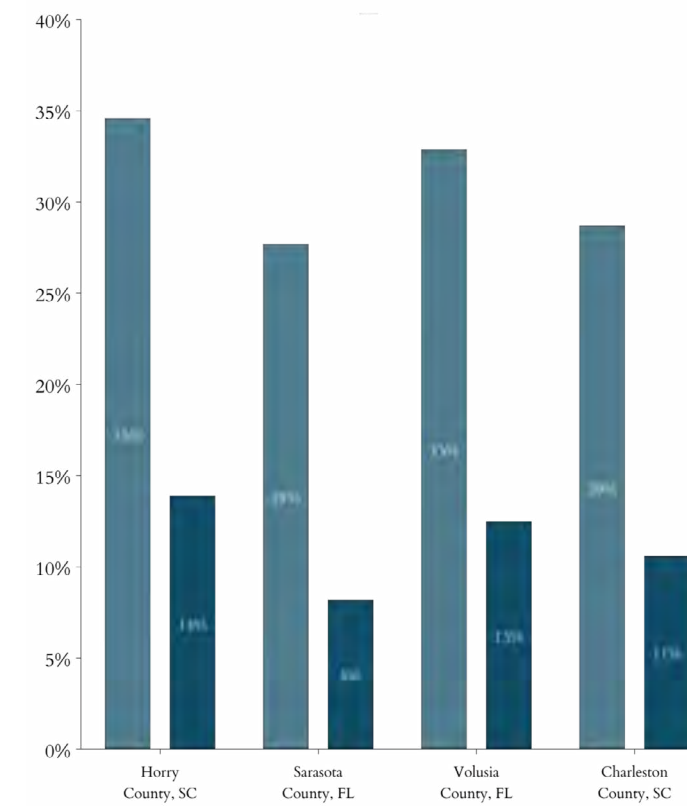
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B21001).

Veteran Residents Comparison



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B21002).

Obesity and Diabetes Rate Comparisons



Source: CDC Places Project, 2024.

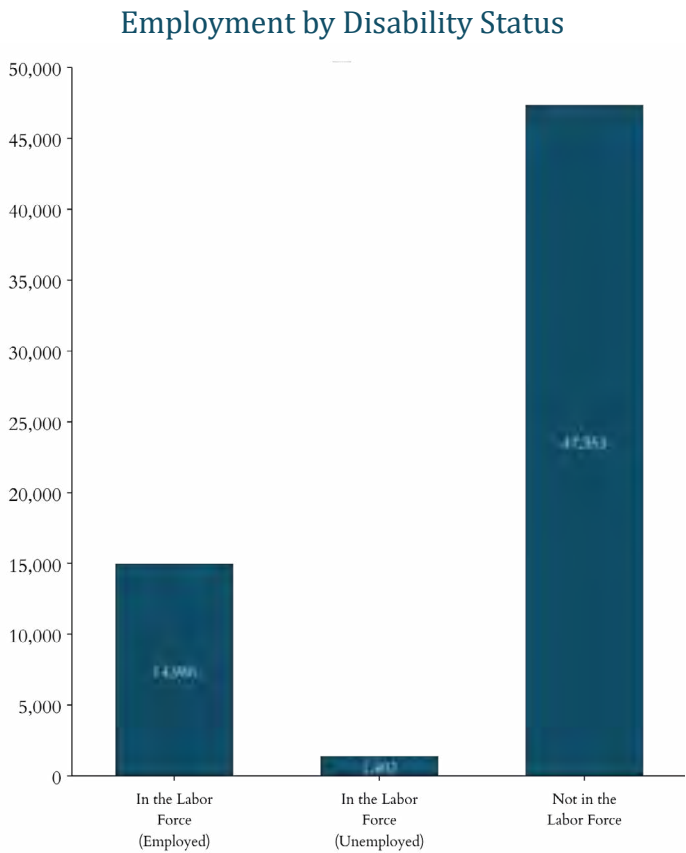
expended on social services increases.

CONCLUSIONS

Continued monitoring of population trends is necessary to inform public service needs and evaluate the impact of government decisions on specific communities. Census data shows Horry County’s population is growing, with the fastest growth occurring in the retirement-aged population.

This fact, combined with population projections, indicates that the county will need to 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



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #S1811).

human service facilities readily accessible from their homes. Many may desire smaller housing units close to shopping and community services with fewer 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 housing needs.

In addition, as the population continues to increase, Horry County officials and staff will need to continually improve development and zoning regulations 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 improve the retention of young professional and college-educated populations. The county should prioritize addressing income gaps between males, females and races and monitor environmental justice issues. 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 its more diverse and growing population, particularly needs regarding income, age and ethnicity.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL RESOURCES

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 geographic isolation from inland South Carolina has greatly influenced its development and settlement. Horry County’s early population was isolated by the Little Pee Dee River to the south and west, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, and the Waccamaw River through the county’s center. In addition to this, it was dominated by natural wetlands and swampy conditions. Nonetheless, 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 exist-

ing in South Carolina (SCIWAY, n.d.)

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 2024, their estimated membership was roughly 380 (Waccamaw Indian People, 2025). 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, 2025). 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 (Pee Dee Indian Tribe, 2025).

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 have 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



Annual Cultural Arts Festival and Pauwau
Source: Myrtle Beach Online, n.d.

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 INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC

In 1852, Horry County 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 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. Outbreaks of diseases and the generally ailing economy depressed the economic situation.

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 for 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 welcome relief.

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 nonetheless 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 the Seaside Inn opened. That event marked the start of the Grand Strand's growing popularity as a vacation destination, spurring tourist-oriented development all along the seashore.

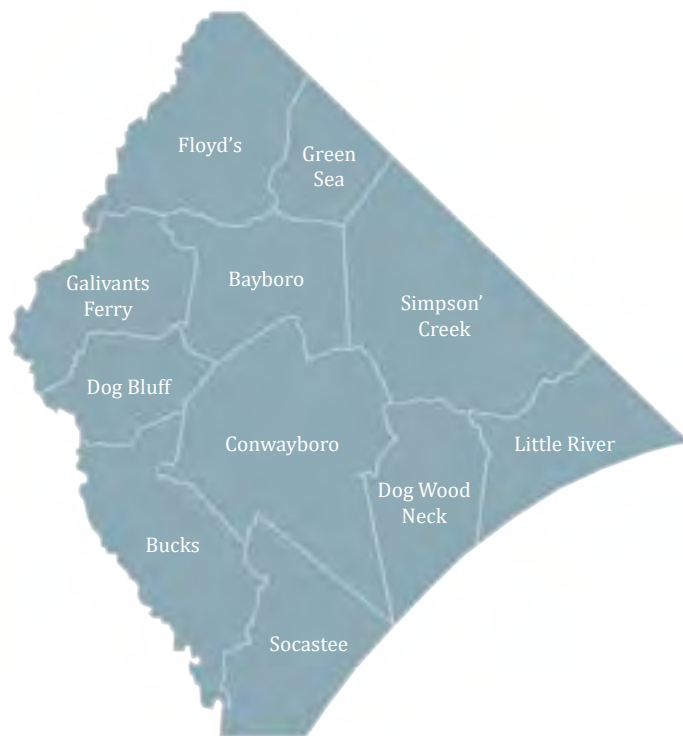
The growing importance of the automobile as a means of transportation led to increased highway construction, improving accessibility. The opening of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, which originally was planned to enhance homeland security from the sea, indirectly contributed to the growing attractiveness of the area as a vacation destination.

The transformation from an agriculturally 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

Horry County Townships 1869



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Sweetgrass basket weaving at Gullah Geechee Community Day.
Source: MyHorryNews, 2023.



Horry County Museum
Source: Strange Carolinas, 2022.

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. In 1998, the Urban Village Redevelopment Master Plan, including

the Market Common, was created.

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, prehistory 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 2013. The new location is 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 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.

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



Myrtle Beach in the 1980s
Source: Myrtle Beach Vacation Rentals, n.d.

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 tell 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 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.

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 276 properties, three trees and one garden on Horry County's Historical Register along with six historic districts.

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.



The South Carolina Hall of Fame
 Source: South Carolina Hall of Fame, n.d.

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



Galivants Ferry Stump Speaking
 Source: The New York Times, 2019.

Historical Events

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

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.

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, roadside 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.

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 con-



1940s Horry County Roadside Market
Source: The Horry County Museum, n.d.

tinues 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.

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.



Horry County Tobacco Barns
Source: Horry County Historic Preservation, n.d.

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. The program opened to Horry County in 1976, and by 2024, 25 farms had been designated as Century Farms. The county has the third 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, and others 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 operated by African Americans between 1865 and 1900. Freewoods Farm provides educational and tourism opportunities for locals and visitors to the area.

The L.W. 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. 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.

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.

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, 2016). 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, cultural gatherings often 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.



Freewoods Farm
Source: MyHorryNews, 2020.



L.W. Paul Living History Farm, the Syrup Day Event
Source: Adventures with Karen & Kell, 2014.



The Little Pee Dee River
Source: Carolina Thread Trail, n.d.

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 L.W. 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.

BEACH CULTURE

Inarguably, the Beach is the greatest cultural attraction offered in the county. The Grand Strand 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 17.6 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

Rural Cultural Events		
Festival/Event	Location	Time of Year
Riverfest	Conway	June
Waccamaw Conference	Conway	-
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

Chicken Bog
Source: Life Made Simple, 2023.

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 became the Myrtle Beach Pavilion Amusement Park where a permanent carnival resided from the 1930s until 2006. A historical landmark and destination for beachgoers 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 namesake.

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 roadside markets, Beach Stores have been a staple of tourist 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 is a 187-foot tall ferris wheel located on the Boardwalk. 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 90 championship golf courses and 35 mini golf courses located in the Myrtle Beach area, 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 2023 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 as it requires substantial amounts of time and money. The 2013 National Golf Foundation Survey concluded that recreational golfers spend an average of between \$1,200 and \$2,000 annually on golf equipment (National Golf Foundation, 2013). In addition, golfers spend roughly \$4,000 annually on golf travel.

According to the 2023 Bureau of Labor Statistics Time Use Survey, American men spend roughly 1.6 hours on an average day participating in sporting activities. Women spend even less, averaging roughly 1.3 hours (BLS, 2023). 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).

Miniature Golf did not originate in Horry County, but some would argue that it was perfected here.

In addition to numerous courses from Little River to Garden City, the Masters' of mini-golf takes place at the self-professed World's



Myrtle Beach
Source: John Coletti, n.d.



The SkyWheel
Source: Fotospot, n.d.



Whispering Pines Golf Club
Source: North Myrtle Beach Golf, n.d.

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 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 include the operations of motorcycles, ATVs, dirt bike, 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



Harley Davidson Bike Week Event in North Myrtle Beach
Source: GotoMyrtleBeach, n.d.

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.

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 in 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.

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.

Numerous campgrounds cater to visitors with RVs, particularly near Surfside Beach and off of Kings Road. There are nearly 9,000 campsites in the county, making up 9% of vacation accommodations (Horry County, 2017).



Ocean Lakes Family Campground
Source: Visit Myrtle Beach, n.d.



Locally Caught Blue Crab at the Blue Crab Festival in Little River
Source: Blue Crab Festival, n.d.

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.

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.

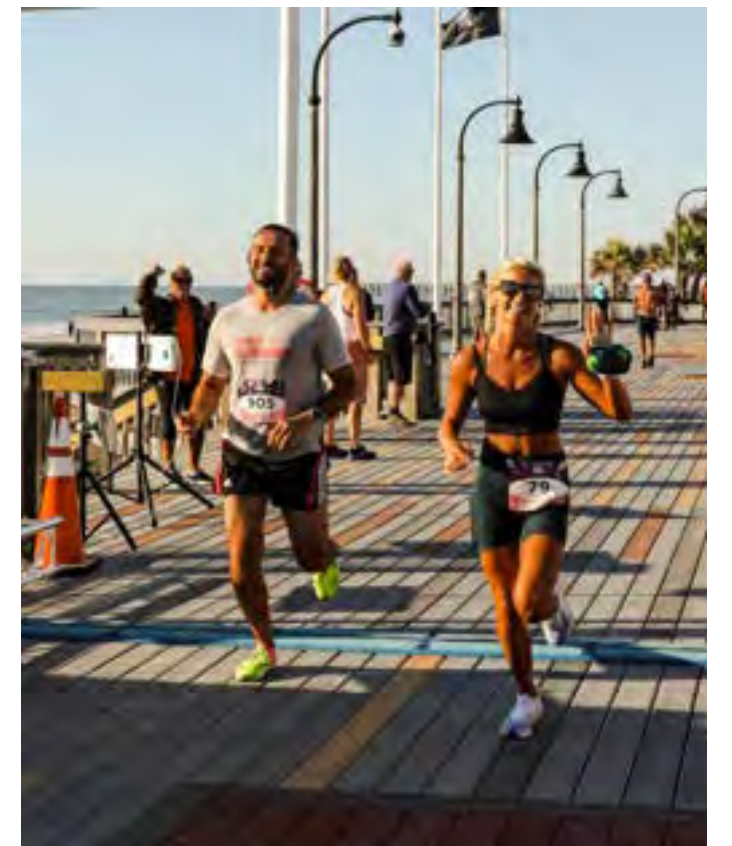
Beach Boogie, the BBQ Festival and numerous shag contests held throughout the year celebrate the unique history of dancing in the county. Other events

utilize urban infrastructure to encourage health and athletics. The Myrtle Beach Marathon uses city and county locations for family fun, 5k, 10k, half marathon, and relay runs. Athletic tournaments and competitions occur year round.

The Arts & Gallery Trail features unique museums and artistic attractions, including oceanfront sculptures and alleyway murals, across the Grand Strand. Ten local breweries on the Beer Trail offer diverse events and activities with live music. The Grand Strand Mini Golf Trail includes more than 30 stops (Visit Myrtle Beach, 2024).

BEACH CULTURE FINDINGS

The beach culture offers a wide variety of facilities with amenities that are frequented by both tourists



Myrtle Beach Marathon
Source: RunMyrtleBeach, n.d.

and locals. Tourism helps support Horry County both economically and 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



Mini Golf Trail
Source: Visit Myrtle Beach, n.d.

Beach Culture Events		
Festival/Event	Location	Time of Year
Society of Stranders Mid-Winter Break	North Myrtle Beach	January
Restaurant Week South Carolina	Myrtle Beach	January
Ripley's Penguin Dash 5K	Broadway at the Beach	February
Shuckin' on the Strand Oyster Roast	Murrells Inlet	February
Surfside Beach BBQ Festival	Surfside Beach	March
Can-Am Days Festival	Myrtle Beach	March
North Myrtle Beach St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival	North Myrtle Beach	March
Myrtle Beach Marathon	Myrtle Beach	March
Run to the Sun Car Show	Myrtle Beach	March
Society of Stranders Spring Safari	North Myrtle Beach	April
Myrtle Beach Food Truck Festival	Myrtle Beach	April
Monday After The Masters	North Myrtle Beach	April
Harley Davidson Bike Week	Varies	May/October
Atlantic Bike Week	Varies	May
Little River Crab Festival	Little River	May
Native Sons Salt Games	Myrtle Beach	June
Myrtle Beach Hot Summer Nights	Myrtle Beach	June-September
Horry County Special Olympics Golf Tournament	Varies	June
Movies at McLean	North Myrtle Beach	May- October
Beach Boogie and BBQ Festival	Myrtle Beach	August
SC's Largest Garage Sale	Myrtle Beach	September
Surfside Beach Annual Family Festival	Surfside	October
Little River Shrimp Festival	Little River	October
Conway Fall Festival	Conway	October
Sounds of Summer	North Myrtle Beach	June-September
North Myrtle Beach	North Myrtle Beach	April

the economy is the threat of hurricanes. The ability of the county to rebuild and continue to provide services to both residents and tourists quickly after a storm is essential.

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).

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 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 a 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 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



Coastal Carolina University
Source: Colleges of Distinction, n.d.

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. After changing ownership the house was left abandoned until 1984 when it

was moved to its current location at the former Springmaid Resort Beach. Those who preserved the house envisioned a place in the Myrtle Beach area where the visual arts could be explored and showcased.

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 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.

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.

Many private groups promote the arts in Horry County, including 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 participate in performing and visual arts programs.



The Long Bay Symphony
Source: Visit Myrtle Beach, 2017.

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

1. House of Blues
2. Legends in Concert
3. Carolina Opry
4. Alabama Theater
5. Medieval Times
6. Pirates Voyage
7. Crocodile Rocks Dueling Pianos
8. Carolina Improv
9. Greg Rowles Legacy Theater
10. GTS Theatre

ARTS CULTURE EVENTS

Some of the most popular arts culture events revolve around music. The Carolina Country Music Fest is

a four-day-long annual event that features some of the most popular Country 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.

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

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.



The Franklin G. Burroughs Museum
Source: Myrtle Beach.com, n.d.



The Annual Art in the Park
Source: Allevants in Myrtle



Carolina Country Music Fest
Source: Carolina Country Music Fest, n.d.

The Myrtle Beach Jazz Festival is important to preserving 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 Street was legendary Black club owner, Charlie Fitzgerald. Mr. Fitzgerald owned and operated Charlie's Place, a supper club, that was a staple on Carver Street 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.

FAITH-BASED CULTURE

Religious organizations have a long history in Horry County. Over 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 the congregation and 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.

Over 240 cemeteries are listed in Horry County's Historical database, many containing

Arts Culture Events		
Festival/Event	Location	Time of Year
Conway Chocolate Walk	Conway	February
Myrtle Beach International Film Festival	The Market Common	April
Brookgreen Gardens Spring Arts Festival	Brookgreen Gardens	April
Arts in the Park	Myrtle Beach	October, November
Myrtle Beach Jazz Festival	Myrtle Beach	October
S.C. State Bluegrass Festival	Myrtle Beach	November
Waccamaw Arts and Craft Guild Art Show	Myrtle Beach	April & October & November
Music on Main	North Myrtle Beach	June-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
Surfside Beach Family Festival	Surfside Beach	September
Live Oak Music Festival	Conway	June
Taste of the Town	Myrtle Beach	October
Carolina Beach Music Awards	Myrtle Beach	November

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.

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

Faith-Based Culture Events		
Festival/Event	Location	Time of Year
Groovin’ on the Green	Conway	May
St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Festival	Myrtle Beach	March
McLean Park Easter Egg Hunt	North Myrtle Beach	Easter
Easter Egg Hunt & Children’s Festival	Surfside Beach	Easter
Gospel Festival	North Myrtle Beach	August
Myrtle Beach Greek Festival	Myrtle Beach	October
Smoke on the Waccamaw	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	November
Intracoastal Christmas Regatta	Myrtle Beach	November
Surfside Beach Tree Lighting and Parade	Surfside	December
Rivertown Christmas	Conway	December
North Myrtle Beach Christmas Parade	North Myrtle Beach	December
Great Christmas Light Show	North Myrtle Beach	October
Ripley’s Festival of Trees	Myrtle Beach	December
The Great Christmas Light Show	North Myrtle Beach	December
Winter Wonderland at the Beach	Myrtle Beach	December

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 individuals. 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 hold fall pumpkin festivals, along with Christmas and Easter events. There are also a variety of holiday events including: Valentines Day, Saint Patrick’s Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and New Year.

FAITH-BASED CULTURE FINDINGS

Horry County’s 2017 National Community Survey found that 60% of Horry County residents participate in religious or spiritual activities, higher 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.

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



St. Peter Missionary Baptist Church
Source: Horry County Historic Preservation

local history and heritage, public art, music, and physical spaces devoted to cultural activities. This includes churches, museums, libraries and art galleries. In 2010, the Knight Foundation published a study 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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



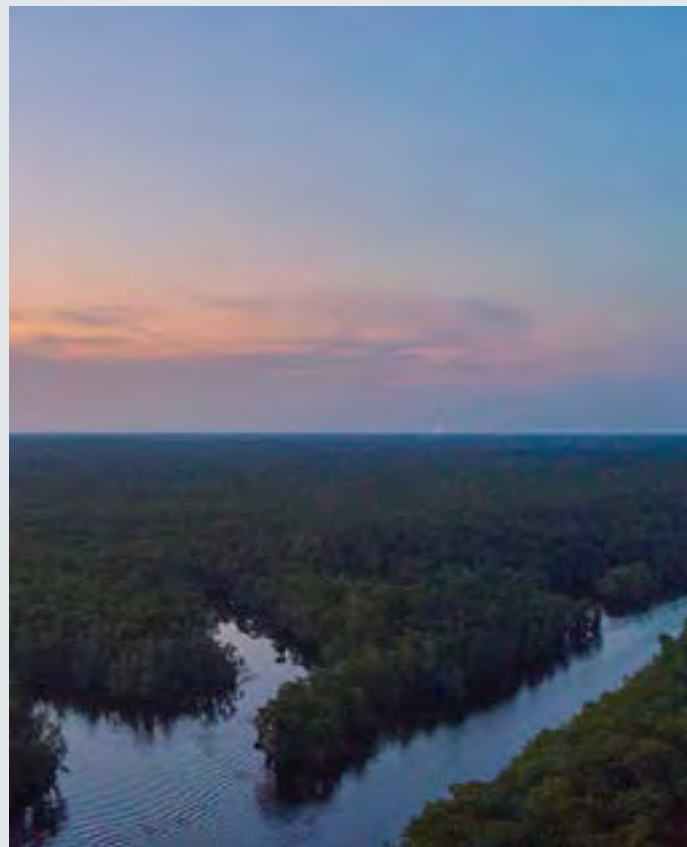
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 4

NATURAL RESOURCES

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.



Waccamaw Waterway
Source: Grand Strand Magazine, 2023.

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:

1. Water quality protection and enhancement by moderating surface runoff, recharging

groundwater supplies, and trapping and removing sediments, nutrients, and chemical pollutants.

2. Flood hazard reduction by reducing the velocity of flowing water, absorbing and slowly releasing floodwaters, thereby lowering flood peaks.

3. Climate stabilization and moderation of weather extremes, such as floods and drought.

4. The regeneration of prime agricultural soils and pollination for the cultivation of crops, grazing of livestock, and harvesting of timber.

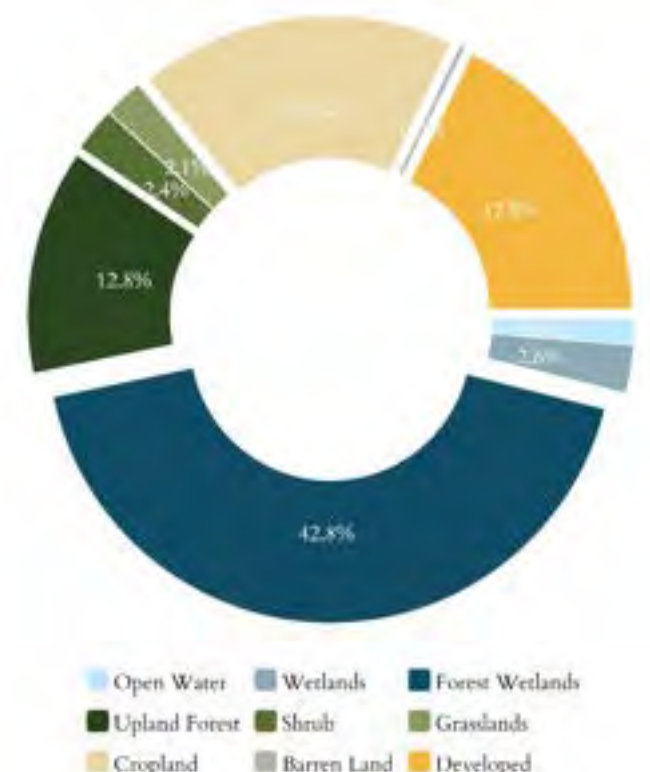
5. Diverse fauna and landscapes that provide critical breeding, nesting, and feeding habitats for many species of mammals, waterfowl, reptiles, fish and shellfish species.

2008 Land Cover Distribution in Horry County

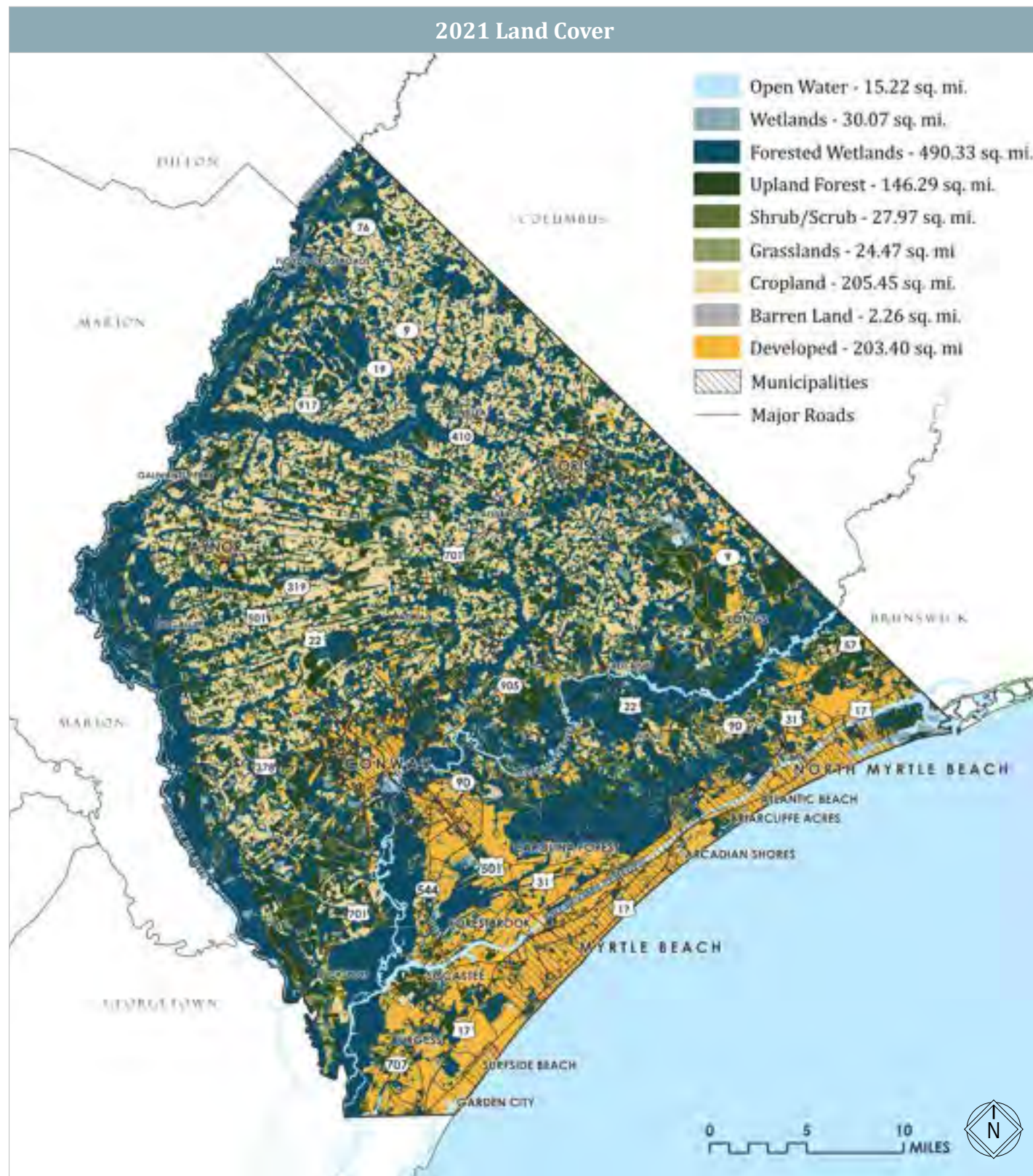


Source: National Land Cover Database, 2008.

2021 Land Cover Distribution in Horry County



Source: National Land Cover Database, 2021.



Source: National Land Cover Database 2021.

6. Recreational opportunities for bird watchers, hunters, canoeists, anglers, and others.
7. Purification of air through forested areas.
8. Biological transformation through detoxification and decomposition of waste.

WATER RESOURCES

Horry County has significant water resources including multiple watersheds, freshwater wetlands and Carolina Bays. Its natural resources 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 mil-

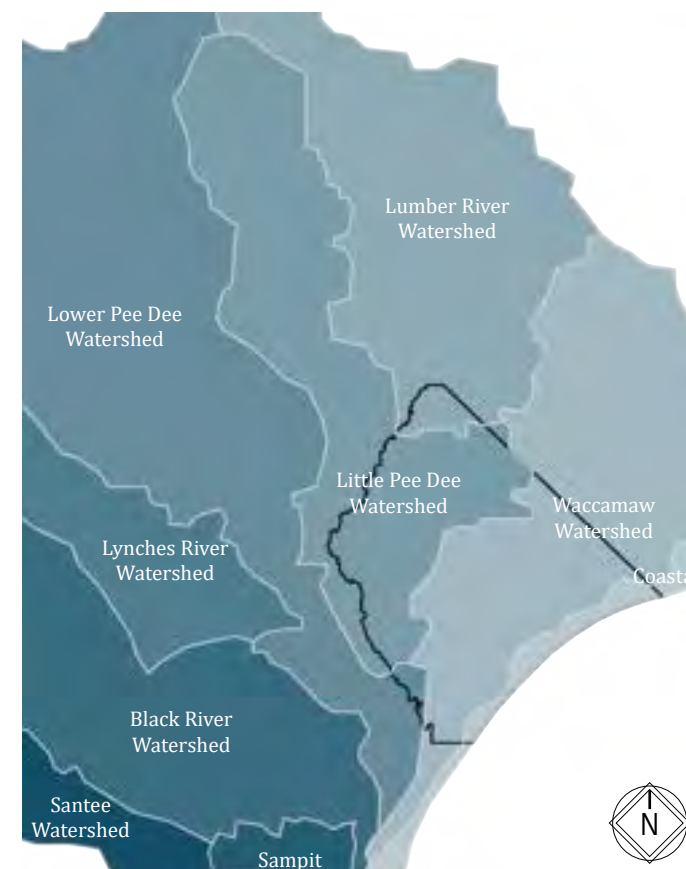
lion acres within the state of South Carolina (SCDES, n.d.) The county transects five sub-watersheds: the Lumber River, Little Pee Dee River, Waccamaw River, Lower Pee Dee River, and Coastal South Carolina Drainage.

Horry County's watersheds 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.

The Lumber River originates in North Carolina and hugs the western border of Horry County where it becomes the Little Pee Dee River at the Route 917 bridge. The Little Pee Dee River follows the county line south where it curves to the east and flows into the Waccamaw River. The Waccamaw River originates in Lake Waccamaw in North Carolina. It enters Horry County at the state line northwest of Hwy 57, meanders southwest through the City of Conway, turns south between Bucksport and Burgess where it meets up with Little Bull Creek, and continues into Georgetown County.

The Little River is a short waterway that enters the Intracoastal Waterway just south of Bird Island. The Intracoastal Waterway originates in the Cape Fear River in North Carolina and enters Horry County northeast of Little River, paralleling the coast line until it turns southwest near Myrtle Beach and flows into the Waccamaw River southwest of Socastee.

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 impassable 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



Source: Waccamaw Watershed Academy, n.d.

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 ten feet 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.

State and National River Recognition

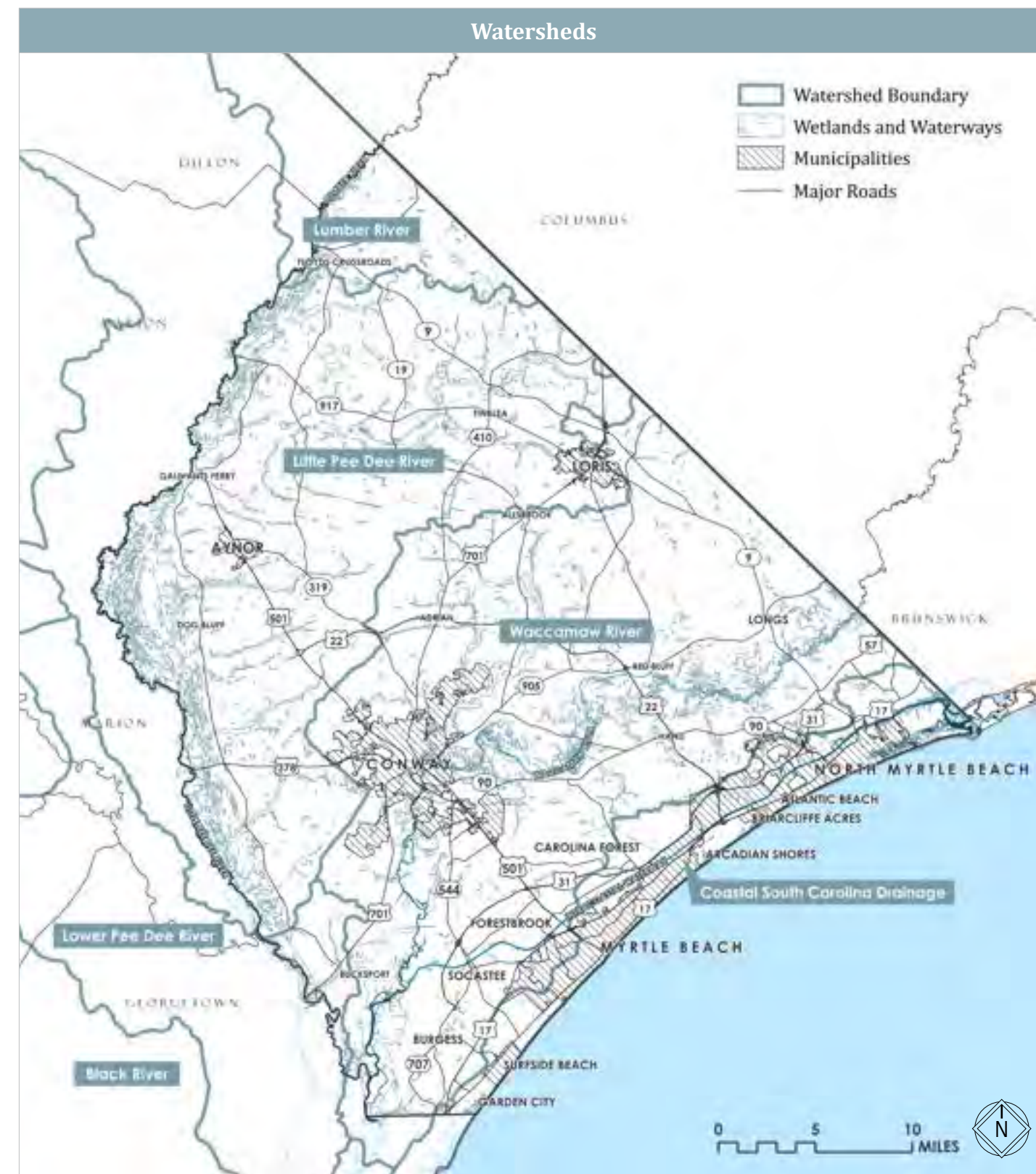
In 1989, the South Carolina Rivers Act established the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program to protect the natural and cultural heritage of South Carolina's rivers. Natural and scenic rivers or river segments with unique or outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic 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



Kayaking in the Waccamaw River Blue Trail
Source: National Rivers Project, n.d.



Swing Bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway
Source: Grand Strand Magazine, 2019.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway
 Source: Grand Strand Magazine, n.d.

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 bottom-land 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 draws 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 portions of the ICW, the majority of the ICW in Horry County was constructed by the Army Corps Of Engineers (USACE) 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.

In 2019, Grande Dunes, a master-planned community, opened a publicly accessible walking trail along the Intracoastal Waterway (Grande Dunes, 2019).

Fish Consumption Advisories

Blackwater rivers are known to have naturally occur-



Grand Dunes Waterway Trail along the Intracoastal Waterway
 Source: Grand Dunes, 2019.

ring 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 by 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, which indicate consumption of fish should be limited. Besides mercury, other contaminants, like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and radioisotopes can also prompt an advisory. Fish Consumption Advisories are issued by South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES).

WETLANDS

Wetlands make up approximately 45% of Horry County, with the majority being freshwater (National Land Cover Database, 2021).

Forested wetlands have decreased 20% while developed areas have increased around 60% over the past 25 years (WBTW, 2022).

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 a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (USACE, 1987). Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, bottomland forests, Carolina Bays, pine savannahs, and 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.

Silviculture practices 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. DES is the regulatory agency responsible for implementing this act and regulating wetlands in the coastal zone.

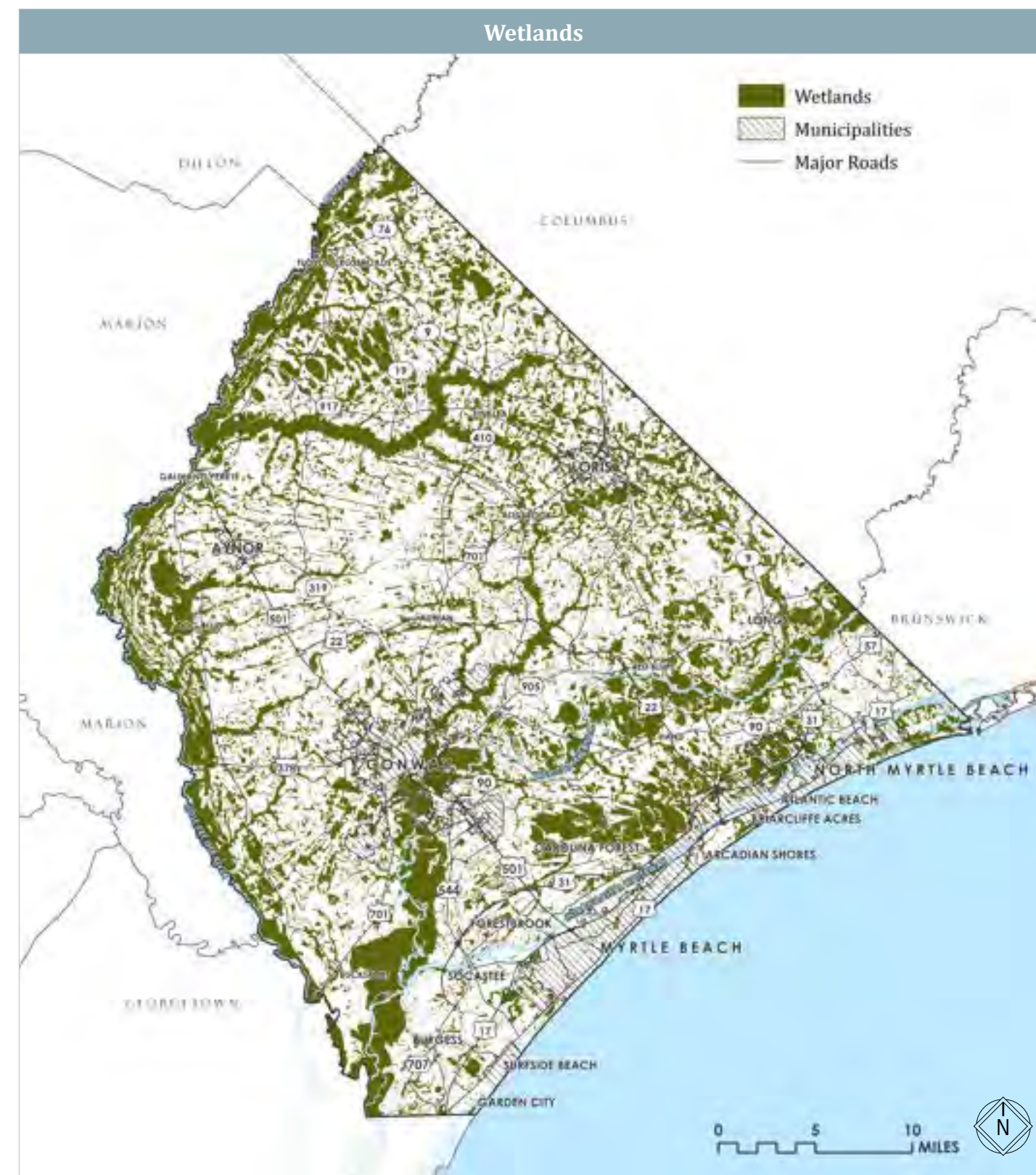
Local governments also have the authority to establish regulations that exceed state and federal standards. Horry County requires a wetland delineation letter from the USACE and protection during construction. Despite growing efforts to preserve wetlands, they continue to be lost at a rapid rate, both 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, 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. The Waccamaw River is 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



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

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, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has incorporated Lewis Ocean Bay and Cartwheel Bay into their Heritage Preserve Program.

To create the Independent Heritage Preserve Wetland Mitigation Bank, the Horry County Government made a deal with RES. The 3,707-acre area is made up of several Carolina bays (RES, n.d.)



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

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 northern and southern coast. Sections of the beachfront offer distinctive and varying environments depending on the type and amount of development. Our beaches and marshes not only support wildlife habitat and recreation, but 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 resources 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 utmost importance to the economic vitality of the Grand Strand.

Renourishment is a soft stabilization measure to minimize the impact of erosion and maintain a wide beach. Renourishment dredges sand onto the active beach from offshore sources and is typically required every 7 to 9 years along the Grand Strand. The Army Corps of Engineers' Reach Project placed more than 700,000 cubic yards of sand along 25.3 miles of coastline from North Myrtle Beach to Garden City (USACE, n.d.) Statewide renourishment projects from 1954 through 2017 placed 48.8 million cubic yards of sand along SC beaches for a total expenditure of \$452.9 million.

The US Army Corps of Engineers allocated \$72 million in 2024 to renourish Horry County's entire shoreline after Hurricane Ian's impacts (USACE, 2024). The Myrtle Beach Renourishment Project will place approximately two million cubic yards of beach-compatible sand along 26 miles of coastline beginning in 2025 (USACE, 2024).

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.

Beach Access

There are over 360 public beach access points along the Grand Strand, with 22 located in 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 and repairs and improvements have been necessary 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.



Myrtle Beach Renourishment Project after Hurricane Florence
 Source: USACE, 2018.



Little River Marsh View
Source: Google Earth Pro, n.d.

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, SCDES monitors water quality at 43 beach locations in Horry County, 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 bacterium. 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 43 beach monitoring sites in Horry County, 18 have long-term swimming advisory signs posted as of January 2025 because of the frequency that the advisories are issued. An advisory means that DES advises you not to swim within 200 feet of where these signs are posted, especially after 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 (SCDES, n.d.). Horry County is the only coastal county in the state with permanent swimming advisories along its beaches.

In addition to DES 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 runoff from upland areas. In addition, marsh and dune systems protect adjacent highlands from erosion and storm damage by absorbing and dissipating wave energy.

Salt marshes can only be found in Murrells Inlet



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

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.

SCDES'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 (SCDES, 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 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 includes discharges from industry, municipal storm sewer and wastewater systems, and construction sites. However, most 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.

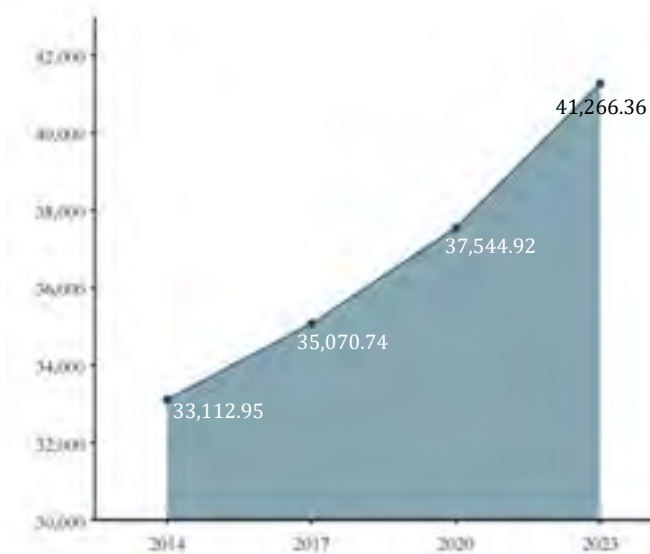
Impervious surfaces, such as roads and rooftops, tend to adversely impact water quality, as they reduce the natural infiltration of rain-water runoff.

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; Holland and Sanger, 2008). Between 2020 and 2023, Horry County's impervious surface increased by approximately 3,721 acres to a total of 41,266.3 (5.14%) of the county's surface area.

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 struc-

Change in Impervious Surfaces



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

ture 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, SCDES 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 SCDES 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 SCDES and the local government

will develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of pollutants for that water body and identify ways to improve it. Horry County works in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, SCDES, 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



Bioswale, Green Stormwater Infrastructure
 Source: The Nature Conservancy, n.d.

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.

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 restore a watershed's hydrologic and ecological functions (Zolch et al, 2017).

FLOOD ZONES

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. Approximately 24% of Horry County's total land area (175,343 acres) lies within the 100-year flood zone and is vulnerable to riverine and rainfall-caused flooding. The county's floodzones primarily lie along the Waccamaw, Little Pee Dee and Lumber Rivers, where the water levels fluctuate with seasonal rain patterns.

2,520 acres of the Horry County coast that are susceptible to flood damage and are significant habitats are ineligible for federal financial assistance under the Coastal Barrier Resource System (CBRS). While areas within the CBRS can be developed by property owners, they cannot access federal flood insurance following flood damage, disincentivizing risky development.

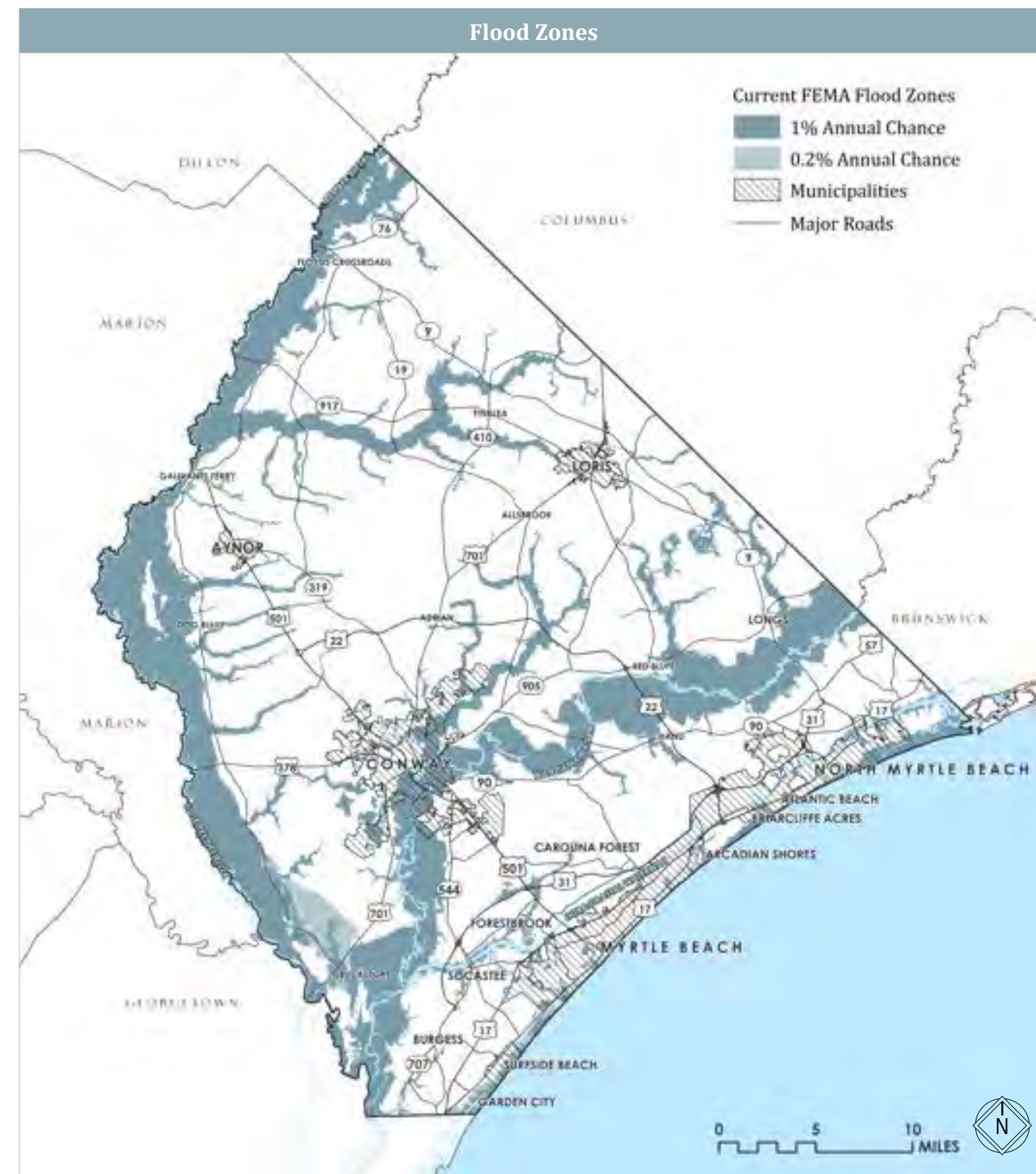
Areas of Horry County in the CBRS include the Meher Baba Spiritual Center, the maritime forest and beach front of Briarcliffe Acres, the inlet at White Point Swash, and Waties Island. While Waties Island has been partially conserved by Coastal Carolina University, a large portion of the island remains in private ownership and could be developed. In its undeveloped state, the island serves as an example of a pristine natural area and as the gateway to South Carolina's portion of the Intracoastal Waterway.

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 infiltration 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 SCDES 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.



Source: FEMA, 2019.

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 2022, there were 629 operating farms with lands for crops, pasture, and woodlands (USDA, 2022). Between 2002 and 2022, there was a 36% decrease in the number of farms in the county, along with a decrease in total farm acreage and an increase in average farm size. These percent change has increased during the last decade compared to the decrease in the percent change of number of farms from 2002-2012. This loss of farmland coincides with development increases in Horry County.

While the number of farms has consistently dropped since 2012, agricultural sales have increased. In 2022 alone, Horry County generated over \$105 million in 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 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 22.7% is currently in use. These croplands account for more than three-fourths of all agricultural revenue in Horry County (USDA, 2022). Until recently, tobacco served as the largest revenue generating crop. While Horry County remains the number one producer of tobacco in the state (USDA, 2022), 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. Cotton

Lands in Farms by Type of Land



Source: USDA, 2022.

production and yield also increased markedly from 2017 to 2022 (USDA, 2022).

Horry County lags 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 \$19 million in sales in 2022. As sales revenues have slightly increased since 2017, poultry and livestock inventories continue to increase in Horry County. From 2017 to 2022, the sale of poultry and eggs increased from nearly \$4.9 million to \$7.9 million and the inventory of broilers increased by more than 35,000. During this same timeframe, the number of hogs decreased from 30,000 to 20,000, and sales decreased by nearly \$1 million. Horry County is still the number three

Prime Agricultural Soils



Source: National Resources Conservation Service, 2023.



Tobacco Day in L.W. Paul Living Farm
Source: Myrtle Beach Sun News, n.d.

producer of hogs in the state (USDA, 2022).

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, 2022). The number and sale of horses and ponies has slightly increased since 2017. 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 opt 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 its agricultural heritage. 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 conserva-

tion 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.

The South Carolina Conservation Bank has protected two tracts of over 600 acres of land in Horry County with a \$4.3 million grant.

The Pee Dee Land Trust also supports agricultural preservation in the Pee Dee region, and has preserved four tracts in Horry County, totaling 1,026 acres (PDLT, 2025).

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

Farmland Trends in Horry County					
	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022
Number of Farms	988	914	938	767	629
Acres in Farms	788,311	163,622	177,569	170,551	151,691
Average Farm Size	191	179	189	222	241

Source: USDA, 2017. USDA, 2024.

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 countywide 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 the South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC), Horry County contains 732,781 acres of land of

which 407,266 acres is classified as forestland, with 42.8% considered forested wetlands and 12.8% as upland forests. Nearly all 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:

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

WILDFIRES

Horry County's forestland is adapted to regular wild-fire. Since 2003, there have been an annual average of 61.9 wildfires that burn over 1,415 acres of land in Horry County. However, this represents a changing wildfire regime: several years of few wildfires that burn under an average of 10 acres are followed by years with major fires that burn over 1,000 acres. Though the number of wildfires and acreage burned has significantly decreased since before 2000, the average acreage per fire has varied more.

The Coastal Plain's longleaf pine forests are adapted to regular low-to-moderate intensity understory wildfires that remove understory brush, provide new habitat, and reduce fuels. Environmental and ecosystem changes, such as the dominance of shortleaf pine forests, increase understory brush, and increased development in the wildland-urban interface impact wildfire's part in shaping Horry County's forestlands.



Source: National Land Cover Database, 2021.

URBAN FORESTRY

As properties are clear cut to meet stormwater grading requirements that prevent flood damage, there is a decrease in tree canopy that absorbs 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, Socastee, and Little River.

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

1. Habitat for urban wildlife
2. Reduced heating and cooling costs
3. Interception and storage of rainwater and reduced flooding
4. Improved air quality
5. Sound buffering
6. Increased property values
7. 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 County'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 100 feet above sea level along the sand ridges of Carolina Bays (FEMA, 2021).

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 59.5% of soils in Horry County have high to medium runoff 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



Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge
Source: Wikipedia, 2025.



Stormwater Drainage System
Source: Horry County Government.



Highly Drained to Poorly Drained, Hydric Soils
Source: USACE, 2025.

often coincide with wetland and floodplain areas and are typically classified as hydric soils. Areas with the best infiltration occur near the beach because 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 sand dredging from river bottoms. 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 DES's Division of Mining and

Solid Waste Management.

There are 61 SCDES permitted mines in the county (SCDES, 2020). The material coming out of these mines is primarily used for road construction and development projects. Borrow pits operated by or for the SC Department of Transportation (SCDOT) are exempt from mining permits if the material is used solely for the building or repair of South Carolina public roads. Practices such as farming and on-site construction are also exempt from mining permits from SCDES.

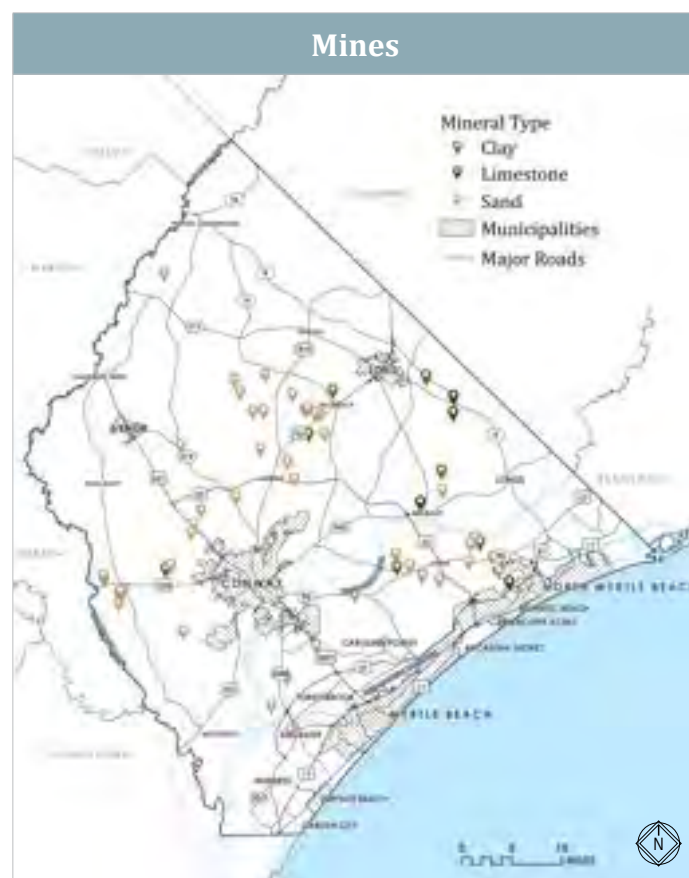
In 2006, Horry County Council began permitting new mining operations as conditional uses in Forest Agriculture or Commercial Forest Agricultural zoning classifications. Recently, zones AG1 & AG2 also began allowing new mining operations. Ponds less than two acres in size, farm ponds less than five acres, and all stormwater ponds associated with an approved development, do not require mining permits from SCDHEC or Horry County Council.

SEPTIC SUITABILITY

Approximately 84.5% of Horry County's soils are severely or somewhat limited for septic tank absorption fields (NRCS, 2025). 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, 2008). It is also dependent upon soil drainage.

Areas less suitable for septic tanks require special design, increased maintenance, and significantly increase in construction costs.

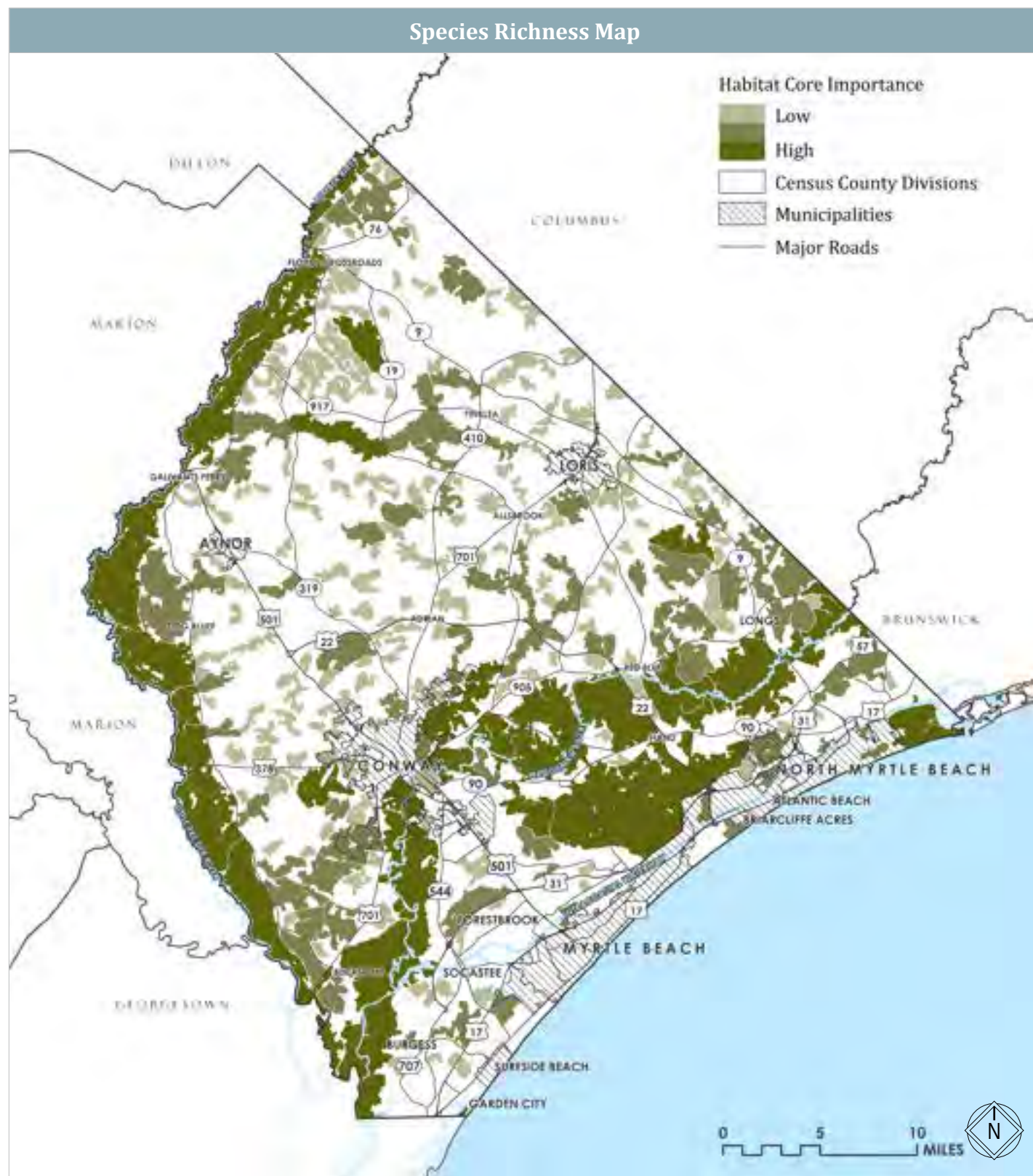
In many cases, installing or connecting to a sewer line is a more viable and environmentally conscious choice. On the other hand, expanding sewer lines into rural areas can encourage development in areas



Source: SCDES, 2020.



Source: NRCS, 2025.



Source: SCDNR, 2024.

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 SCDES regulations in May 2016, many previously permitted septic fields no longer meet state standards. These fields will be required by SCDES 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. While plant life is beneficial for ecosystem stability and absorbs flood waters, it is 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 habitat cores map (SCDNR, 2024).***

While this map does not reflect the 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 the public dataset provided by SCDNR (SCDNR, 2025).

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 endangered list at the federal level. Bald eagle populations declined



Loggerhead Turtle in Myrtle Beach
Source: Blue Wave Adventures,

Threatened and Endangered Species		
Vertebrate Animals		
Caretta caretta	Loggerhead	Threatened
Chelonia mydas	Green Sea Turtle	Threatened
Dermochelys coriacea	Leatherback Sea Turtle	Endangered
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle	Threatened
Dryobates borealis	Red Cockaded Woopecker	Endangered
Trichechus manatus	Florida Manatee	Endangered
Vascular Plants		
Amaranthus pumilus	Seabeach Amaranth	Threatened
Schwalbea americana	Chaffseed	Endangered

Source: USFWS, 2025.

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, n.d.).

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 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 identifies sites to expand existing conservation corridors and 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 habitat 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 (USFWS, 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, n.d.)

The 5,347-acre Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve 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.

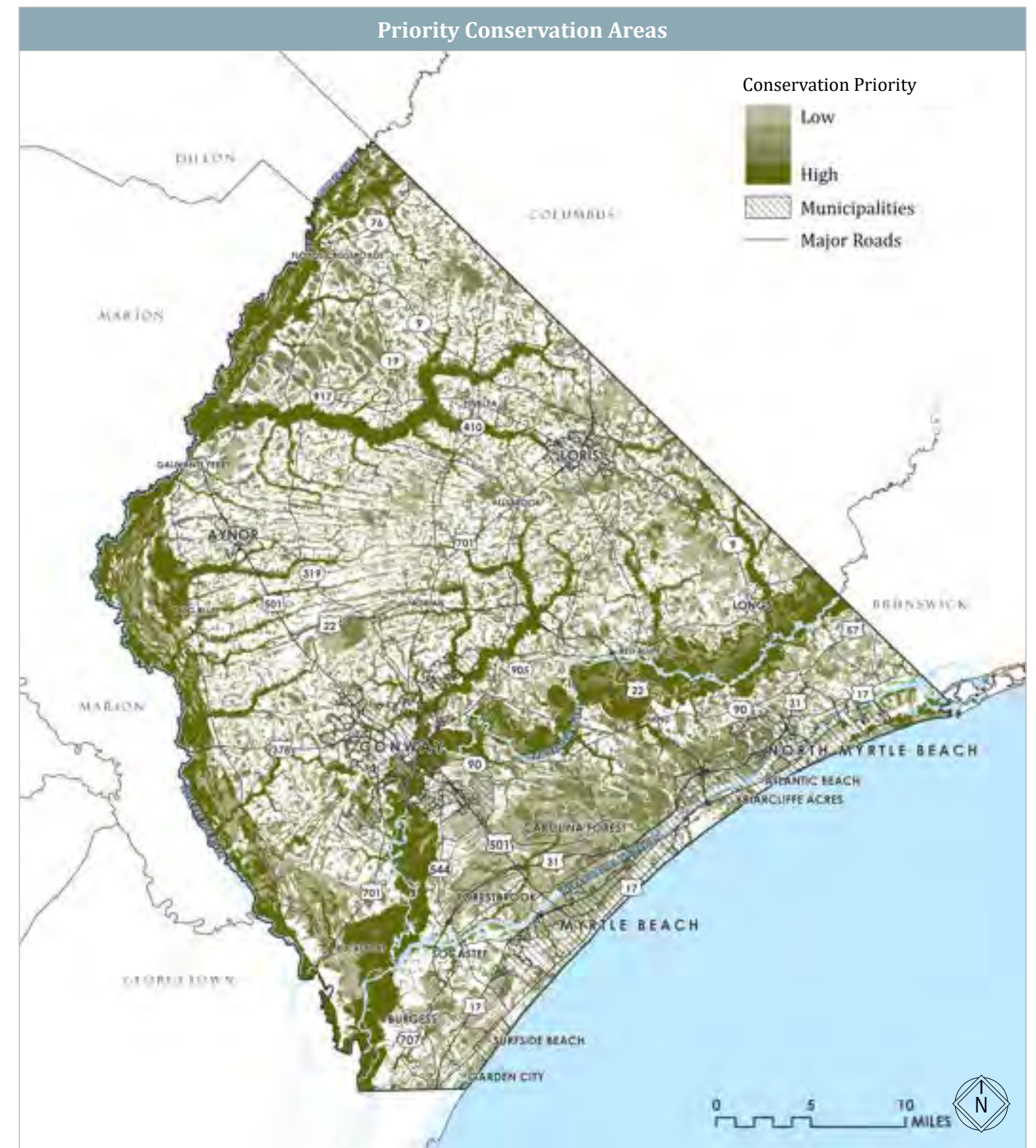
The 568-acre Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve protects one of the few known Carolina bay-longleaf pine savannah complexes in South Carolina. The longleaf pine savannahs contain white fringed, yellow fringed and rosebud orchids, Venus' flytraps, pitcher plants and a diverse array of wildflowers.

The 10,444-acre Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage 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.

The 9,000-acre Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve 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, n.d.).

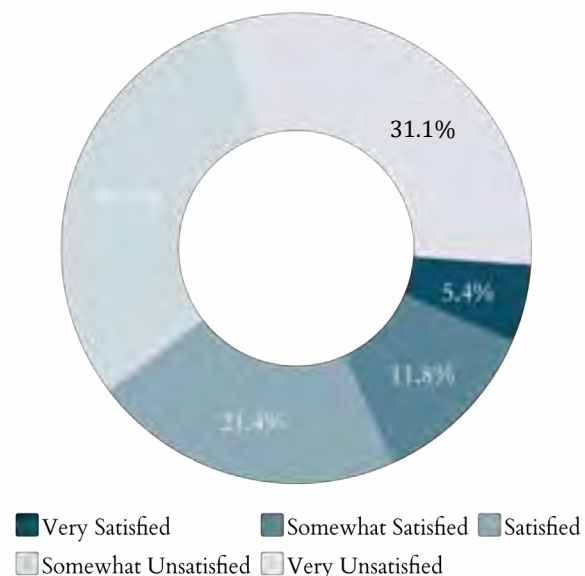
NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines nature-based solutions as includ-



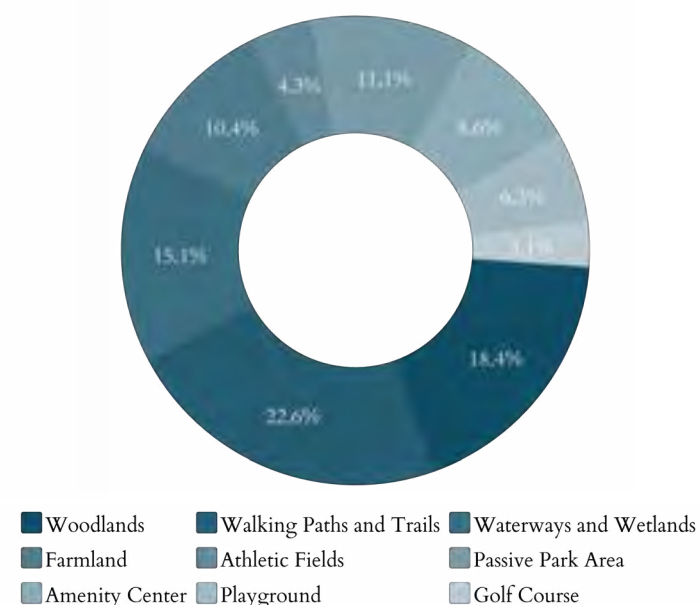
Source: South Carolina Conservation Bank; Horry County Planning & Zoning.

How satisfied are you with neighborhood open space and amenities in Horry County?



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning, 2025.

Which open space and recreation facilities do you want to see in Horry County?



ditional 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 square miles for roaming and foraging, depending upon the availability of food, water, and shelter (SCDNR, 2025).

New research makes it 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 and 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 pollution sources and prevailing winds coming off of the ocean disperse pollution. While air quality is not a major concern in Horry County, the pollution generated here only exacerbates pollution problems elsewhere. The Waccamaw Air Quality Coalition was formed to serve as a forum to discuss air quality concerns and

Conservation Subdivision

Conservation subdivisions are a design strategy that attempts to preserve undivided, buildable tracts of land as communal open space for residents.

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 ad-

share ideas to reduce air pollution in Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg Counties.

SCDES is responsible for air quality monitoring to measure the concentrations of pollutants in the air. Through the Clean Air Act, the EPA 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 are generally small and widespread. Examples include 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 2024, there were only two active point source emitters in the County, far fewer than 12 just a decade ago (EPA, 2024). Inevitably, the emissions from point sources have reduced over time. SCDES 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.

SCDES has also not consistently operated an ozone monitoring site in Horry County because past studies and monitoring have indicated good air quality. SCDES 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 offshore 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 beaches 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 (BOEM, 2016).

South Carolina is well situated to become an economic hub for offshore wind development.

Clemson Energy Innovation Center in Charleston operates the largest wind turbine testing facility in the world (Colbert-Busch, 2012). All 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. 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. It 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. Onshore wind turbines can already be seen among beach resort high rises in North Myrtle Beach.



Solar Panel at Home
Source: Santee Cooper, n.d.

SOLAR POWER

Solar energy also provides opportunities, 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 presence 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 1,325 solar panels, on its maintenance facility on 10th Avenue in Myrtle Beach (Santee Cooper, 2021).

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 more than 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.

In 2018, Santee Cooper opened the Bell Bay Solar Farm on Hwy 701 with 6,000 solar panels 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 land-fill within Myrtle Beach International Airport. The site will have over 6,000 panels on 14 acres. While large solar installations are not common, 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 (SCGreenPower, 2025)

OFFSHORE DRILLING

After BOEM opened 98% of oil and gas resources in

federal offshore areas to exploration and development, South Carolina advocated for an offshore 'no drill' oil exemption. BOEM halted offshore drilling for a 10-year period in 2020, and there has been an effort to protect the offshore areas permanently (South Carolina Governor, 2020). This is a battle that will continue to take place in the future.

ENERGY FINDINGS

Growing trends in 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 economically and ecologically critical.

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 the population grows, water quality, impacts 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 forestlands, wetlands, and dunes is critical to 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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



HOUSING ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 5

HOUSING

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 ten-year housing growth rates ranging from 35% to 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 2020, the number of housing units in Horry County only increased by 17,710 units, growing 9.5% to 203,702 total. However, between 2020 and 2023, the estimated housing growth rate increased to 3.9% annually, approaching pre-recession levels. Despite the temporary slowdown in new construction, Horry

County's population significantly increased between 2010 and 2020, indicating housing stock remained available.

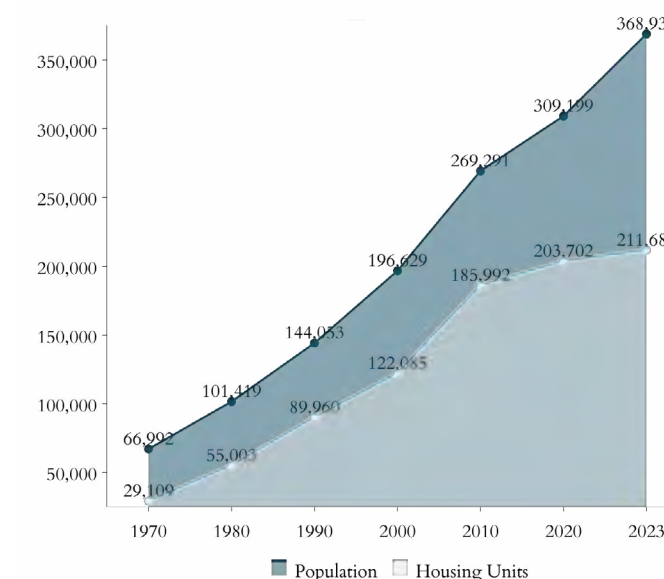
*Unincorporated areas account for **155,331 (73.4%)** of the county's total housing units. Growth since the 1970s has primarily occurred in unincorporated Horry County.*

As of 2023, a majority of the county's housing stock is located in Myrtle Beach, Little River, and Conway East. These areas also have the greatest share of seasonal housing units.

HOUSING TYPES

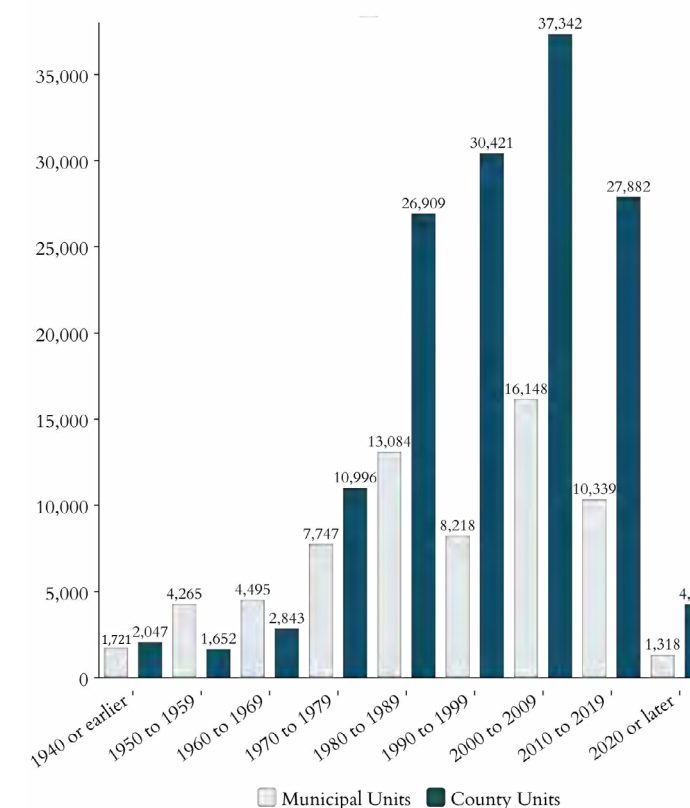
Single-family units remain the most common type of housing in Horry County, encompassing 69.6% of all units. The chart on the following page details

Housing Units and Population Growth



Source: US Census, Decennial Census. American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25001).

Housing Units by Year Structure Built



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25034).

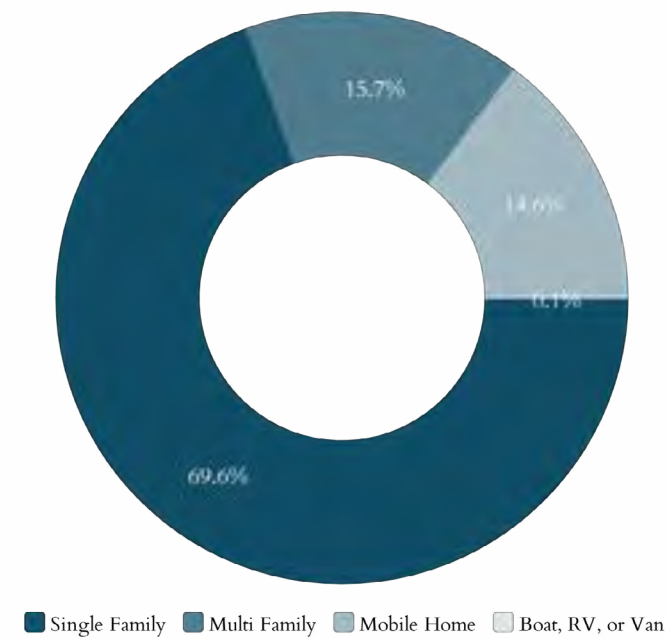
the breakdown of occupied housing units by type.

The breakdown of housing types by County Census Division (CCD) is detailed on the next page. The Conway East, Conway, Little River, and Myrtle Beach CCDs have the highest shares of single-family units, while Floyds Crossroads CCD has the lowest. 15.7% of the population lives in multi-family dwellings, while another 14.6% reside in mobile homes. More than half of all units in Horry County are three-bedroom units, and studio units are least common. As the population rises, a variety of affordable housing options will need to be available for both rural and urban areas.

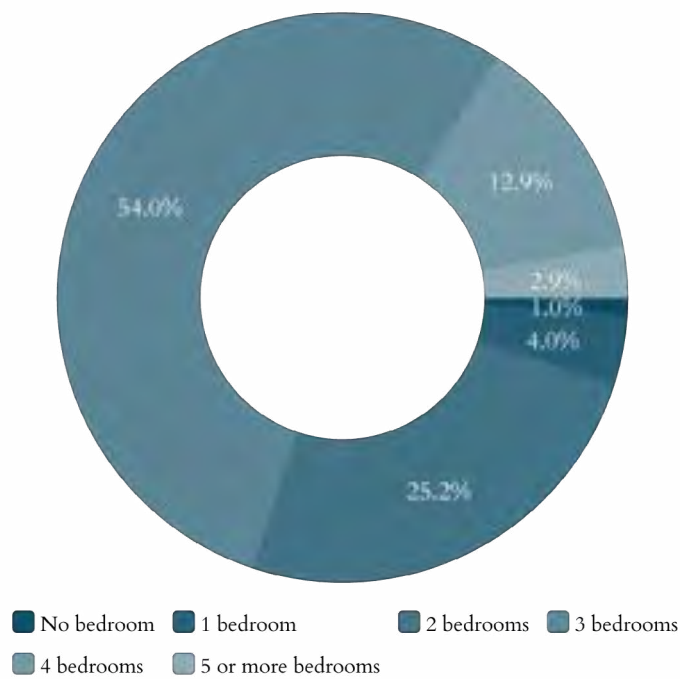
OCCUPANCY AND VACANCY

Of the 211,686 housing units in Horry County, 71% are occupied, 19.2% are classified as seasonal, and a remaining 9.8% are considered vacant, primarily for rent. 53.9% of the total housing stock is owner occupied, while 17.1% are renter occupied. Since 2010, there has been a slight increase in the per-

Population by Housing Type



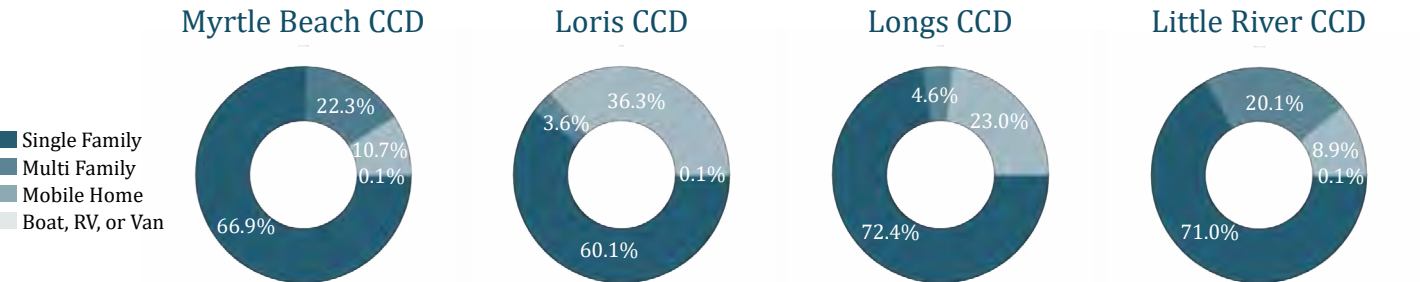
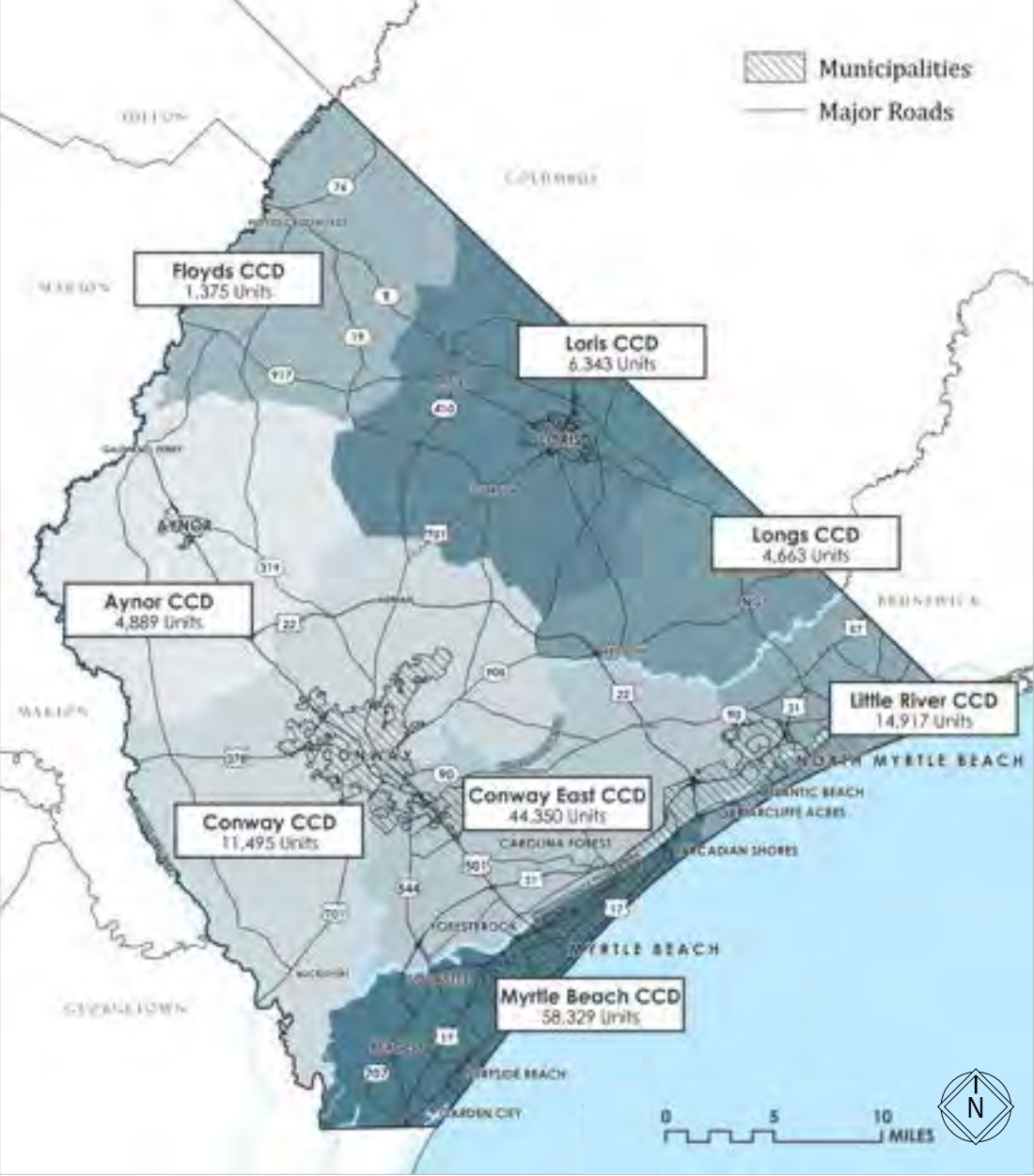
Number of Bedrooms



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25033 and B25041).

Estimated Housing Units (2023)	
Aynor CCD	5,310
Town of Aynor Unincorporated	421 4,889
Conway CCD	20,813
City of Conway Unincorporated	9,318 11,495
Conway East CCD	44,350
Unincorporated	44,350
Floyds Crossroads CCD	1,375
Unincorporated	1,375
Little River CCD	42,533
City of North Myrtle Beach Town of Briarcliffe Acres Town of Atlantic Beach Unincorporated	27,110 223 283 14,917
Longs CCD	4,653
Unincorporated	4,653
Loris CCD	7,584
City of Loris Unincorporated	1,241 6,343
Myrtle Beach CCD	85,068
City of Myrtle Beach Town of Surfside Beach Unincorporated	24,467 4,272 56,329
Total Housing Units	211,686
Municipal Housing Units Unincorporated Housing Units	67,335 144,351

Housing Units by County Census Division



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25001 and B25033).

cent of owner and renter-occupied units, while the estimated percent of seasonal units has decreased. 77.1% of unincorporated areas' 144,351 housing units are occupied, 15.4% are classified as seasonal, and a remaining 7.5% are considered vacant, primarily for rent. 60.8% of the total housing stock is owner occupied, while 16.3% are renter occupied.

Overall, 22.9% of all units are considered vacant, largely due to the fact that 15.4% of the county's housing stock is seasonal.

In total, there are approximately 22,190 seasonal units, comprising 19.8% of South Carolina's total seasonal housing stock. In 2023, only 0.9% of the overall housing stock was estimated to be vacant and for sale, indicating high demand, 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 number of housing units that are investment properties with high values and are not available for year round usage has an impact on the availability of affordable housing in close proximity to jobs available near the beach. This impacts travel patterns and quality of life for working families.

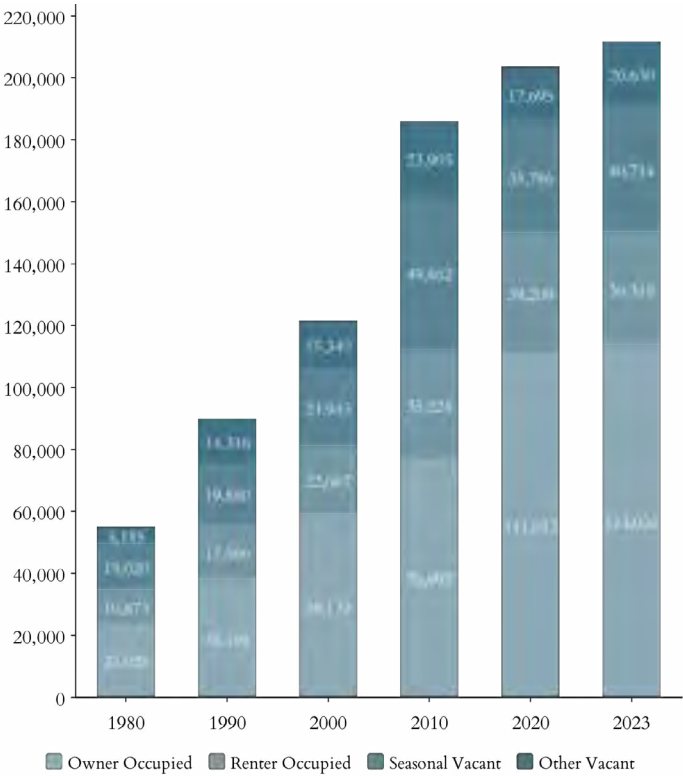
HOUSING CONDITIONS

Safe housing is fundamental to having a high quality of life. Because the vast majority of housing in Horry County has been recently constructed, few units are classified as substandard. A residence is considered substandard by the Department of Housing and

Urban Development (HUD) if it does not have:

- 1. operable indoor plumbing;
- 2. a usable flush toilet inside the unit for the exclusive use of a family;

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Trends



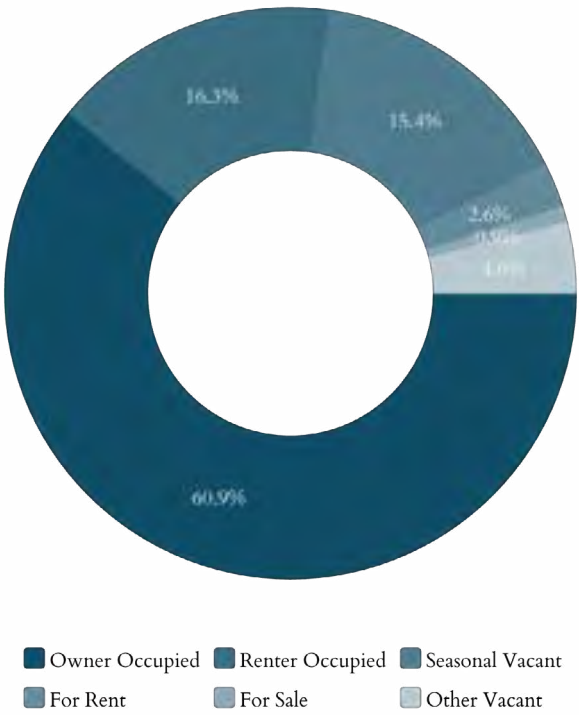
Year	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Seasonal Vacant	Other Vacant	Total Units
1980	23,925	10,873	15,020	5,185	55,003
1990	38,198	17,566	19,880	14,316	89,960
2000	59,713	22,087	24,945	15,340	122,085
2010	76,997	35,228	49,862	23,905	185,992
2020	111,012	39,209	35,786	17,695	203,702
2023	114,026	36,316	40,714	20,630	211,686

Source: US Census, Decennial Census. American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25003 and B25004).

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy by Census County Division							
	Occupied		Vacant				Total Units
	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Seasonal	For Rent	For Sale	Other	
Aynor CCD	3,800	939	150	83	24	314	5,310
Conway CCD	14,189	4,540	377	362	184	1161	20,813
Conway East CCD	28,610	8,890	3,844	1,145	284	1577	44,350
Floyds Crossroads CCD	768	341	21	0	0	245	1,375
Little River CCD	16,955	3,855	15,263	4,690	469	1301	42,533
Longs CCD	3,308	769	312	0	69	195	4,653
Loris CCD	4,400	2,115	181	12	29	847	7,584
Myrtle Beach CCD	41,996	14,867	20,566	4,441	817	2381	85,068
Total	114,026	36,316	40,714	10,733	1,876	8,021	211,686
Percent Total Housing Units	53.9%	17.2%	19.2%	5.1%	0.9%	3.8%	100.00%

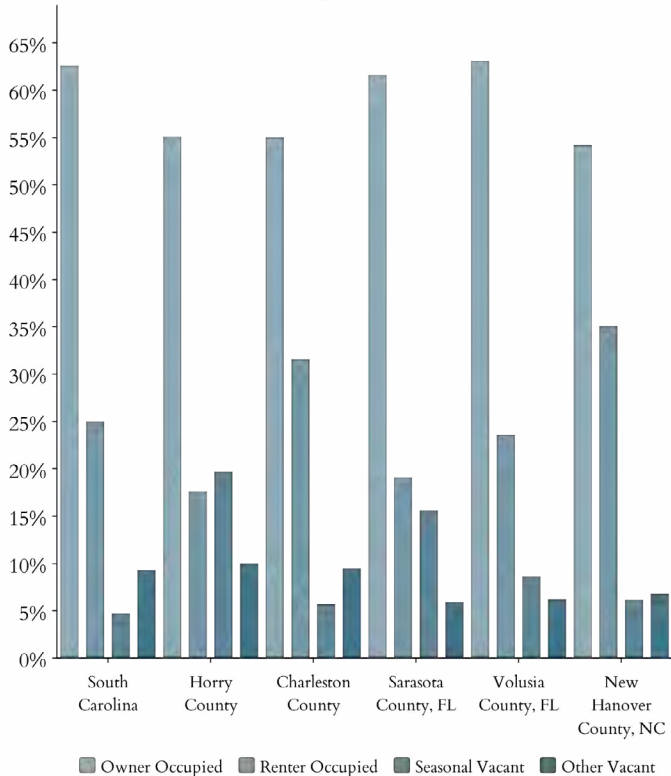
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25003 and B25004).

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25003 and B25004).

Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Comparison



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25003 and B25004).

3. a usable bathtub or shower insider 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, 0.19% lack complete plumbing facilities, 0.83% lack a means of heat, and 0.37% lack kitchen facilities. Overcrowded units with more than one inhabitant per room make up 1.24% of occupied units. (ACS, 2019-2023, (ID #B25049, B25117, B25053, and B25014)).

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.

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

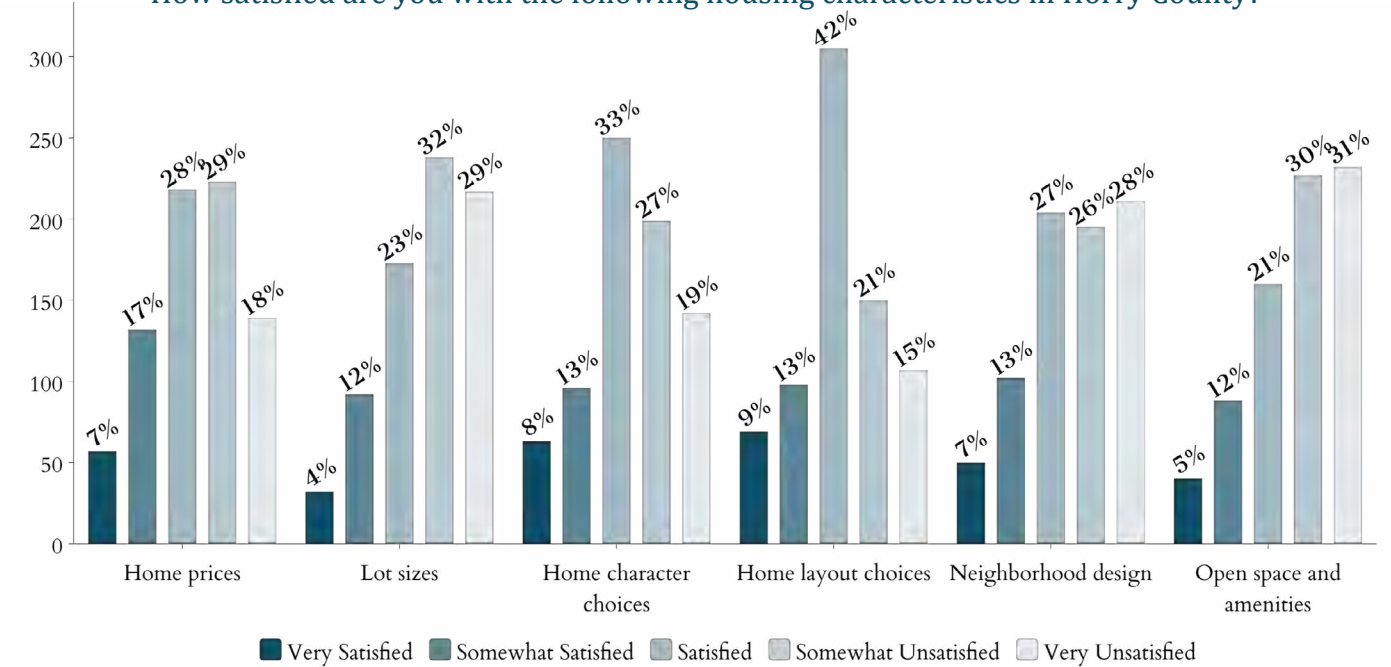
Because Horry County is in the coastal zone and has an abundance of wetlands and riverfront, nearly 24% of the land area is located within the regulatory flood zone. As of 2024, there are numerous repetitive flood loss properties in unincorporated Horry County that have flooded multiple times over five years. Many of these homes were constructed prior to the adoption of the county's initial flood maps in 1987 and do not meet current flood zone construction regulations. Repetitive flood loss properties are also located outside of the regulatory flood zone, indicating the need for updated flood maps and mitigation efforts.

In addition, many single family homes, especially along the beachfront, are split into duplexes or have enclosed 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 1994 are not designed to withstand hurricane force winds, even if tied down. Campers and other recreational vehicles do not provide wind protection either. While 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.

While Horry County is infrequently impacted by major wind events, many dwelling units are at risk during such events. 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

How satisfied are you with the following housing characteristics in Horry County?



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 square feet. 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 excluding resort areas that were constructed prior to the establishment of zoning regulations.

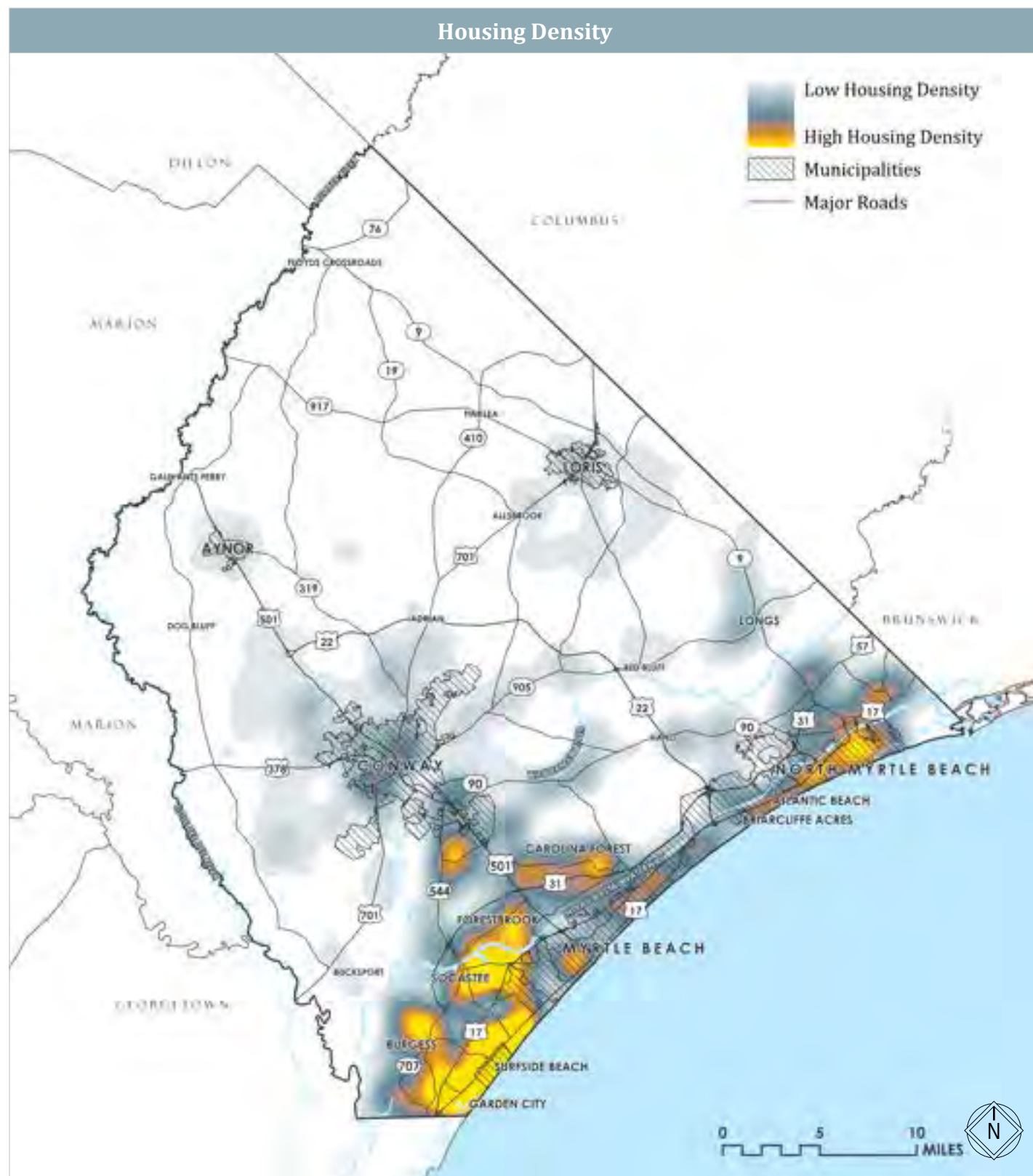
All major residential subdivisions are required to meet Horry County's Land Development Regulations

(LDR), which provide uniform standards for all new subdivisions that regulate traffic flow, adequate access for emergency vehicles, open space, and sidewalks. Some development criteria are triggered by the number of dwelling units. Additional regulations may exist within development agreements or overlay districts, in addition to stormwater regulations.

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

Based on existing residential development patterns, Horry County's most densely developed areas are the South Strand and North Strand. While these areas have seen the most growth in recent years, the greatest density remains in resort areas along the beachfront.

Most unincorporated areas of Horry County



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

are not densely developed, and sprawling development patterns are apparent along major road corridors. Residential and commercial development are not centralized with the exception of municipal downtowns and areas directly along the beachfront.

As residential development has increased drastically in the last 40 years, it has largely consisted of major residential subdivisions without integration with adjacent developments or easy access to commercial uses and services. While establishing interconnected, walkable communities may be challenging in unincorporated Horry County because of extensive wetlands, regulations and site design play a significant role in shaping livability. Redevelopment also presents opportunities 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.

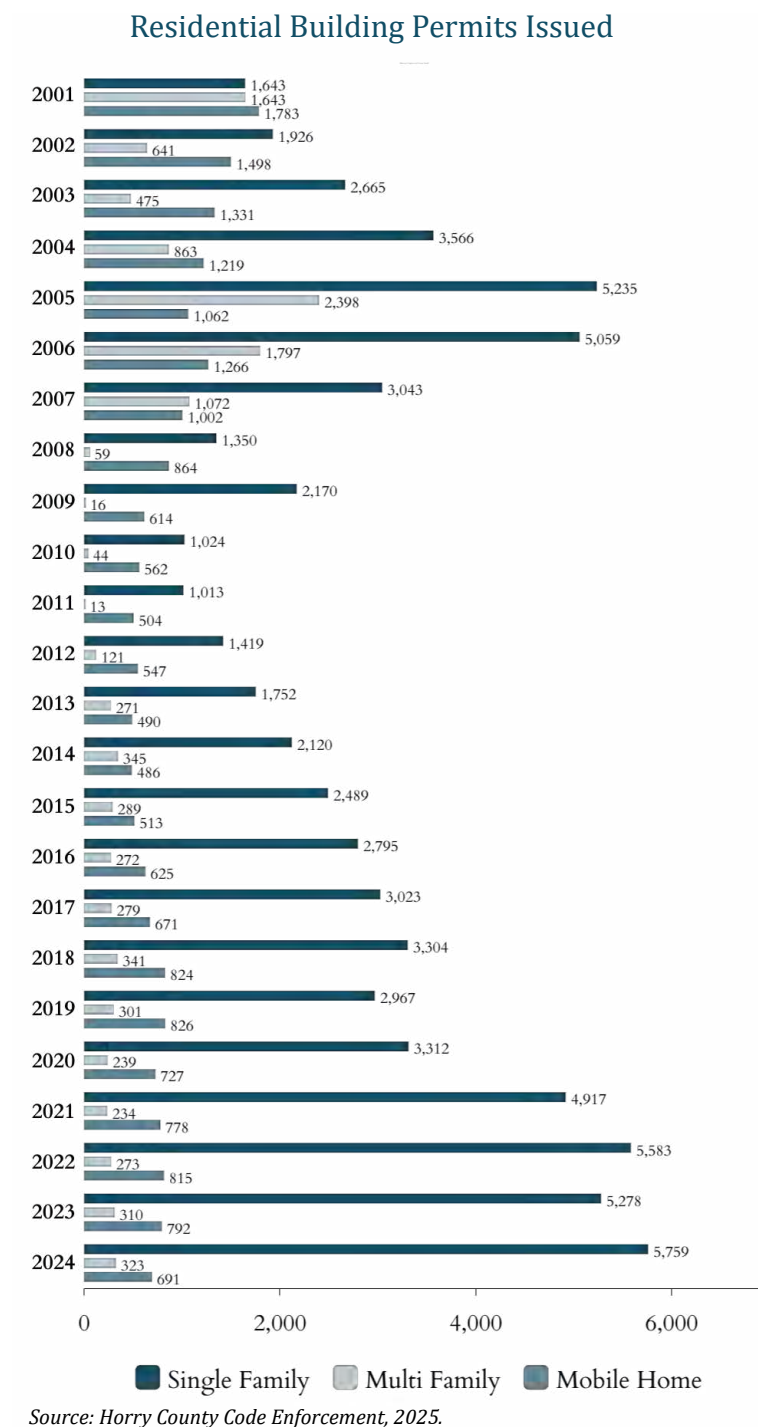
DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

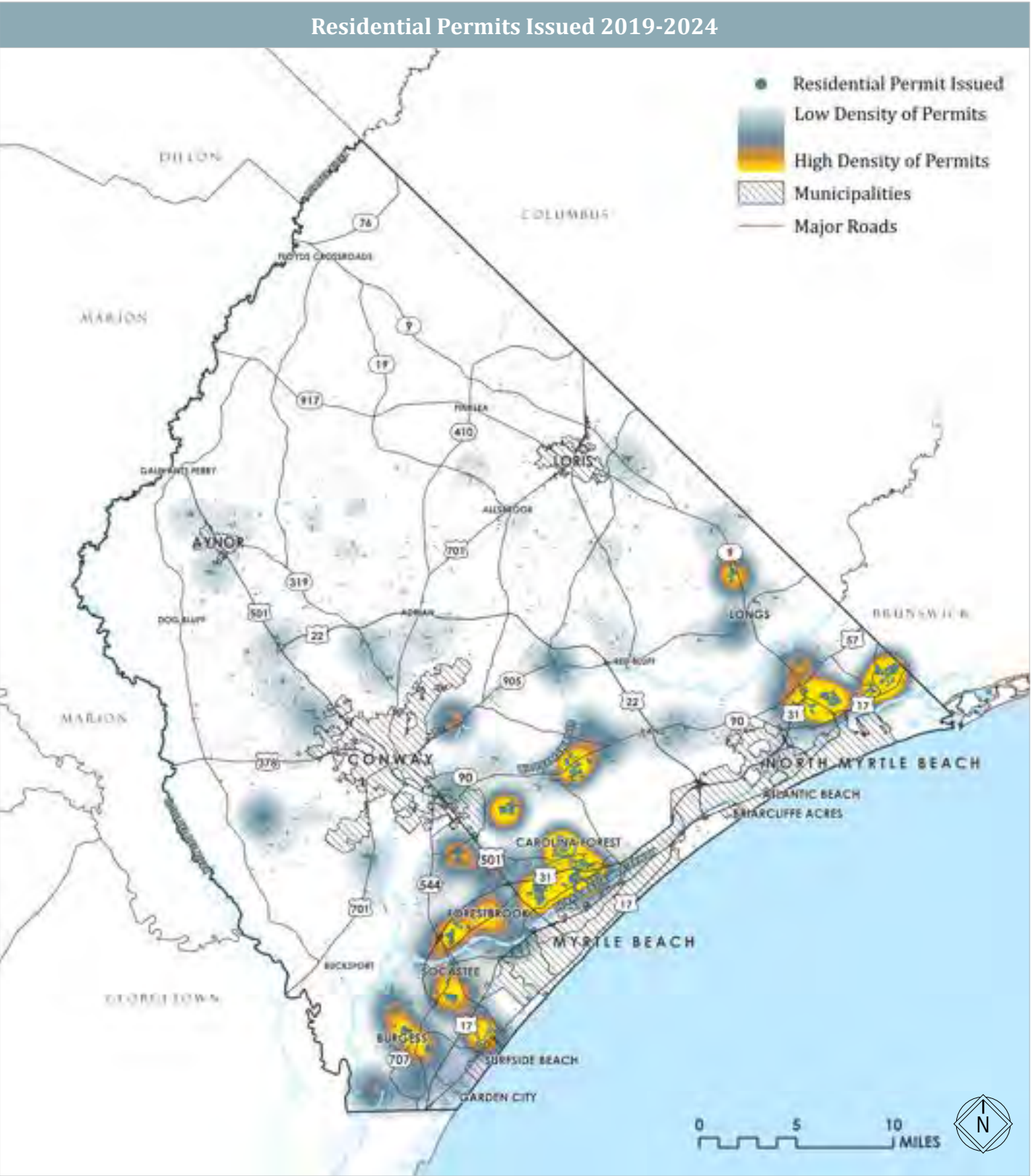
Major residential subdivisions account for 2% of Horry County's total land cover. However, an additional 8% of the County's total land area is under construction or has been rezoned for major subdivisions. The following section details recent housing trends in unincorporated Horry County. This data does not include growth occurring in municipalities.

Recent Growth

While residential growth declined during the Great

Recession and the Covid-19 pandemic, development has fully rebounded. The map on the following page represents all residential building permits that were issued from 2019 through 2024. Over this timeframe, single-family residential growth occurred heavily in





Source: Horry County Code Enforcement, 2025. Horry County Planning and Zoning.

Carolina Forest, Little River, and Forestbrook, largely driven by construction in major subdivisions. These areas can be clearly seen as ‘hot spots’ on the map.

Areas shown in blue indicate where fewer residential permits were approved in recent years. Emerging growth areas around Conway and along the Hwy. 9, 90, and 905 corridors have higher permit application activity. As development continues to increase in rural areas of the county, infrastructure needs and costs should be evaluated to inform future land use decisions and capital improvements for roads, fire stations, police services, recreation, and schools.

Potential Growth

The county's population projections estimate 211,838 more people will live in Horry County by 2040. To accommodate this growth, assuming that average household size remains approximately 2.46, an additional 86,113 housing units will need to be available in unincorporated and incorporated Horry County (ACS, 2018-2022, ID #S1101).

If construction rates and average household size remain the same, unincorporated Horry County can accommodate approximately 45% of the projected population growth through 2040. Nearly

64,000 additional units will be added in unincorporated areas if population continues to increase as anticipated.

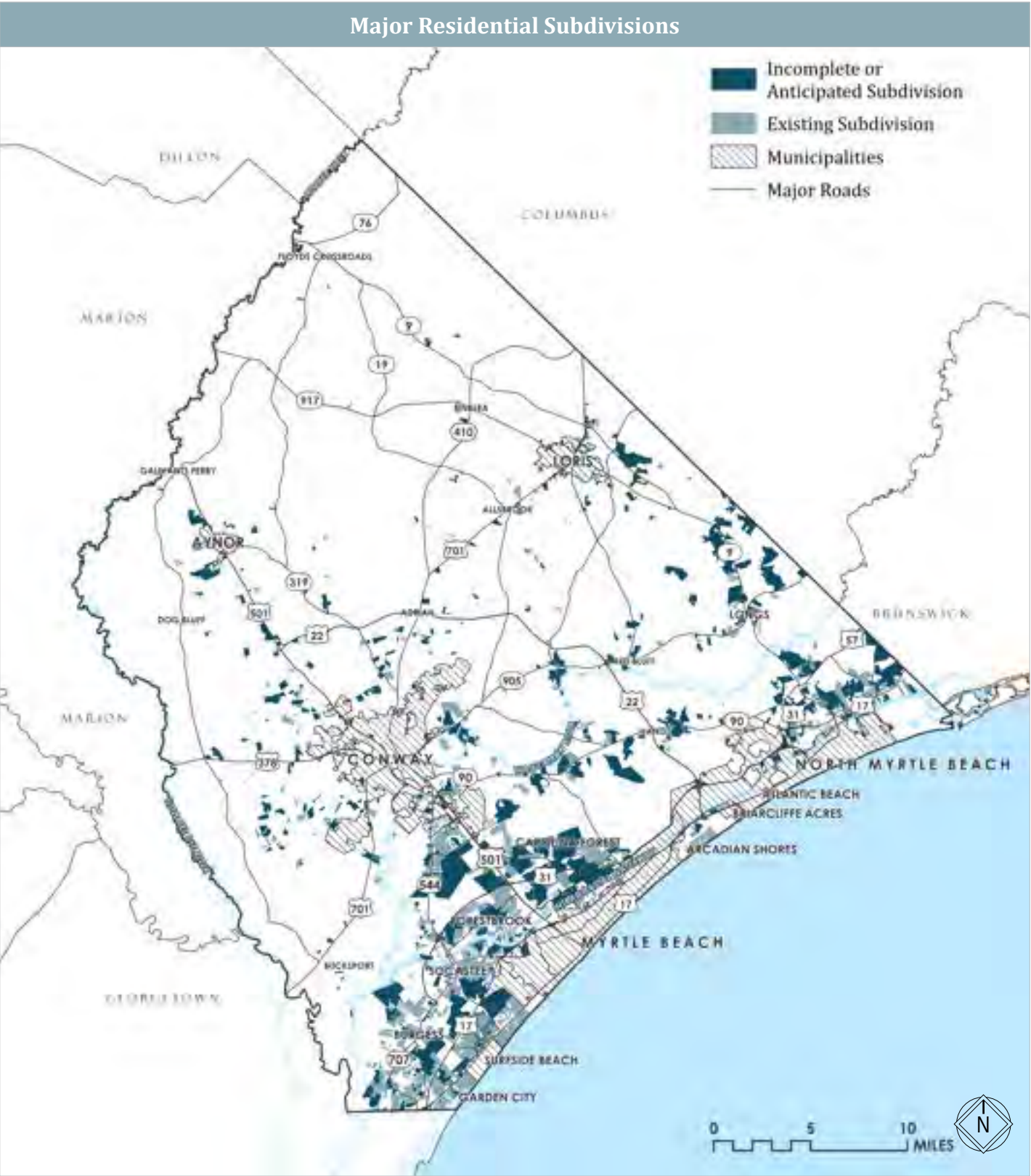
The table below conveys existing housing trends and projected growth if those trends continue. It does not account for alterations in development patterns that could occur from land use policies or incentives. The number of projected additional units needed also does not account for seasonal housing unit needs or the transition of year-round residences into seasonal housing.

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 repetitive flood loss areas, enclosure of breakaway walls, conversion of single-family homes into duplexes and vacation rentals, mobile home age and durability,

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	5,310	-	2,033	2,033	355
Conway CCD	20,813	50	5,034	5,084	3,186
Conway East CCD	44,350	6,495	9,008	15,503	20,498
Floyds Crossroads CCD	1,375	-	32	32	-
Little River CCD	42,533	2,423	2,148	4,571	4,194
Longs CCD	4,653	825	6,242	7,067	-
Loris CCD	7,584	-	1,743	1,743	-
Myrtle Beach CCD	85,068	6,965	5,751	12,716	15,915
Total	211,686	16,785	32,783	49,568	44,148

Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID #B25001). Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

and dilapidated housing.

COST AND AFFORDABILITY

Home costs and average rents have continuously increased as population growth has increased. Single family home values have increased 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

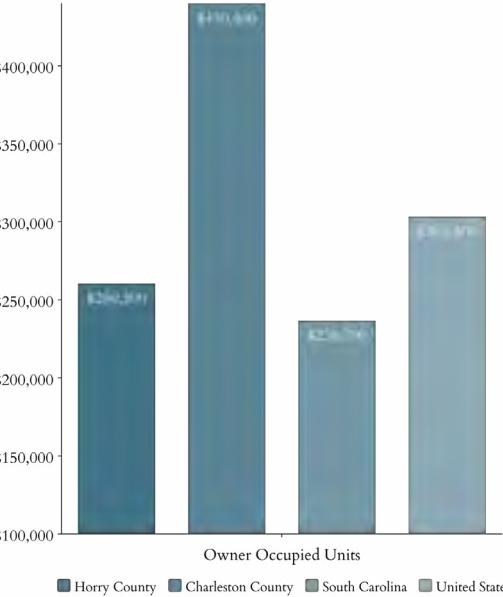
In 2023, the median property value of owner-occupied housing units in Horry County was \$260,500, 51.0% higher than the median value of \$172,500 in 2018. Property values remain slightly above the State median (\$236,700) and lower than the national median (\$303,400). 59.7% of owner-occupied housing units are valued at less than \$300,000.

Despite lower median property values, median single-family sales prices reached \$386,990 in 2022. Continued increases in the median sales price indi-

Median Sales Price (2024)		
	Single Family	Condo/Townhouse
Aynor	\$289,900	NA
Carolina Forest	\$420,000	\$250,000
Conway	\$295,000	\$197,500
Garden City/Murrells Inlet	\$429,950	\$315,000
Little River	\$384,700	\$210,000
Loris/Longs	\$297,000	\$218,500
Myrtle Beach	\$465,000	\$230,000
North Myrtle Beach	\$580,065	\$327,450
Socastee	\$349,900	\$230,850
Surfside Beach	\$380,000	\$187,750

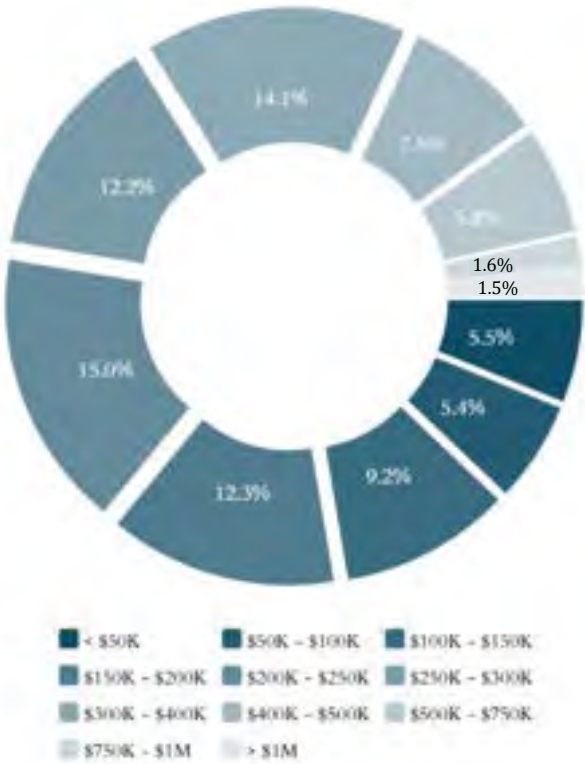
Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®, 2025.

Median Property Value Comparison



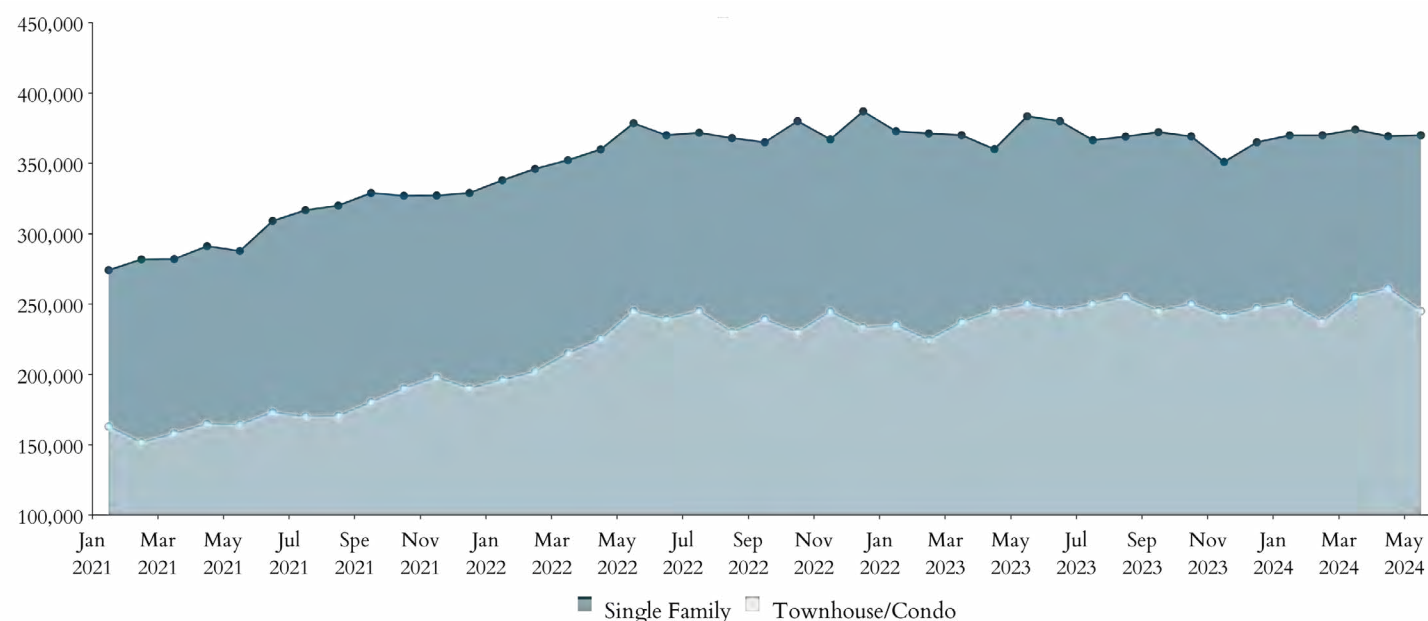
Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID#B25077).

Horry County Property Values



Source: US Census, American Community Survey 2019-2023, (ID#B25075).

Median Sales Price



Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®; InfoSparks®, 2024.

cate high demand for existing housing stock.

Rental Costs

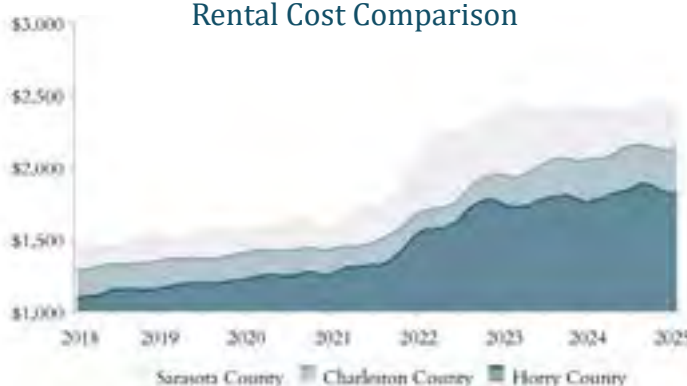
While renting often seems like a more affordable option than purchasing a home, rental costs are also increasing rapidly. 2023 estimates suggest that the proportion of renters paying between \$500 and \$999 per month significantly decreased from 60% to 27.5% while the proportion of renters paying between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month has almost doubled since 2015. The median rent has increased to approximately \$1,181/month, a \$338/month increase since 2015 (ACS 2019-2023, (ID #25064)).

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

Estimated Rent Paid in 2023	%
Less than \$500	4.9%
\$500-999	27.5%
\$1,000-1,499	40.5%
\$1,500-1,999	14.5%
\$2,000 or more	8.1%

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023, (ID #B25063).

Rental Cost Comparison



Source: Zillow Horry County Home Prices and Values, 2025.

housing near the beach can be more affordable, but is not a viable long-term housing solution.

Housing Inventory

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.

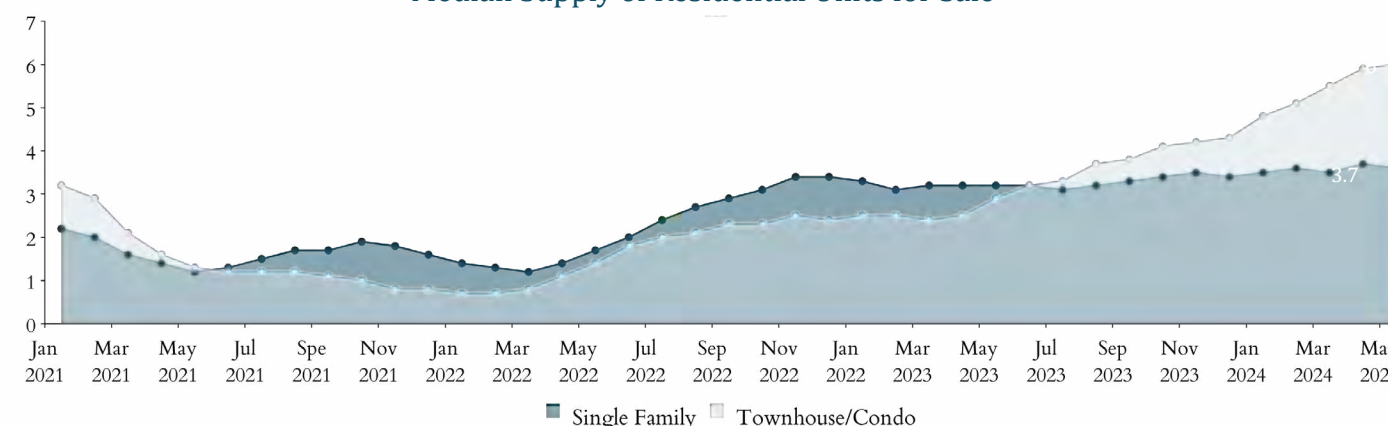
While a number of housing developments are underway, the existing housing supply is not large enough to meet growing demand without rapid increases in new housing for a variety of income levels and household types. In addition, historic flooding has placed an additional burden on both the housing market and the construction industry.

While new development is rapidly adding housing stock, supply continues to be out-paced by demand for both single-family and multi-family units, driving up housing costs.

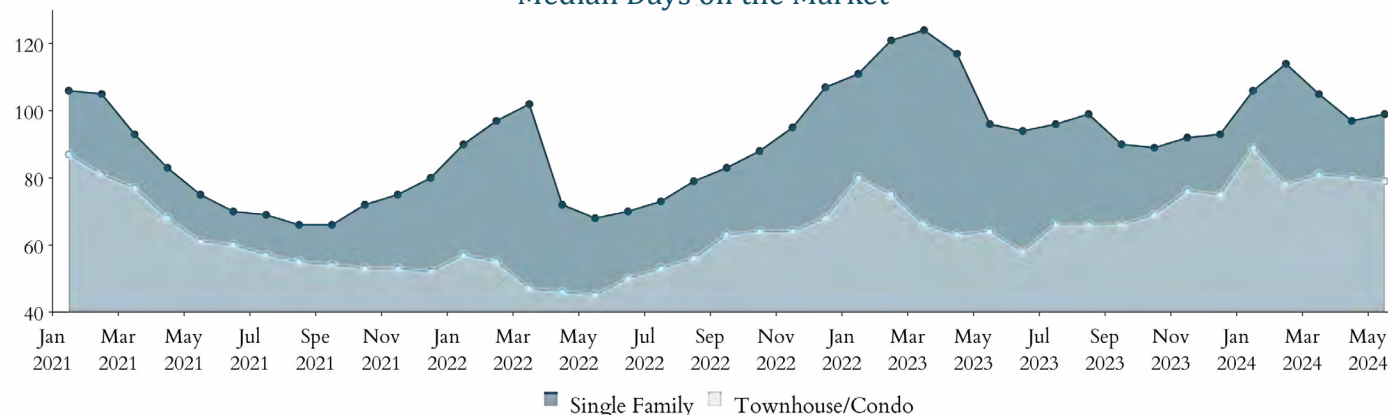
COST BURDEN

The U.S. 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. 22% of homeowners and 41.1% of renters in Horry County were considered cost-burdened in 2023 (ACS, 2019-2023, (ID #B25106)).

Median Supply of Residential Units for Sale



Median Days on the Market



Source: Coastal Carolinas Association of REALTORS®; InfoSparks®, 2024.

Income

Cost burden heavily correlates with median household income. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Area Median Income (AMI) for Horry County in 2023 was \$73,700, 12.2% lower than South Carolina’s annual AMI of \$83,981. Families whose income is less than 30% of the area median income are considered low-income by HUD.

From 2010 to 2023 Horry County’s median home value increased 34.7%. Over the same period, the median household income went up 33.2% from \$43,142 to \$64,623. An individual with the median household income could afford up to a three-bedroom home in Horry County, as shown at right.

Income Limits		
Median Household Income	Income Limit Category	4 Person Household
\$73,700	Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits	\$30,000
	Very Low (50%) Income Limits	\$36,150
	Low (80%) Income Limits	\$57,850

Source: HUD, 2023.

FAIR MARKET RENT

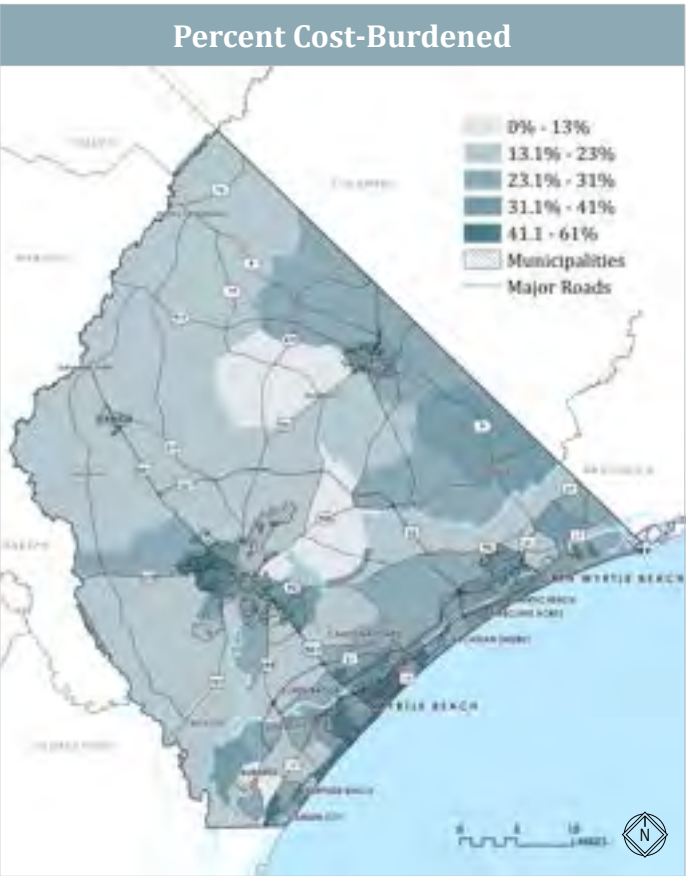
In 2023, 26% or 34,707 households in Horry County were renters (NLIHC, 2023). To assess renter affordability, Fair Market Rents (FMR) are used to determine payment standard amounts for housing programs. According to HUD, FMRs are gross rent estimates that include the cost of all tenant-paid utilities, except telephones, cable, satellite televi-

Fair Market Rents (FMR) by Number of Bedrooms				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$966	\$1,117	\$1,420	\$1,706
Horry County	\$991	\$1,141	\$1,455	\$1,642

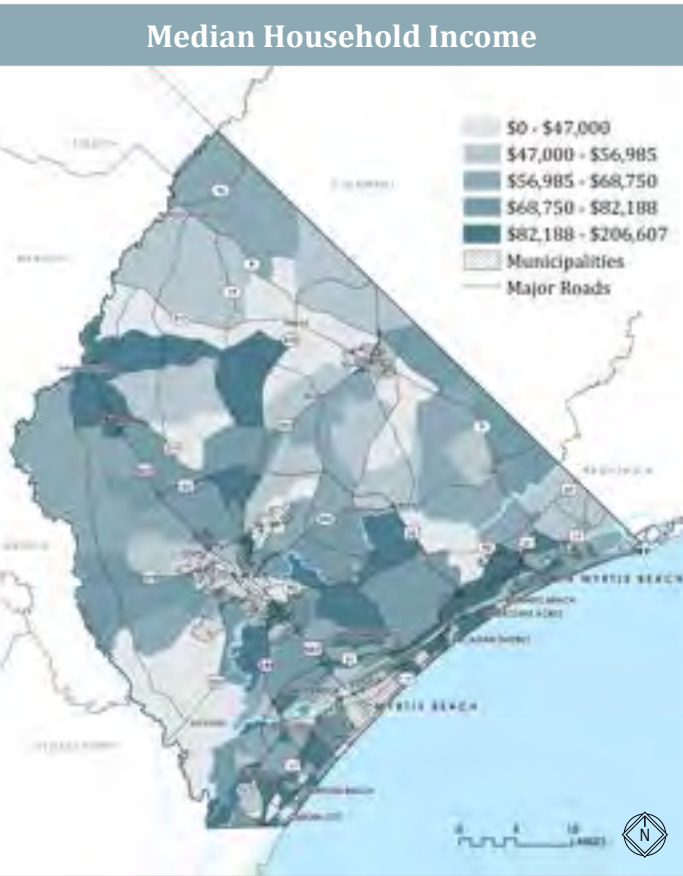
Annual Household Income to Afford FMR by Bedrooms				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$38,643	\$44,674	\$56,817	\$68,258
Horry County	\$39,640	\$45,640	\$58,200	\$65,680

Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent (At 40 hours/week)				
Location	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four-Bed
South Carolina	\$18.58	\$21.48	\$27.32	\$32.82
Horry County	\$19.06	\$21.94	\$27.98	\$31.58

Source: NLIHC, 2023.



Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023, (ID #B25106).



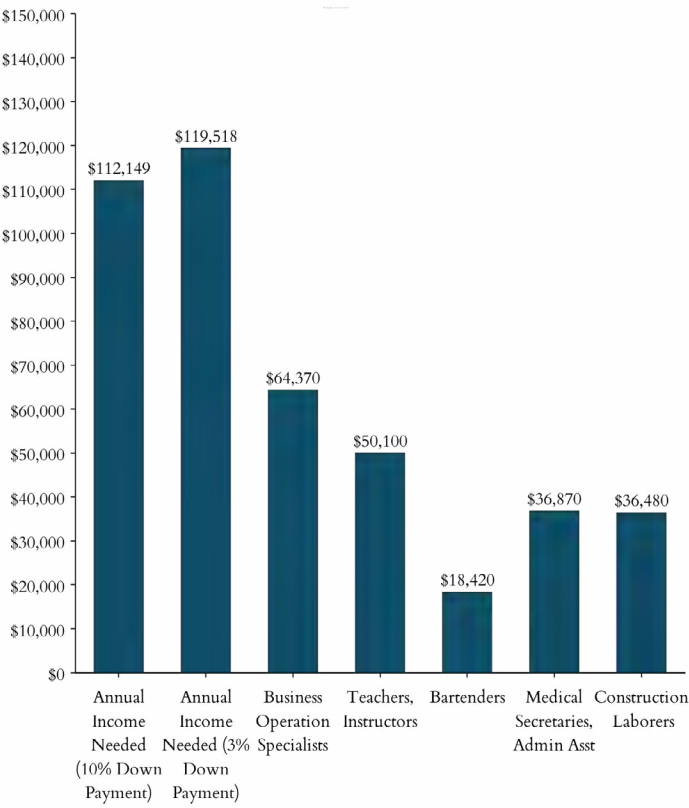
Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2019-2023, (ID #S1901).

sion 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.

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, except four-bedroom units, a higher income is necessary in Horry County than the state. Given the median income is \$73,700, a four-bedroom home is the largest home a family could afford with this income. Households that qualify as low income could only afford a two-bedroom home. Households that qualify as very low and extremely low income would not be able to afford housing in the county.

A Horry County resident would need to work 115 hours per week at minimum wage to afford a one-bedroom home at Fair Market Rent (NLIHC, 2024).

Homeownership Market Affordability



Source: National Housing Conference, 2023.

With the county's estimated mean renter's wage of \$15.55 hourly, an individual could only afford \$808 monthly 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 (NLIHC, 2023).

To afford a studio and one-bedroom in Horry County, the minimum price in the rental market is \$44,840 and \$47,480 respectively. To afford a home with more than two bedrooms ranges approximately from \$54,440 to \$80,200. Construction laborers, medical secretaries and administrative assistance, which are the largest occupations in Horry County could struggle to afford any type of home in the rental market. While teachers and instructors could afford a studio and one-bedroom, bartenders could not even afford a studio. The homeownership market tends to be more extreme, showing the annual income of \$112,149 needed (including a 10% down payment) to buy a home. This is almost double the annual income of business operations and specialists.

Foreclosures

Foreclosures are another way to measure cost burden and home values. 1.1 Horry County homes per 10,000 were foreclosed in 2024, lower than the national value of 2.3 (ATTOM, 2024). While the 2008 recession increased delinquent mortgages to 1.7 percent, only 0.01% of countywide mortgages are currently delinquent. As county housing values continue to rise, it may become more difficult for households that default on their mortgages to find affordable housing options.

FAIR HOUSING

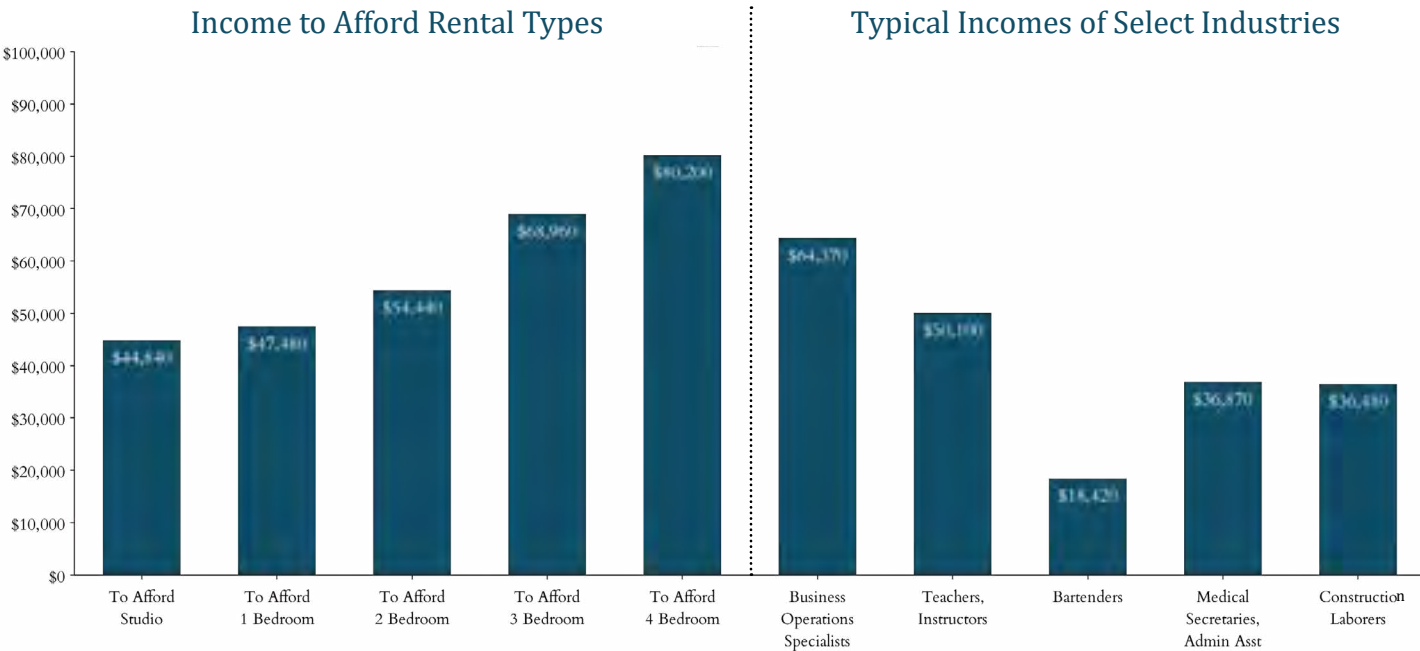
Fair housing has long been an important issue in American urban policy, stemming from discrimination and fueled by growing civil unrest that reached a boiling point during the Civil Rights Movement. The passing of the Fair Housing Act in 1968 was a critical step towards addressing this complex problem but was far from the solution. The Fair Housing Act mandates that the Department of Housing

and Urban Development ‘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:

- 1. Location and type of affordable housing.
- 2. Community opposition to public housing and Not In My Backyard (NIMBY) sentiments.
- 3. Displacement of residents due to economic pressure.
- 4. Heir’s property issues.
- 5. Segregation due to community ties.
- 6. The availability, type, frequency, and reliability of public transportation.

Average Prices by Housing Type			
Structure Type	2013	2018	2022
Condo	\$198,818	\$253,956	\$268,711
Detached	\$354,105	\$415,199	\$427,392
Detached Leased Land	\$302,186	\$411,672	\$454,413
Detached with HPR	\$364,974	\$464,145	\$467,859
Manufacture Leased Land	\$121,749	\$149,842	\$153,294
Manufactured with Land	\$143,180	\$178,750	\$185,316
Semi-Detached	\$317,554	\$388,350	\$350,661
Townhouse	\$214,806	\$276,895	\$312,042

Source: AEG, 2024.



Source: National Housing Conference, 2023.

Income Criteria to afford Low-, Median-, and High- Housing Units for Owners				
Location	Income Criteria	2013	2018	2022
South Carolina	Low-Priced (25%)	\$15,967	\$20,119	\$29,273
	Median-Priced (50%)	\$29,273	\$34,596	\$58,547
	High-Priced (75%)	\$47,902	\$58,547	\$74,514
Horry County	Low-Priced (25%)	\$20,225	\$23,951	\$39,918
	Median-Priced (50%)	\$34,596	\$39,918	\$58,547
	High-Priced (75%)	\$47,902	\$58,547	\$74,514

Income Criteria to afford Low-, Median-, and High- Housing Units for Renters				
Location	Income Criteria	2013	2018	2022
South Carolina	Low-Priced (25%)	\$16,980	\$20,980	\$24,980
	Median-Priced (50%)	\$24,980	\$28,980	\$37,980
	High-Priced (75%)	\$37,980	\$44,980	\$54,980
Horry County	Low-Priced (25%)	\$21,980	\$22,980	\$28,980
	Median-Priced (50%)	\$26,980	\$30,980	\$44,980
	High-Priced (75%)	\$37,980	\$44,980	\$69,980

Source: AEG, 2024. American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

To Rent in Metropolitan Statistical Area									
	Studio	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	-			
Myrtle Beach-Conway-North Myrtle Beach, SC	\$966	\$991	\$1,141	\$1,455	\$1,642	-			
	Qualifying Income to Rent in Metropolitan Statistical Area								
	Studio	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	-			
	\$38,640	\$39,640	\$45,640	\$58,200	\$65,680	-			
	To Buy in Metropolitan Statistical Area								
	ZHVI	10% qualifying income	3% qualifying income	PMI 10%	PMI 3%	APR 10%	APR 3%	Property tax per month	Home-owner's insurance per month
	\$331,487.75	\$110,622.49	\$117,891.31	\$248.62	\$267.95	\$1,932.03	\$2,082.30	\$303.86	\$96.68

Source: National Housing Coalition, 2023.

- 7. Lack of access to financial services. Lending discrimination.
- 8. The availability of affordable units in a range of sizes.
- 9. Admissions and occupancy policies and procedures, including preferences in public housing.
- 10. Lack of access to high performing schools.
- 11. Lack of meaningful language access.
- 12. Quality of affordable housing information programs.
- 13. Lack of local public fair housing enforcement.
- 14. Lack of assistance for housing accessibility modifications.
- 15. Lack of affordable, integrated housing for individuals who need supportive services.
- 16. Location of accessible housing.

COST AND AFFORDABILITY FINDINGS

Horry County's population growth is increasing demand on its housing market. The availability of homes for sale is lower than 2% of the entire housing stock. Demand is driving up home values and spurring new construction of single-family homes.

Major subdivisions put on hold during the Covid-19 pandemic are now being revised and built out, and there has been a recent increase in permit applications for new major subdivisions.

From a pure quantitative standpoint, there are ample units in the region to house the current population. However, high home values and rents relative to wages result in much of the housing stock being out of the affordable range for large portions of the population.

22.5% of owner-occupied households and 41.8% of renter households contribute more than 30% of their wages to housing expenses. The income criteria for owners and renters to afford homes in Horry County is higher than or the same as that of South Carolina. Income criteria for owners to afford low-priced homes has increased approximately 97%, while income criteria for owners to afford high-priced homes has increased around 56%. Moreover, the average prices for each type of home in Horry County has significantly increased over 9 years, showing the highest, 50.4% from 2013 to 2022, for Detached Leased Land units followed by 45.3% for townhouses.

This indicates that many households are vulnerable

to becoming homeless, as they may struggle to establish a 'rainy day fund.' While tourism and service sector jobs in Horry County reduce unemployment rates during part of the year, they 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 can 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 home buyer education.

SHORT-TERM HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Shelter is a 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 experienced homelessness nationwide. In 2020, the South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless Point in Time Count estimated 4,053 persons experiencing homelessness statewide.

Horry County had the highest number of unsheltered homeless individuals (319 total) and total homeless individuals (602 total) counted in the Pee Dee Region (SCCH, 2024). Nearly 73% 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 58% of the homeless population is Black or African-American, which is considerably higher than the percent of the overall population, 27%. 17% of the homeless population are children under the age of 18, but 22% of the total population. 62% of the homeless population are male and 38% female.

The Total Care for the Homeless Coalition is the lead entity coordinating the region's Continuum of Care



Homeless encampment
Source: Myrtle Beach Online, 2024.

(CoC) Program. The CoC brings together over 80 members representing more than 40 agencies that provide a wide range of services to the homeless. Its services include 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.

EMERGENCY HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Homelessness is unacceptable, and 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. Funding to prevent first-time



Housing Rehabilitation Example

and ongoing homelessness, reducing the duration of homelessness, veteran services, aiding in the move from homelessness to independent living, and needs assessment are the main goals of this program. ECHO provides a get help link for those looking for a quick solution: <https://echousing.org/get-help/>.

Horry County, through a subrecipient agreement with ECHO, will assist 225 households through rapid rehousing and 325 individuals through homelessness prevention assistance during the 2023-2027 consolidated planning period.

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 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (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. Two Public Housing Authorities serve low-income households throughout the county:

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

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Horry County Community Development Department manages several home repair programs funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the United States Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development program, and SC Housing. The Essential Home Repair Program is designed for homeowners 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.

To start the application process, households interested in receiving support through the owner-occupied rehabilitation program must fill out a pre-application. The waiting list for candidates maintained by Horry County typically takes one year from the time of initial application to the start of construction.

The construction of adequate, secure, and affordable housing is the main deliverable of this program. In the 2024 program year, Horry County completed 22 rehabs and spent \$1,040,415.60 on housing rehabilitation. Furthermore, eight housing restoration projects were active at the end of the program year. The average cost of housing restoration was \$34,124.46.

HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME)

The Horry County HOME Consortium (HCHC) receives entitlement funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME). HCHC was established in 2018 to support the funding, building, and maintenance of

2025 HOME Rent Limits							
Rent Limit	Efficiency	1 BR	2 BR	3 BR	4 BR	5 BR	6 BR
Horry County							
Low HOME Rent	\$760	\$813	\$977	\$1,128	\$1,258	\$1,389	\$1,519
High HOME Rent	\$968	\$1,038	\$1,248	\$1,433	\$1,579	\$1,723	\$1,868
Georgetown County							
Low HOME Rent	\$726	\$778	\$933	\$1,077	\$1,202	\$1,326	\$1,450
High HOME Rent	\$902	\$908	\$1,191	\$1,368	\$1,506	\$1,643	\$1,781
Williamsburg County							
Low HOME Rent	\$595	\$637	\$765	\$884	\$986	\$1,088	\$1,190
High HOME Rent	\$705	\$711	\$933	\$1,115	\$1,225	\$1,333	\$1,441

Source: Horry County. 2024.

affordable housing in the low-income and underserved communities of Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg Counties, South Carolina. There are 12 municipalities within the Consortium’s administration. The Consortium has appointed Horry County as its principal agency. To fund a range of housing initiatives, HCHC collaborates with nearby community housing development organizations (CHDOs), for-profit and nonprofit developers. These activities can include:

- 1. Homeowner-occupied housing rehabilitation
- 2. Homeowner new construction
- 3. Rental acquisition and rehabilitation
- 4. Rental new construction
- 5. Tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA)

Applications for tenant-based rental assistance pro-

grams and homeowner-eligible HOME programs are made twice a year. During application acceptance periods, requests for proposals and related applications will be posted on the Community Development page. Homeowner or renter applicants are not directly funded by HCHC. Those who would like to know if they qualify for support under the HOME program can get in touch with the HOME-funded organizations directly.

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

The Horry County Community Land Trust (HCCLT) is a newly formed non-profit organization committed to making homeownership and housing products more attainable for Horry County’s workforce. HCCLT will prioritize permanent workers and their

families —teachers, first responders, hospitality workers, healthcare staff, and other essential employees who help keep our community thriving.

This initiative ensures that local workers can afford to live where they work, reducing commute times, supporting local industry, and strengthening our economy. The Trust is specifically designed to serve permanent residents of Horry County, ensuring that housing remains accessible to those who live and work in our community year-round. To ensure maximum impact on affordable housing, the Horry County CLT targets participation of homeowners at 80%-120% area median income.

The Trust's Board of Directors includes key stakeholders in county housing affordability. Board members include representatives from United Way of Horry County, the cities of Myrtle Beach and Conway, Horry County MBREDC, the Coastal Carolina Association of Realtors®, Horry County Schools, Coastal Carolina National Bank, and Tidelines Health.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) aim to hasten the country’s recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic’s effects on the economy and public health. ARPA funds totaling \$68.8 million was awarded to Horry County to address provision of government services, to address negative economic impacts, to make community investments, and to address disproportionately impacted communities, among other goals. A portion of Horry County’s ARPA funding was awarded as subrecipient agreements to non-profit organizations to address the need for affordable housing.

For example, as part of the ARPA funding, the county awarded Oak Tree Farm, a community that serves adults with autism and other development disabil-

ities with \$1,934,590 toward the construction of 24 one and two-bedroom rental apartment units in Conway. Horry County also awarded Habitat for Humanity of Horry County a subrecipient agreement in the amount of \$1,435,000 to purchase new parcels for neighborhood-scale development.

Other ARPA investments include, but are not limited to construction of a domestic violence shelter, land to become the future site for a veterans affairs nursing home facility, non-profit funding for home repairs for low-to-moderate income homeowners to facilitate weatherization, and initial funding for a Community Land Trust.

ARPA SLFRF investments were also awarded through subrecipient agreements to municipalities and utilities for community infrastructure projects under-

2025 HOME Income Limits								
Household Income Limit	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
Horry County								
Extremely Low Income (30%)	\$18,250	\$20,850	\$23,450	\$26,050	\$28,150	\$30,250	\$32,350	\$34,400
Very Low Income (50%)	\$30,400	\$34,700	\$39,100	\$43,400	\$46,900	\$50,350	\$53,850	\$57,300
60% Limit	\$36,480	\$41,640	\$46,920	\$52,080	\$56,280	\$60,420	\$64,620	\$68,760
Low Income (80%)	\$48,650	\$55,600	\$62,550	\$69,450	\$75,050	\$80,600	\$86,150	\$91,700
Georgetown County								
Extremely Low Income (30%)	\$17,400	\$19,900	\$22,400	\$24,850	\$26,850	\$28,850	\$30,850	\$32,850
Very Low Income (50%)	\$29,050	\$33,200	\$37,350	\$41,450	\$44,750	\$48,100	\$51,400	\$54,700
60% Limit	\$34,860	\$39,840	\$44,820	\$49,740	\$53,700	\$57,720	\$61,680	\$65,640
Low Income (80%)	\$46,450	\$53,050	\$59,700	\$66,300	\$71,650	\$76,950	\$82,250	\$87,550
Williamsburg County								
Extremely Low Income (30%)	\$14,300	\$16,350	\$18,400	\$20,400	\$22,050	\$23,700	\$25,300	\$26,950
Very Low Income (50%)	\$23,800	\$27,200	\$30,600	\$34,000	\$36,750	\$39,450	\$42,200	\$44,900
60% Limit	\$28,560	\$32,640	\$36,720	\$40,800	\$44,100	\$47,340	\$50,640	\$53,880
Low Income (80%)	\$38,100	\$43,550	\$49,000	\$54,400	\$58,800	\$63,150	\$67,500	\$71,850

Source: Horry County, 2024.



Oak Tree Farm Affordable Housing Program

taken in partnership with the City of Myrtle Beach, the City of North Myrtle Beach, the Town of Surfside Beach, the Town of Atlantic Beach, Grand strand Water and Sewer Authority, Bucksport Water System, and Horry Telephone Cooperative. ARPA SLFRF funding was also awarded to Horry Georgetown Technical College for workforce development programs targeting low to moderate income individuals.

ARPA SLFRF funding received through a grant from the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority is supporting neighborhood-level drainage projects across the county. In addition to ARPA SLFRF investments, Horry County disbursed more than \$30 million in Emergency Rental Assistance funding through its non-profit partner, Eastern Carolina Housing Organization (ECHO).

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. While some older zoning districts allow transitional housing, 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 homeless-

ness. 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 (Horry County, n.d.) Grant money can go towards any of the following:

1. Acquisition of real property.
2. Relocation and demolition.
3. Rehabilitation of residential and non-residential structures.
4. Construction of public facilities and improvements such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes.

5. Up to 15% of the CDBG award to public services.
6. Activities relating to energy conservation and renewable energy resources.
7. Provision of assistance to profit-motivated business to carry out economic development and job creation/retention activities.

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 orchestrate major recovery efforts in the event of a disaster, managing FEMA documentation and funds for county-led recovery efforts.

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:

1. Dilapidation,
2. Disrepair,
3. Defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents or other calamities,
4. Lack of adequate ventilation, light or sanitary facilities;
5. Extensive damage or structural deterioration so as to render the dwelling unsafe, or
6. 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.
7. 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. Currently, Batch 7 (IFB for demolition contractor) is in procurement.

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, and there is 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 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 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 subsequent flooding 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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



RESILIENCE ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 6

RESILIENCE

Resilience is defined as the ability of communities, economies, and ecosystems to anticipate, absorb, recover, and thrive when presented with environmental change.

In 2020, the Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act (SC Code Section 6-29-510) was amended to form the South Carolina Office of Resilience, which provides there core services to the state:

- 1. Housing recovery following federally declared disasters
- 2. Mitigation against future flood risks
- 3. Resilience planning

To accomplish these goals, the office developed and implemented a Strategic Statewide Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan. The plan identifies major hazard risks around the state and provides strategies for local governments to improve resilience in their communities.

The amendment to the Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act requires a Resilience Element to be added to local governments' comprehensive plans. The Re-

silience Element is required to:

1. Consider the impacts of natural hazards on individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, economic development, public infrastructure and facilities, and public health, safety, and welfare
2. Promote resilient planning, design, and development
3. Coordinate with all preceding elements in SC Code Section 6-29-510 and the goals and strategies of each of the other plan elements
4. Inventory existing resilience conditions
5. Be completed in coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies

As the county comprehensive plan, IMAGINE 2040, is due for its five-year review, it is an opportune time to add this required element.

Horry County has experienced increased flooding events from tropical cyclones and heavy rain events. With increasing population and expanding devel-

opment, more homes and businesses will be subject to flooding and other natural disasters. This section provides an inventory of hazards the county faces, their potential and historic impacts on populations and infrastructure, and plans and programs developed to mitigate those impacts.

RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

South Carolina's Strategic Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan approaches resilience as the ability of communities, economies, and ecosystems within South Carolina to anticipate, absorb, recover, and thrive when presented with environmental change and natural hazards (SCOR, 2021). Resilience is determined by how well human and infrastructural exposure to hazards is mitigated. Hazards include natural hazard events, long-term changes in the environment, and human-caused threats. Exposure to hazards is influenced by geography, population characteristics, and risk factors. Infrastructure, systems, response resources, and social networks can contribute to mitigation of and recovery from hazard impacts. This element evaluates Horry County's hazard exposure and mitigation resources.

HAZARDS

Horry County is vulnerable to a variety of natural and human-caused hazards that threaten life and property.

The Horry County Mitigation Planning Task Force identified hazards based on historical evidence gathered from the South Carolina State Climatology Center, the National Climatic Data Center, FEMA's Hazard Mapping website, and the South Carolina Geological Survey.

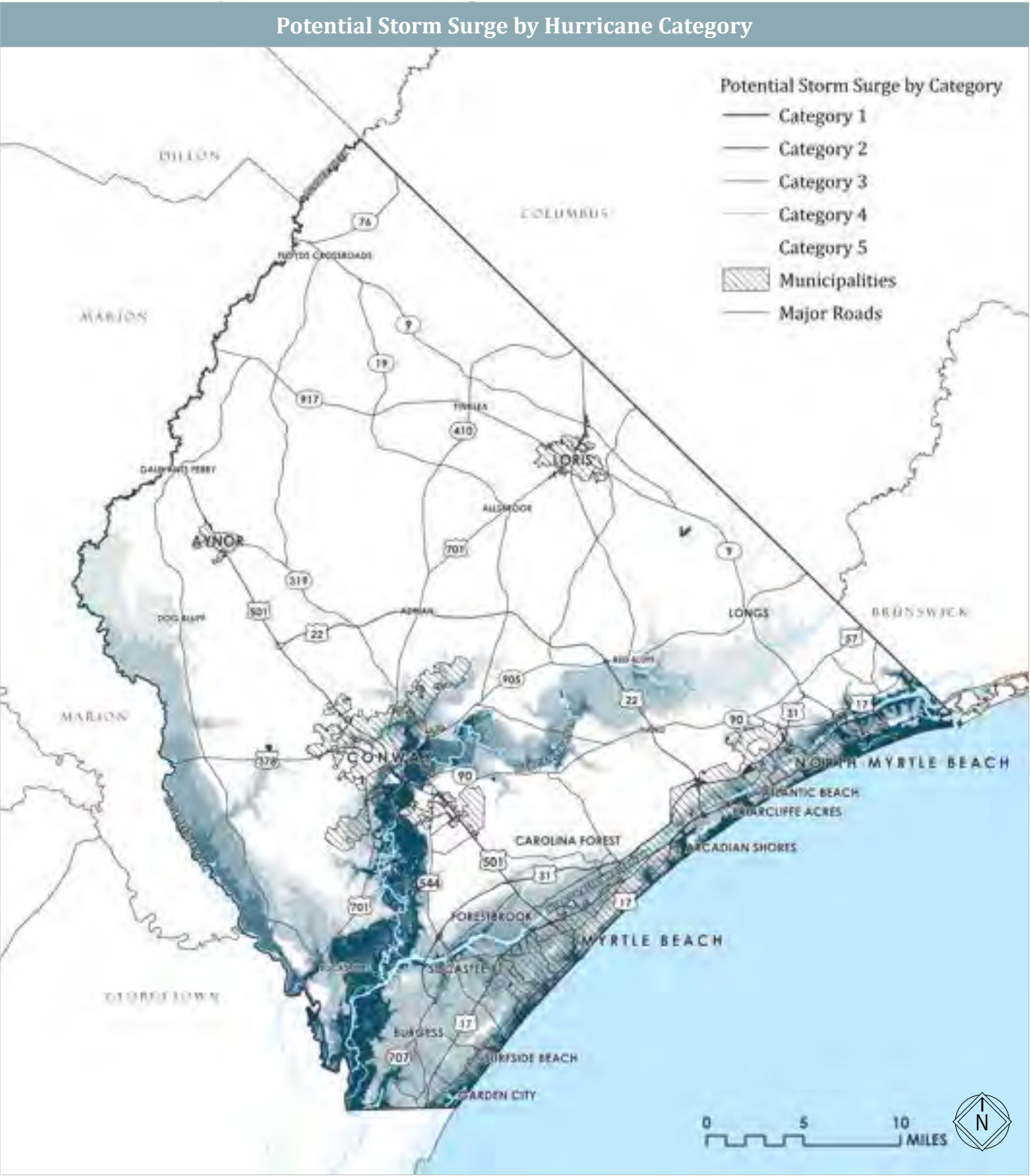
The Mitigation Planning Task Force also gathered GIS information and historical data and shared them with local jurisdictions (HCEM, 2021). Local jurisdictions provided a wide range of data that

identified what hazards affected the region based on the past experiences. Hazards most likely to affect Horry County include:

- Hurricanes
- Flooding

Hazard Ranking Assessment				
Hazard	Past Federal Declarations	Frequency	Impact	Hazard Ranking
Natural Hazards				
Hurricane	Yes	Highly Likely	Critical	4
Storm Surge	No	Possible	Negligible	1
Earthquake	No	Highly Unlikely	Catastrophic	2
Wildfire	Yes	Highly Likely	Negligible	3
Flooding	Yes	Highly Likely	Negligible	3
Tornados	No	Likely	Negligible	2
Severe Thunderstorms	No	Highly Likely	Negligible	3
Lightning	No	Likely	Negligible	2
Winter Storms	No	Likely	Limited	3
Drought	No	Possible	Negligible	1
Extreme Heat	No	Possible	Negligible	1
Tsunami	No	Highly Unlikely	Negligible	1
Man Made Hazards				
Hazardous Materials	N/A	Highly Likely	Negligible	3
Terrorism-Chemical/Radiological	N/A	Highly Unlikely	Negligible	1
Terrorism-Biological	N/A	Highly Unlikely	Negligible	1
Terrorism-Nuclear	N/A	Highly Unlikely	Negligible	1
Terrorism-Explosives	N/A	Unlikely	Limited	1
Cyber Terrorism	N/A	Likely	Negligible	2

Priority ranking of hazards identified by the Mitigation Planning Task Force as shown in table.
Source: HCEM, 2021.



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

- Tornadoes
- Severe Thunderstorms
- Winter Storms
- Earthquake
- Wildfire
- Drought and Extreme Heat

The Horry County Multi-jurisdictional All-hazards Mitigation Plan describes these hazards and their mitigation strategies in detail. The plan is summarized later in this element.

HURRICANES AND STORM SURGE

Horry County is regularly impacted by hurricanes and storm surge that bring high winds, heavy rain, flooding, and thunderstorms. 44 tropical cyclones made landfall on the South Carolina coast between

1851 and 2023, including four Category 3 or stronger hurricanes: the Great Charleston Hurricane (1893) and Hurricanes Hazel (1954), Gracie (1959), and Hugo (1989). The Atlantic Hurricane Season starts on June 1 and ends on November 30, though tropical cyclones can form outside of these dates. Based on the storms in last 50 years, Horry County has an 86% annual chance of being affected by a tropical system (SCDNR, 2024).

Hurricanes typically bring structure-damaging winds and flooding. Horry County is susceptible to storm surge in beachfront communities, riverine flooding from rainfall further up the Little Pee Dee and Waccamaw watersheds, and compounding flooding at river confluences. Low-intensity storms can cause extensive flooding given the county's low elevation

Major Hurricanes		
Hurricane	Year	Category
Great Charleston Hurricane	1893	3
Hazel	1954	4
Gracie	1959	4
Hugo	1989	4
Bertha	1996	2
Bonnie	1998	3
Matthew	2016	1
Florence	2018	1
Dorian	2019	1
Isaias	2020	1
Ian	2022	4

Source: NOAA, n.d.



Flooding in Conway following Hurricane Florence in 2018
Source: ABC 4, 2018.

and extensive waterways.

Local and global effects of global climate change are predicted to increase the frequency and impacts of hurricanes as sea levels and ocean temperatures rise.

The county's most destructive hurricane on record, Hurricane Hazel made landfall in Little River as a Category 4 storm in 1954 with the highest lunar tide of the year. Myrtle Beach recorded peak wind gusts of 106 mph, a storm surge of 10 feet, and an 18-foot surge just across the state line in Calabash, North Carolina. Only two of Garden City's 275 buildings remained intact, and 80% of Pawley's Island's seafront structures were destroyed (SCDNR, 2024).

Hurricane Florence (2018) caused extensive and long-lasting flooding in Socastee, Conway, and Bucksport. Heavy rainfall in North Carolina caused the Waccamaw to crest at a record 21.16 feet, causing two fatalities, washing out 261 roads, flooding 1,941 homes, and causing \$49 million in residential damage (NOAA, 2018).

Storm surge caused by hurricanes has caused major damage to coastal communities in the region. During Hurricane Hugo (1989), storm surge along the coast reached its highest recorded level of 13 feet in Charleston County (SCDNR, 2024). Hurricane Irma's (2017) storm surge caused maximum inundation levels of 3 to 5 feet above ground level along the coast, despite making landfall in southwest Florida. Hurricane Ian (2022) brought a peak storm surge of almost seven feet to Pawleys Island (SCDNR, 2024).

Storm surge from Winyah Bay can compound with riverine flooding and cause inland flooding along the Intracoastal Waterway, Waccamaw, and Little Pee Dee River. Modeled worst-case storm surge of Category 3 and stronger hurricanes could inundate large parts of the county's low-lying areas in Socastee and Surfside Beach.

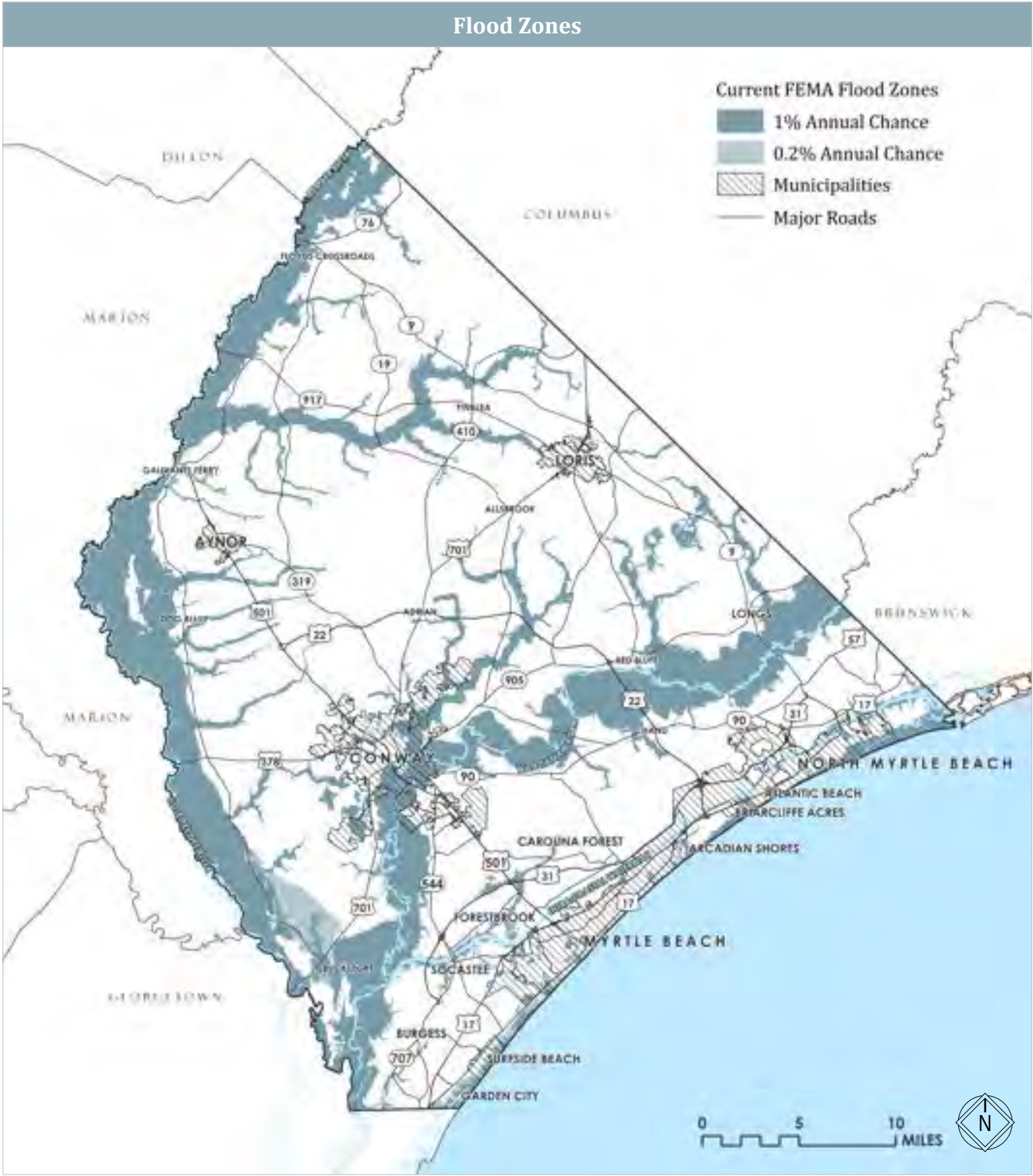
FLOODING

Heavy rain is typically the cause of the county's most severe flood events, exceeding the impact of storm surge on coastal communities. Approximately 24% of Horry County's total land area (273.9 square miles) lies within the 1% annual chance flood zone and has a 1% chance of flooding annually. 19.5 square miles of land are located in the 0.02% annual chance flood zone impacted by extreme floods.

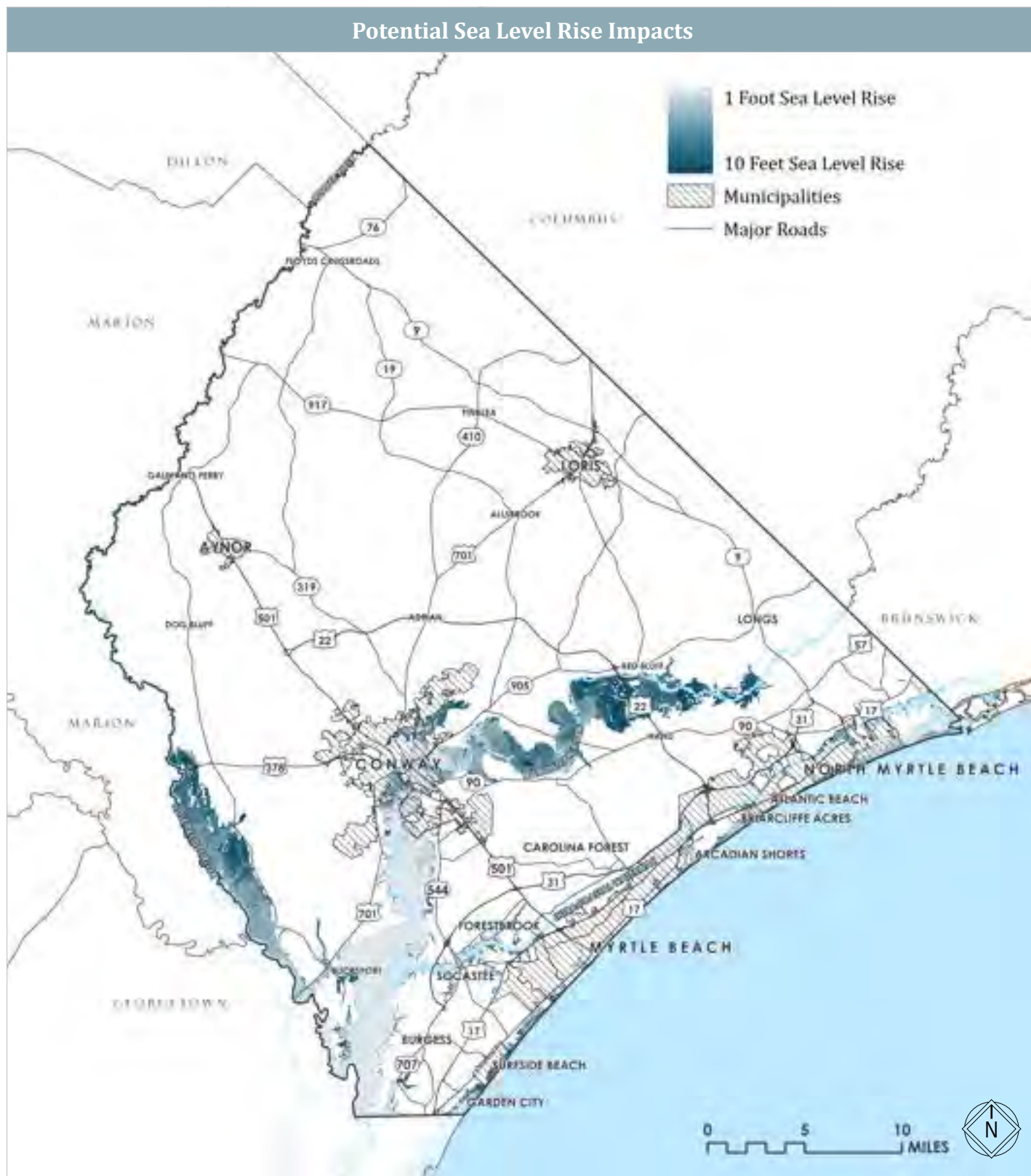
Horry County is vulnerable to several types of flooding. Riverine flooding along the Intracoastal Waterway, Waccamaw, and Little Pee Dee rivers is caused by local and up-watershed rainfall. Hurricane storm surge can cause flooding in communities along the coast, especially in communities flanked by tidal marshes. Coastal flooding is caused by high tides

Flood Events		
Year	Impacts	Type
1999	Compound storm surge, riverine, and flash flooding from Hurricane Floyd	Compound
2000	Flash flooding in Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and Garden City	Flash Flooding
2012	Flash flooding along the Waccamaw caused by thunderstorms	Flash Flooding
2015	Flash flooding from Hurricane Joaquin	Flash Flooding
2016	Extreme storm surge, riverine, and flash flooding from Hurricane Matthew	Compound
2018	Countywide extreme riverine and flash flooding from Hurricane Florence	Compound
2019	Countywide storm surge, riverine, and flash flooding from Hurricane Dorian	Compound
2022	Storm surge in Garden City and Myrtle Beach from Hurricane Ian	Storm Surge
2022	Countwide flash flooding caused by thunderstorms	Flash Flooding
2023	Flash flooding along the Waccamaw caused by thunderstorms	Flash Flooding
2024	Riverine and flash flooding in Loris from Tropical Storm Debby	Riverine

Source: NOAA, 2025a.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning

and influenced by rising sea levels. The county's low-lying topography and extensive wetlands and waterways allow flooding causes to compound.

7.6% of single-family structures (12,798 total) and 10.3% of multifamily structures (751 total) are located in the 1% annual chance flood zone, with another 8,592 and 437 in the 0.2% annual chance flood zone.

Most at-risk structures are located in parts of Garden City, Surfside Beach, and North Myrtle Beach susceptible to compound coastal, riverine, and tidal bay flooding. Structures in Socastee, Bucksport, and Conway are primarily threatened by riverine flooding.

Horry County has been impacted by 97 flood events since 1993, including 16 riverine floods, 19 coastal floods, and 62 flash floods. These caused four fatalities and an overall damage cost of \$21.9 million (HCEM, 2024). Horry County's position near the bottom of several watersheds means heavy rainfall in inland areas can contribute to long-lasting riverine flooding.

Hurricanes are often responsible for heavy rain that causes flooding. Precipitation records from 1893 to 2020 show that the county's 24-hour rainfall record occurred in 1999, when Hurricane Floyd brought 14.80 inches of rain to Myrtle Beach in one day (HCEM, 2024). Hurricane Joaquin (2015) brought multi-day rainfall and extensive inland flood damage. Hurricane Matthew (2016) caused 15 inches of rain that set flood height records along the Waccamaw. Two years later, Hurricane Florence (2018) brought 20 inches of rain to parts of the county (NWS, 2018).

Flash flooding is caused by sudden increases in river flow, often caused by increased upstream rainfall. Flash flooding repetitively impacts low-lying areas in Socastee, Conway, Bucksport, and Longs along the Waccamaw, Intracoastal Waterway, and wetlands.

These areas are susceptible to compound flooding that combines local runoff, heightened river levels from upstream rainfall, and decreased downstream drainage due to storm surge. However, the county's low-lying topography and widespread wetlands allow flooding to occur throughout the county.

Sea Level Rise

South Carolina's average sea level has risen by 10 inches since 1950 and as many as 0.13 inches annually in the past decade (NOAA, 2025g). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates the Grand Strand's sea level will rise between 2.17 and 6.69 feet by 2100 (NOAA, 2025b).

While there are varying estimates of how much sea levels will rise in the next 100 years, there is no doubt sea level rise will continue.

Sea level rise will have major impacts on coastal communities, especially those located along tidal marshes. Since 2000, sea level-related flooding has increased 75% throughout the state, leaving 90,000 properties at risk (NOAA, 2025c). In 2020, NOAA observed five days with high tide flood events at Springmaid Pier. By 2040, this number is projected to rise to 20 days annually (NOAA, 2025d). Storm surge will inundate coastal areas for longer periods following hurricanes. Coastal and riverine communities will need to prepare for increased flooding frequency, erosion, and runoff from rainfall and tidal events.

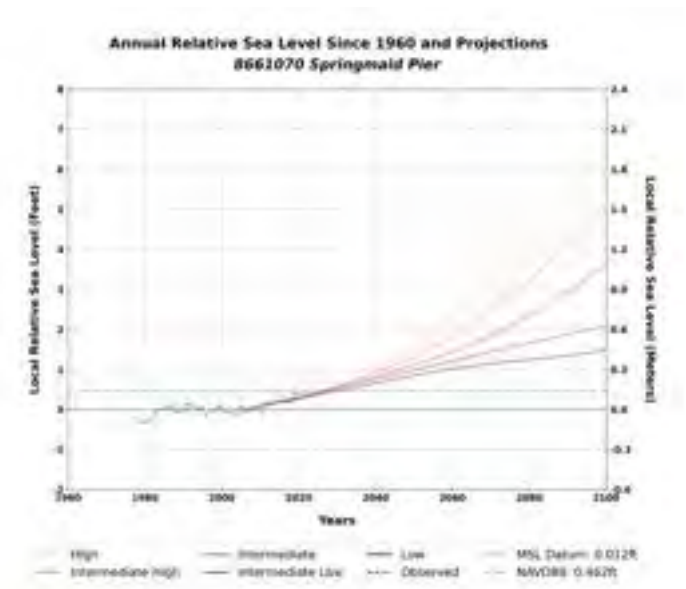
While several low-lying areas in Horry County are susceptible to flooding from storms and large rainfall events, coastal areas are impacted regularly by extreme high tides. Though less than 1% of its land area falls within the coastal area impacted by wave action, it constitutes a substantial portion of the county's valuable land and tax base.

Of the county's developed coastline, Garden City

is most vulnerable to shallow coastal flooding and storm surge inundation. Its low-lying topography, lack of established dune systems, and structure encroachment onto the beach leave it exposed to tidal action from both the Atlantic and tidal marshes. Consecutive record-breaking flooding in 2015, 2016 and 2018 illustrate early results of sea level rise.

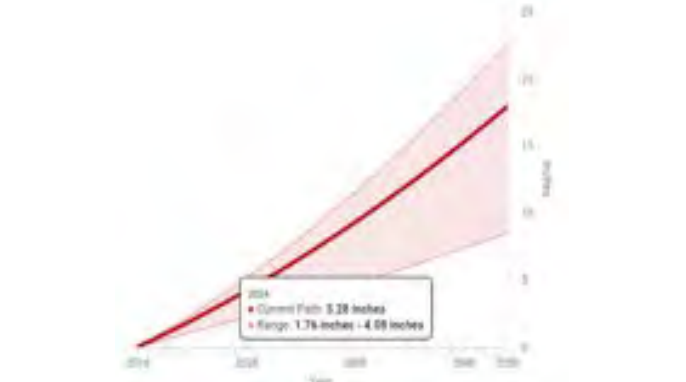
SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

Severe thunderstorms that include thunder and



Annual Mean Relative Sea Level Since 1960, Springmaid Pier. Source: NOAA, 2025f.

Springmaid Pier Sea Level Rise Forecasts by 2050



Source: SeaLevelRise.org, n.d.

lightning, heavy rain, and hail impact Horry County frequently. A total of 318 severe thunderstorms and 206 windstorms with wind speeds over 50 knots were recorded in the county between 1955 and 2020 (HCEM, 2024). Severe thunderstorms have caused \$4.6 million in direct damages, 15 wind-related injuries, and one death.

Thunderstorms can cause widely distributed damage, including wind damage to manufactured homes, lightning-caused wildfires, and rain-fall-caused flooding.

As thunderstorms are caused by interactions between warm, humid weather fronts, climate change may increase their frequency and intensity.

TORNADOES

Since 1950, 55 tornadoes have been recorded in Horry County (SCDNR, 2025). Tornado strength is measured according to the Fujita Tornado Scale and estimates intensity by peak three-second wind speed. According to SCDNR, 20 tornadoes were classed as EF 0 (wind speed of 65 to 85 mph), 23 as EF 1 (86 to 110 mph), 10 as EF 2 (111 to 135 mph), and two as EF 3 (136 to 165 mph). These tornadoes caused a combined 104 injuries and total damages of \$22.3 million (SCDNR, 2025)

Tornadoes can occur throughout Horry County. The county's most destructive tornado happened in 2001, when a super-cell thunderstorm created an EF 2 tornado that traveled two miles through Myrtle Beach along the coast. It injured 36 people, caused \$8.0 million in damage to vehicles, billboards, utilities, and buildings, and knocked out power for 4,000 people (SCDNR, 2025.) Over 400,000 people were on vacation in Myrtle Beach when the tornado struck.

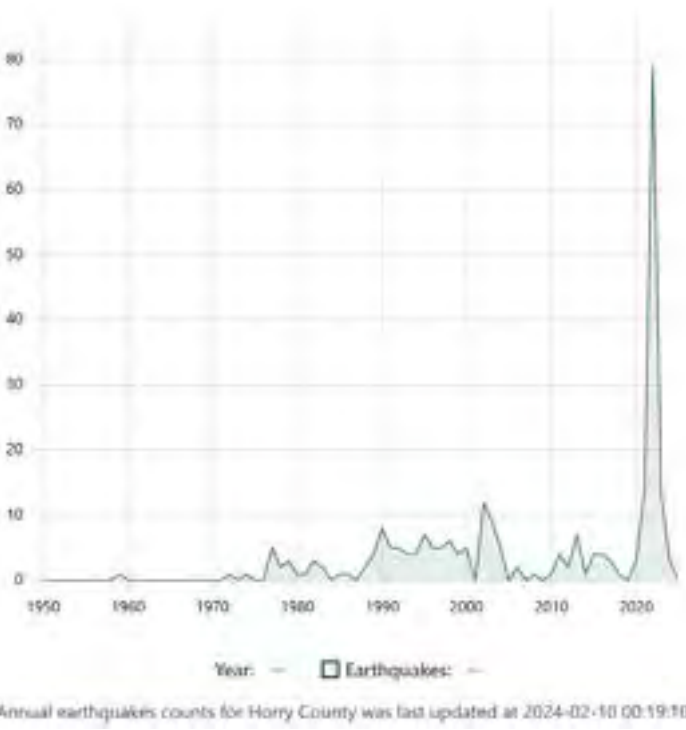
Though tornado impacts are relatively localized, they are less predictable. Most residences in the county

do not have access to a basement or tornado storm shelter, particularly manufactured homes.

EARTHQUAKES

Horry County is geophysically inferred to be divided by up to five fault lines including a major fault along its western border (SCEMD, n.d.; HCEM, 2025). The county experiences minor, typically imperceptible earthquakes regularly (database.earth, 2025). However, the county could also be significantly impacted by soil liquefaction caused by earthquakes in surrounding regions. A fault line in Charleston was responsible for the greatest known earthquake to strike eastern North America in 1886, with a local measured intensity of 7.0 on the Richter Scale (HCEM, 2021).

Earthquakes per Year, 1950-2024



Source: database.earth, 2025.

Horry County has seen a total of 254 earthquakes since 1950. Destructive earthquakes happen infrequently in Horry County and most measure below 1.0, causing imperceptible shaking.

However, impacts could be locally exacerbated because many buildings were built before building standards that require better earthquake resiliency were instituted (HCEM, 2021). Moreover, Horry County's sandy soils show evidence of historic liquefaction due to earthquake activity, which could impact buildings and infrastructure.

WILDFIRES

The South Carolina Forestry Commission fights more than 3,000 wildfires statewide each year. Since 2003, Horry County has had an annual average of 61.9 wildfire incidents that burn over 1,415 acres (SCFC, 2024). Wildfires happen most often between January and April, when relative humidity is low, pine debris and grasses are driest, and conditions support fast-moving wildfires.

South Carolina's Coastal Plain is fire-adapted, with a history of lightning- and human-started wildfires that maintained the dominance longleaf pine forests (USFS, 2006). Prescribed burning decreased vegetative fuel loads, particularly underbrush, and increased habitat diversity. However, the modern dominance of more fire-prone species in coastal plain forests has resulted in more destructive wildfires and a more difficult environment for proscribed burns (USFS, 2009).

98% of annual wildfires in South Carolina are caused by humans, with outdoor debris burning accounting for 35% to 45% (SCFC, n.d.) Outdoor burning is particularly risky in developed areas where fuels have been left unmanaged in proximity to natural areas. In 2009, the Highway 31 Fire was started by a debris



Source: FEMA, 2025. Horry County Planning & Zoning.

burn and burned over 19,130 acres, destroyed 76 homes, and damaged another 97, resulting in over \$50 million in damages (SCFC, n.d.) In 2025, the Covington Drive fire burned 2,059 acres in many of the same areas after being ignited by debris burning.

Wildland-Urban Interface

While Horry County's natural landscapes are adapted to fire, increased development in proximity to forested land hinders the ability of land managers to conduct prescribed burns to reduce wildfire fuels.

The wildland-urban interface includes areas where scattered development is located adjacent to fire-adapted forested and brush landscapes. The interface includes a 100-foot Direct Ignition Zone and a two-mile Ember Ignition Zone that buffer

wildland areas, in which wildland fires can ignite structures directly or via embers (FEMA, 2025b).

In 2023, an estimated 19.9% of the county's land area (145,864.7 acres) was located in the interface. 19,297 single family residences (11.5%) and 326 multifamily structures (4.5%) are located in the Direct Ignition Zone. Scattered developments are more difficult to defend and evacuate when threatened by wildfire. Climate change is influencing more prolonged droughts, accelerating the buildup of fuels in developed areas.

DROUGHT AND EXTREME HEAT

Horry County has historically experienced at least one month of drought in a typical year (USDM, 2025). Months-long extreme droughts occurred in

Major Wildfires		
Wildfire	Year	Acres
Bombing Range Fire	1954	10,162
Rambi Raceway Fire	1966	625
Longs Crossroads Fire	1967	1,200
Socastee Plantation Fire	1967	6,005
Clear Pond Fire	1976	30,000
Cotton Patch Bay Fire	1981	2,500
Forestbrook Fire	1996	844
Long Bay Fire	2001	1,911
Legends Fire	2002	1,658
Highway 31 Fire	2009	19,130
Covington Drive Fire	2025	2,059

Source: South Carolina Forestry Commission, 2025.



Highway 31 Fire, 2009
Source: SCFC, 2009.

the summers of 2002, 2008, 2012, and 2024.

Droughts in Horry County can increase wild-fire risk and often correlates with extreme heat, creating dangerous conditions for outdoor labor and recreation.

Drought is measured by the amount of precipitation, soil moisture, humidity, and vegetation health compared to historic levels. The Palmer Drought Severity Index measures drought relative to typical levels, with values below zero indicating drought. Severe droughts experience conditions between the fifth to tenth percentile of normal historic levels, while extreme drought indicates conditions in the fifth to second percentile.

In 2024, Horry County's entire population was impacted by drought, with 25.7% (69,291 residents)

living in areas that experienced severe drought (USDM, 2025). 41.6% of the county's land area (305,280 acres) was impacted by severe drought and 25.7% (188,800 acres) by extreme drought in July. 2024 was the 39th driest year and the ninth driest June in the past 130 years, with only 48% of average rainfall levels (NOAA, 2025c). In addition to population impacts, drought impacted 37,012 acres of soybeans, 18,805 acres of corn, and 7,226 acres of cotton in 2024 (USDA, n.d.)

Horry County's ten-year average annual temperature has risen 2.2° Fahrenheit since 1990 from 61.4° to 63.6° in 2025 (NOAA, 2025e). However, the single-year average ranged between 58.6° in 1993 up to 67.0° in 2017. The county's highest temperature was recorded as 107° in Loris in 1952, and summer

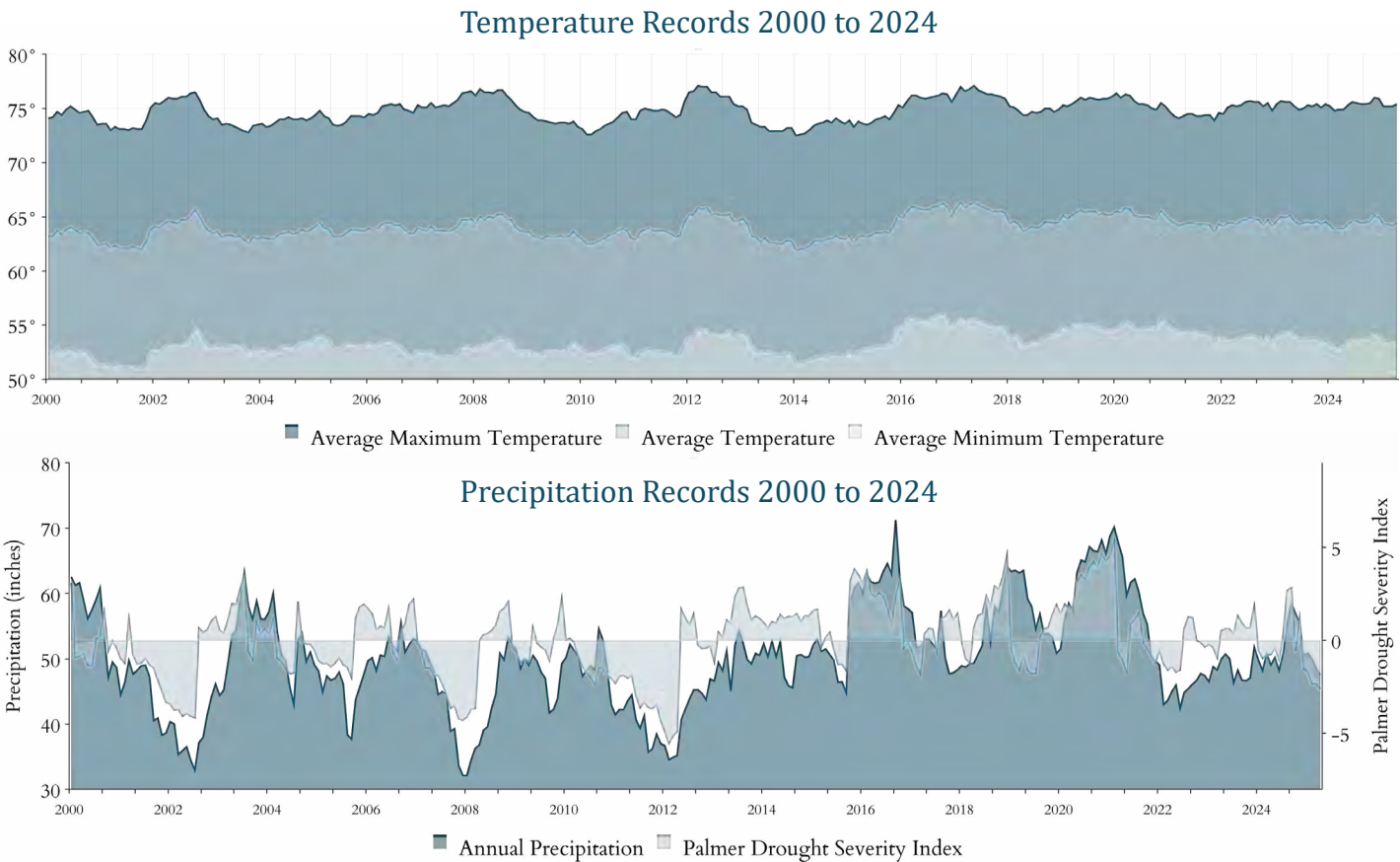
temperatures regularly average over 80° in August (NOAA, 2025e). July 2024 was one of the county's hottest on record, with only eight days averaging under 80.0°.

Drought and extreme heat have direct and indirect impacts on health. Extreme heat can cause heat-stroke and exacerbate underlying health conditions, particularly for children under age five, adults over 65, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions (EPA, 2025a).

Heat exposure differs based on the built environment and vegetation cover. Areas with limited vegetation and concentrated heat-absorbing infrastructure and buildings cause higher localized temperatures. Tree canopy cover, the extent and type of land development, and median age and household income

Winter Storms		
Year	Effects	Maximum Snowfall
1988	Heavy snowfall	5.0
1989	Record snowfall, extreme freezing temperatures	14.5
2004	Mixed snow, sleet, and ice accumulation. FEMA disaster declaration	1.0
2010	Heavy snow accumulation countywide	3.5
2014	Freezing rain, ice accumulation in inland areas. FEMA disaster declaration	0.0
2018	Mixed snow and sleet in inland areas, extreme freezing temperatures	3.0
2022	Mixed ice and sleet accumulation	1.0
2025	Heavy snow countywide, mixed wintry precipitation countwide	5.8

Source: NOAA, 2025.



Source: NOAA, 2025e.



Snowfall in January 2025.

Source: Horry County, 2025.

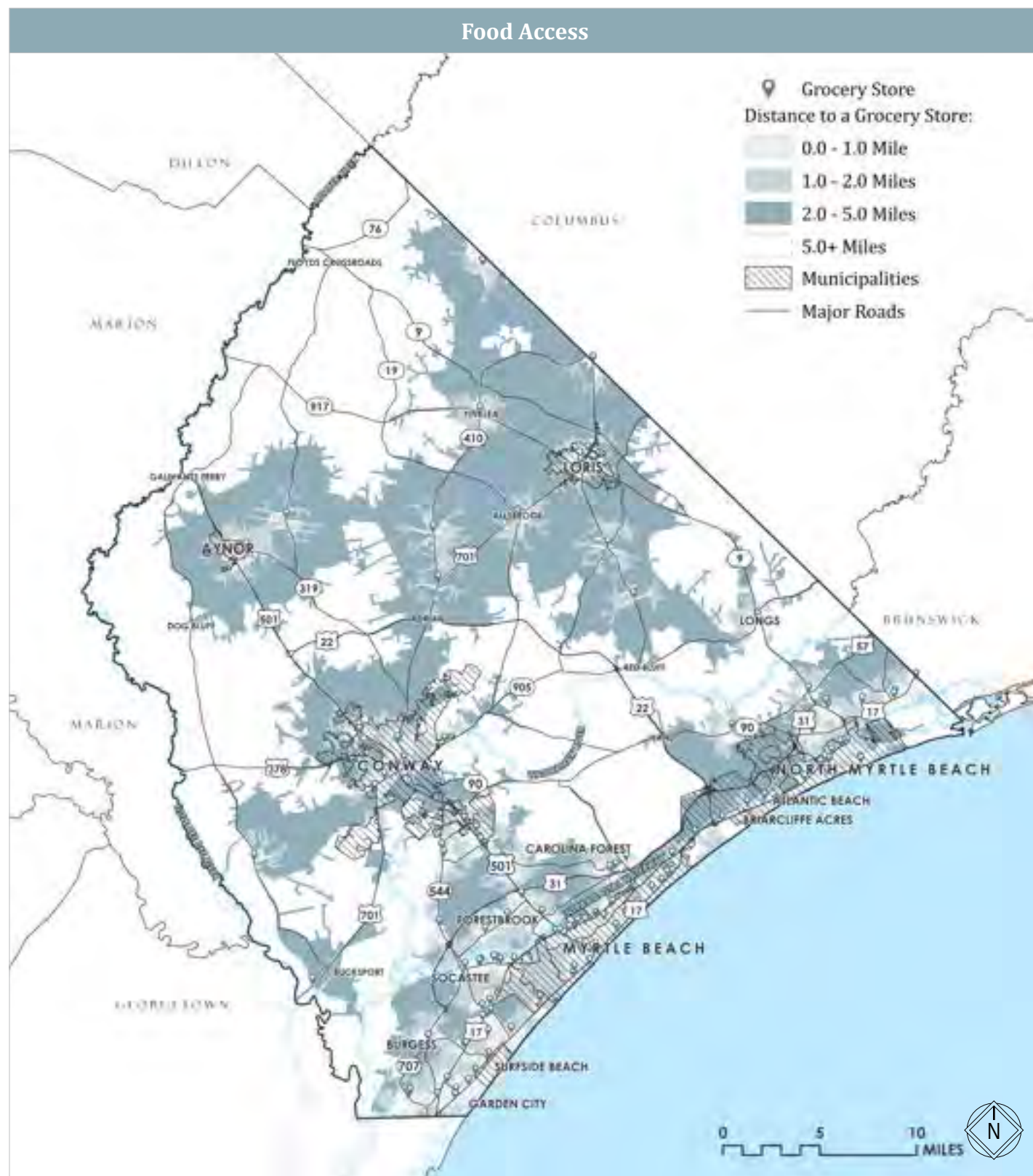
determine an area's vulnerability to heat exposure (EPA, 2025b).

WINTER STORMS

Winter storms occur infrequently in Horry County. Direct damage may be caused by ice and snow accumulation, while cold temperatures can cause injuries and fatalities. Indirect impacts of cold weather and ice include vehicle crashes, prolonged cold exposure, and heat, communications, and power outages. The county's coldest temperature was recorded as 2° Fahrenheit in Loris in January 1985 (SCDNR, n.d.)

Twelve winter weather events since 2000 have caused one death and \$23.3 million in property damage (HCEM, 2024).

In December 1989, the county received a record 12 inches of snow over a 24-hour period. Ice storms in 2004 and 2014 brought particularly severe and distributed damage to buildings and infrastructure, resulting in FEMA disaster declarations.



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

FOOD ACCESS

According to the USDA, 8.4% of United States households lived in low food security areas in 2023 where they may have difficulty obtaining enough nutritious food at some time during the year (USDA, 2025b). 14.4% of South Carolina households faced food insecurity in 2023, higher than the national average of 12.2% (USDA, 2025b). 42% of South Carolina adults reported not eating fruit and nearly one in five Black residents experience food insecurity (SCDPH, 2023b). South Carolina's low food security rate—indicating people who have continuously disrupted eating patterns due to a lack of food—was the highest in the country at 7.0%, compared to the national average of 4.7% (USDA, 2024).

In 2022, 49,410 individuals in Horry County (13.9% of all residents) faced food insecurity (Feeding America, 2025).

Among food-insecure individuals, only 52% had incomes below 130% of the poverty line and were eligible for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program. The average county meal cost is \$4.04 and \$37.5 million would be required to meet food-insecure populations' needs (Feeding America, 2025).

Environmental and residential location can impact food security. 28.7% of residences in the county are located more than three miles by road from a grocery store (Horry County, 2025d). These low-access areas are typically located in rural areas. In these areas, residents may rely on convenience or dollar stores with fewer nutritious food options or spend more time traveling to grocery stores.

Access to grocery stores in urban areas is further limited by lower rates of household vehicle ownership. Areas with lower vehicle ownership rates in Myrtle Beach and Conway located more than a mile from a grocery store are considered food deserts

by the USDA (USDA, 2011). Communities in urban food deserts may experience elevated obesity and diabetes rates.

EXPOSURE AND VULNERABILITY

Hazards have differing impacts on Horry County communities and infrastructure depending on the hazard's severity, the community's exposure to its impacts, and its ability to recover. This section examines the exposure of public facilities, energy and transportation infrastructure, local economies, and county populations. Additional factors including population growth, development, and high visitation levels can increase the county's hazard exposure.

NATIONAL RISK INDEX

Measuring relative exposure is necessary to identifying populations and areas that bear a disproportionate burden of hazard impacts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Risk Index uses a dataset of 18 natural hazards to measure community exposure to hazard impacts (FEMA, 2025a). The risk calculation employs three components: Expected Annual Loss, Social Vulnerability, and Community Resilience.

Expected Annual Loss (EAL) includes the projected annual monetary loss of lives, building, and agricultural damage. Horry County's total EAL is \$293.3 million, including a expected annual loss of \$263.6 million to buildings, \$1.8 million to agriculture, and 2.41 annual fatalities (FEMA, 2025a). Hurricanes contribute most to the county EAL at a \$257.4 million annual loss, 97.6% of the total. Horry County's EAL is within the 98th percentile of all counties in the United States, indicating high exposure and potential loss.

Horry County has a relatively high Social Vulnerability score, within the 73rd percentile of

all counties (FEMA, 2025a).

Social vulnerability measures a community's characteristics that determine vulnerability, including employment and income, education, race and ethnicity, and household and housing characteristics. Community Resilience measures the ability of communities to respond to hazard exposure using institutional and governance capacity, community networks, environmental mitigation, and financial resources. The county's score is in the 61st percentile, indicating moderate resilience due to relatively low community capital, housing, and institutional resilience (FEMA, 2025a). While these scores reflect average prior conditions, they do not necessarily forecast future results.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

When siting public facilities, the county considers the potential impacts of natural hazards on their operations. Twelve county and municipal fire stations are located within 0.25 miles of a 1% annual chance flood zone, and flooding can limit their response areas. Of Horry County Schools' facilities, only the Conway Education Center is located in a flood zone. Four schools are designated as hurricane evacuation shelters, which can delay their reopening following hurricanes. 12 schools, 16 county and municipal fire rescue stations, and the South Precinct police headquarters are located in hurricane evacuation zones. Sea level rise may increase the number of roads impacted by hurricane storm surge and limit emergency response areas. 20 schools and 22 fire

rescue stations are located in the direct ignition zone, and are vulnerable to wildland-urban interface fires. Horry County public safety services face increasing call volumes during hazard events. Horry County Fire Rescue's response volumes have increased 4.3% annually (32.9% since 2017), while the police department's have risen 5.6% annually (44.8% since 2017). HCFR set a record daily response volume for non-hurricane-related responses in summer 2024, with 321 calls in 24 hours - only 37.3% lower than its record during 2016's Hurricane Matthew (Horry County, 2025a). Summer population and visitation growth is increasing routine demand on public safety resources.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Horry County's EAL shows hurricanes pose the greatest potential economic threat to the county, causing an expected \$257.4 million in damages annually. Hurricane Florence (2018) caused \$41.5 million in direct damage, while Ian (2022) caused \$6.5 million (Horry County, 2024). Associated storm surge and riverine flooding are responsible for additional damage.

In addition, the significance of visitation to Horry County's economy increases the impacts of hazard events that disrupt the peak tourism season.

Economic impacts include lost tourist and retail revenue and long-term impacts on visitation. The Covid-19 pandemic caused a countywide 5.3% decrease in retail sales value and a 225.7% increase in unemployment (Horry County, 2025c). To mitigate these impacts, the County used federal stimulus funding to support land acquisition for industrial park expansions, freight rail facility improvements, and job training programs (Horry County, 2025c). Long-term economic resilience

will require continued revenue and employment diversification.

ENERGY

Horry County's electric grid is exposed to recurring damage from hurricanes, wind, and flooding. Hurricane-caused power outages totaled 62,000 in Florence (2018), 18,300 in Dorian (2019), and 19,500 in Ian (2022) (WMBF, 2022). Flooding may cause long-term damage to transmission lines and substations, and electric interruptions can impact economic activity and resident health. Various projects are underway to improve the electric grid's capacity and resilience. Santee Cooper received \$779k of federal funding to install

National Risk Index for each Hazard Type				
Hazard Type	Risk Index	Estimated Annual Loss Value	Social Vulnerability	Community Resilience
Coastal Flooding	Relatively Moderate (89.7)	\$3,783,823	Relatively High	Relatively High
Drought	Relatively Moderate (86.4)	\$387,271	Relatively High	Relatively High
Earthquake	Relatively Moderate (95.1)	\$8,410,702	Relatively High	Relatively High
Hail	Relatively Low (60.9)	\$148,060	Relatively High	Relatively High
Heat Wave	Relatively Moderate (87.3)	\$751,263	Relatively High	Relatively High
Hurricane	Very High (99.6)	\$257,442,032	Relatively High	Relatively High
Ice Storm	Relatively High (86.6)	\$394,321	Relatively High	Relatively High
Landslide	Relatively Low (44.1)	\$21,900	Relatively High	Relatively High
Lightning	Relatively High (97.4)	\$1,437,782	Relatively High	Relatively High
Riverine Flooding	Relatively Moderate (91.2)	\$3,819,004	Relatively High	Relatively High
Strong Wind	Relatively Moderate (86.7)	\$1,159,976	Relatively High	Relatively High
Tornado	Relatively High (96.1)	\$12,531,140	Relatively High	Relatively High
Wildfire	Relatively Moderate (93.3)	\$2,532,387	Relatively High	Relatively High
Winter Weather	Relatively High (93.9)	\$513,918	Relatively High	Relatively High

Source: FEMA National Risk Index, 2025.

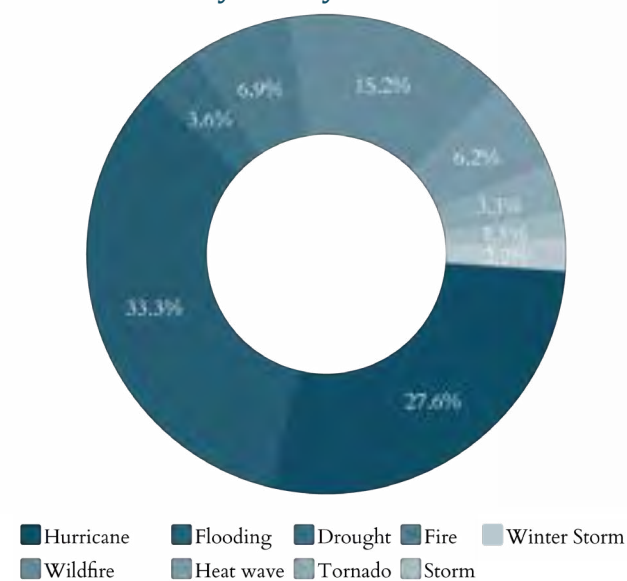


Snowfall in January 2025.
Source: Horry County, 2025.



2021 flooding on Rosewood Drive in Socastee.
 Source: Soda Citizen, 2021.

What natural hazard is it most important for Horry County to address?



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

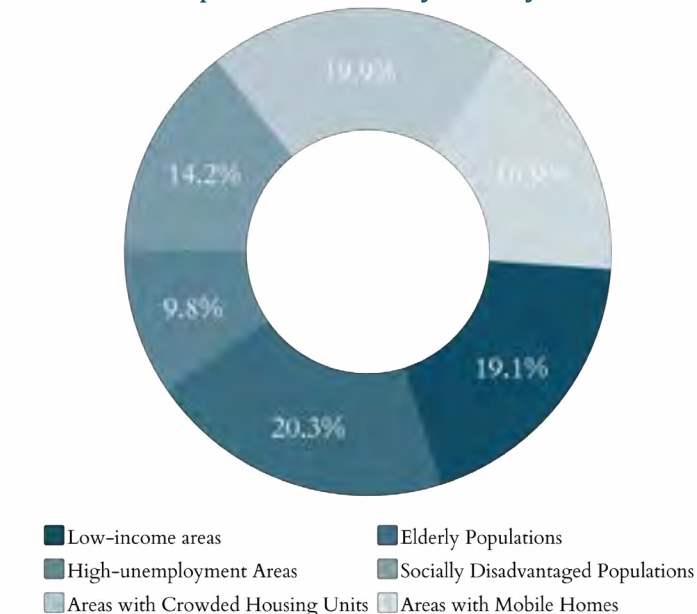
self-repairing devices on existing Horry Electric Cooperative power lines to automatically restore power following outages (Santee Cooper, 2024). To prevent peak outages, Santee Cooper is currently doubling the capacity of its main transmission line serving the county.

Rapid population growth has increased peak demand on the local electric grid. In response, providers have instituted surge pricing in the mornings and evenings to regulate demand. Surge pricing disproportionately burdens low-income populations and can cause users to reduce home heating and cooling during dangerous heat waves and winter storms.

TRANSPORTATION

Resilient transportation networks are critical to hazard response and recovery. Roadway closures constrain public safety response areas, impede evacuation, and limit access to critical services. Horry County's transportation network is vulnerable to hazard impacts and congestion caused by increasing

What characteristic that increases vulnerability is it most important for Horry County to address?



travel demand and reliance on personal vehicles.

Several of Horry County's critical roadways are vulnerable to riverine and flash flooding. Every hurricane evacuation route crosses the Little Pee Dee and Waccamaw flood zones, with Hwy. 501 crossing 1% annual chance flood zones in 14 locations. Flooding caused by Hurricane Florence (2018) closed over 465 roads in the county and damaged 250 (Horry County, 2021). These included sections of designated evacuation routes SC-22, SC-544, SC-9, and Hwys. 378 and 501. Hwy. 501 remained the only functioning roadway across the Waccamaw only after temporary flood protection measures were constructed. Hurricane Joaquin (2015) closed Hwy. 501 and roads in Conway, while Ian (2022) flooded most roads in Garden City.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Population casualties often continue to occur in the aftermath of a hazard event, due to a lack of timely medical assistance or supplies (Federal Practitioner,

2017). Evacuations can cause indirect casualties as individuals must adapt to mental and physical stress without the support of normally functioning community and social structures (Hayakawa, 2016). Hazard events can also exacerbate existing health concerns and inequities. Pregnancy mortality rates vary by race in South Carolina, with black women experiencing a 1.7-time higher death rate than white women between 2018 and 2019. In 2021, the infant mortality rate was 2.5 times greater for Black women than White women (SCDPH, 2023b). Hispanic residents of urban areas report being in poor physical health 2.6 times more frequently than their rural counterparts (SCDPH, 2023b). However, the overall death rate in 2020 was 8.7% higher in rural South Carolina areas. Between 2019 and 2022,



Source: Wikipedia, 2009.

the number of drug overdose deaths by intent grew from 1,131 to 2,296, in particular in rural areas (SCDPH, 2023b). Health inequities may persist following natural hazard events. Though 87.6% of county residents had health insurance in 2023, coverage ranges from 90.3% of White residents to only 65.0% of Hispanic residents (Census Bureau, 2023). 30.7% of residents with no high school diploma lack coverage. Compounding exposure, vulnerability due to health conditions, and unequal access to resources can concentrate impacts on certain communities.

COMMUNITY IMPACTS

Hazard events can exacerbate existing social inequities, and exposure to environmental hazards is often influenced by social vulnerability. Communities with high concentrations of senior, low-income, or minority populations are disproportionately impacted by hazards and may lack sufficient resources to prepare for and recover from hazard events.

Areas exposed to riverine and coastal flooding (including Little River, Surfside, Burgess, and Socastee) are home to concentrated minority, elderly, and low-income populations.

Rural areas are disproportionately likely to be exposed to flood risk and have low-income communities. Low-English-proficiency communities are concentrated in parts of Conway, Myrtle Beach, and North Myrtle Beach that will be impacted by sea level rise, hurricane storm surge, and coastal flooding. Impacts on housing can have secondary impacts on vulnerable communities. Areas with high proportions of manufactured homes are vulnerable to severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, and wildfire. The destruction of naturally affordable housing can accelerate increases in housing costs, displacing low-income communities.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMS

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires counties to develop a hazard mitigation plan. The Horry County Multi-jurisdictional All-Hazards Plan was adopted by Horry County in 2021 as its official mitigation plan. The plan was developed by the Mitigation Planning Task Force (MPTF) and included representatives from all participating jurisdictions, interested special purpose districts, and county government department representatives with a total of 60 members.

The MPTF identified the hazards discussed in the introduction of this section. Each hazard was profiled to include:

1. A description of each identified hazard in the planning area and the location and extent that this hazard can impact the area;
2. A historical background on each identified hazard in the planning area and the probability of future hazard events occurring; and
3. Maps of the locations and portions of the planning area affected by hazard events.

Additionally, a hazard index was developed to rank hazards in order of the importance of mitigation on a scale of 1 to 5. The index considered the anticipated frequency, impact consequences, and any past emergency declarations in the hazard category.

Unsurprisingly, hurricanes received the highest hazard index ranking. Horry County has been impacted by over a dozen hurricanes in the last 30 years.

The MPTF analyzed the risk assessment to establish goals to reduce hazard impacts in 2020. The following goals were determined to have the greatest benefit in hazard reduction in Horry County.

1. Minimize loss of life and property from natural hazard events.
2. Protect public health and safety.
3. Increase public awareness of risk from natural hazards.
4. Improve government and public response to natural hazard disasters.
5. Reduce risk and effects of natural hazards.
6. Increase technical capabilities to reduce potential losses.
7. Enhance existing or develop new policies and regulations that reduce potential hazard impacts.
8. Protect the most vulnerable populations, buildings and critical facilities.

Action: Acquire and preserve properties subject to repetitive flooding from willing property owners	
Category	Property Protection
Hazard	Flooding
Goal(s) Addressed	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 8
Priority	Moderate
Funding Source	SCEMD, HMGP, FEMA, PDM, FMA, SRL & RLP
Price Range	Varying
Responsibility	Horry County Emergency Management
Completion Date	Continuous-Reviewed & Updated on an annual basis
Jurisdiction	Horry County

An example of an action item developed through the hazard mitigation plan. Source: HCEM, 2024.

These goals were used to identify mitigation techniques and actions, grouped as prevention, property protection, natural resource protection, structural projects, emergency services, and public information and awareness.

Mitigation actions were ranked from high to low priority and used to develop projects with measurable outcomes and timelines. The MPTF will continuously review all mitigation actions' costs and benefits throughout implementation.

The MPTF ensured that regular updates of the Hazard Mitigation Plan will occur by appointing a Mitigation Coordinator responsible for organizing changes to the plan. The MPTF meets quarterly in conjunction with the Local Emergency Planning Committee to monitor and evaluate the plan.

At each meeting, the progress of the mitigation strategies is evaluated. All goals are reviewed to determine their relevance and effectiveness in light of changes in county, state and federal policies.

Jurisdictions and agencies responsible for implementation actions report on project status, implementation processes, and difficulties encountered.

HURRICANE RESILIENCE

Horry County's vulnerability to hurricanes and tropical storms is largely determined by its exposure to various impacts including coastal storm surge, riverine flooding from heavy rainfall, and wind damage to structures. Improved hurricane resilience requires resilience interventions that address each interrelated hazard.

The county adheres to the 2021 South Carolina Building Code standards in construction that establish building wind and flood resilience requirements. Mitigation of structure exposure to direct storm

surge along the coast is largely carried out through the Beach Management Plan. Impacts of storm surge along tidally-influenced rivers is mitigated by building standards and restrictions for structures in FEMA flood zones.

Extensive parts of Socastee, North Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, Surfside Beach, and Garden City are located in SCEMD hurricane evacuation zones A, B, and C. Evacuation routes include Hwy. 501, SC. 22, Hwy. 378, Hwy. 17, and SC. 544. Evacuation clearance times for zones A, B, and C in Horry and Georgetown Counties with a 100% resident compliance rate could reach 29.4 hours with existing capacity (SCEMD, 2025). Evacuation times are longest in Surfside Beach and Garden City, which the SC. 22 extension is intended to improve.

Beach Management Plan

The South Carolina Bureau of Coastal Management (BCM) is responsible for the management of the state's beachfront. The state Beachfront Management Act establishes statutory guidance and state policies for the beachfront, including a requirement that ocean beachfront counties and municipalities prepare local Beach Management Plans (BMPs) in coordination with BCM. Horry County adopted its first BMP in 1991 and completed updates in 2002, 2013, and 2023 in accordance with the state requirement to update the plans every ten years.

The 2023 update is based on jurisdictional beach baselines and setbacks established in 2018 by the BCM (Horry County, 2023). The plan analyzes beach natural characteristics, tidal action, species habitat, water quality, erosion, and land use to establish management goals. Identified concerns include hurricane-caused and tidal beach erosion, low beachfront water quality, impacts on natural habitat, and high demand for beach facilities.

The plan aims to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance the beach and dune system by:

1. Limiting the size of habitable structures;
2. Requiring oceanfront habitable structures to be located as far landward on a lot as possible;
3. Prohibiting new shore-parallel erosion control structures; and
4. Promoting beach and dune restoration.

Because the county's beachfront is heavily developed and not buffered by barrier islands, it experiences rapid erosion, particularly during tropical storms (Horry County, 2023).

The BMP aims to maintain the existing beach setback line by restoring dune systems, continuing periodic renourishment, preserving natural coastline, and avoiding permanent stabilization structures.

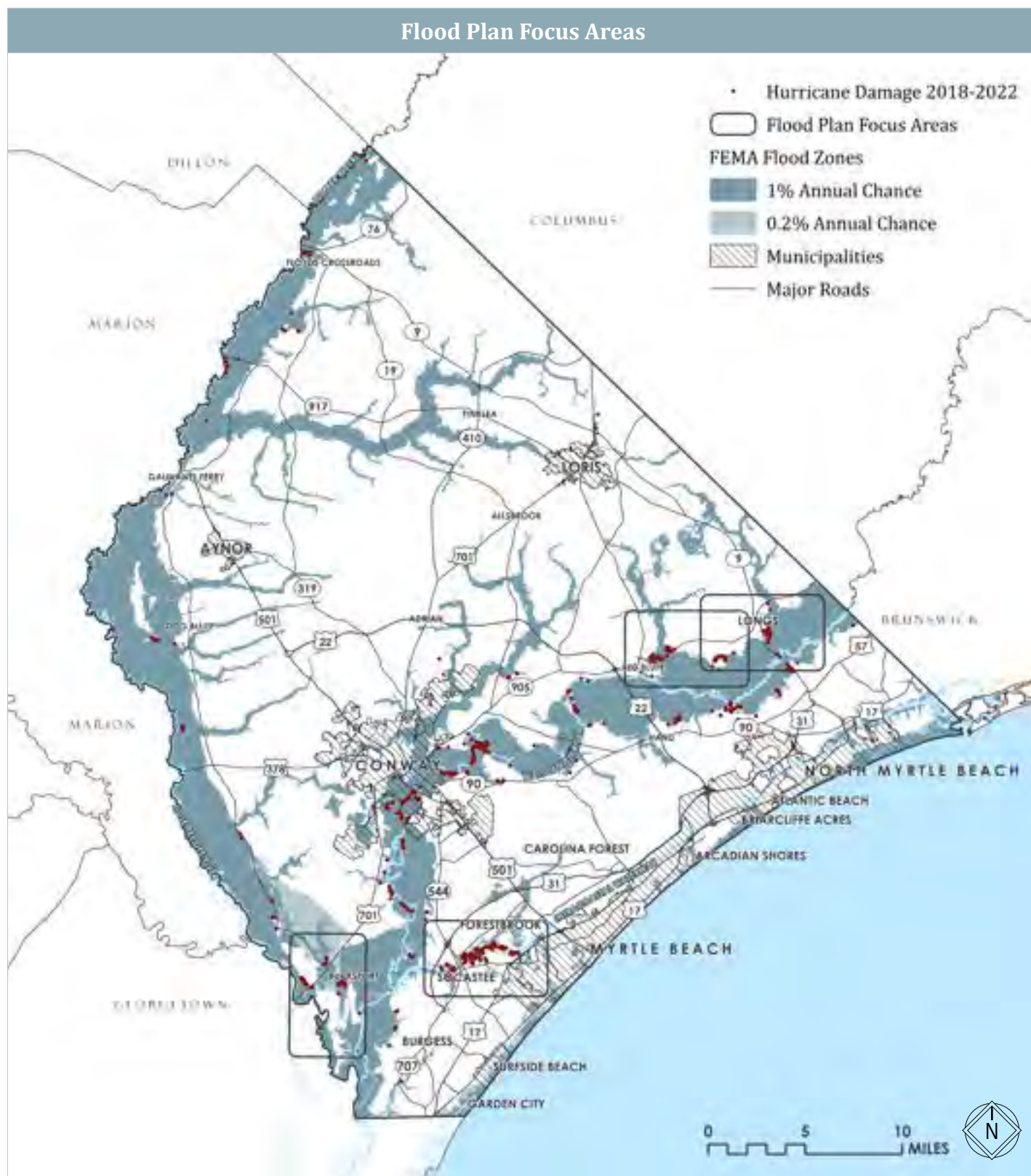
Beachfront redevelopment is to be restricted to existing setbacks and square footage, including following tropical storms. Natural resilience and stabilization measures are to be used as possible. However, gray infrastructure including seawalls, bulkheads, revetments, groins, and breakwaters are considered for limited application.

To support resilient beachfront recovery following tropical storms, the BMP recommends preparing county resources for rapid post-hazard assessment and response coordinated with long-term shoreline goals.

Restoring natural resiliency systems and gradually reducing structure encroachment on the active beach is encouraged to reduce development exposure to hazard events.



Beach Stretches under Horry County Management and covered under the Beach Management Plan
Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

FLOOD RESILIENCE

The Horry County Flood Resilience Master Plan identifies repetitive flood loss areas, contributing topological, hydrological, and development factors, and potential interventions to improve resilience (Horry County, 2021). The plan responds to extreme flooding caused by Hurricane Florence in focus areas in Bucksport, Longs, Red Bluff, and Socastee. It aims to establish policies to promote resilient development, guide infrastructure investments, and pilot practical and geographically-specific interventions.

The plan identifies key risks and vulnerabilities that exacerbate flooding country-wide:

1. Low-lying and relatively flat topography, which reduces flood water channelization;
2. Sedimentation within waterways that reduces water storage capacity and disrupts flow;
3. Historical development patterns that allow construction of properties in areas vulnerable to flooding;
4. Reduction of water storage within floodplains and wetlands as a result of new development;
5. Lack of safe egress infrastructure during flood events;
6. A large amount of infrastructure vulnerable to flooding and a lack of resources; and
7. Sea level rise and storm surge encroachment on coastal communities that slows riverine system discharge into the Atlantic Ocean.

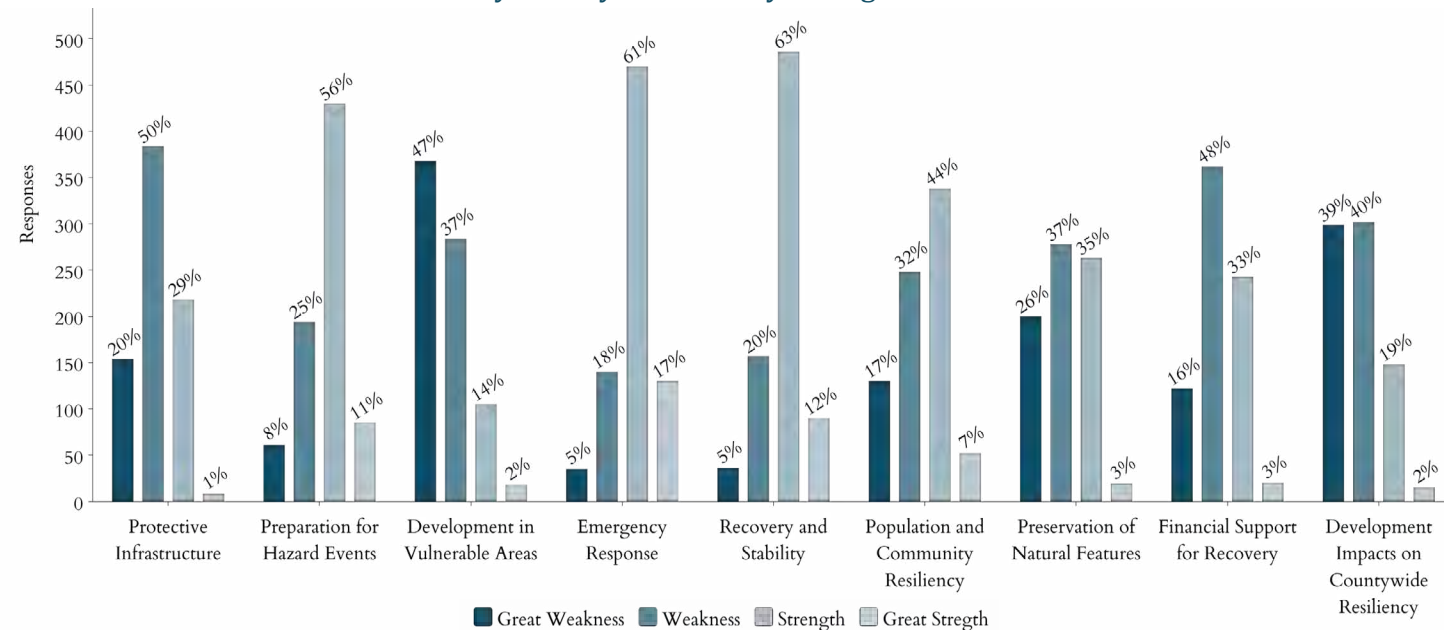
Vulnerabilities are impacted and geographically redistributed with changing climate conditions and development patterns. To reduce flood exposure and asset vulnerability, the plan recommended a variety of strategies that address interacting hazard contributors including natural environments, development regulations, and policy. :

1. Revise the Flood Ordinance by raising

- minimum structure elevation, banning fill in the floodplain, and adopting new floodplain maps. Horry County has revised the flood ordinance to raise the Base Flood Elevation;
2. Map a new supplemental flood zone based on Florence flooding. The new flood zone has been mapped and added to county ordinances;
3. Conduct a coordinated buyout and land reuse program for high-risk neighborhoods and use vacant land for flood mitigation measures;
4. Create regulatory riparian buffer areas to reduce risky development and preserve wetlands and local natural water storage;
5. Require 10% tree canopy preservation and incentivize more in subdivisions;
6. Incorporate LID and resilient subdivision design features into the zoning code;
7. Create a county-wide watershed hydrological model to project impacts of flooding;
8. Incorporate flood modeling in infrastructure design;
9. Assess watershed-level floodwater storage approaches to maximize local storage;
10. Improve infrastructure to drain and prevent localized flooding;
11. Create a post-disaster code enforcement plan to reduce risky reconstruction;
12. Expand awareness of and develop flood risk communication networks; and
13. Conduct local community-based resilience plans to create local resilience strategies.

While the plan proposes interventions tailored to the target areas, it encourages applying lessons learned in planning and implementation to high-risk areas throughout the county. The plan also highlighted the need for additional watershed studies across Horry County. Since it was initiated, Horry County has received grant funding for two major flood studies. Hydrologic and hydraulic studies of the Buck Creek

What are Horry County's Resiliency strengths and weaknesses?



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

and Simpson Creek watersheds were funded by the SC Office of Resilience. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has initiated a three-year study related to flood mitigation along the Waccamaw River.

Several flood mitigation projects have since been undertaken with grant funding. The Big Bull Landing Road Raising project engineering was completed through a grant from the SC Office of Resilience. Initial construction was performed in the wake of Tropical Storm Debby. Neighborhood-level drainage improvements, funded by the SC Rural Infrastructure Authority's SCIIP program were completed at Kayla Circle and Azalea Lakes. Additional SCIIP-funded drainage improvement projects on Highway 9, Hemingway road and Jones Road are scheduled for construction in 2026.

In 2019, Stormwater completed a DHEC-funded study of flooding along Socastee Creek, resulting in a recommendation to upsize the culvert under McCormick Road in Forestbrook in order to mitigate flood risk. In 2022, the SC Office of Resilience funded

a grant application for construction in 2026.

One of the major components of flood resilience is discouraging development within the floodplain and along river corridors.

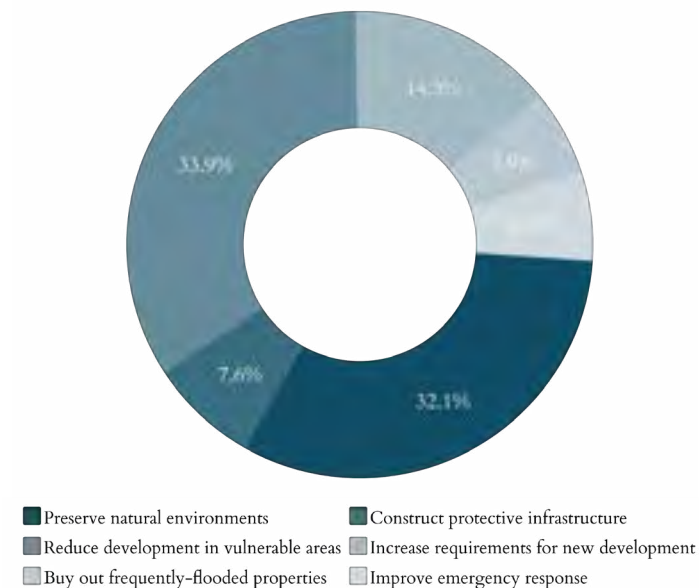
The county's Flood Damage Prevention and Control ordinance bans the placement of critical facilities in the 1% and 0.02% annual chance flood zones. Private development must be elevated above the base flood elevation and not increase flood impacts on adjacent properties.

Community Rating System

One way Horry County addresses flood mitigation is through improvement of its 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.

How do you think Horry County should manage hazards and increase resiliency?



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

The program enhances public safety, reduces damages to property and infrastructure, mitigates economic disruption, and protects the environment. CRS communities' flood insurance premiums are discounted to reflect their reduced risk under the program's goals:

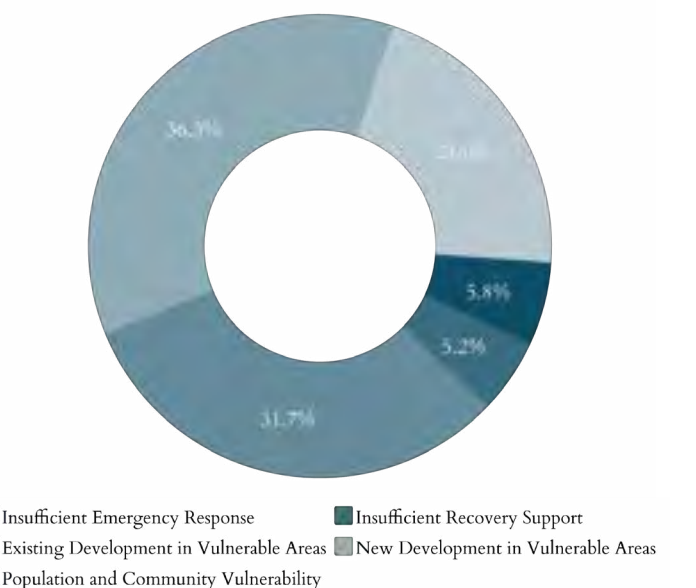
1. Reduce and avoid flood property damage
2. Strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP
3. Foster integrated floodplain management.

Horry County entered the CRS program in 2010 and was initially placed in classification 9. In 2017, the county received credit for 13 qualifying activity categories and improved to classification 7, providing a 15% discount on flood insurance.

In May 2023, the county was awarded 2,637 points, improving to CRS classification 5 with a 25% discount percentage.

Horry County receives credit for its public information, map information, and outreach services, flood

What are the most significant obstacles to increasing Horry County's resiliency?



insurance and protection promotion, floodplain mapping, open space preservation, and building standards, floodplain management planning, and repetitive loss property acquisition program.

North Coast Resilience Project

Horry County, Georgetown County, and municipalities in the Waccamaw Council of Governments collaborate with The Nature Conservancy to research opportunities to improve regional flood resilience. Collectively referred to as the North Coast, participants identify measures to reduce threats and damages of future flood events 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 modeled current and future flood risk to determine ideal locations for habitat restoration and floodplain preservation to reduce flood vulnerability. Mapping incorporated data from stream and tidal gauges, high water marks, sensors, recent riverine flooding, and post-tropical storm satellite imagery. Potential flood areas in 2035 and 2060 were inferred from historic and projected climate and development changes.

The project modeling is used to implement restoration projects that will protect and improve the management of lower order streams connected to the Waccamaw River. Conservation partners use the model to prioritize land conservation efforts, and the maps are available for planning and public education purposes.

Housing Buyout program

Guided by the Flood Resilience Plan, Horry County has used buyout programs to reduce housing exposure and losses in flood-prone areas of Socastee. Buyout programs reduce flood hazards and provide natural flood mitigation by acquiring and demolishing frequently flooded structures. Properties are typically preserved in a natural state, sometimes offering open space access to the public.

In only five years, Socastee's Rosewood, Bridge Creek and Lawson's Landing neighborhoods were impacted by multiple flood events caused by Hurricanes Joaquin (2015), Matthew (2016), Florence (2018), and heavy rains (Horry County, 2021). The Socastee Buyout program targeted 63 homes along the Intracoastal Waterway for acquisition in two phases

beginning in June 2021 and completed in 2024. \$17.0 million was allocated to the program supported by CDBG funding (SCOR, 2024). Buyouts should be coordinated with land use regulations that prevent new flood zone development.

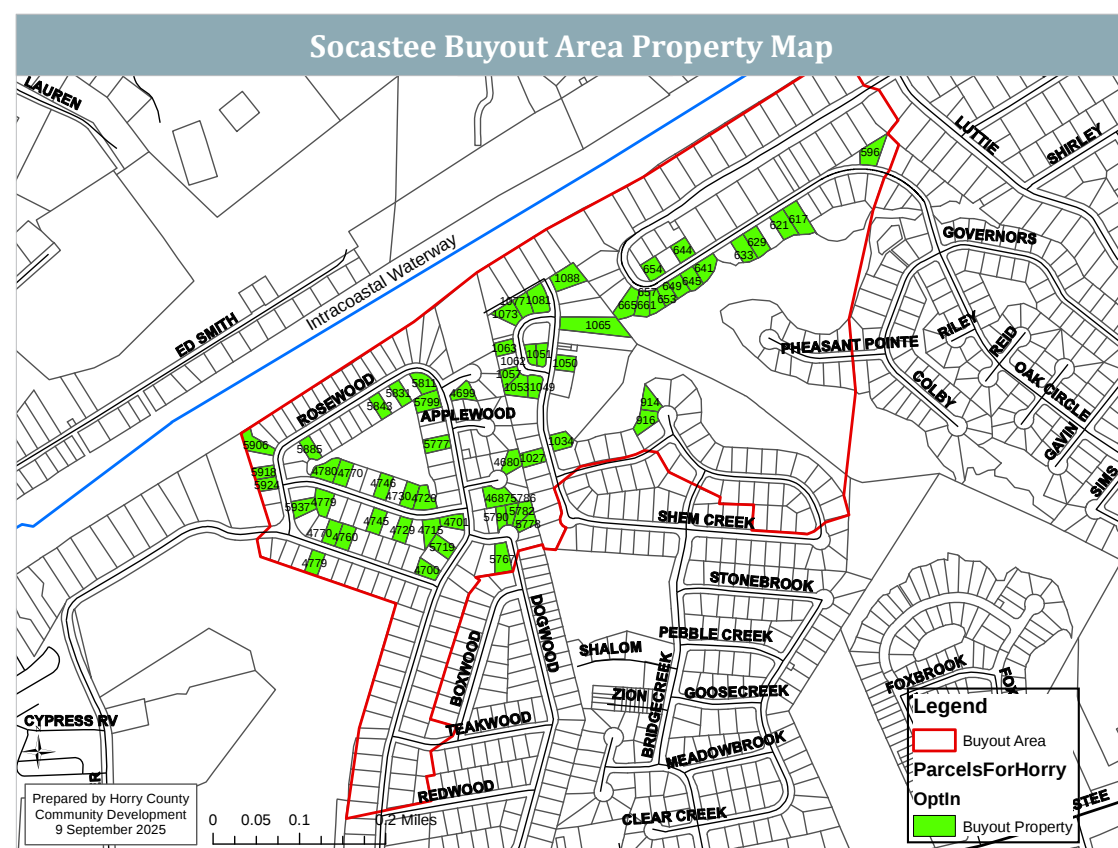
WILDFIRE RESILIENCE

Improved wildfire resilience requires coordinating working and natural lands management, development design, and land use regulation. The county's land use regulations should support wildfire resilience. A floating overlay zone for developments bordering fire-adapted landscapes should detail design standards and require defensible space. 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 requiring shorter block lengths in the Land Development Regulations and proposed Planned Developments. It should discourage the approval of design modifications that reduce the required number of improved points of ingress and egress for new development.

SCFC employees work with local fire departments to assess wildfire hazards to communities and structures. As part of the National Fire Plan effort, SCFC personnel conduct workshops to educate community leaders and homeowners in high-fire-risk communities. The county should coordinate fire risk



Socastee Buyout Area
Source: Horry County Community Development.



Cutting a fireline with a bulldozer.
Source: Horry County, 2025c.

mitigation projects with SCFC, including emergency access upgrades and prescribed burns.

Twelve Horry County communities are Firewise-designated in coordination with SCFC and Horry County. Firewise requires the reduction of wildfire fuels between five and 100 feet from a home, where radiant heat or vegetation and outbuilding fires can ignite a structure.

Prescribed Burning

Prescribed burning is the planned application of controlled fire to natural landscapes that decreases vegetative fuel loads and increases habitat diversity. This decreases the likelihood of larger, more intense wildfires supported by excess vegetation and dead fuels. Prescribed burning interrupts the continuity of the fuel layer horizontally (on the ground surface) and vertically.

As underbrush grows taller over time, a vertical fuel structure is developed, which allows surface wildfires to climb the fuel ladder and become disastrous crown fires.

Prescribed burns are currently used on state-managed natural lands in the county, particularly Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve. However, development encroachment on fire-managed areas poses challenges to continued prescribed burning. The county should consider how development impacts the continued feasibility of prescribed burning on working and natural landscapes.

CONCLUSIONS

Horry County's population, communities, and infrastructure are exposed to intersecting natural hazards compounded by geography, hydrology, and development patterns. Community vulnerability differs by exposure, infrastructure, population composition, and the resources available for mitigation

and recovery. The county's preparation, mitigation, and response to natural hazards must consider each community's varied exposure and vulnerability and impacts on other communities.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 7

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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 GOVERNMENT 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.



Horry County Government and Justice Center
Source: Horry County Government, n.d.

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 (SCDMV), 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.

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,



J. Reuben Long Detention Center
Source: MyHorryNews, 2023.

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 and GIS, 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 North Main Street on the outskirts of the City of Conway. It includes 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 Public Health, 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.

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' 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.

The 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, SCDPH, SCDMV, Social Security 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 inter-jurisdictional 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. It serves 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 has undergone remediation, and its cooling pond, Lake Busbee, 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 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 Myrtle Beach and the 16-kilowatt solar display at Coastal Carolina University. Beyond expansion of solar, Santee Cooper is also exploring onshore and offshore wind opportunities, which is further discussed in the Natural Resources Chapter.

To maintain the reliability of the electrical system



Demolition of the Granger Generating Station Stacks
Source: abc4 News, 2016.

serving the growing Horry County population, Santee Cooper is currently constructing a 230 kV transmission line between Marion and Conway. This transmission line will utilize an existing 34-mile right-of-way and improve transmission system capacity during high-demand periods.

Duke Energy provides electric and gas services in parts of the county. It constructed two solar farms along Hwy 9 in Horry County in 2018. 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.

Dominion Energy provides electricity and natural gas services to approximately 500,000 customers across the state. Dominion Energy 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. The addition of new transmission lines may present an opportunity for bicycle and pedestrian connectivity. The Grangier Station site also presents an opportunity for redevelopment and reinvestment into downtown Conway.

WATER SUPPLIERS

There are several water and sewer providers in Horry County. The Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA) serves all local water authorities, including area municipalities, with 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 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 occurred in May 2019 at a flow

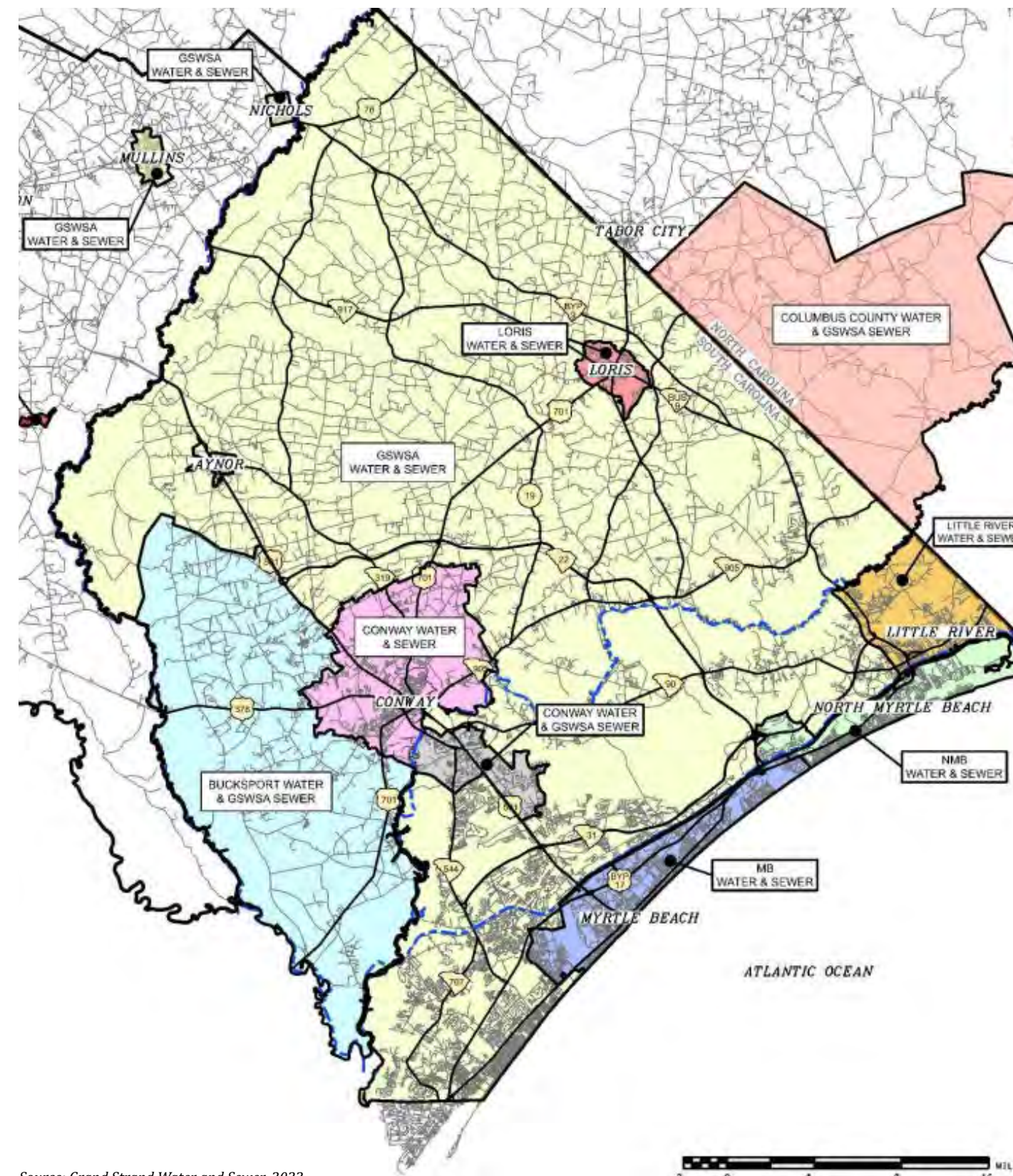
of 39.2 MGD. During this same period, 2.4 MGD of flow were added to the distribution system from ASR and blend wells for a total system output of 41.6 MGD. The by-product of the treatment process, alum sludge, is thickened and land applied to a designated centipede grass turf farm.

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 designed for ready expansion. Water is pulled from the Intracoastal Waterway.

In addition, GSWSA has eight groundwater wells withdrawing 6.7 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 two 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 67.9 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 construct a new 20 MGD water treatment plant in the Socastee area on the Waccamaw River by 2028.

GSWSA also has a rural program that supports customers with existing water and septic systems that



Source: Grand Strand Water and Sewer, 2023.

are failing. If water and sewer are 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 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. The system currently pumps approximately 1.0 MGD, 66% of capacity. This system provides water to Bucksport and surrounding communities from five well sites 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.

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.

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 has 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 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 2020, \$9.5 million in impact fees were collected in direct proportion to new customers added. The City of North Myrtle Beach also maintains two wastewater treatment facilities: Ocean Drive and Crescent 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. The GSWSA 2040 Strategic Business Plan outlines capital, structural, and operational improvements and financing required to meet the needs of the area through 2040.

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 surfaces (including 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 qual-

ity 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 SC Department of Environmental Services' 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 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 a half-acre of land. Since 2006, the Stormwater Department has issued 2,211 permits in 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 inspec-

tors 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 must its drainage system. The county holds 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 Bank Erosion
Source: Clemson Extension, n.d.

pond maintenance issues, such as erosion.

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, supporting compliance with the county's NPDES Phase II stormwater 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 USGS gauges 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.

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 program. 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 conduct monitoring at river gauge sites, as well as special projects as needed.

In addition, the county 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.

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's stormwater ordinance requires 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.

While necessary to ensure positive drainage, this measure has resulted in extensive tree removal and grading. The requirement results in significant land alteration and may limit construction of slabs on grade.

Overall, these regulatory changes will result in better designed communities. Older development within the county and developments less than one half acre in size are not subject to these higher regulatory standards. In many cases, existing infrastructure is under-designed or failing. A comprehensive Stormwater Drainage & Maintenance Capital

Improvements Plan is needed to fully understand the costs associated with improving drainage, reducing flooding and improving water quality.

Because most prime locations for development have already been utilized, the use of marginal lands for construction is likely to continue. 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 Road, 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 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 increased demand for installation

on top of light poles in parking lots and on 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.

Fiber Optics

Fiber optics are thin flexible fibers of glass or other transparent solids that transmit light signals for telecommunications. All fiber-optic cabling and pedestals are located underground. Horry County has an extensive network 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 its 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 pro-

vide 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.

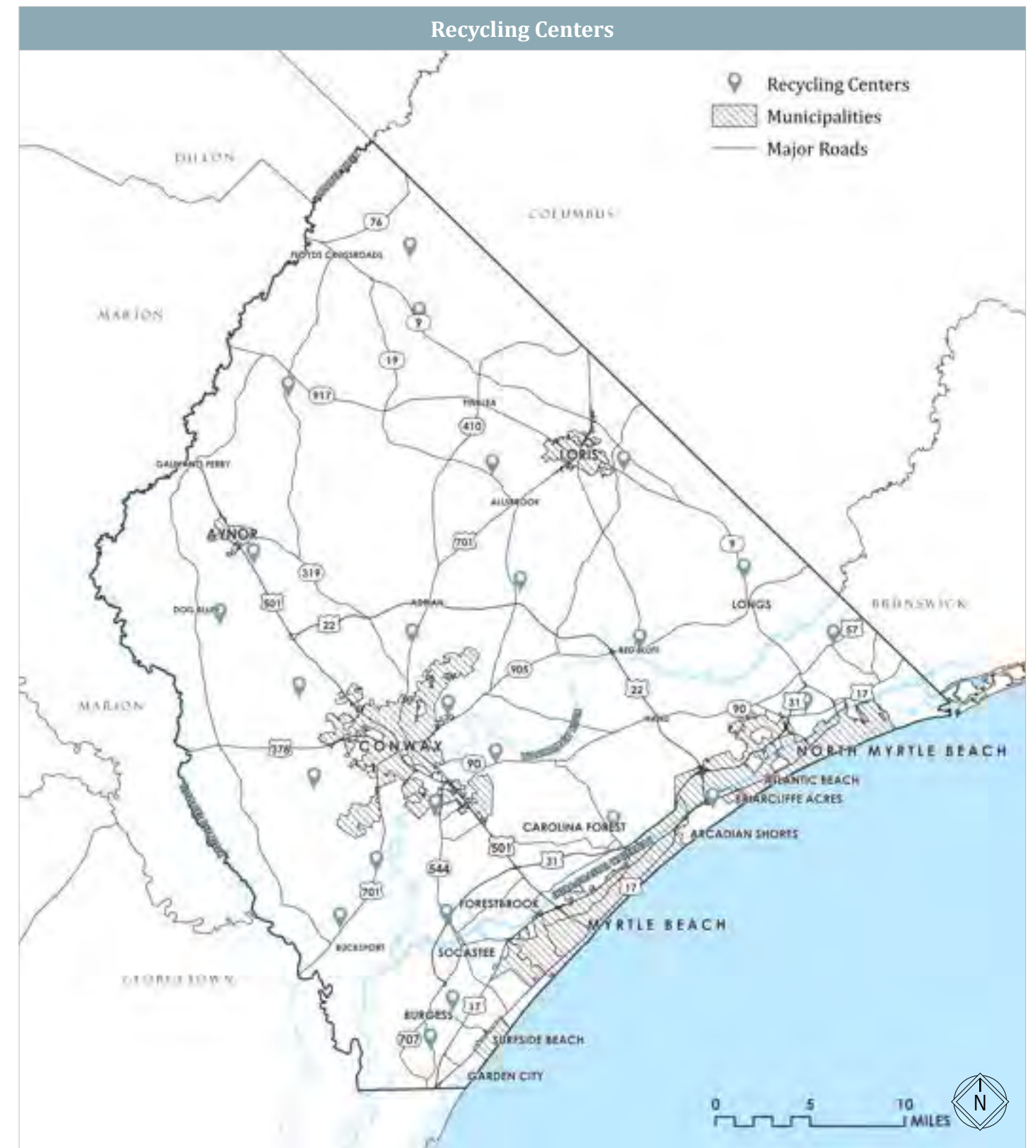
In 2009, Horry County Council enacted Ordinance 02-9 which provides an effective means of regulating the collection and disposal of solid waste generated in Horry County. In Horry County, this includes solid waste recovery, recycling, and disposal services to the unincorporated parts of the county, as well as municipal areas. The Horry County Solid Waste Management Plan was originally completed in 1993, and the latest update was completed in 2022 and 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. The Solid Waste Authority staffs 25 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. Municipalities provide curbside collection of household waste and yard waste. 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. The FY 2021 South Carolina Solid Waste Management Annual Report determined each



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

South Carolinian disposed on average 4.0 pounds per day of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW), while Horry County residents disposed 4.5 pounds per day.

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 293,000 tons of municipal solid waste were disposed of in FY2022.

The landfill area has approximately 6,691,036 tons of MSW capacity remaining as of July 2022 (existing and future capacity). Based on estimated consumption, the Class Three landfill will reach capacity in FY2042. In 2023, the SWA obtained a draft permit for a 42.8 Class Three landfill expansion that will provide additional MSW disposal capacity.

The Class Two C&D landfill has a permitted disposal rate of 250,000 tons per year. Approximately 156,000 tons of C&D waste were disposed in FY2022, though the SWA reported higher-than-average volume due to storm-related debris. A 2022 expansion of the Class Two Landfill added 921,000 tons of capacity, and the landfill area has approximately 1.0 million tons of C&D capacity remaining as of July 2022. Based on estimated consumption, the Class Two landfill will reach capacity sometime in FY2029.

In 2014, Horry County Council enacted Ordinance 78-13. This Ordinance allows construction and

demolition (C&D) debris 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 holds permits for the Piggyback Phase 3 Extension of the MSW landfill. 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 and the Piggyback Phase 3 Expansion is anticipated to provide MSW capacity over the 20-year planning period. The figure to the right illustrates the remaining capacity of the Class Two and Class Three Landfills and estimated consumption over the next 20 years.

Debris Management

Per the 2022 SWA Disaster Debris Management Plan, Horry County could generate 4.3 million cubic yards of debris from a Category Three hurricane. A summary of estimated quantities of debris and the acreage necessary to store and process the debris is shown in the chart below. The SWA manages a total of 1,458.8 acres for vegetative debris management.

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

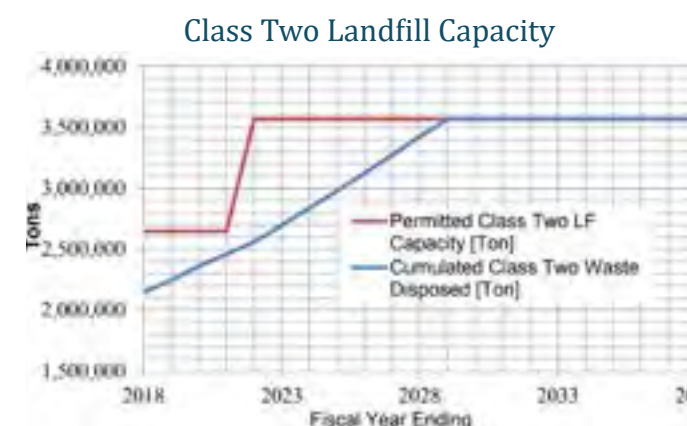
Horry County maintains programs to encourage recycling, including recycling convenience centers, educational activities, and a regional Material Recycling Facility (MRF). The SWA also operates a yard waste composting facility. While Horry County recycling is voluntary, residential, curbside pickup is available in most municipalities. Recycling and yard waste disposal is 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 using 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



Source: GSWSA, 2021.

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: GSWSA, 2021.

Existing Acreage Set Aside for Debris Processing			
Site Name	Closest Address	Site Acreage	Anticipated Site Use
HCSWA Landfill	1886 Highway 90, Conway, SC 29566	9.7	Chipping/Storage
Highway 701 Site	HWY 701 North, Conway, SC 29526	2.83	Vegetative
A-2 Buist/1187 Site	511 3-R Drive, Conway, SC 29526	1187	Vegetative
Green Sea Site	Corner of Fair Bluff HWY&Grassy Bluff HWY, Green Sea, SC 29581	268.95	Vegetative

Source: GSWSA, 2021.



Volunteers at the 2015 Community Cleanup Day
Source: Keep Horry County Beautiful.

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 volunteer groups that help in keeping the county's streets, parks, open spaces, rivers, schools, and other community amenities clean and litter free.

In 2024, 348 KHCB volunteers spent 224 hours collecting 556 bags of trash at 12 locations on 93.5 miles of roadways, beaches, and parks.

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.

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 permitting 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.

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 2024, there were 88 state licensed childcare facilities in Horry County, including two types:

1. 79 licensed childcare centers (care for 13 or more children; operates more than four hours a day and two days a week)
2. 9 licensed family childcare 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 holiday day camps; Bible schools; and facilities for the mentally ill or handicapped.

With a rising population, there is a high demand for additional childcare facilities. Many facilities already maintain a waiting list.

PK-12 EDUCATION

The Horry County School District is a countywide school system with 54 elementary, middle, and high school attendance zones. Horry County Schools (HCS) operates 57 schools: 30 primary and elementary schools, 13 intermediate and middle schools, 11 high schools, four charter schools, two academies and five specialty programs. Students also can 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.

HCS is the third-largest school district in South Carolina, with an average daily membership (ADM) of 47,800 students in 2024-25. That number increased by 567 students from the previous year, or 1.2%. This growth rate is consistent with the District's annual growth rate since 2014, despite a 2.8% enrollment decline in 2020-21 due to COVID-19. By 2033, HCS projects K-12 enrollment to be 43,448, an 8.2% decrease from 2023 enrollment. This does not include area charter schools, whose maximum enrollment is based on their charters.

Areas of the county with the highest anticipated school attendance growth include Carolina Forest, St. James, Socastee, and North Myrtle Beach. These forecasts have heavily influenced the recommendations of Growth and Capacity projects for the next five years and beyond. Without further capital improvements, HCS anticipates that at least 14 schools will be at or above 100% capacity by 2032.

In 2025, HCS will complete construction on two new

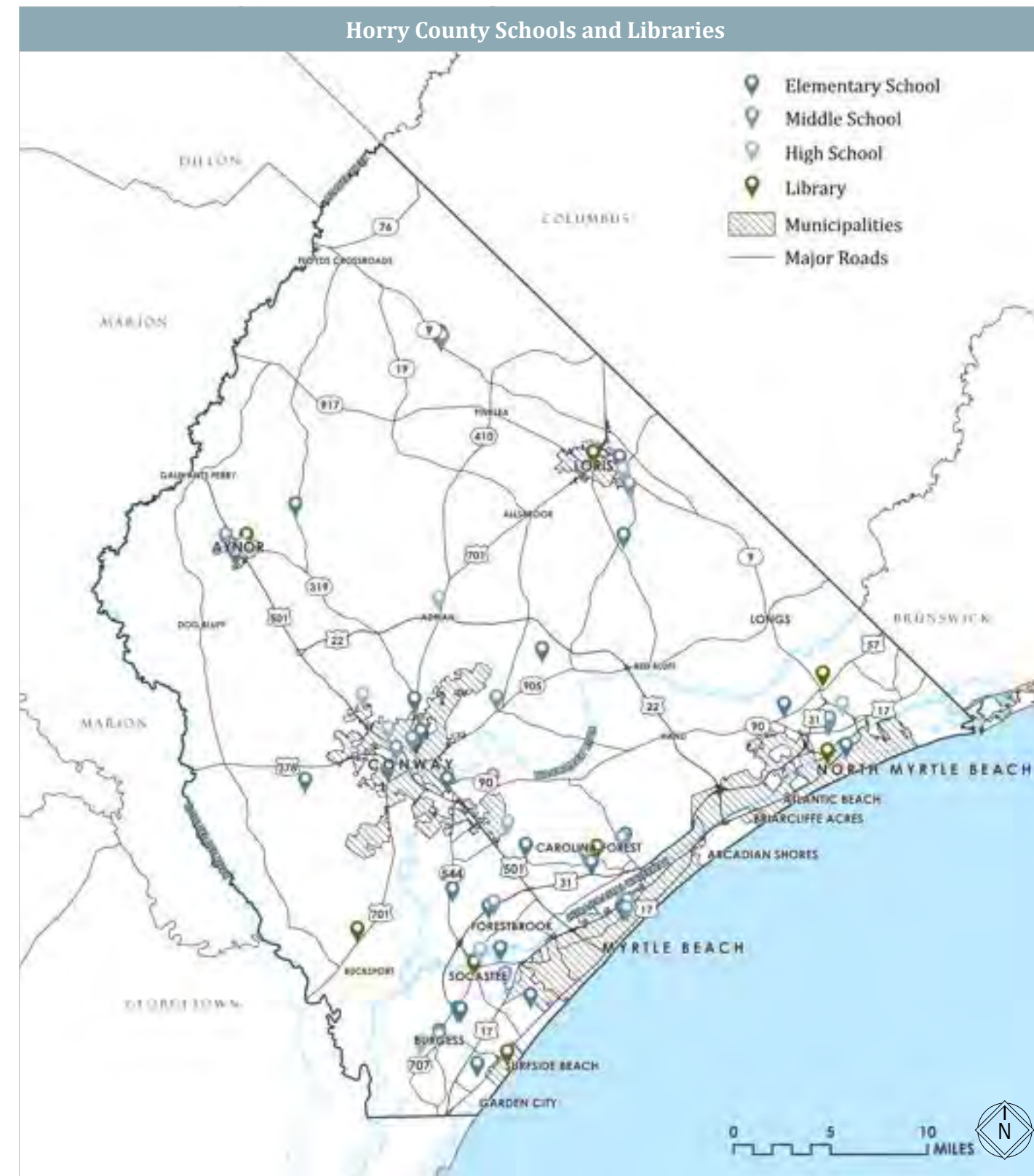
elementary schools along Carolina Forest Blvd and Ron McNair Blvd that will reduce overcrowding at River Oaks Elementary. The lack of road connectivity between River Oaks Drive and Carolina Forest Blvd necessitates the construction of two elementary schools versus one new facility. However, in the long 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, 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 several schools over this same five-year timeframe.

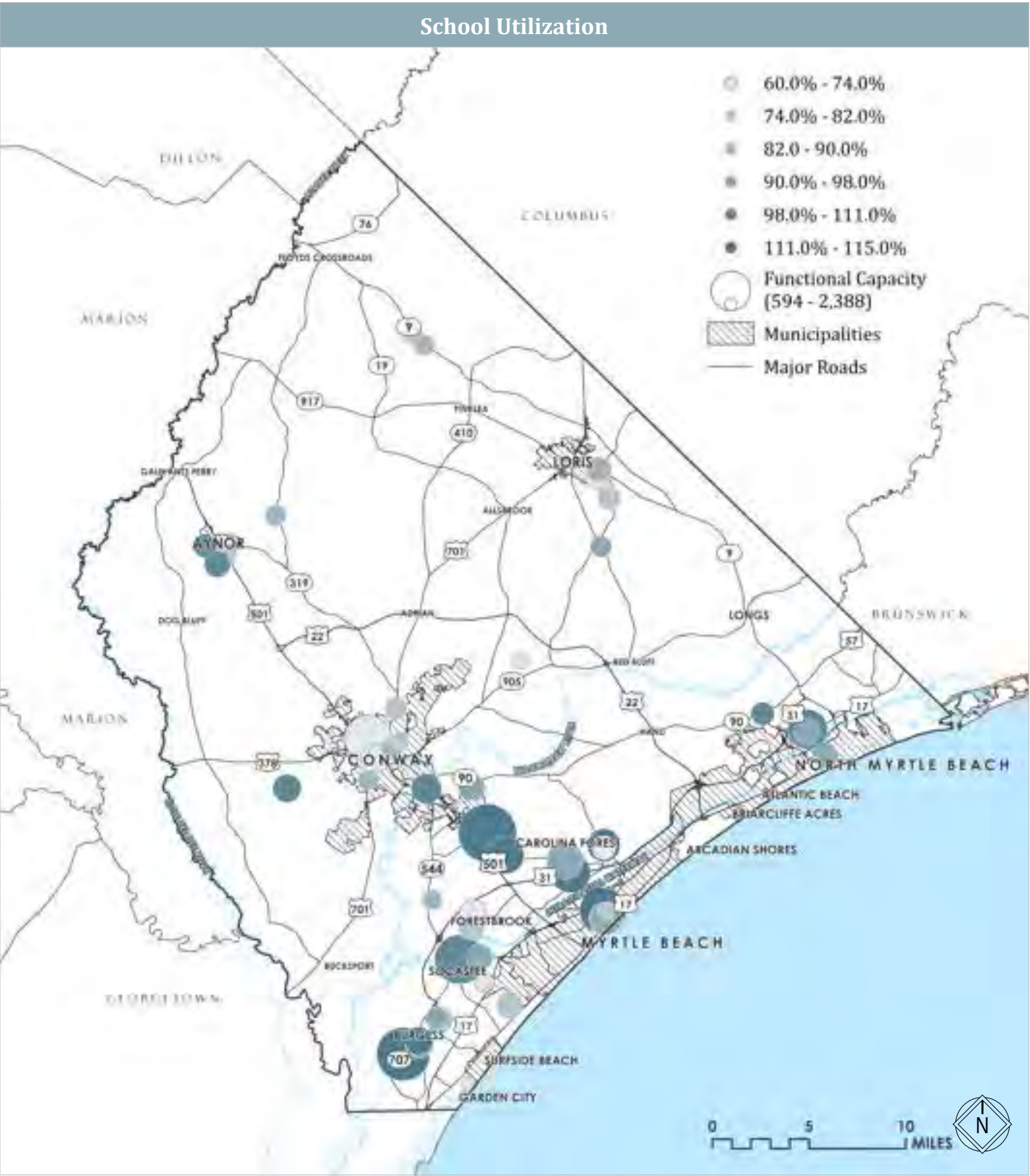
Land Suitability

In the master planning of some large developments, such as Carolina Forest, the developers set aside school sites that can be purchased by HCS. If sites are not already set aside, HCS looks 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 increasingly difficult to find sites for new schools. On rare occasions, schools must be constructed outside the attendance zone in order to meet requirements. The District prefers not to build outside existing 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 con-



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

Horry County Schools Functional Capacity Estimates (Forecasted Average Daily Membership)										
School	Facility Type	Functional Capacity	2022-23 45-Day Modified ADM	2022-23 Utilization	2023-24 45-Day Modified ADM	2023-24 Utilization	2027-28 45-Day Modified ADM	2027-28 Utilization	2032-33 45-Day Modified ADM	2032-33 Utilization
Aynor Elementary School	CD-5	714	784	110%	790	111%	821	115%	798	112%
Midland Elementary School	CD-5	735	610	83%	618	84%	549	75%	566	77%
Aynor Middle School	6-8	707	750	106%	710	100%	714	101%	685	97%
Aynor High School	9-12	1,059	784	74%	806	76%	791	75%	792	75%
Carolina Forest Elementary School	CD-5	971	1,211	125%	1,220	126%	1,357	140%	1,312	135%
Ocean Bay Elementary School	CD-5	783	1,032	132%	1,037	132%	1,027	131%	960	123%
River Oaks Elementary School	CD-5	870	1,286	148%	1,305	150%	1,361	156%	1,298	149%
Palmetto Bays Elementary School	CD-5	685	574	84%	577	84%	603	88%	615	90%
Waccamaw Elementary School	CD-5	863	967	112%	951	110%	956	111%	954	111%
Black Water Middle School	6-8	859	777	90%	814	95%	826	96%	833	97%
Ocean Bay Middle School	6-8	1,010	706	70%	743	74%	844	84%	859	85%
Ten Oaks Middle School	6-8	1,212	1,118	92%	1,189	98%	1,270	105%	1,358	112%
Carolina Forest High School	9-12	2,388	2,797	117%	3,012	126%	3,520	147%	3,815	160%
Conway Elementary School	CD-5	661	557	84%	534	81%	460	70%	469	71%
Homewood Elementary School	CD-5	639	661	103%	660	103%	728	114%	723	113%
Kingston Elementary School	CD-5	639	444	69%	452	71%	524	82%	533	83%
Pee Dee Elementary School	CD-5	827	842	102%	869	105%	960	116%	913	110%
South Conway Elementary School	CD-5	661	571	86%	592	90%	599	91%	572	87%
Conway Middle School	6-8	657	581	88%	593	90%	473	72%	486	74%

Source: Horry County Schools, 2025.

Horry County Schools Functional Capacity Estimates (Forecasted Average Daily Membership)										
School	Facility Type	Functional Capacity	2022-23 45-Day Modified ADM	2022-23 Utilization	2023-24 45-Day Modified ADM	2023-24 Utilization	2027-28 45-Day Modified ADM	2027-28 Utilization	2032-33 45-Day Modified ADM	2032-33 Utilization
Whittemore Park Middle School	6-8	1,200	859	72%	893	74%	885	74%	1,000	83%
Conway High School	9-12	2,095	1,531	73%	1,555	74%	1,689	81%	1,666	80%
Green Sea Floyds Elementary School	CD-5	681	580	85%	572	84%	579	85%	588	86%
Green Sea Floyds High School (6-12)	9-12	819	608	74%	620	76%	599	73%	582	71%
Daisy Elementary School	CD-5	682	614	90%	626	92%	683	100%	665	98%
Loris Elementary School	CD-5	874	759	87%	762	87%	746	85%	716	82%
Loris Middle School	6-8	859	697	81%	707	82%	688	80%	710	83%
Loris High School	9-12	1,059	765	72%	781	74%	825	78%	835	79%
Myrtle Beach Early Childhood School	CD-1	594	487	82%	479	81%	474	80%	470	79%
Myrtle Beach Primary School	2-3	710	653	92%	648	91%	643	91%	620	87%
Myrtle Beach Elementary School	4-5	1,101	1,019	93%	1,023	93%	1,010	92%	973	88%
Myrtle Beach Middle School	6-8	1,212	1,070	88%	1,053	87%	1,099	91%	1,051	87%
Myrtle Beach High School	9-12	1,329	1,505	113%	1,513	114%	1,364	103%	1,401	105%
Ocean Drive Elementary School	CD-5	840	813	97%	783	93%	815	97%	780	93%
Riverside Elementary School	CD-5	664	679	102%	685	103%	737	111%	692	104%
Waterway Elementary School	CD-5	823	794	96%	808	98%	810	98%	756	92%
North Myrtle Beach Middle School	6-8	1,212	1,260	104%	1,287	106%	1,241	102%	1,252	103%
Forestbrook Elementary School	CD-5	1,030	844	82%	827	80%	754	73%	730	71%

Source: Horry County Schools, 2025.

Horry County Schools Functional Capacity Estimates (Forecasted Average Daily Membership)										
School	Facility Type	Functional Capacity	2022-23 45-Day Modified ADM	2022-23 Utilization	2023-24 45-Day Modified ADM	2023-24 Utilization	2027-28 45-Day Modified ADM	2027-28 Utilization	2032-33 45-Day Modified ADM	2032-33 Utilization
Lakewood Elementary School	CD-5	1,006	854	85%	827	82%	795	79%	783	78%
Socastee Elementary School	CD-5	849	803	95%	803	95%	803	95%	803	95%
Forestbrook Middle School	6-8	1,086	821	76%	793	73%	811	75%	711	65%
Socastee Middle School	6-8	909	541	60%	554	61%	500	55%	464	51%
Socastee High School	9-12	1,644	1,571	96%	1,639	100%	1,598	97%	1,473	90%
Burgess Elementary School	CD-4	714	677	95%	651	91%	653	91%	671	94%
Seaside Elementary School	CD-4	661	417	63%	398	60%	361	55%	358	54%
St. James Elementary School	CD-4	758	829	109%	859	113%	860	113%	812	107%
St. James Intermediate School	5-6	1,092	848	78%	851	78%	807	74%	784	72%
St. James Middle School	7-8	985	898	91%	884	90%	889	90%	858	87%
St. James High School	9-12	1,577	1,738	110%	1,784	113%	1,766	112%	1,703	108%

Source: Horry County Schools, 2025.

siders 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 improve 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 can better prepare people for the workforce.

Coastal Carolina University (CCU) is a four-year institution located in Conway with 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 golf facility. 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 2023, CCU approved a Campus Master Plan Update. It proposed projects including two new academic buildings, three housing facilities, athletic and recreation support buildings, an intramural sports field, new arts center, music and band building, HTC Center expansion, two parking structures, a health and human performance building, track and field facilities, and a Student Union building expansion and shuttle transportation hub.

The updated plan also discusses the potential for a gateway district 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 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 pedestrian connections and safety between student housing and core campus facilities.

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, and 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, and in 2024, HGTC broke ground on a new Nursing and Health Sciences Institute at its 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, aesthetics 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



Source: Coastal Carolina University, 2023.



LEGEND

1. Academic Building
2. Athletic Operations
3. Athletic/Recreation Support Building
4. Athletic Dining & Wellness
5. Central Plant Expansion
6. Club Sports & Intramural Sports Field
7. Combined Convocation Center/Center for the Arts
8. Facilities Warehouse - East Campus
9. Health and Human Performance (HHP) Building
10. Honors College/Housing
11. Housing with Residential Hub
12. Housing - Specialty
13. HTC Center Expansion
14. Music and Band Building
15. Parking Deck with Ground Level Post Office
16. Parking Deck
17. Soccer Concession/Restroom/Team Locker Room Building
18. Student Union Expansion & Transportation Hub
19. Track & Field
20. Transportation Hub - East Campus
21. Water Tower
22. Welcome & History Center/University Services



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

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.

The library had 142,967 active users and a circulation of 867,038 items in FY2024.

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 library users, such as Socastee's increasing Spanish-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 strategically 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 FY2024, the library's total circulation of e-books and other electronic resources (audiobooks, movies, television shows, and music) accounted for 313,812 checkouts. In order to accommodate additional population growth, expansions are needed in Little

River and Myrtle Beach.

Beyond physical locations, the Library System must also invest in additional bookmobiles and items that it can take to schools, after-school 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, schools, and library facilities and offerings. As developable land become scarcer, the county will need to work with the School District and developers to identify future school sites. While the library system will need to expand in the future, it 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 near area campuses.

New housing will have impacts 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 growth.

RECREATION AND LEISURE FACILITIES

The county's youth and senior populations are growing rapidly alongside the 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 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 guide land acquisition and recreational improvements to meet residents' needs.

Horry County operates three regional parks, five recreation centers, 29 parks, 27 boat landings, and 22 beach accesses. These facilities include 38 baseball/softball fields, 13 multi-purpose fields, four tennis courts, eight outdoor basketball courts, 26 playgrounds, three disc golf courses, and 14 miles of trails on nearly 700 acres of land.

The county has two nationally recognized paddling trails, the Waccamaw River Blue Trail and the Southeast Coast Saltwater Paddling Trail. Additional parks and playgrounds are currently under design and construction in Carolina Forest, Socastee, Aynor, Loris, and Green Sea. A complete list of Horry County recreational facilities can be found in the Horry County Parks and Open Space Inventory.

Horry County provides 3.0 acres of park space per

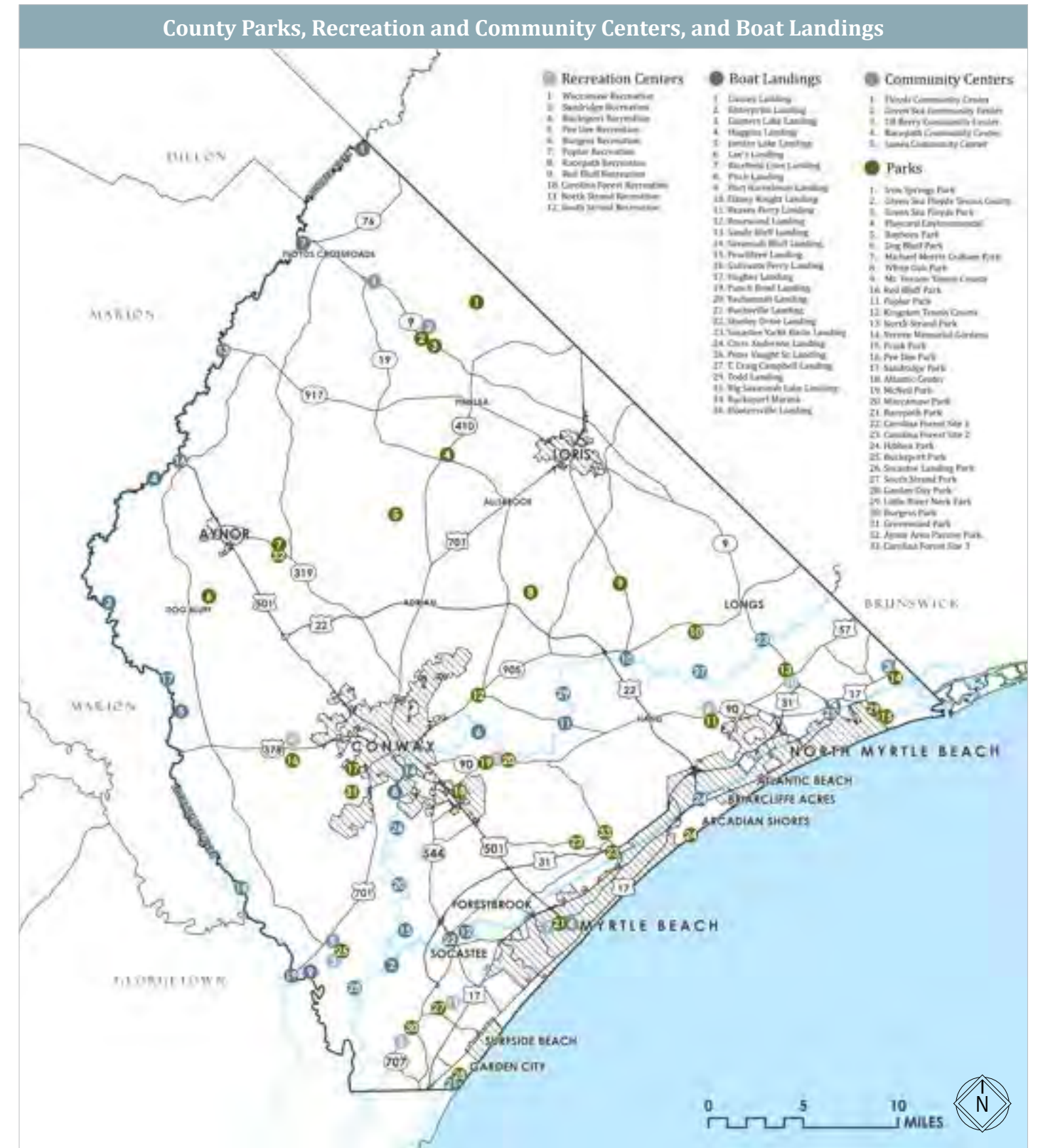
1,000 residents, while national standards typically call for 10.2 acres. The county has significant natural features that supplement its recreational assets and can boast an impressive 64,600 acres of open space (which equates to roughly 200 acres per 1,000 residents). Unfortunately, the beach and rivers are not readily accessible to everyone.

In addition, many recreational facilities have limited amenities and are not accessible to people of all ages and physical capabilities.

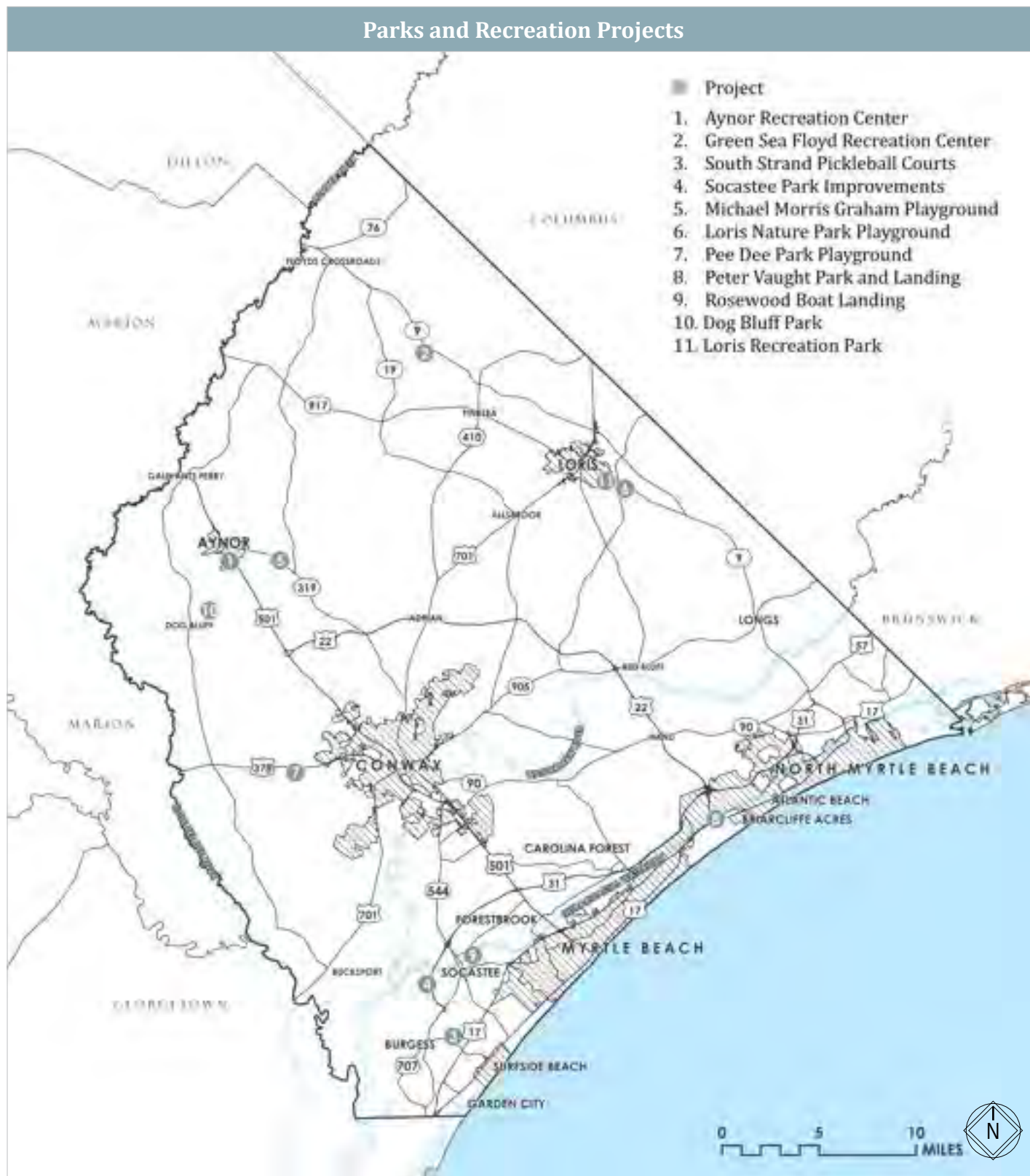
Access to recreation and natural spaces can have a direct impact on physical and mental health. Based on a review of ten studies, the Centers for Disease Control has reported an increase in physical activity simply by improving the proximity of recreational facilities to residences. Neighborhood design, access to walking paths, and siting of public recreation facilities is essential to consider with future development. 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 community 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, Green Sea, and 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.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

While the county has dedicated millage to support recreational needs in the county, the funds struggle to support the operations and maintenance of existing facilities, let alone the development of new facilities. Strong demand for recreation among existing residents will be augmented by future population growth. Current funding cannot meet this demand.

Programming is currently available at all recreation and community centers, in addition to a specialized outdoor recreation and athletic programs. 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 (HCCOA), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1975 to provide senior care services. HCCOA serves over 10,000 senior citizens throughout Horry County. Programs and activities include meal services, transportation assistance, housekeeping assistance, senior activities, recreation, basic health checks, telephone reassurance, in-home visitation, group counseling, employment opportunities, and local outings.

Senior Centers are located in Aynor, Bucksport, Burgess, Carolina Forest, Conway, Grand Strand, Green Sea, Loris, Mt. Vernon, North Strand, and the South Strand. The HCCOA operates a senior center out of a 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 programming and 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.

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 2025, there are five hospitals in Horry County with a total of 1,014 general and special-purpose beds. Medical campus expansions currently in progress include a 48-bed expansion of McLeod Health Carolina Forest Hospital, a 12-bed expansion of Conway Medical Center, and a new 36-bed hospital in Socastee. In addition, various doctor's offices, rehabilitation facilities, urgent care clinics, and a Veterans Affairs Clinic serve Horry County.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

The SCDPH's 2022 Drug Overdose Deaths Report found state opioid-related overdose deaths rose

229.7% from 2018 to 2022 (SCDPH, 2022). According to the DPH, there were 192 deaths from opioid overdoses in the county in 2022. That same year, EMS administered the drug Naloxone (that reverses the effect of opioids) 813 times.

The county's opioid overdose death rates are among the highest in the state, at 61.4 per 100,000 residents.

While Horry County has three methadone clinics, zoning laws and public stigma may inhibit 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.

The South Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund (SCORF) Board was created by the South Carolina Opioid

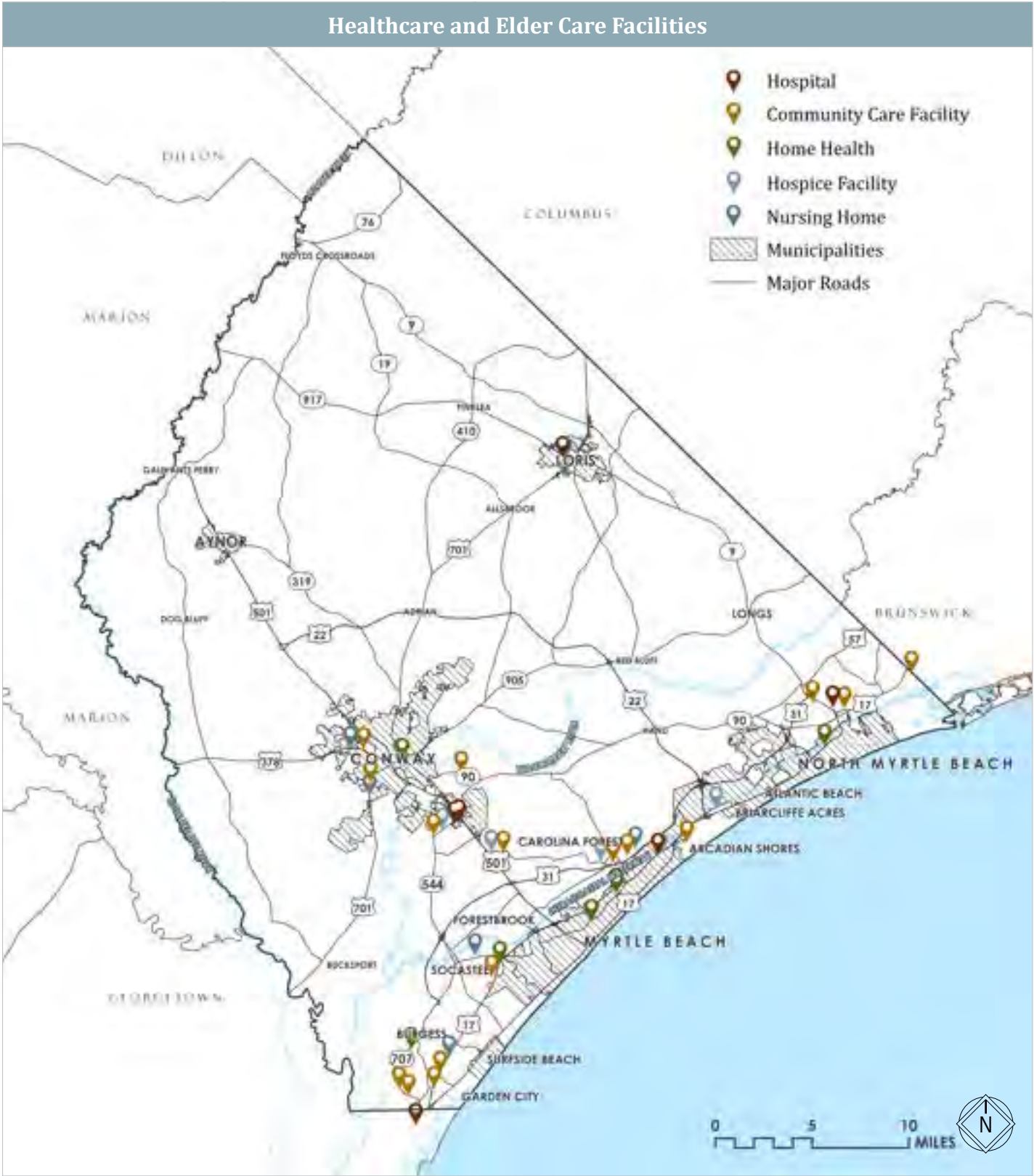
Recovery Act, SC Code §11-58-10 et seq., to administer and disburse the South Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund in accordance with the terms of South Carolina Opioid Litigation settlement agreements. Beginning in 2023, the SCORF Board initiated distribution of settlement funds for approved uses to help address and remediate the impact of the opioid epidemic in South Carolina.

Horry County’s SCORF Guaranteed Political Subfund funding led to development of enhanced services within several county department-based teams which regularly encounter those with opioid use disorders and other substance abuse disorders. The 15th Judicial Circuit Court initiated an expansion of services within the Treatment Court to hire a Case Manager and an Outreach Coordinator, thus allowing

Hospital and Medical Center Bed Counts						
Facility	Total Beds	General Beds	Neonatal Special Care	Rehabilitation	Psychiatric	Substance Abuse
Conway Medical Center	228	210	6	12	0	0
Grand Strand Medical Center	405	357	2	24	22	0
McLead Seacoast Hospital	155	155	0	0	0	0
McLead Loris Hospital	50	50	0	0	0	0
Lighthouse Behavioral Health Hospital	105	0	0	0	76	29
Total Units	943	772	8	36	98	29

Licensed Health Care Facilities		
Facility Type	Number of Facilities	Licensed Units
Ambulatory Surgery	8	31
Home Health	8	42
Hospice Facility	1	36
Hospice Program	7	N/A
CDAP Facilities	6	0
Renal Dialysis	9	180
Resident Treatment for Children and Adolescents	0	0
Public Health Clinics	5	N/A
Nursing Homes	8	824
Community Residential Care Facilities	21	1701

Source: SCDPH, 2025b.



Source: SCDPH, 2025b.

for more comprehensive case management services which addressed barriers to participation.

Since inception of these services, participation in Treatment Court has increased by 129%.

J Reuben Long Detention Center utilized SCORF funds to expand their successful Next Steps program for male inmates to establish a Recovery Community for Female Inmates. In its first two years of operation, more than 370 individuals were connected to therapeutic counseling services, more than 300 individuals were provided with a substance use disorder specific release plan and more than 700 individuals were connected with peer support.

The Horry County Police Department initiated a Crisis Intervention Team of civilian licensed counselors who are on call for patrol officers when calls involve suspected addiction or mental health issues. These counselors provide services including referral to treatment. In their first year of service, the CITs engaged in more than 1,700 contacts.

Horry County Fire Rescue initiated a Harm Reduction Team to provide post-overdose follow-up, and treatment and services referral, serving more than 2,200 individuals in the first year of operation. Horry County Public Safety is also initiating a Public Safety Employee Assistance Program, designed to provide specialized services for first responders experiencing secondary trauma from work-related stressors.

SCORF funding also enabled the Coroner's office to acquire additional toxicology testing equipment. This equipment enables the timely, accurate, and accessible post-mortem toxicology screenings that are essential for the investigation of suspected overdose deaths, informing public safety response, and targeting harm reduction and outreach efforts.

SCORF Guaranteed Political Subfund resources were also used to develop a multi-jurisdictional Opioid

Remediation collaborative Strategic Plan, a major recommendation of which was to create a single office for coordination of opioid and mental health related initiatives. In April 2025, Horry County established a Department of Behavioral Services to coordinate county, municipal, non-profit, and health provider efforts and to provide referrals to services. The Departments of Behavioral Services and Community Development are also working together to address service gaps at the intersection of behavioral health and homelessness.

ELDER CARE FACILITIES

US Census data shows Horry County's population is aging due to the baby-boomer generation retiring in warmer climates. 2023 estimates show that 41.7% 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. There are three Adult Day Cares (175 units), 47 In-Home Care Providers, 17 Community Residence Centers (11 with Alzheimer care and 1,639 total units), and eight Nursing Homes (824 units) in Horry County.

As Horry County's population continues to age, there will be added demand for assisted living facilities, along with residential communities 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 and 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 county's median age 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 in Horry County.

CONCLUSIONS

As Horry County grows, additional community facilities and services will be required, along with increased stress on existing facilities. This will require additional capital expenditures to meet community needs and support future growth. A dedicated funding source for public facilities is needed to ensure that the county can provide a high quality of life. As developable land becomes scarce, there will be increased competition among government organizations to acquire the same sites as developers, potentially driving up costs for taxpayers. 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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



PUBLIC SAFETY ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 8

PUBLIC SAFETY

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 COMMUNICATION 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 specialists 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 are needed, the call is immediately transferred. In addition, staff provide medical pre-arrival instructions to callers,

dispatches to county environmental services and litter control officers, along with maintaining records of all calls and radio traffic.

In 2024, the 9-1-1 Center handled 457,317 total calls which resulted in 317,787 dispatches, an average of 52.2 calls per hour. While call numbers have been relatively constant over the last few years, they can spike during economic downturns, special events and emergency situations such as hurricanes. It is also common that in consistently high crime areas that residents often become apathetic to report crimes for a variety of reasons.

9-1-1 FINDINGS

Staffing levels should keep up with growing population and visitation. Currently, staffing levels are

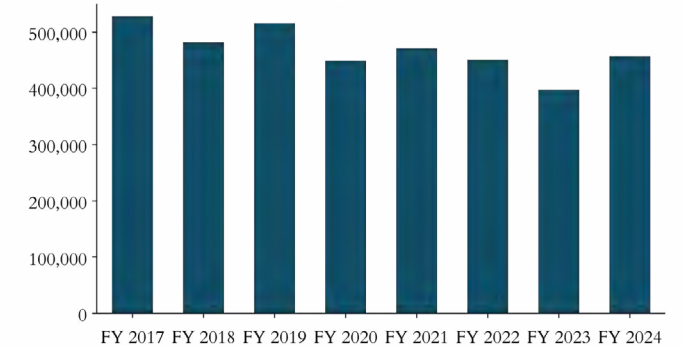
below what the budget allows for. However, there is a need for even more positions and equipment to keep pace. Beyond staffing, public information and education should be made more readily available regarding the non-emergency phone number. In addition, paper records need to be added to the electronic database, making information readily available to the specialists.

In January 2023, the Emergency 9-1-1 Center and Emergency Management Center was moved to the new Randall S. Webster building in Conway. The new facility combines emergency dispatching and the operations center in one building, enhancing emergency response coordination. The new dispatching center provides updated equipment, increased space, and a direct connection to the county’s fiber optic

Volume of Telephone Calls	
	FY24
9-1-1 Calls Received	317,787
Non-Emergency Calls Received	139,530
9-1-1 Texts Received	3,436
Total Incoming Communications	460,753
NCIC Transactions	674,612
Radio Transmissions	11,907,094

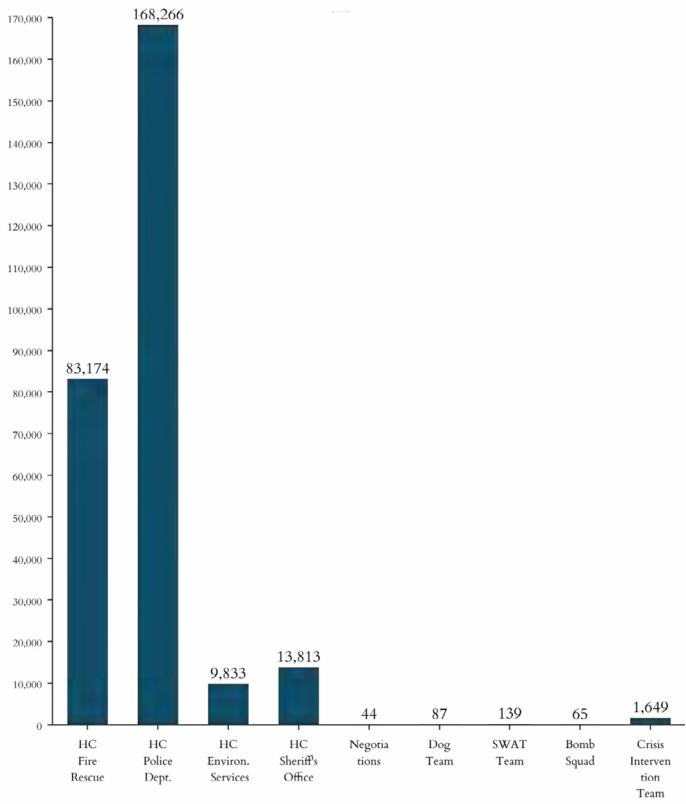
Source: Horry County E911, 2025.

Incoming Call Volume to 9-1-1 Communications Center



Source: Horry County E911, 2025.

2024 Dispatched Calls



Source: Horry County E911, 2025.

line for coordination with other county departments.

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, Emergency 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: earthquakes, hurricanes, riverine and coastal flooding, tsunamis, communication, evacuations, mass fatality events, re-entry, operational areas, mosquito borne diseases, severe weather, drought, wildfire, plane crashes, and toxic material spills.

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

In January 2023, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was moved to the new Randall S. Webster building in Conway. The new facility features a category 5 hurricane hardened structure and can withstand up to 160 MPH winds. Moving the facility from its former location at the M.L. Brown Building eliminated facility vulnerability to flooding caused by 2016's Hurricane Matthew.

The facility includes redundant HVAC, sanitation, and power systems that can function for 72 hours without electricity. Emergency operations are accommodated by a command room with 34 consoles for emergency dispatchers, the 9-1-1 call center, meeting rooms, a helipad, bunkrooms, kitchens,

and administration office. The facility also houses five training rooms and 25 classrooms.

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

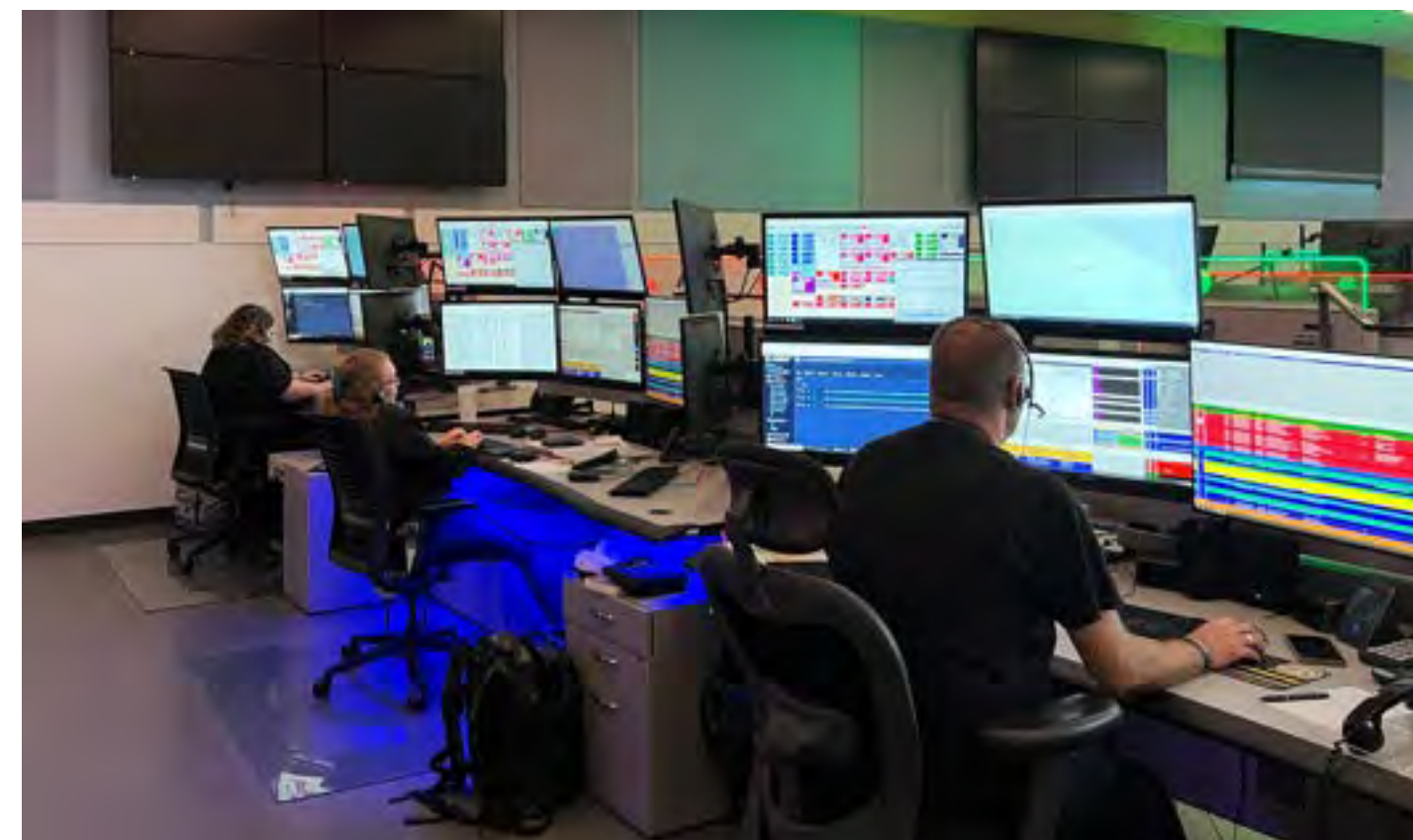
Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in 2012. The campaign also reflects the National Hurricane Center's (NHC) decision to separate the association of storm surge inundation from the category of storm.

As new major roadway projects are completed, such as the SC Hwy 22 extension and I-73, evacuation times will continue to improve.

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 for alerting the public to the opening of shelters and their locations. There are four shelters in the county,



Emergency Operations dispatch and communications center
Source: Horry County, 2025a.

all located in public schools. In addition shelter locations can change over time. 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.

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 by 300 feet) 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 Road is the only fueling location available for county vehicles to refuel if power is out.

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 have ten days to approve or deny the request.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FINDINGS

The Randall S. Webster 9-1-1 Communications and Emergency Operations Center will need the capacity to expand as the county population grows. Evacuation routes, shelters, plans, and distribution points will need to be evaluated and updated on a continuing basis as population increases 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 SC Hwy 22 extension 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 2025, the Police Department maintained a staff of over 455, with 383 sworn officers and 72 civilian staff. 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 is currently 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.

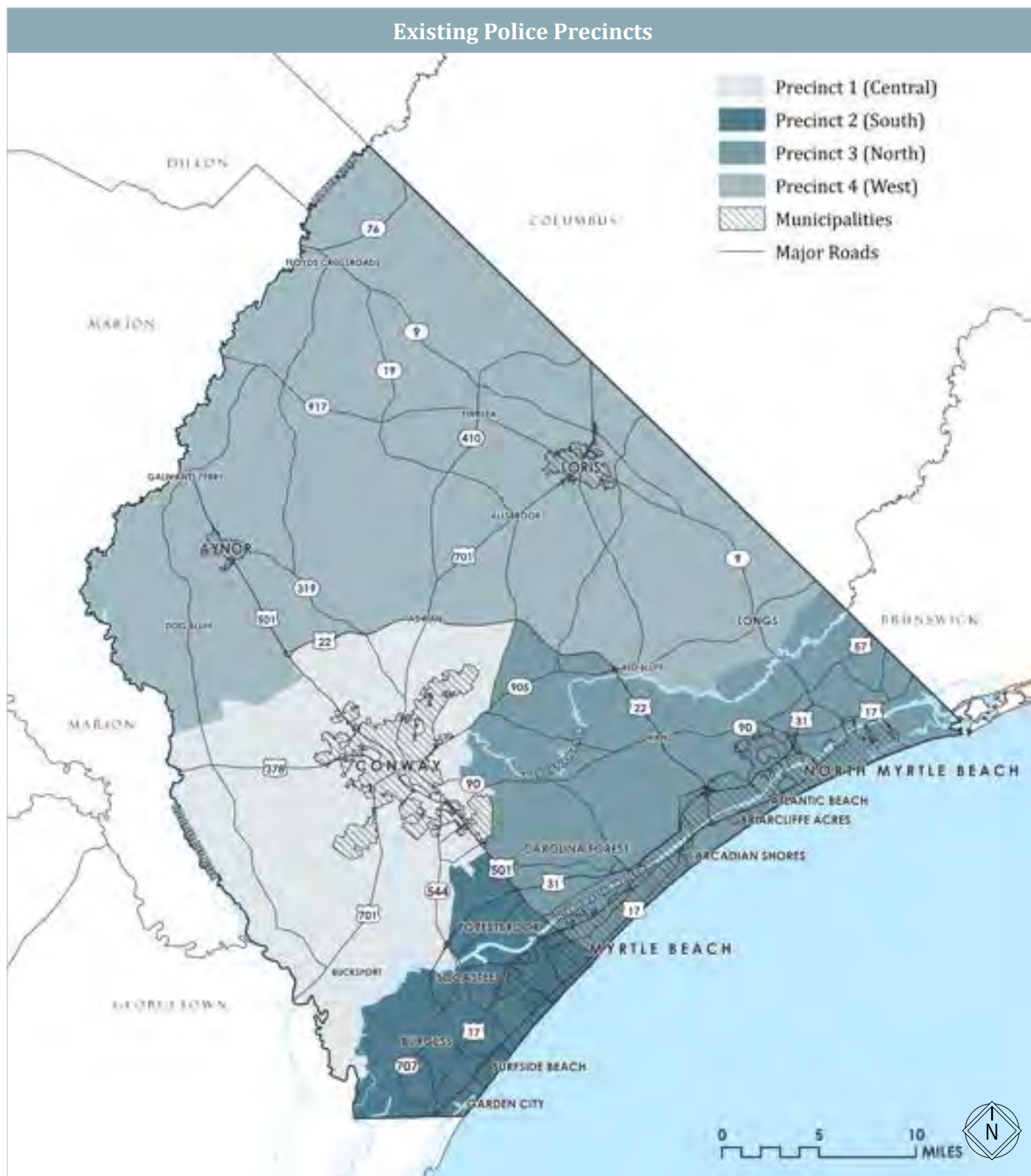
The County Police are at capacity in the M.L. Brown Building, as well as in the four existing precinct buildings.

In 2025, the completion of the Central Coast Complex in Carolina Forest will allow for the creation of a fifth precinct and restructuring of existing precincts, increasing staffing capacity and improving response times.

The Police Department has proposed the addition of a sixth precinct in the future to further improve service and emergency response. The department also recommends precinct staff expansion, support expansion and CID expansion.

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 nighttime training. A centralized practice firing range that has the capacity for 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 county has identified a site and begun design for a new public safety training facility adjacent to the Emergency Operations Center. The site will include driving and firearm practicing facilities would accommodate the future growth needs of the police department, Sheriff's Office, and Fire and Rescue.

Currently, the department is purchasing new equipment as budget and grant money allows for. Recent additions have included a drug lab, armored BearCat a bomb response vehicle, and a negotiations vehicle. Department acquisition includes safety equipment



Source: Horry County GIS, 2025a.

for officers. However, there remains 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 2013 to 2023. Violent crimes include murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Reported crime rates have declined since 2020 even as the county population has grown. The Police Department maintains an online GIS map that tracks crime for the past 48 hours.

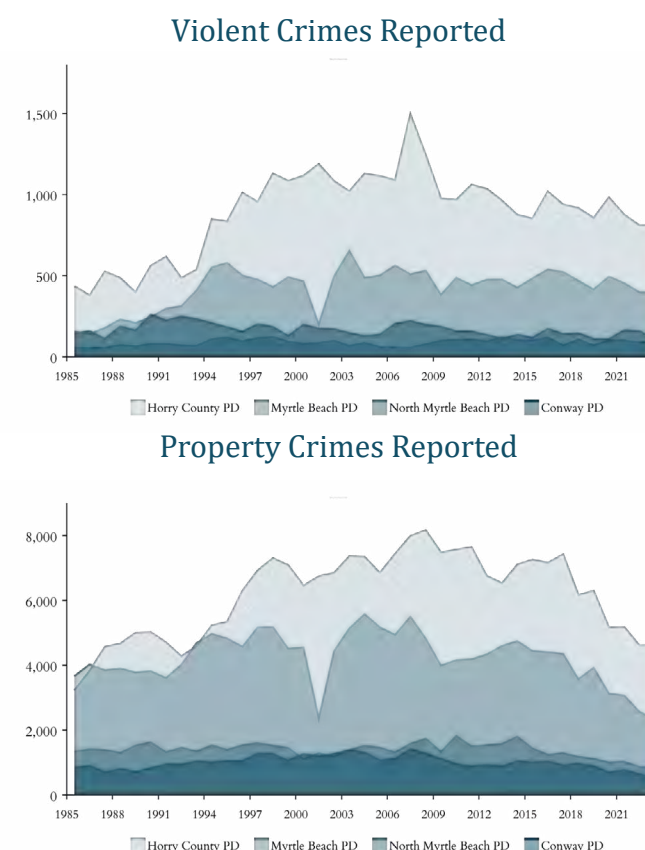
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

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 influence 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.



Source: FBI, 2023

Environmental Services

Environmental Services is comprised of four 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 at the Horry County Animal Care Center
Source: Horry County, 2025b.

Domestic Violence

The county's first domestic violence shelter began construction in January 2025. The shelter will feature 18 beds, pet accommodations, and a learning center when complete.

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 2024, the Sheriff's Office was staffed by 91 sworn officers and 9 civilian staff headquartered 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.

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, with 799 inmates housed in the month of January 2024 and 11,000 total housed in 2023.

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. Increasing this method of correction, is the cheapest way will keep the Detention Center's incarcerated population down. Currently personnel for the day report/electronic monitoring have outgrown their space and are in need of larger quarters.

The Jail Diversion and Reentry Program provides treatment for drug and alcohol use, with 70% of participants successfully remaining clean and sober. In comparison, 30 to 90 day acute care treatment programs are achieving a 7% clean and sober rate. In 2022, the Detention Center began offering the program to female 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 799 inmates and 176 corrections officers, J Reuben Long was understaffed in 2024.

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 online 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 767 total sex offenders.

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, day-care 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.

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 adding 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 sheriff's presence for security at the Court House 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 aims 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. The 15th Circuit Solicitor's Office also 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 between floors and also between several buildings. Investigators are located in the Drug Enforcement Building on Church Street, and Victim Advocates are located on Beaty Street. 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. The Solicitor's Office has purchased the old Conway Hospital on 11th Ave and Hwy 501 in Conway and is renovating the building for future 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:

1. summoning jurors for civil and criminal court
2. filing of civil, criminal and family court documents
3. processing arrest warrants
4. passport applications
5. public defender applications
6. hawker's and peddler's applications
7. notary public registration
8. filing of bondsman license and collecting estreatments
9. collection and disbursement of child support and alimony
10. collection of general sessions fines and court costs
11. custodian of civil, criminal, and family court documents
12. 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. While the possibility exists to scan the records into an offline secured database physical files can 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, visitors, 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. A dedicated scanning department would help these departments run efficiently. In addition, the Solicitor's Office needs more secured storage areas and the satellite Magistrate offices will also need to be expanded.

FIRE PROTECTION AND EMS

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 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 46 stations. In 2024, department staffing included 532 full-time career staff and 128 volunteers.

In addition to the county and municipal stations, the Murrells Inlet-Garden City Fire Department operates within a Special Purpose District serving approx-

imately 25 square miles in southeastern Horry County and northeastern Georgetown Counties. This area is protected by four stations.

Currently, Horry County Fire Rescue utilizes 26 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. In 2024, the county had 23 ISO-10 areas encompassing 55.77 square miles (4.44% of county land area) with an assessed value of \$26.6 million. Future growth in these zones will result in greater stresses on the department and higher insurance premiums for those living there.

FIRE RESPONSE

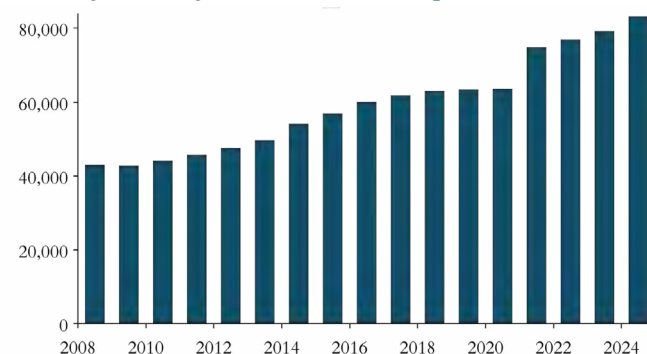
Response times are not only important for ISO ratings, but should also be used to inform rezoning requests and land development decisions. Reflecting rapid population growth, call volume handled by Horry County Fire Rescue has risen considerably. In 2024, Fire Rescue responded to 83,174 calls – a 5.0% increase from 2023. Additional stations are planned to accommodate growing response needs and call volumes.

Ten fire stations are currently staffed with three or fewer firefighters, less than the four-person staffing recommended by the National Fire Protection Association.

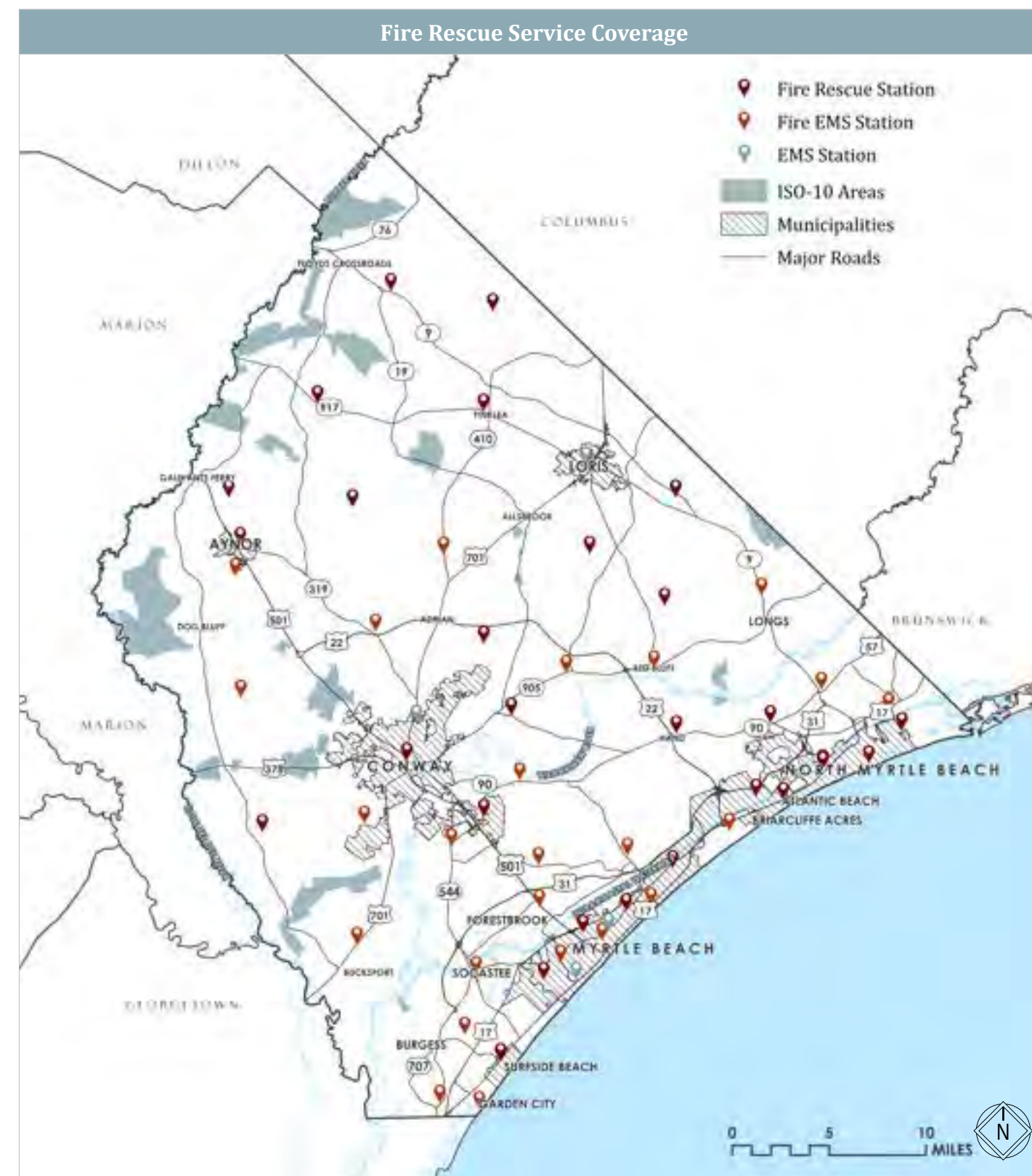
As call volumes and development have increased, the county has converted volunteer stations to 24-hour or day staffing.

To accommodate current and projected needs, the county will need to convert 10 volunteer stations and four volunteer ladder trucks to 24-hour career staffing. New stations are also needed to maintain response times, with three opened in 2024: stations 4 (Forestbrook), 12 (Hand), and 14 (Shell). Renovations and expansions are currently in land acquisition, design, and construction for Socastee, Finklea, Cherry Hill, Maple, Goretown, Antioch, Joyner Swamp, and Ketsuptown fire stations.

Horry County Fire Rescue Response Volumes



Source: Horry County Fire Rescue, 2025.



Source: Horry County GIS, 2025b.

Unfunded projects include new stations for Oak Street, Camp Swamp, Loris, US Hwy 378, Brown Swamp, Gilbert, Carolina Forest, Bay Road, and Gunter's Island. Additional stations, lifecycle maintenance and replacement will be needed as development continues.

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.

In 2024, EMS responded to 59,443 medical calls – an increase of 3.3% from 2023. To address the growing EMS volumes, 24-hour ambulance crews will need to be added to 12 fire stations that currently lack EMS units and three stations that require additional units.

PERSONNEL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The department staffs a full-time Fire Training Center in the Bayboro area and has 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-ser-

vice 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 and replacing a pole-barn construction type building currently utilized by the department.

The department needs to consider updating tools, equipment, and technology for training.

Providing the appropriate 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. In 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. 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.

CONCLUSIONS

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.

In the 2018 comprehensive plan public survey, safety was residents' foremost concern.

In addition, respondents indicated they were willing to pay extra for improvements to public safety service. Public Safety, including emergency preparedness, fire safety, emergency medical services, and provisions for our judicial system should remain one of the forefront topics for improvement for the county.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 9

TRANSPORTATION

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 Element 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

Several agencies are involved in transportation planning efforts, including the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS), Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG), and numerous county departments. In addition, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and area municipalities play a critical role in identifying interjurisdictional project needs.

Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 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 the regional 2045 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 10-year capital project plan adopted by GSATS and 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.

The Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG) not only assists in managing GSATS, but also supports SCDOT transportation planning outside its boundaries in Horry, Georgetown, and Williamsburg counties.

SCDOT partnered with WRCOG to develop the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan to identify and prioritize state highway needs for areas outside of the MPO. The Rural Long Range Transportation Improvement Plan covers funded Regional Mobility Program regional improvement projects that comply with South Carolina ACT 114 and are identified in



GSATS and WRCOG Planning Areas
Source: GSATS, 2023.

the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan. 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.

SPECIALIZED STUDIES AND PLANS

Beyond regional planning initiatives mandated to receive federal and state transportation funding, GSATS and the agencies involved in it have developed several transportation plans and studies 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



Source: GSATS, 2023.

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.

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 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



East Coast Greenway
Source: bikocity, n.d.

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 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 stud-

ies range in size and design based on the area of which they are implemented to target. 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. Transportation strategies that strive to reduce congestion by increasing capacity or making the most of already existing capacity are likely to have the following effects (APA, 2007):

1. more effective use of existing infrastructure;
2. increased single occupancy vehicle trips;
3. excessive pavement;
4. excessive urban sprawl;



Source: OKI, 2025.



The Market Common
Source: Thomas & Hutton, n.d.

- 5. decreased transit and multimodal trips; and
- 6. possibly excessive travel.

Land-use regulations that separate uses and limit densities are likely to have two effects (APA, 2007):

- 1. increased congestion; and
- 2. increased urban sprawl.

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Horry County maintains a total of 1,577 miles of county roads, of which 1122 miles are paved and 455 miles are unpaved. Additionally, the South Carolina Department of Transportation manages a total of 1,321 miles of primary and secondary state roads within the county (SCDOT, 2023). Most roads within new subdivisions are conveyed to the county. Roads

are typically classified by their design and average daily traffic count (ADT).

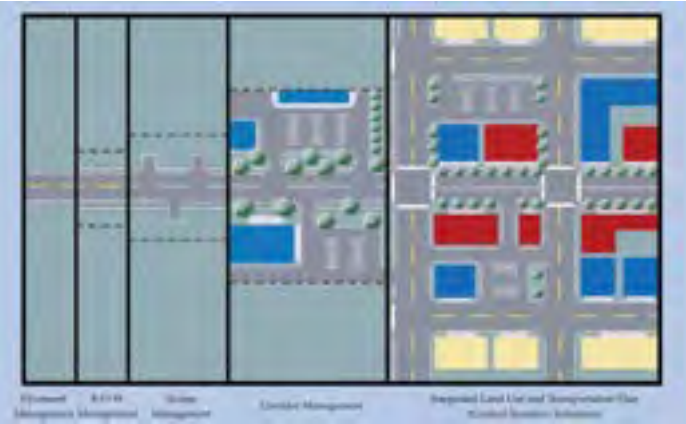
When rezoning requests and new developments are being planned, Horry County evaluates the capacity of the existing roadway system and those roadways within the proposed development.

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

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

Source: Horry County, 2025.



The Evolution of Transportation Planning and Its Integration with Land Use
Source: Troy Russ, AICP, Principal, Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.



Road Hierarchy
Source: Congress for the New Urbanism, n.d.

Classification of Land-Use Policies Likely to Affect Transportation	
Defining a Regional Development Pattern	
Regional Planning	
Transit-Oriented Development	
Corridor Planning	
Jobs-Housing Balance	
Urban Growth Boundaries	
Creating Livable Places	
Zoning: Mix of Use and Density	
Performance Zoning	
Designing for Density/Amenity	
Street Connectivity	
Streetscape	
Providing Public Infrastructure and Services	
Provision: Where and How	
Pricing	
Concurrency/Impact Fees	
Miscellaneous Policies	
Pricing Externalities	
Changes in Property Taxation	
Purchase of Transfer of Development Rights	
Location-Efficient Mortgages	

Source: American Planning Association, 2007.

the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Manual based on the road-way 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 main-tenance system, both paved and unpaved.

Paved roadways are repaired and resurfaced with road fee funds. Road fee funds also assist with the paving of four miles of unpaved roads 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 paved 100 miles of dirt roads and resurfaced 100 miles of paved roads. RIDE 4 will fund the paving of 200 miles of dirt roads and resurfacing of 100 miles of paved

roads through 2050. 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

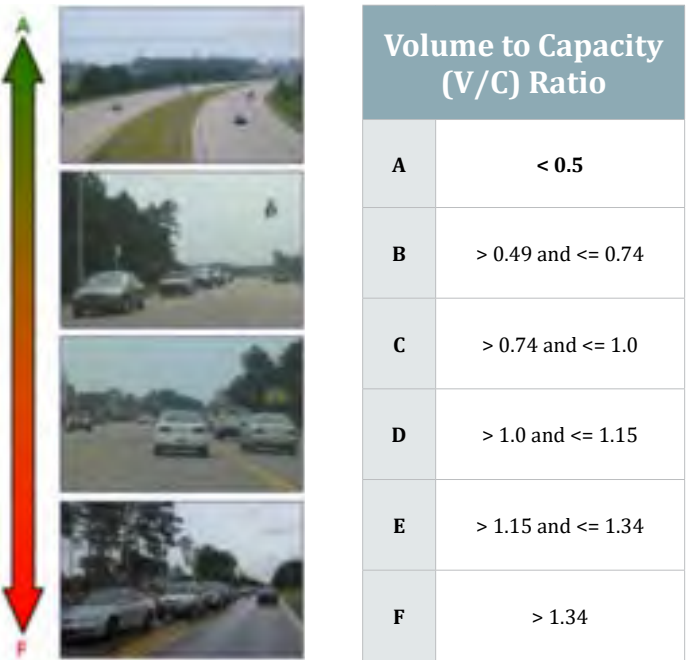
Based on the Highway Capacity Manual by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies (TRB), Level of Service (LOS) is a scale used to evaluate how the use of a roadway compares to the number of vehicles it was designed to accom-odate. Transportation planners derive LOS for a roadway by examining its traffic volumes, operat-

ing 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 the issue may be solved by traffic light timing or turn lanes. In many cases, congestion may be relieved through improved road connectivity. Understanding driver origins and destinations is extremely important to identifying



2019 Roadway Level of Service Scores for the GSATS Area
Source: GSATS, 2023.



Source: South Carolina Statewide Travel Demand Model Documentation, n.d.

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.

INTERSECTIONS

Signalization and intersection improvements can manage traffic flow 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. Beyond signalization improvements, other intersection improvements, such as lighting, crosswalks, and appropriately designed turn lanes, can make significant headway in reducing crashes.

WAYFINDING

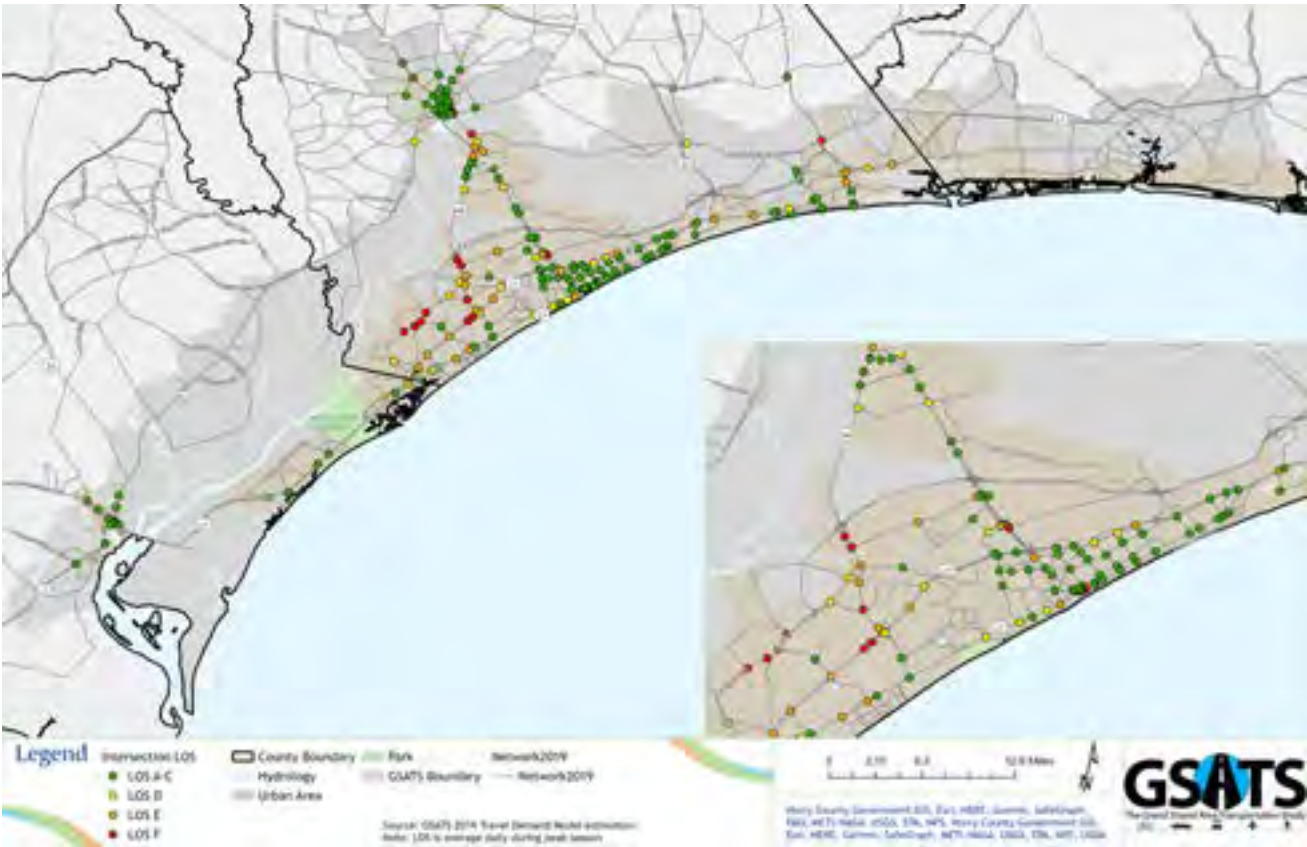
Navigation to and around the Grand Strand and within its individual communities can be improved through wayfinding signage. In 2013, GSATS initiated an origin-destination study to obtain a better idea of how drivers navigate throughout the Grand Strand. Despite Hwy 22 being available, in addition to 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 installed wayfinding signage 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 drivers and improve the flow of traffic in and out of the region.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE PREEMPTION

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 make the difference between life and death for those needing medical assistance.

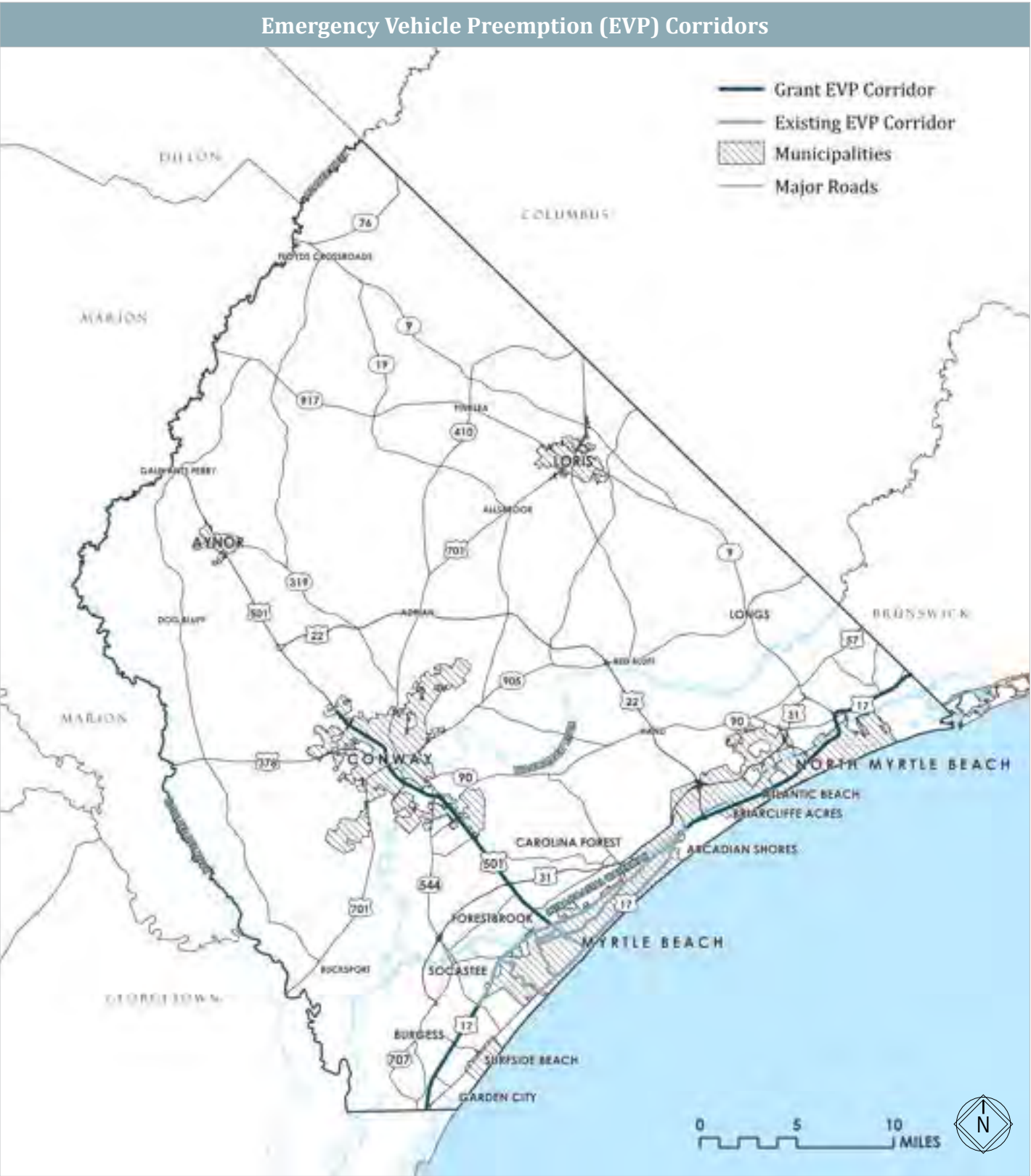
On November 15, 2024, GSATS was awarded a \$800,000 grant by the FHWA to install EVP at intersections on Hwy 501 and Hwy 17 in Horry County. The EVP system will interface with existing EVP signals in the City of Myrtle Beach and improve emergency response vehicle flow through the region. In addition to decreasing travel times, the project will reduce emergency response vehicle conflicts at intersections and improve safety.



2019 Intersection Level of Service Scores for a portion of GSATS Area
Source: GSATS 2023.



Example of Origin-Destination Study Conducted for GSATS
Source: GSATS, 2017.



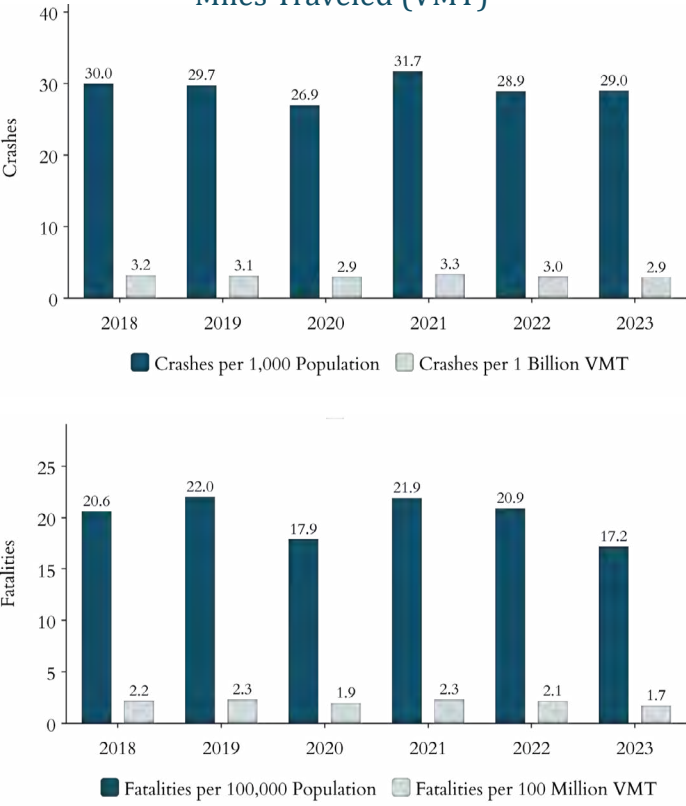
SAFETY

Traffic crashes serve a measure of safety and often provide an indicator of where road improvements are necessary. Unfortunately, Horry County, including its municipalities, has led the State of South Carolina in the number of traffic fatalities. 76.8% of all crashes and 71.5% of all traffic fatalities between 2018-2023 occurred in Horry County urban areas.

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 percent of the total fatalities in that county each year.

Crashes and Fatalities per Population and Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)



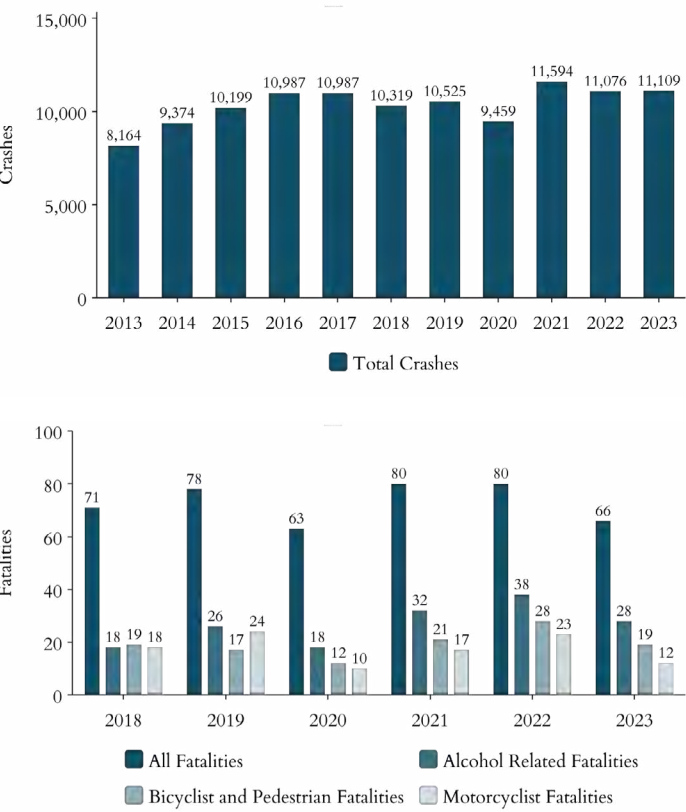
Source: SCDPS, 2013-2022.

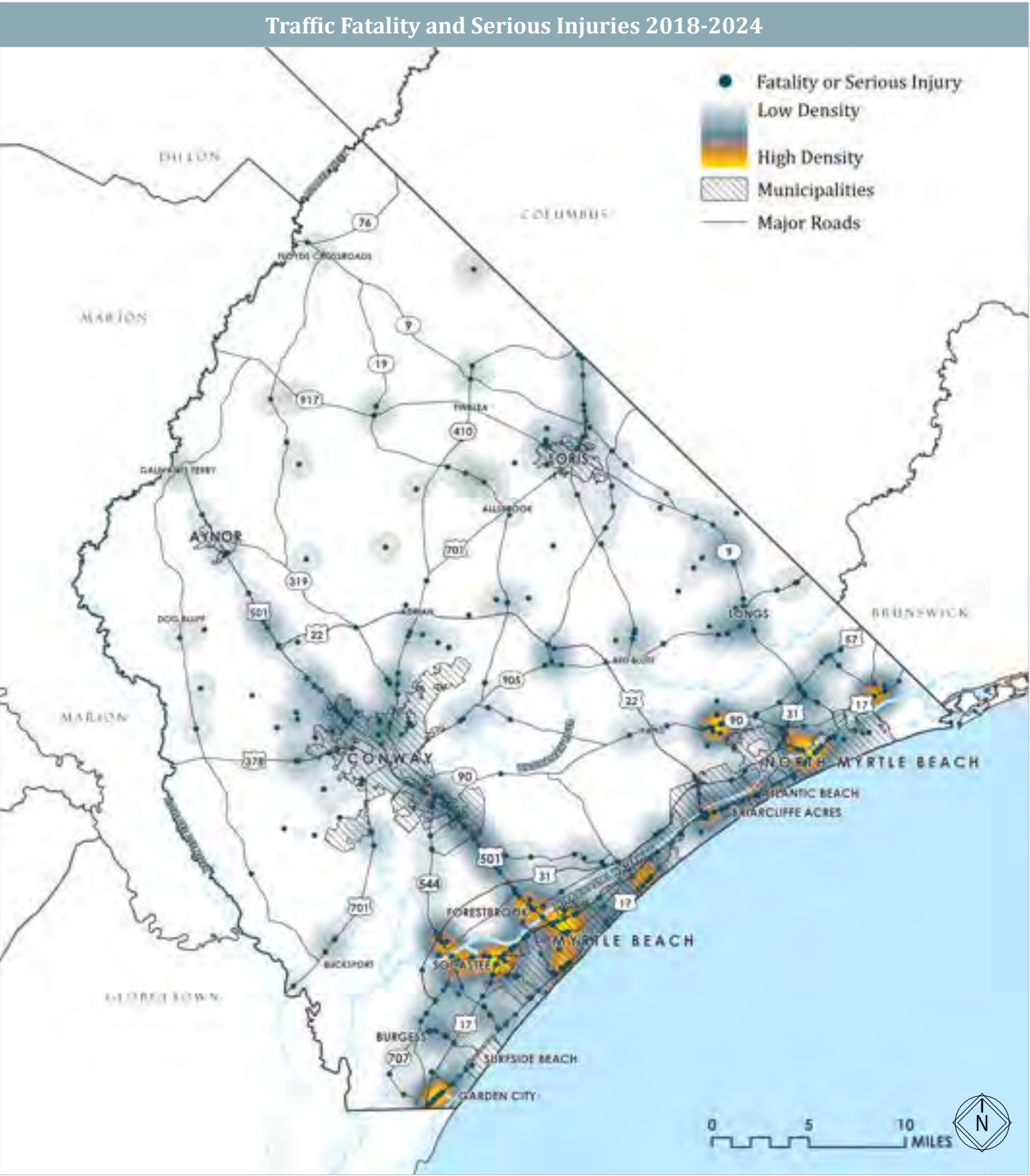
Countywide Crash and Fatality Trends

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Crashes	10,319	10,525	9,459	11,594	11,076	11,109
Fatalities	71	78	63	80	80	66
Alcohol Related Fatalities	18	26	18	32	37	28
Bike and Pedestrian Crashes	172	184	149	187	186	172
Bike and Pedestrian Fatalities	19	17	12	21	28	19
Motorcycle Crashes	391	398	339	403	364	355
Motorcycle Fatalities	18	24	10	17	23	12

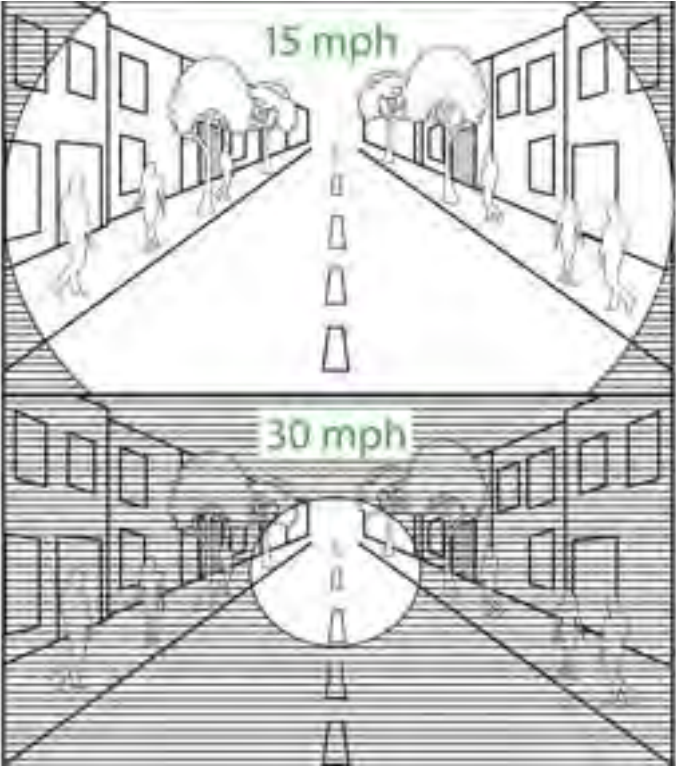
Source: SCDPS, 2013-2022.

Countywide Crash and Fatality Trends





Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.



Visual Perception at Different Speeds
Source: streets.mn, 2015.

In addition, Horry County has a high number of motorcycle and moped fatalities. Speeding is exacerbated by population growth (WMBF, 2020). Reducing traffic speed by the Critical Ten would create more walkable neighborhoods (StreetsMN, 2015).

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

Streetside Dimensions for Thoroughfares under Constrained Conditions	
Streetside Zone	Minimum Dimension
Residential (All Context Zones)	
Edge and Furnishing Zone (Planting Strip, utilities, etc.)	3 feet
Clear Pedestrian Travel Way	5 feet
Frontage Zone	1 foot
Total Minimum Streetside Width:	9 feet
Commercial with Ground Floor Retail (All Context Zones)	
Edge and Furnishing Zone (Treewell*, utilities, bus stops, etc.)	4 feet
Clear Pedestrian Travel Way	6 feet
Frontage Zone	2 feet
Total Minimum Streetside Width:	12 feet

* Plant only small caliper trees (4 diameter when mature) in 4-foot treewells
Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers, n.d.

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. As our land use decisions are made, careful consideration should be made regarding the needs and capacity of the transportation system.

COMPLETE STREETS

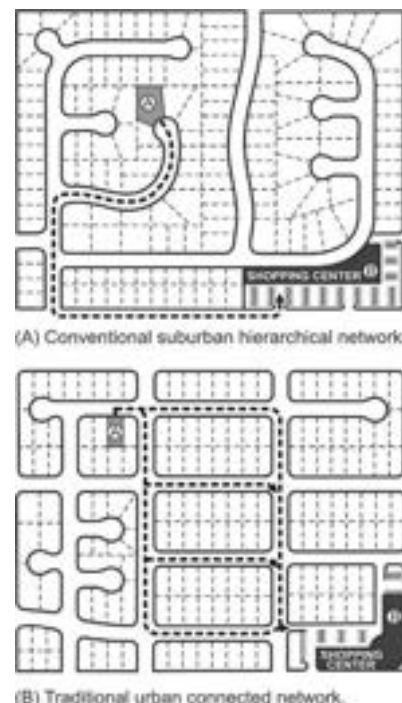
Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shopping areas, and bicycle to work. Ultimately, complete streets 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 is unique and responds to its community context. A complete street may include sidewalks, bike lanes or wide paved shoulders, bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrow 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 all users.

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,



The Collector in a Typical Hierarchical Network
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, n.d.

which causes longer, indirect trips and limits opportunities for alternate routes.

Such a network limits accessibility for people who walk, bike, or take public transportation because 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 few 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 provides

redundancy in traffic capacity on parallel major streets. Concern over a loss of traffic capacity can be tempered with surplus capacity elsewhere.

A network of Complete Streets works best with short block lengths. Short blocks are important to pedestrians and cyclists because they reduce the total distance traveled and provide direct access to properties. Shorter blocks allow 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. Horry County and Myrtle Beach allow blocks in new subdivisions to be as long as 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 commercial centers, 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.

The county has standards for the number of entryways into a subdivision based on the number of



Before and After Complete Streets
Source: Smart Growth America, n.d.



Evolution of Street Networks in America (Adopted from Stephan Marshall)
Source: Congress for the New Urbanism, n.d.



Walkable Street in Downtown Conway
Source: Homes for Sale.

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 multimodalism, enhance safety, develop community centers, and ultimately guide and enhance community character.

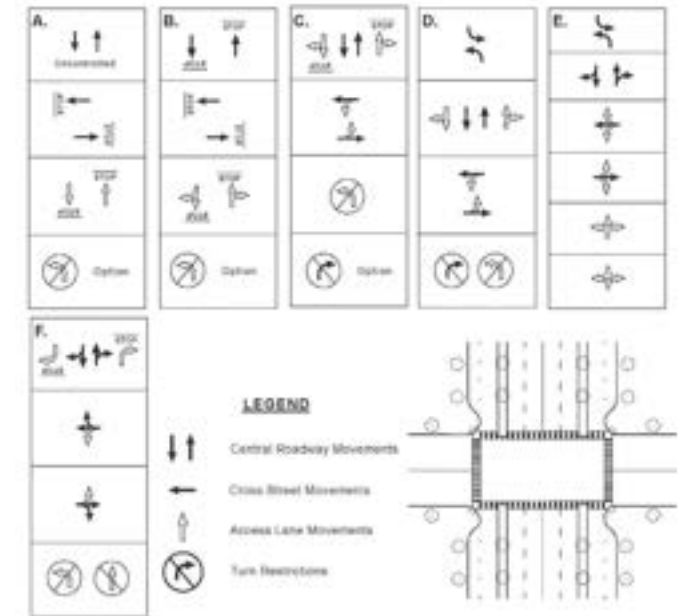
Design guidelines with minimum dimensions not only ensure walkability but also provide unified landscapes for pedestrian-friendly streets. As shared streets should accommodate diverse activities, considerate traffic control and turn restriction may be required at multiway intersections. In addition, network capabilities should be analyzed before designing walkable urban thoroughfares.

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 most connections to major destinations rely on arterial roadways, the GSATS region has made it a policy to integrate bicycle and pedestrian facilities into all its road projects, whether the development of new roads or widening of existing facilities.

This has resulted in an increase in bicycle and pedestrian facilities in unincorporated Horry County in



Traffic Control & Turn Restriction Options at Multiway Boulevard Intersections
Source: Congress for the New Urbanism, 2017.

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 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



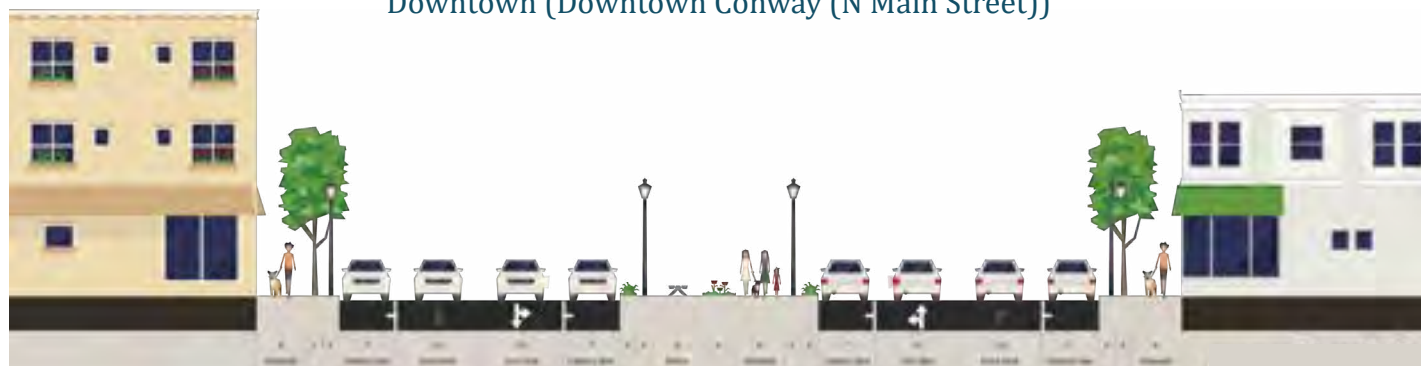
Arterial (Carolina Forest Boulevard)



Collector (International Drive)



Downtown (Downtown Conway (N Main Street))



Neighborhood (The Market Common)

Street Typologies
Source: Streetmix, 2025.

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.

In July 2024, Horry County received \$4 million for new multi-use paths along Longwood Drive, Wilderness Lane, and Salem Road. These paths will offer a safe travel corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists by segregating motorized vehicles.

Wilderness Lane and Longwood Drive Shared Use Path

Wilderness Lane and Longwood Drive play a crucial role in connecting the nearby residential areas to the local transportation network, offering access between US 17 and SC 544. The planned shared use paths will establish essential connections for pedestrians and cyclists from these communities to the current sidewalks on SC 707 and TPC Boulevard.



Typical Cross-Section of East Coast Greenway in unincorporated Horry County
Source: East Coast Greenway, n.d.

Conway to Myrtle Beach Multi-Use Path Corridor

This multi-use path corridor, connecting Conway and Myrtle Beach, consists of three sections with three different jurisdictions. Horry County is responsible for a portion runs from Carolina Forest Boulevard to George Bishop Parkway at the Intracoastal Waterway. The main users of the corridor will be cyclists and pedestrians and will be built alongside the railroad tracks on the eastern side, spanning a total of 12,305 feet, from where the current path network ends at Carolina Forest Boulevard to Christa McAuliffe Street. An 8’ shared use path will extend from Christa McAuliffe Street, running alongside the western edge of the railroad and stretching all the way to River Oaks Drive, totaling 5,550 linear feet.

As Horry County continues to grow, it will need to continue to build out its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to include all unincorporated areas. It should identify creative funding solutions to support growing recreational desires of our residents.

Salem Road Shared Use Path

Salem Road is an important connection for the growing Burgess Area of Horry County, providing access to Highway 707 and St. James High School from various residential communities. A new sidewalk on the south side of Salem Road will link pedestrians from these communities to the existing sidewalks on SC 707 and to the St. James High School. The project will construct a 5’ concrete sidewalk on the south side of Salem Road between SC 707 and Freewoods Road.

Residential Shared Street Policy

In a residential area, this policy allows motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians to use the same road space without designated travel lanes. Residential shared street design should incorporate signage, street

furniture, or road modifications to indicate that the space is shared by multiple transportation modes.

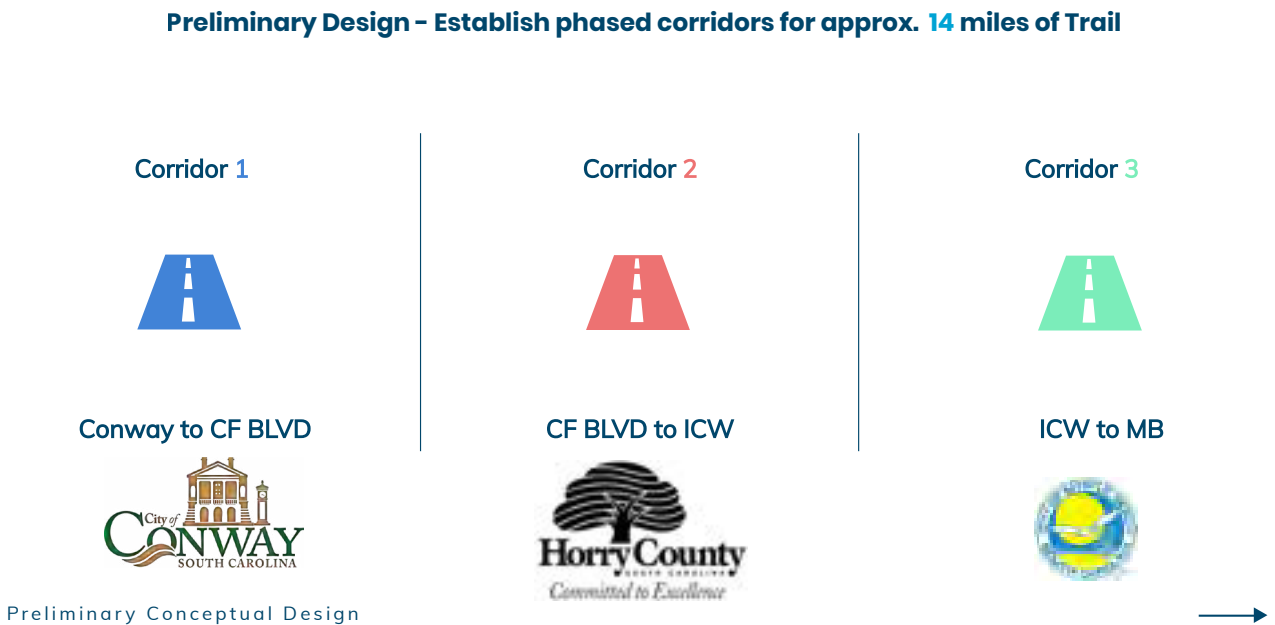
The implementation of this policy could begin in the GSATS region, initially focusing on disadvantaged areas and neighborhoods with high volumes of bike or pedestrian traffic.

STREETSCAPING & GATEWAY SIGNAGE

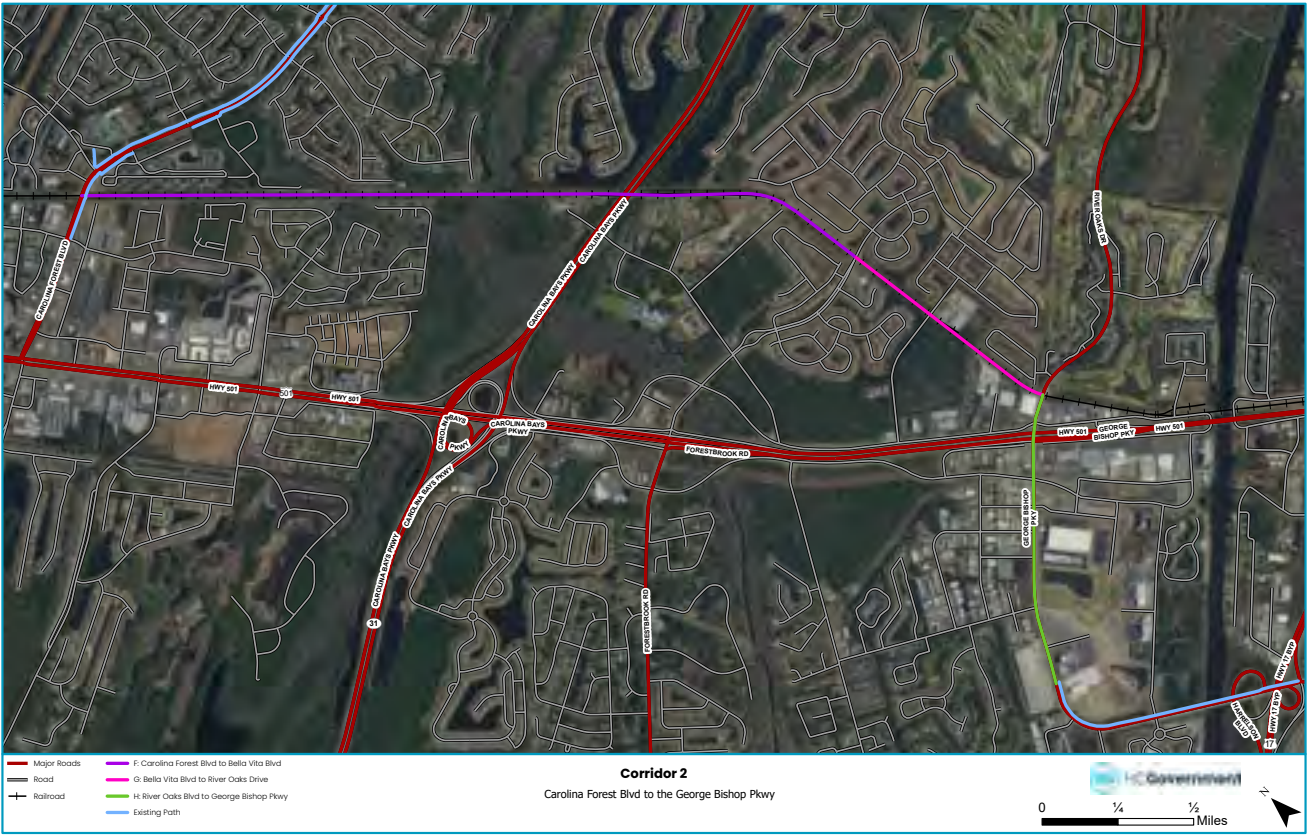
Streetscaping is often combined with bicycle and pedestrian improvements and lighting to improve safety and provide a greater sense of belonging for its users. Streetscaping should be done according to road classification to ensure the right of way and traffic needs can accommodate it. Segments of a 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.

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 & 22 Interchange in Arcadian Shores. Additional beautification efforts are underway at the Hwy 17 Bypass & Holmestown Road intersection. Other projects, such as the beautification of the Hwy 501 corridor between Hwy 544 and Carolina Forest Blvd, the Hwy 544 & Hwy 17 Bypass Interchange, and the Hwy 17 Bypass in Garden City, are planned.

The Garden City streetscaping project will include improvements on Waccamaw Drive from Melody



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

Lane to the county line and on Atlantic Avenue between the marsh and Waccamaw Drive, accompanied by pedestrian and bicycle facilities. \$46 million is allocated to this project. 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.

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 special tax districts in unincorporated Horry County and Accommodation Tax allocations in 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 (COAST RTA)

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.

Systemwide ridership for the Coast RTA has increased in the most recent years. In 2024, the system served an average of 49,875 rides per month, including 46,475 on fixed routes and 4,500 on demand-responsive services. Annual ridership reported for Fiscal Years between 2016 and 2022 is shown in the chart below.

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, Bucksport, Conway, Garden City, Georgetown, Loris, Murrells Inlet, Myrtle Beach, Pawleys Island and Surfside Beach. The current fleet consists of 35 fixed route

vehicles and 10 paratransit vehicles.

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.

In 2020, Coast RTA converted its flag-stop system to a system of designated bus stops with signs. While some stops in Myrtle Beach and Conway have shelters and passenger pads, there are no bus pull-offs or shelters in unincorporated Horry County. Many stops, particularly in unincorporated areas, lack sidewalk access, crosswalks, and ADA accessibility features.



Coast RTA
Source: Coast RTA.



Coast RTA
 Source: Myrtle Beach Sun News

Beyond its fixed routes, Coast RTA offers Para-transit 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

Annual Ridership for FY 2016-2024			
Year	Fixed Route	Paratransit	System Total
2016	476,995	3,942	485,076
2017	501,948	11,875	513,823
2018	509,586	13,695	523,281
2019	616,932	20,609	637,541
2020	328,646	14,639	343,285
2021	443,082	23,417	466,499
2022	646,840	27,207	674,047
2023	623,478	33,919	657,397
2024	539,257	30,020	569,277

Source: Coast RTA, 2018-2025.

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 in 2016 through the U.S. 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 Element. As upgrades to the rail line and its usage increases, public safety improvements will also need to be made to crossings and traffic signals along the active portion of the line.

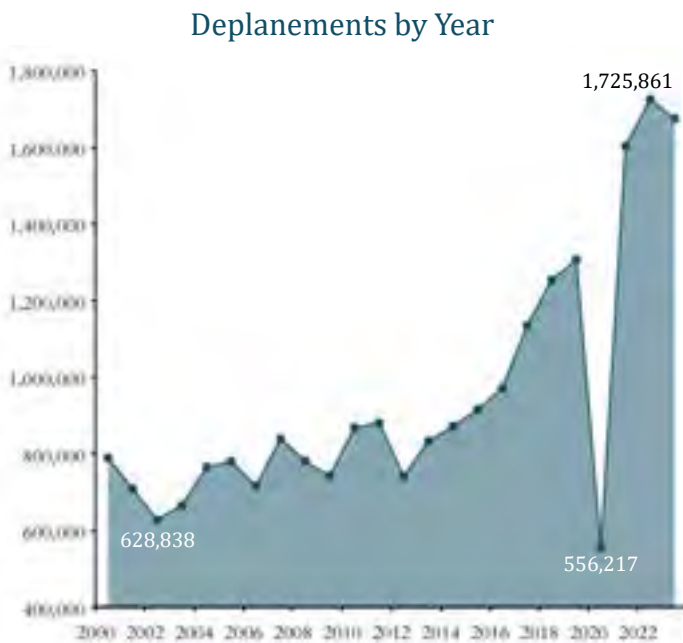
Horry County currently lacks any passenger rail lines. The nearest station is the AMTRAK located in Florence, and there are not any spur lines to the Grand Strand.

AVIATION

Horry County owns and operates four airports. These include one commercial service airport serving the Grand Strand, 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 Conway-Horry County Airport (HYW), located 5 miles west of Conway, provides operations and services for the growing general aviation community in the western part of Horry County. The Loris Twin Cities Airport (5J9) is an unattended public use airport that is used for training for practice approaches and landings.

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 and non-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



Source: Myrtle Beach International Airport, 2025.

Forecast Levels				
	Base Year (2018)	Near Term (2023)	Mid-Term (2028)	Long-Term (2038)
Total Operations	123,659	140,420	154,014	187,289
Passenger Enplanements	1,255,246	1,690,157	1,873,397	2,315,196
Based Aircraft	60	68	73	83

Source: Myrtle Beach International Airport, 2021.

county’s sole international commercial aviation facility, with 10 airlines offering scheduled air service to and from the Myrtle Beach. MYR set a record number of passengers in 2022.

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.

MYR’s air service level, as per the 2019-2023 NPIAS, falls under the category of a Small Hub Primary Airport, indicating that MYR serves 0.05% to 0.25% of total U.S. Passenger enplanements. A single asphalt runway at MYR is approximately positioned in the north-south direction. This runway serves as a physical barrier between the general aviation and



South Carolina Airport Compatible Land Use Evaluation (CLUE) Tool
Source: South Carolina Airports, 2025.

commercial operations of the airport, with commercial operations situated to the east and general aviation to the west. The economic impact and opportunities associated with the Myrtle Beach International Airport is discussed further in the Economic Element.

Airport have impacts on allowed land uses and development heights in their approach zones. 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 to South Carolina Aeronautics Commission (SCAC) for review. The SCAC uses the Airport Compatible Land Use Evaluation (CLUE) tool to evaluate land use compatibility near airports.

Notable Achievements and Projects

In 2020, MYR received the Routes Americas 2020 Marketing Awards with its excellent marketing efforts and earned GBAC STAR™ Facility Accreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC). At the time, MYR was the only airport in the Carolinas and Georgia to receive the coveted accreditation, ranking eighth in the world.

In 2021, MYR was ranked best small airport in the US and launched the Pups Easing Travel Stress Therapy Dog Program (USA Today, 2021). Starbucks, a new concessionaire, and Southwest Airlines, a new airline partner, were added. In 2022 and 2023, Avelo Airlines and Breeze Airways were recruited as additional airline partners. MYR started the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program in 2022 and was



Source: Myrtle Beach International Airport.



Myrtle Beach Airport
Source: Myrtle Beach Airport.

named fourth among the US's Best Small Airports by USA Today's 10Best Readers' Choice Awards. In 2023, Republic Airways joined as a new airline partner, and Republic Airways built Lift Academy, a flight school.

Long-range projects related to any expansion projects - completed:

1. Reconstruction/relocation of Taxiway A (MYR)
2. Reconstruction of runway and taxiways (CRE)
3. Expansion of commercial and general aviation fuel farms (MYR)
4. Rental car parking lot canopies and customer/employee booths (MYR)
5. Renovations to the Customs and Border Protection Facilities (MYR)
6. Expansion of the outbound baggage handling system (MYR)
7. Expansion of long-term and cell phone parking facilities (MYR)
8. Runway and taxiway reconstruction (HYW)

Current / Upcoming projects:

1. 2024: Vehicle parking lot, 6-gate Concourse A Terminal Expansion, T-hangars
2. 2025: Terminal Expansion (continued), Reconstruct Runway Ph. 1
3. 2026: Reconstruct Runway Ph. 2
4. 2027: Reconstruct Runway Ph. 3
5. 2028: Hangars, Fuel Facility improvements, Vehicle parking/Curb widening
6. 2029: Maintenance Facility, Remote vehicle parking
7. 2030: ITAP development, hangars (MYR)

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 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 airport and Amtrak train service stations for breaks and holidays.

Beyond local providers, several transit service providers located outside the GSATS region provide service in Horry County, including:

1. Williamsburg County Transit Authority
2. Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority
3. Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority
4. Intercity bus service: Greyhound, Carolina Trailways, and Southeastern Stages

PUBLIC TRANSIT FINDINGS

A variety of public transit options are available in Horry County. These options include Coast RTA's fixed routes, entertainment route, and paratransit in Horry and Georgetown Counties. Horry County should work with Coast RTA to plan and fund improvements to bus stops that improve rider safety and ADA accessibility.

It should also establish design guidelines for public transit facilities in 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.

Intercity services are limited to coaches to Myrtle Beach and the 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. While some projects are funded, many lack adequate funding or funding at all.

ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT AND 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. I-73/73 would run from Charleston through Winston-Salem, continue north through Virginia and West Virginia, and split in Ohio with I-74 terminating in Cincinnati and I-73 in Saint Sault Marie.

The 42-mile southern section of I-73 would use a new alignment from SC Hwy 22 in Conway to I-95 in Dillon via Aynor and Marion. The project is expected

to cost between \$2.8 and \$3.4 billion. I-73 South would provide an interstate link between the Myrtle Beach region and I-95, serving residents, businesses, and tourists by improving travel times, increasing capacity, and facilitating hurricane evacuation.

Right-of-Way plans are complete for I-73 South, and construction plans are available from US 501 to I-95. Partial funding for I-73 South in Horry County will be collected in the RIDE 4 program, but the project cannot advance without state and federal funding.

Horry County Council voted to allocate \$24 million annually from the Hospitality Sales Tax towards the completion of this project. RIDE 4 will set aside \$450 million as local match funding provided that state and federal funding is secured.

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. I-74 is proposed to continue east to I-140 through southeast North Carolina and connect with the northward extension of S.C. 31 Carolina Bays Parkway.

SC Hwy 22 Extension

With increasing numbers of summer tourists and year-round residents, the provision of a more convenient evacuation route between U.S. 17 and U.S. 501 from the South Strand to areas further inland has become a necessity. The SC Hwy 22 Extension 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 SC Hwy 22 Extension is a proposed 28-mile, multi-lane, limited-access toll facility that would extend from US Hwy 501 near Aynor to Surfside and Murrells Inlet.

On January 19, 2006 the South Carolina Department

I-73 South Corridor



Source: SCDOT, 2025.

of Transportation (SCDOT) Commission allocated the \$1 million of state funds required to match at least 20 percent of the \$4 million of federal transportation funds that were made available to this project. RIDE 3 funded partial right-of-way acquisition, and RIDE 4 allocates \$1.56 billion to complete construction.

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 U.S. 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 \$552 million (\$185 million in South Carolina and \$367 million in North Carolina).

The extension would provide additional capacity for inland traffic traveling through Calabash in North Carolina and Little River and the Grand Strand in South Carolina. It would improve traffic flow at the intersection of S.C. 9 and S.C. 57 and provide a more direct route for coastal truck traffic moving through North Carolina.

RIDE 3 is funding up to \$125 million of the estimated \$185 million construction cost on the South Carolina portion of the project. RIDE 4 will allocate funding as needed to fully fund the project. North Carolina has not yet identified construction funding.

Both new interstate highways, the extension of Carolina Bays Parkway, and furthering the design of The SC Hwy 22 Extension 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 used fundings from the hospitality fee and raised \$1.2 billion towards 23 major projects, including the construction of the SC 22 Conway Bypass, SC Highway 31, SC Highway 544 widening, Fantasy Harbor bridge and interchanges, and parts of Robert Grissom Parkway.

The RIDE 2 initiative was a \$425 million effort to improve 15 projects, including the Aynor Overpass, continuation of Highway 31, the construction of International Drive, the widening of Highway 707 and Glenns Bay Road, and other road improvements. 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 collected funds to support projects within the Ride 3 program between 2016 and 2025.

In November 2016, 69.1% of voters approved a 1 cent capital sales tax on retail sales, accommodations and prepared food. Groceries were exempted from the sales tax.

20 more projects have been continuing and some

are at or near completion, including the Palmetto Pointe Boulevard extension and Carolina Forest Boulevard. Horry County received \$825 million over the 8-year life of the 1 cent Capital Projects Sales Tax that expired on April 30, 2025. RIDE 3 consisted of five paving projects including 100 miles of dirt roads, resurfacing 100 miles of paved roads, and 14 major road construction projects.

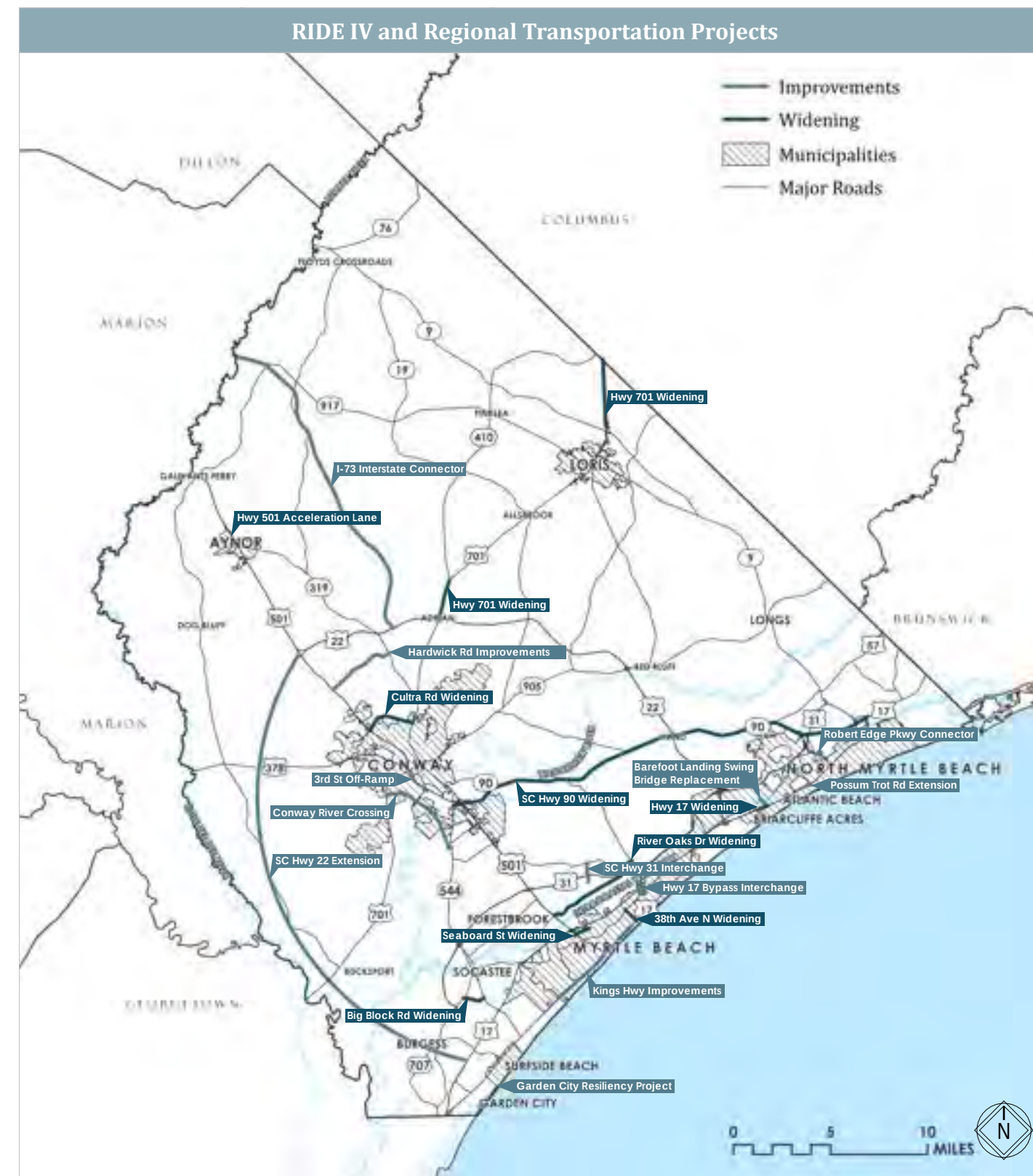
On November 8, 2024, Horry County voters, by a 57% to 43% margin, supported a One-Cent Capital Project Sales Tax for roads. This tax went into effect on May 1, 2025, and will expire on April 30, 2050. The RIDE 4 initiative is slated to receive \$6 billion over the 25-year life of the tax.

Carolina Forest / River Oaks / SC 31 Interchange

This project will provide a new interchange on SC 31 at Augusta Plantation Drive and Revolutionary War Way, and is identified in the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS) Long-Range Plan as a Recommended New Construction Project. Plans for a connector at this location date back to the original Carolina Forest Master Plan from the late 1990's. Some of the needed right of way (ROW) has previously been acquired by Horry County. In order to distinguish this project from others on SC 31, the project name Carolina Forest / River Oaks / SC 31 Interchange will be used.

Carolina Forest's access to the larger transportation network is currently provided at the bookends. This new interchange would provide critical system linkages between Carolina Forest Boulevard, River Oaks Drive, and SC 31 (Carolina Bays Parkway) at the mid-way point between US 501 and International Drive. The proposed interchange would:

1. Reduce congestion on existing roadways
2. Reduce vehicle miles traveled in project area



Source: Horry County GIS.

3. Improve traffic operations through critical system linkages
4. Provide new connectivity for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Beyond these major projects, there are several funded and unfunded transportation needs that would improve the region's quality of life. Transportation projects include identified or anticipated needs based off growth projections in the GSATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the 2040 Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, State Gas Funded Projects, and additional studies.

Projects with a regional scope are included in the GSATS 2045 Transportation Improvement Program

(TIP). The TIP includes funded and unfunded projects, project costs, and funding years. The complete list of regional improvement projects can be found on GSATS' website, or at this link. Horry County cannot guarantee this link will remain active.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Identified bicycle and pedestrian projects can be found in 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 numerous project needs are identified, limited funding is 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, improved bus stop infrastructure is needed throughout the county. Sheltered benches and bus pull off areas with ADA accessibility are needed at high-ridership stops. 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

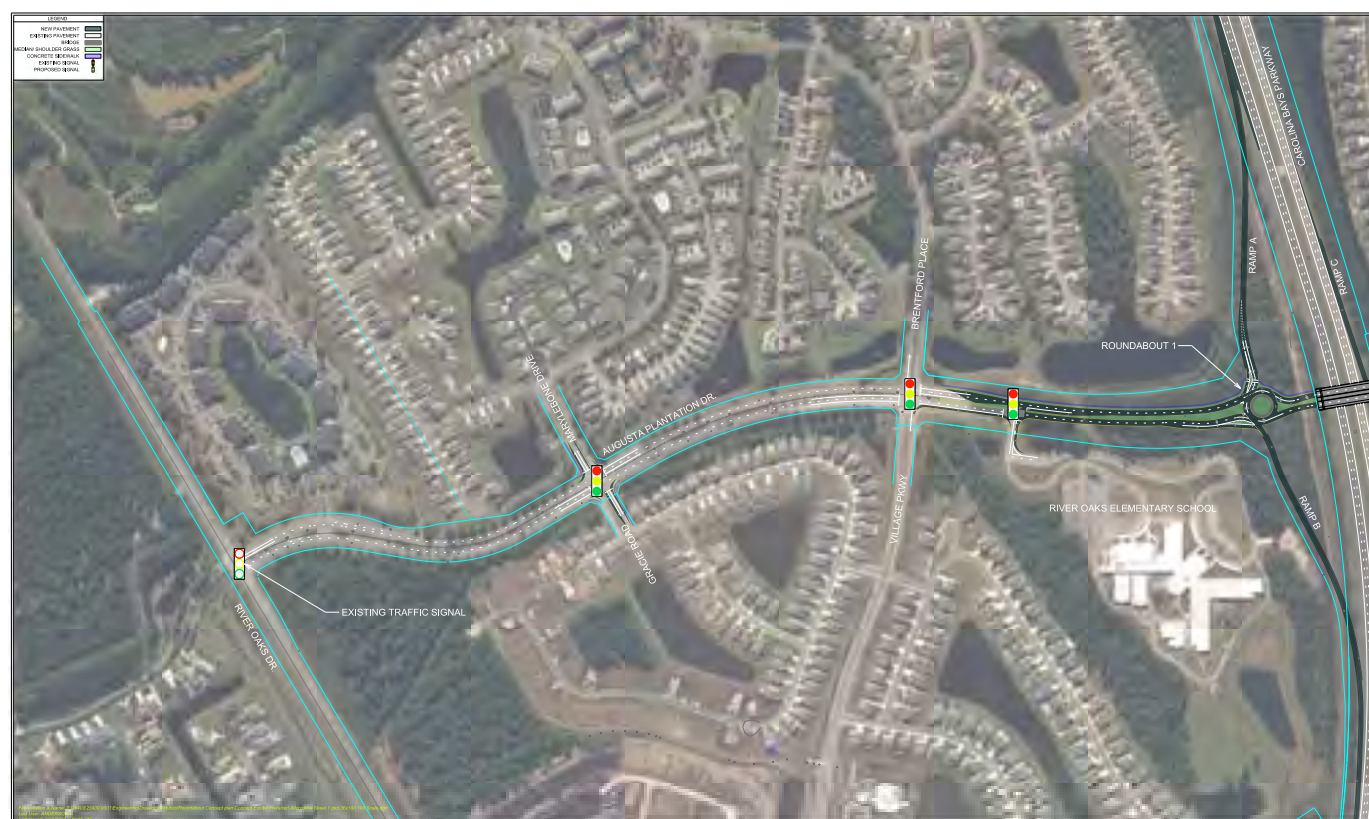
Continued improvements along the RJ Corman line

are underway to improve the railroad travel speeds. Improvements east of Gardner Lacy Road may also be necessary to attract additional industry. If 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

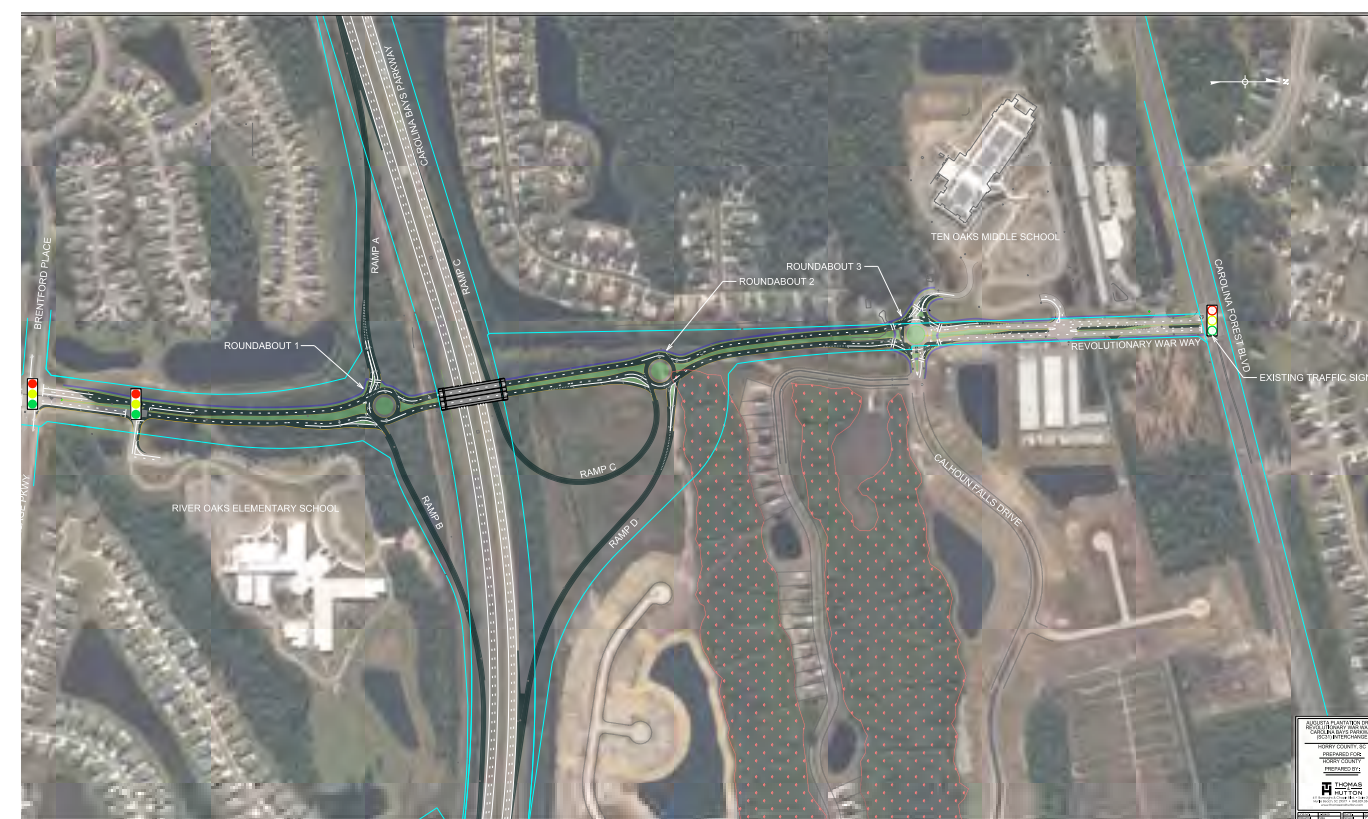
Myrtle Beach International Airport's Master Plan identifies necessary improvements to maintain reliability and improve capacity as tourism, business travel, air freight, and general aviation volumes grow. Projects include modifications to airside and landside infrastructure including additional gates and terminal space, reconfigured curb frontage and passenger access, and runway reconstruction.

Carolina Forest Blvd/River Oaks Drive/SC Hwy 31 Interchange



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

Carolina Forest Blvd/River Oaks Drive/SC Hwy 31 Interchange



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

TRANSPORTATION RESILIENCE

Transportation infrastructure in the environmentally sensitive areas is likely to be vulnerable to hurricane. 2018's Hurricane Florence impacted Highway 9 and 90 and nearly flooded US 501 and US 17 in Georgetown. To address this challenge, the FAST Act required MPOs to develop resilience strategies.

PLANNED PROJECTS FINDINGS

Horry County has a vast amount of planned transportation projects. With the success of the previous three RIDE programs, RIDE 4 will construct major widening projects, intersection improvements, and multimodal projects including mass transit. Other planned projects within Horry County include Interstate Highway 73/74 corridors, The SC Hwy 22 extension, and the extension of Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Hwy. 31).

While the county has a plethora of transportation projects, there are 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 by 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 November 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provided significantly increased federal highway and transit funding. The five-year, \$1.2 trillion IIJA increased federal highway funding by 14.8% to \$305 billion and transit by 77.0% to \$108 billion. The Federal Highway Administration allocates funding to the State, which allocates it by formula to GSATS. While the IIJA increased the county's transportation funding to historic levels, continued targeted investment will be necessary after 2026 when the Act expires.

GSATS is funded by a mixture of Federal and State transportation dollars.

The SCDOT Regional Mobility Program supports the GSATS MTA based on population and in FY 2024-25, the GSATS allocation will be \$15.7 million per year.

Those funds support the implementation of the 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the GSATS area, which is a ten-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.

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.

Infrastructure Maintenance Trust Fund (IMTF)

Every state levied a gas tax by 1929. In 1932, the first national tax was put into effect. By 1950, most federal and state road spending was funded by gasoline taxes (APA, 2019). In 2017, the South Carolina General Assembly passed its first gas tax increase in 30 years, which increased the gas tax by 2 cents per year from 2017 to 2024. Revenues from that increase augmented SCDOT's resurfacing efforts and work to improve structurally deficient bridges, improve highway safety, and widen interstates. In Horry County, these funds were directed to road safety improvements along Highways 9, 701, 90, and 22. It also included bridge improvements along Alma Rd, Broadway, Brunson Spring Rd, Good Luck Rd, Hwy 134, Hwy 472, Hwy 548, Louisville Rd, and Oak St Extension. The General Assembly has also provided additional one-time state appropriations, and federal funding has increased by more than 30 percent as a result of the October 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

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 and represent all areas of the county.

C Funds come from 3.99 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



Carolina Bays Parkway
Source: Myrtle Beach Sun News, 2019.



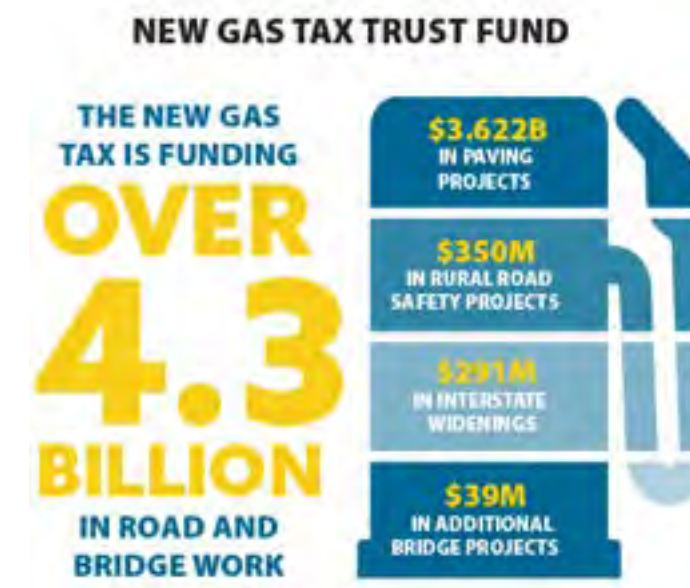
Source: Horry County.

funds on the state highway system for construction, improvements and maintenance. CTC reserves the right to select all roads and 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.

The gas tax allocation to the CTC increased 0.3 cents per gallon between 2018 and 2021 to a total of 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 transfers an additional \$3.5 million to be divided among donor counties within 3 years. Horry County CTC is anticipated to received \$5.8 million plus in FY 2023-24 and also 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 fourth rendition of the program, which will create new connections and widening existing roadways. RIDE 4 revenue collections must be used to fund the projects set forth in the adopted sales tax resolution.



New Gas Tax Trust Fund
Source: SCDOT, 2023b.

Horry County Road Maintenance Fee

Horry County collects \$50 on every vehicle registered within the county as a road maintenance fee. In 2022, the Horry County Council passed an ordinance that a \$6.5 regional transportation fee will be included in the road maintenance fee. 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

sub-collector 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 competes 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.

CONCLUSIONS

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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 10

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

Several agencies are involved in economic development in Horry County, including the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation, the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments, the South Carolina Department of Commerce, Santee Cooper, various business associations, and area chambers of commerce. In addition, numerous educational institutions are involved with developing the county's workforce and assessing economic growth opportunities.

ECONOMIC PLANNING EFFORTS

The Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation (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 (2022) identifies three areas for the MBREDC to focus, including:

1. Recruit and retain high-quality industries in order to generate jobs for the citizens of Horry County;
2. Provide a variety of high-quality economic development products in which new and existing industries can locate and/or expand;
3. 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 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. The 2023-2027 plan is designed to guide regional economic growth in Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties through job creation, economic diversification, 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.

The 2008 Economic Development Strategic Plan for Horry County was developed by the Clemson Institute for Economic 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 that addressed 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 limited, as it is not regulatory in nature and no agency is responsible for implementation.

SPECIALIZED STUDIES AND PLANS

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.

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 tourism offerings.

EXISTING PLANS FINDINGS

Multiple plans and studies conducted by governments, business associations, and academic institutions convey the need to building on the county's existing economy, diversify its industries, and foster workforce development. Implementation depends on voluntary efforts of numerous organizations, and no agency is responsible for overall implementation. Coordination is critical to foster economic development in the county.

LABOR FORCE

In 2024, Horry County's labor force was comprised

of 169,496 individuals, indicating a 54.2% labor force participation rate. Working-age individuals may be unemployed if they are disabled, applying for jobs, stay-at-home parents, or early retirees. It may also indicate that workers commute out of the county for work.

Horry County's 61.1% workforce participation rate for individuals aged 16 to 24 is higher than South Carolina (60.6%) and the United States (59.2%).

In contrast, county workforce participation for individuals over the age of 65 (5.6%) is lower (15.2% in South Carolina and 16.8% in the United States). 85.7% of the active workforce is aged between 25 and 64 years old.

The chart below compares Horry County's labor

force statistics to similar counties, South Carolina, and the United States. Horry County's labor force has higher rates of individuals younger than 65 with disabilities or lacking health insurance than peer counties. The rate of Bachelor's degree holders and per-capita income are the lowest among peer counties.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. Total county employment and employment of high school degree holders is projected to grow 1.7% annually over the next ten years. However, employment in occupations that require an Associate's to a Doctoral degree is projected to grow 2.0% to 2.7% annually, 58.8%

faster than for non-degree holders.

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 nine graduate programs with a total enrollment of 1,470 students (roughly 13% 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 offers 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

In 2023, Horry County's labor force was estimated to include 169,496 individuals, a 3.4% increase from 2022. The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) states that employment has expanded significantly from 19,760 in 1970, to 118,920 in 2005, to 169,496 in 2023 (SCDEW, 2024).

Unemployment rates provide a snapshot of the economic health of the region. The graph on the following page compares unemployment rates in Horry County, South Carolina, and the United States from 2008 to 2024.

Horry County's unemployment rate fluctuates more significantly between winter and summer months than South Carolina and the United States.

These unemployment rates do not reflect people that are underemployed and working multiple jobs.

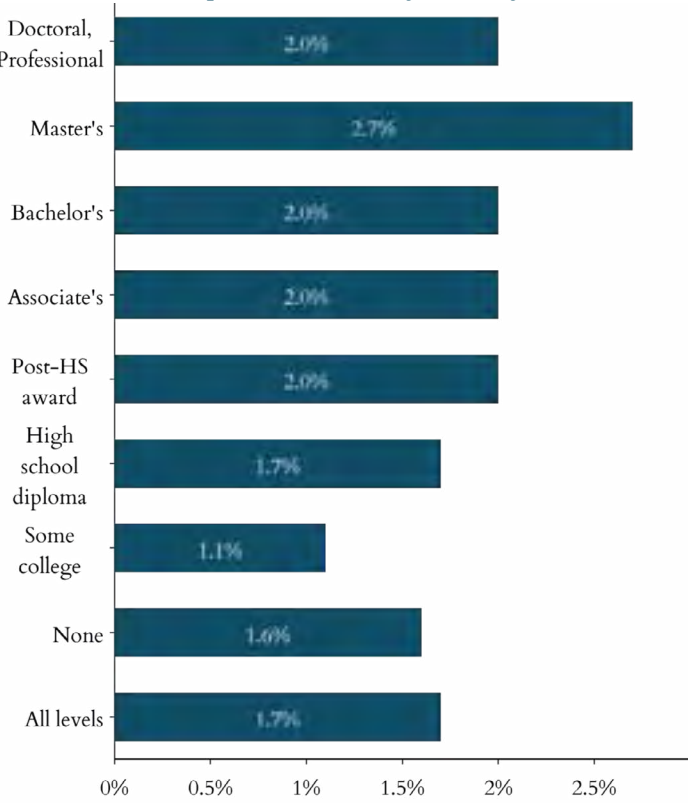
Following the Great Recession in 2008, Horry County's unemployment rate spiked to a high in January 2010 (BLS, 2024a). Between 2008 and 2010 there were a reported 58,769 layoffs state-wide concentrated in manufacturing, administrative and waste services, and retail trade. While layoff rates decreased from 2008 to 2010 in most industries, accommodation and food services layoffs increased. Considering Horry County's high percentage of employment in accommodations, food service, and retail trade, county workers likely experienced similar rates.

In May 2018, Horry County's unemployment rates fell to 3.2%, the lowest monthly rate since the late

Labor Force Comparison to Peer Counties							
	Horry County	Charleston County	New Hanover County, NC	Sarasota County, FL	Volusia County, FL	South Carolina	United States
Labor force participation (age 16+)	54.2%	64.8%	64.2%	48.9%	54.0%	59.5%	63.0%
With a disability (under age 65)	12.6%	6.8%	8.3%	8.2%	11.6%	10.0%	8.9%
Persons without health Insurance (under age 65)	14.7%	9.7%	10.9%	13.5%	12.8%	11.1%	9.5%
High school graduate + (% of persons age 25+)	91.6%	92.9%	93.5%	94.1%	91.6%	89.3%	89.1%
Bachelor's degree + (% of persons age 25+)	25.4%	48.1%	43.4%	38.3%	26.2%	30.6%	34.3%
Median household income	\$59,880	\$78,795	\$67,515	\$77,213	\$63,075	\$63,623	\$75,149
Per capita income	\$34,147	\$51,480	\$43,378	\$53,149	\$35,364	\$36,072	\$41,261
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing	\$235,000	\$415,000	\$320,000	\$338,500	\$251,400	\$216,200	\$281,900

Source: Census Bureau, 2023.

Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Training Required for Horry County



Source: JobsEQ, 2024.

1990s, when summer rates frequently fell below 2%. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic caused the County's unemployment rate to reach an all-time high of 20.3% in April 2020. Unemployment increased through 2024 to 5.7% in August, exceeding any pre-pandemic August unemployment rate since 2016.

While county unemployment initially recovered more quickly than the national average (to 4.7% by April 2021), it has not fallen to pre-pandemic levels.

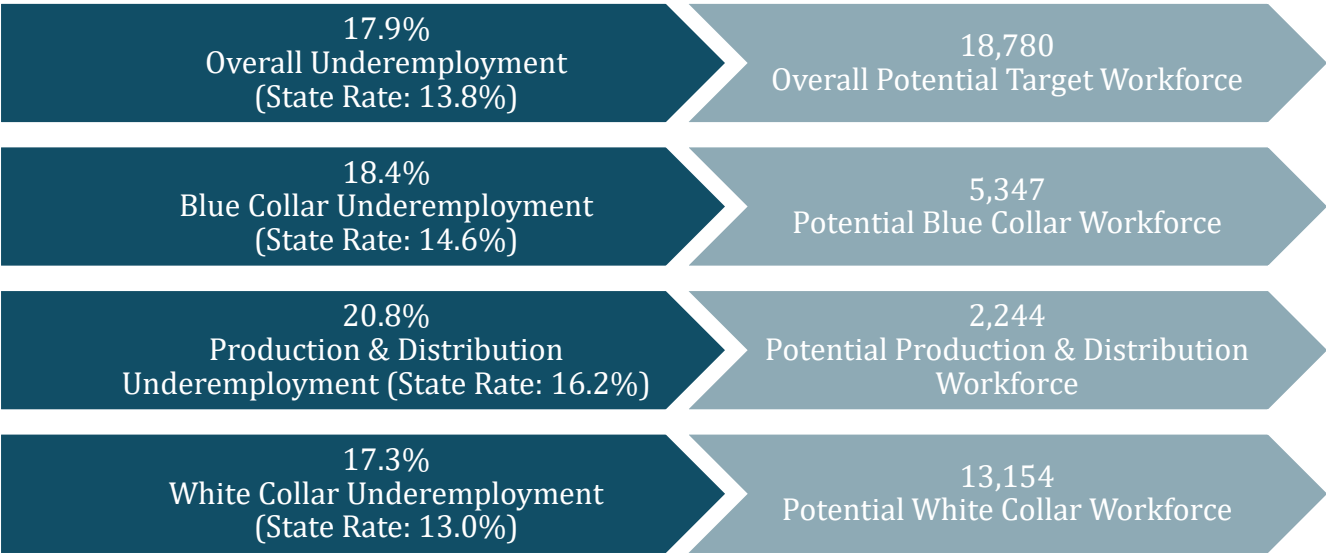
By industry, the majority of unemployment claims in Horry County come from retail trade, accommodations and food services, healthcare and social assistance, and construction. Overall underemployment in the region's labor shed is 17.9%, four

points higher than the state at 13.8%. Given strong seasonal employment in service-related industries, this comes as no significant surprise.

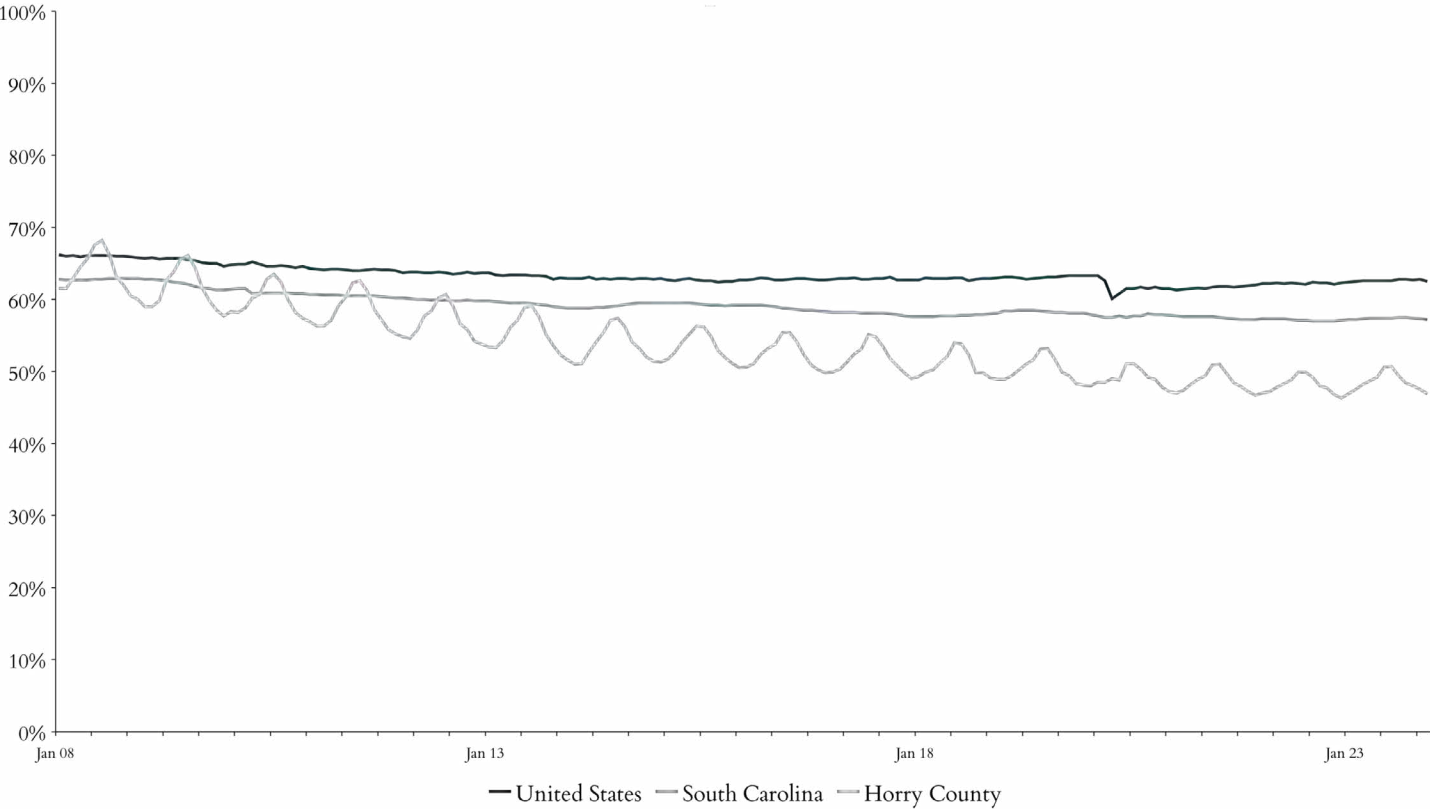
County underemployment among production and distribution workers (20.8%) is higher than state levels (16.2%). This equates to 5,347 potentially underemployed blue collar workers and 13,154 underemployed white collar workers within a 40-minute drive time. As a result, the region is poised for employment expansions.

Fueled by South Carolina's largest workforce development database, SC Works connects job seekers to state and local workforce resources. SC Works partners with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce and 12 Workforce Investment Boards to help employers post positions and candidates

Underemployment Statistics for 40 Minute Drive Time Labor Shed in Horry County, SC

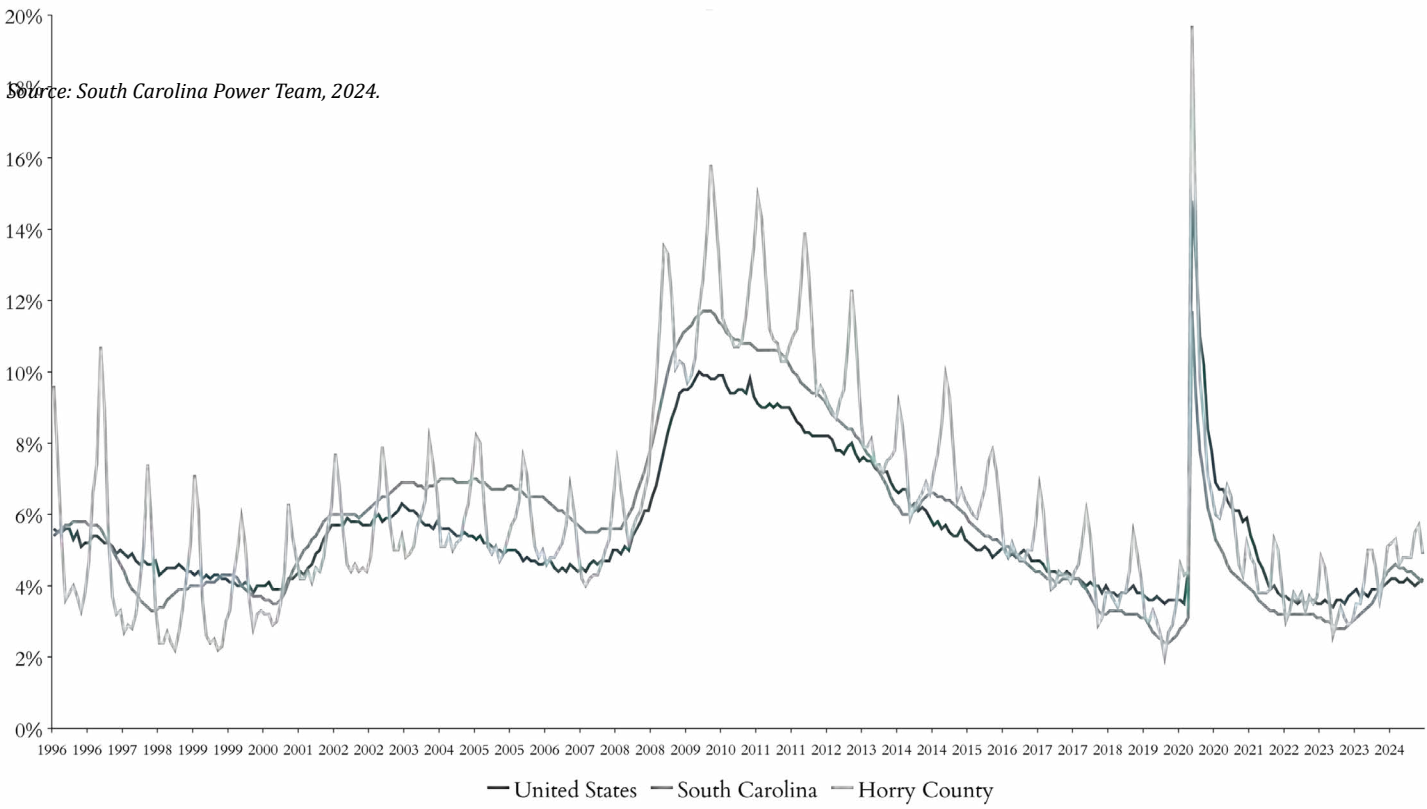


Labor Force Participation Rate in Horry County, SC



Source: SCDEW, 2024.

Historical Unemployment Rate in Horry County, SC



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024a.

find positions. Horry Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) has a blueprint for 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 \$46,261 in 2024, a 3.6% increase from 2023. As a comparison, annual average wages were \$72,405 in the nation in 2024.

High-wage sectors in the county include Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$98,997), Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (\$85,951), and Finance and Insurance (\$82,791). Wage growth in Horry County saw a 3.6% year-over-year increase, similar to the state (3.7%) and national rates (3.6%).

While the county's demographic data is very compelling for the recruitment and retention of industries, some existing economic condition provide reason for concern. The majority of 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 \$543 (approximately \$13.57 per hour) and \$677 (approximately \$16.92 per hour) respectively.

Because low-wage sectors represent the greatest share of county employees, the average hourly wage is \$22.24.

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

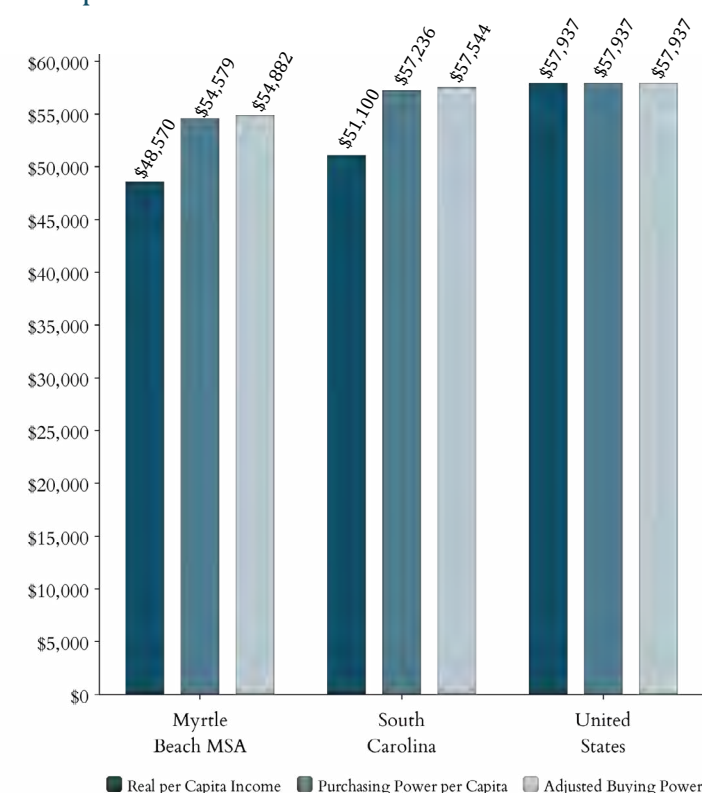
of relative purchasing power. Horry County's cost of living is 4.7% lower than the national average. Average wages are also lower, and rental costs and home values have significantly increased since 2000, increasing demand for housing near employment centers.

In addition, the majority of hospitality positions, with the exception of managers, typically are not provided with health benefits. These concerns impact both existing and prospective residents who cannot obtain relevant, highly-paid employment with the benefits they need to support their families.

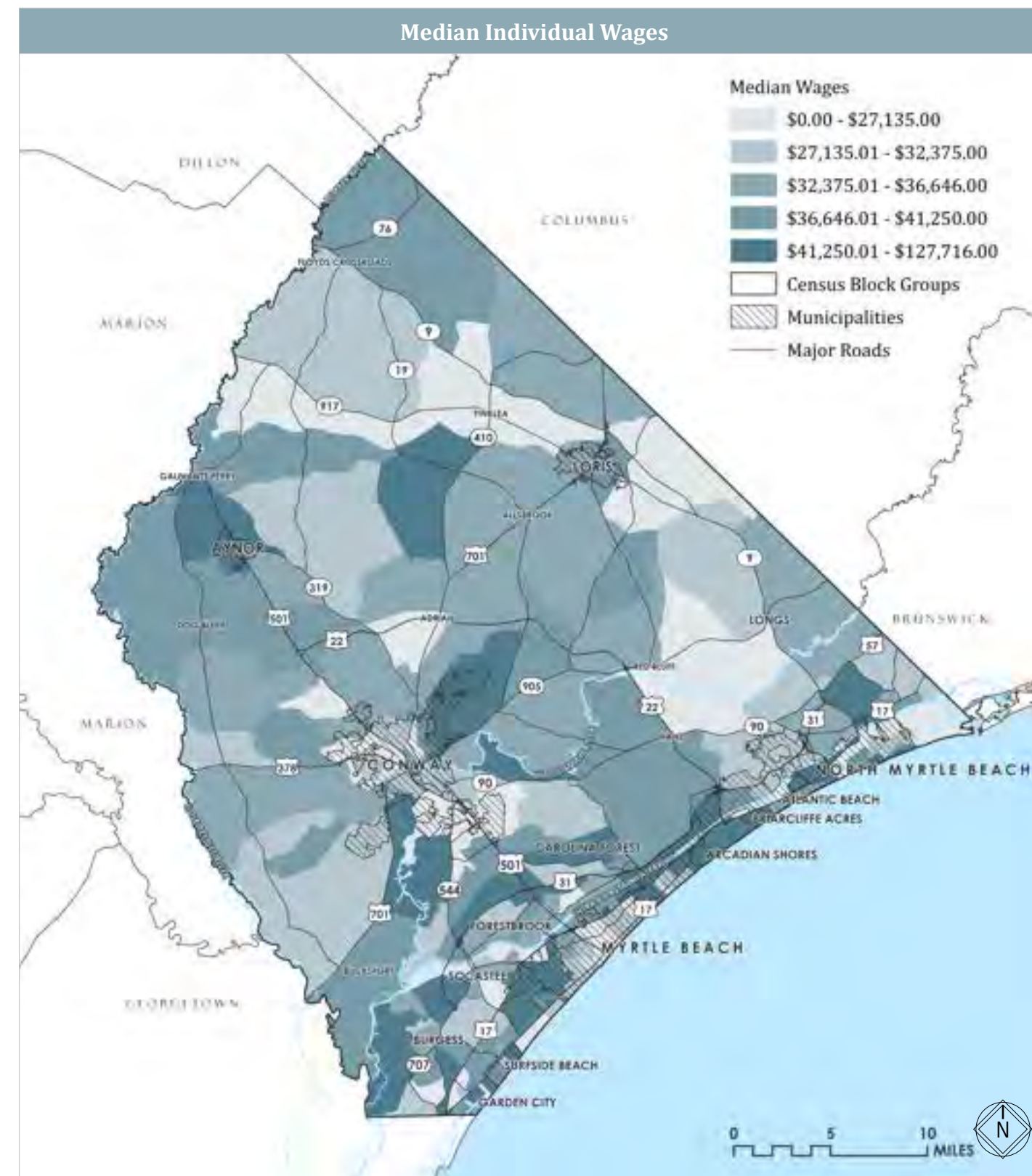
COMMUTING PATTERNS

There are a large number of in-bound and out-bound commuters in Horry County. An estimated 9.0% of

Relative Purchasing Power in Horry County, compared to South Carolina and the United States



Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023.



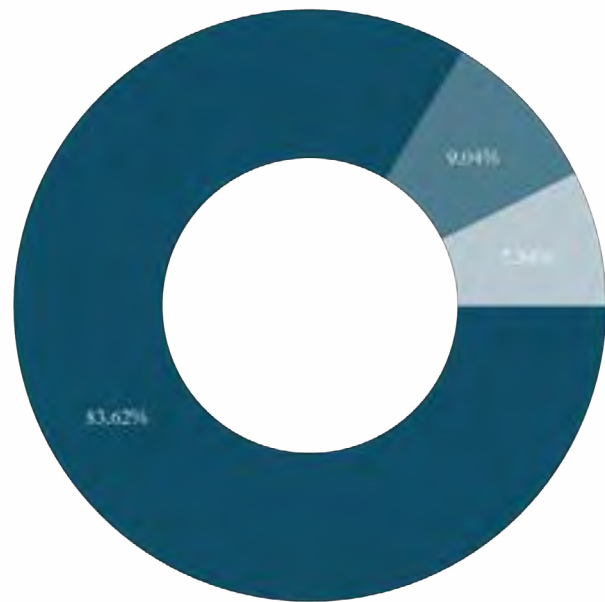
Source: Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023.

county employees commute from other counties, while 7.3% of employment-age residents commute to work outside the county (Census Bureau, 2020). 83.6% of county workers work and live in the county.

The majority of Horry County residents who commute out of the county work in Georgetown (4,332 people), Brunswick (993 people), and Florence County (669 people). The majority of workers that commute into Horry County reside in Georgetown (4,356 workers), Columbus (2,096 workers), and Brunswick County (2,381 workers).

Commuting patterns within Horry County and its neighboring counties provides information regarding job creation and regional pull. In 2020, 83.6% of employed Horry County residents worked in their county of residence, compared to 58.1% in Dillon,

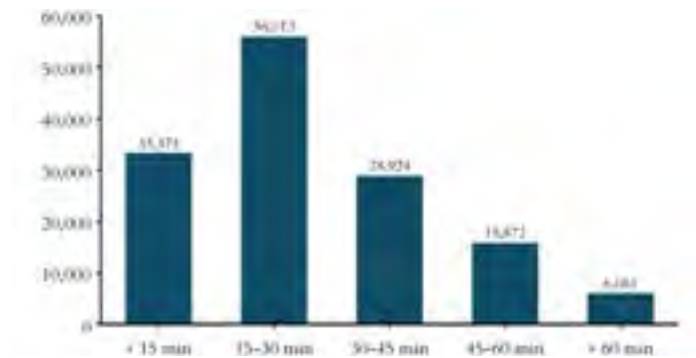
In and Out-Bound Commuting Patterns
in Horry County, SC



■ Work and Live in County ■ In-Commuters ■ Out-Commuters

Source: Census Bureau, Commuting Flows Survey 2016-2020.

Number of County Commuters by Commute Time



Source: SC Power Team Labor Force Study, 2024.

56.7% in Georgetown, and 41.5% in Marion County.

This data indicates that Horry County is a regional job creator and employment hub, which allows its residents to work in the county and provide jobs for workers from surrounding counties.

County commuters face moderate-length commutes, with 63.7% of county workers commuting less than 30 minutes and 20.6% commuting 30 to 45 minutes. Some commuters travel longer than 60 minutes one-way. Challenges to employment growth include a lack of sufficient public transportation options in the region, along with increased traffic congestion during the summer.

WORKFORCE FINDINGS

Horry County's high disability rate among those of workforce age, the prevalence of low paying positions, and the high numbers of those without health insurance are significant limiting factors to 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 impact an individual's ability to maintain work and can severely strain a household's finances. These limitations create a scenario where a fragile population lives paycheck-to-paycheck or is only

a few paychecks away from economic destitution.

Horry County has a smaller workforce, lower workforce participation rate, and lower average annual wage compared to peer counties due to its tourism-based economy. While tourism supports sales and employment, tourism-oriented sectors tend to have low wages. Accommodations and Food Service constitutes 20.3% of jobs with an average annual wage of \$31,612 and the 17.4% of jobs in the Retail sector have an average annual wage of \$27,085. Low-wage tourism-based employment has a substantial impact on livability and disposable household income in the county.

Horry County needs to focus economic growth on higher paid skilled jobs to help mitigate employment instability.

Labor Force and Payroll Comparison		
	Employment	Average Annual Wages
Charleston - North Charleston, SC	374,860	\$58,830
Columbia, SC	381,750	\$54,540
Greenville - Anderson, Mauldin, SC	422,160	\$55,030
Myrtle Beach - Conway - North Myrtle Beach, SC - NC	178,800	\$46,150
Spartanburg, SC	159,730	\$52,850

County Labor Force and Payroll Comparison		
	Employment	Labor Force Participation Rate
Horry County	150,141	47.6%
Richland County	198,143	61.2%
Charleston County	222,161	65.2%
Greenville County	259,582	58.1%

Source: SCDEW, 2024b. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023.

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 are in line or below state averages, which limits the continued development of a highly skilled workforce. While historic and projected occupational growth statistics are favorable, overall concentration and counts of key occupational sectors may hinder opportunities in the manufacturing and distribution space.

The county has high underemployment compared to the state average, which provides an opportunity for companies to leverage latent workers and skills. However, effective, high-wage workforce development is contingent on continued and enhanced interaction between employers, local training institutions, and the community at large.

ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS

Economic health and growth are 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 13,247 employers. Of these, 95.6% employ fewer than 50 people and only account for 42.3% of the active workforce. Employers with 50 to 250 people account for 30.4% of the workforce, while the remaining 27.2% are employed by large businesses or governments with over 250 employees.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Horry County's top employer is the Horry County

School District, followed by Coastal Carolina University and the Horry County Government. SCDEW identifies the top 20 list of employers. 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 include:

- Adidas America
- City of Myrtle Beach
- Coastal Carolina University
- Conway Medical Center
- Food Lion
- Founders National Golf
- Georgetown Hospital System
- Grand Strand Regional Medical Center
- Hilton Grand Vacations Company
- Horry County Government
- Horry County Schools
- Horry Telephone Cooperative
- Kelly Services USA
- Loris Community Hospital District
- McLeod Loris Seacoast Hospital
- OS Restaurant Services
- Publix Super Market
- Southeast Restaurants Corporation
- Walmart
- Wyndham Vacation Ownership

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 include:

- Kyocera (AVX)
- Apollo Valves/Conbraco
- Metglas
- Canfor Southern Pine
- Wolverine Brass

Several large businesses in Horry County have

Employers by Number of Employees				
Employees	Employers	% of Total Employers	Employees	% Total Employees
0 to 4	8,526	64.36%	9,610	5.93%
5 to 9	1,844	13.92%	12,421	7.67%
10 to 19	1,353	10.21%	18,464	11.40%
20 to 49	948	7.16%	28,158	17.39%
50 to 99	330	2.49%	22,724	14.03%
100 to 249	184	1.39%	26,562	16.40%
250 to 499	36	0.27%	12,078	7.46%
500 to 999	16	0.12%	10,467	6.46%
1000 +	10	0.08%	21,457	13.25%
Total	13,247	100.0%	161,941	100.0%

Source: SCDEW, 2024.

developed locally and have a major impact on local employment. 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 other significant employers, not included in MBREDC and SCDEW’s lists:

- Horry Telephone Cooperative Inc.
- City of North Myrtle Beach
- Horry Georgetown Technical College
- Lowes Foods
- Lowes Home Centers

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 that is an accessory use or structure to the residential dwelling. The business use must be owned and operated by the resident owner or occupant.

In 2024, there were a total of 10,313 firms in Horry County. Of these, 1,637 were owned by women (15.9%), 799 by minorities (7.7%), and 504 by veterans (4.9%) (Census Bureau, 2024). 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, guided hunting, and heritage tourism.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The largest industry sector in Horry County is Accommodation and Food Services, employing 34,513 workers. The next largest sectors in the region are Retail Trade (26,790 workers) and Health Care and Social Assistance (15,413). The following chart shows the breakdown in jobs by industry.

Location quotients are used to identify the concentration of industrial sectors in a local economy relative to a 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 highest LQs in the region are Accommodation and Food Services (LQ = 2.33), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (LQ = 1.91), and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (LQ = 1.89). While Accommodation and Food Services are the largest industry in Horry County, Charleston and Beaufort counties still employ more people within these sectors. Two of three industries with the highest LQ (Accommodations and Food Services and Retail) also have the lowest average annual wages (\$27,745 and \$35,258 respectively).

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 are emerging or losing significance.

TOURISM

Tourism is the most important industry on the Grand Strand, driving accommodation, food services, and retail sales. The Grand Strand is considered one of the nation’s top vacation destinations and hosted

Industry NAICS, LQ, Employment, and Average Annual Wages						
NAICS	Industry	Current			4-Year History	
		Four Quarters Ending with 2024 Q4			Total Change	Avg Annual % Change
		Employment	Average Annual Wage	LQ	Employment	Region
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	207	48,960	0.16	-19	-2.29%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	69	70,320	0.12	-8	-2.90%
22	Utilities	650	59,856	0.79	75	2.88%
23	Construction	9,363	57,456	1.18	1,664	4.44%
31-33	Manufacturing	3,444	51,840	0.28	468	3.40%
42	Wholesale Trade	2,860	60,288	0.49	634	5.54%
44-45	Retail Trade	26,790	32,496	1.81	3,501	3.27%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	3,229	49,080	0.66	856	6.63%
51	Information	1,715	69,504	0.62	-18	-0.26%
52	Finance and Insurance	3,337	72,288	0.55	374	2.80%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4,833	42,432	2.08	684	3.54%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,824	64,800	0.47	1102	5.71%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	536	74,400	0.21	55	2.57%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	8,095	41,664	0.92	577	1.78%
61	Educational Services	786	33,360	0.27	431	13.71%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	15,413	56,448	0.72	2,774	4.50%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,858	24,384	2.13	1,633	6.97%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	34,513	26,064	2.49	5,119	3.71%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,896	35,376	0.86	908	5.83%
92	Public Administration	1,257	69,480	0.36	133	2.65%

Source: JobsEQ, 2024. 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.

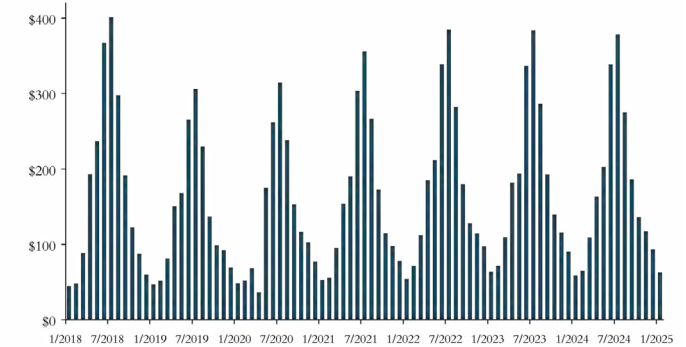
17.6 million visitors in 2023 (MBREDC, 2023). Several industries provide goods and services to travelers and tourists. In a study conducted by Coastal Carolina University, over \$4.8 billion in direct tourist related spending occurred in Horry and Georgetown counties in 2015. This had a total economic impact of \$7.0 billion, supporting over 83,000 jobs. It generated \$2.2 billion in income 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 were approximately 157,000 units available for rent along the Grand Strand in 2024 including hotels, motels, vacation rentals, timeshares, and campgrounds.

The annual average hotel and motel occupancy rates on the Grand Strand was 54.6% in 2024, compared to 58.7% in 2018 (MBACC, 2024). The annual average daily rate was \$122.79 in 2024 compared to \$119.25 in 2018. During peak seasons, hotels reach more than 70% occupancy and fall as low as 30% in the off-season. During the 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.

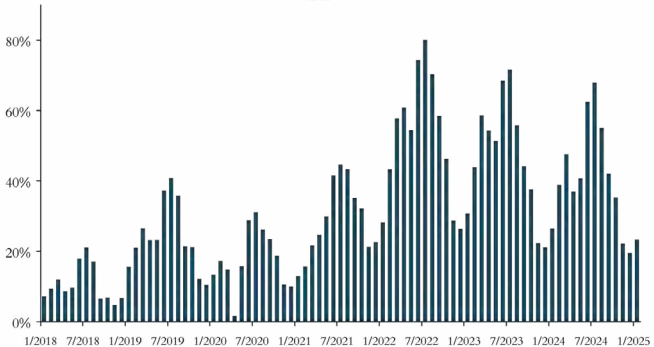
According to the Chamber of Commerce, overnight visitors to Horry County spend an average of \$338 per person per trip, while day visitors spend an average of \$92 per person per day. The combined

Vacation Rental Average Daily Accommodations Costs



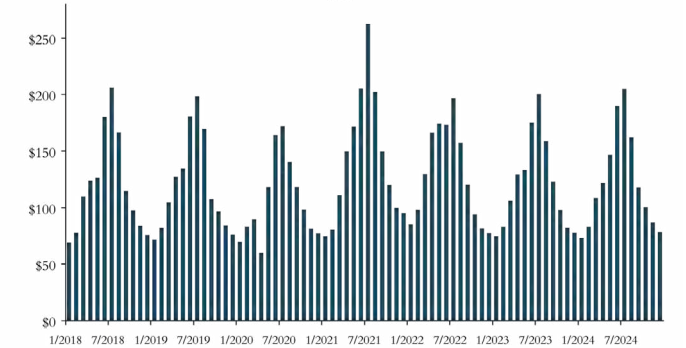
Source: Visit Myrtle Beach Key Data, 2025a

Vacation Rental Occupancy Rate



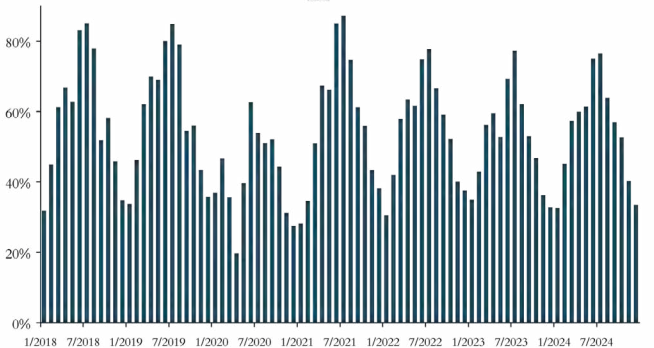
Source: Visit Myrtle Beach Key Data, 2025a.

Hotel Average Daily Accommodations Costs



Source: Visit Myrtle Beach STR, 2025b.

Hotel Occupancy Rate



Source: Visit Myrtle Beach STR, 2025b.

Total Annual Retail Sales	
Year	Total Retail Sales
2024	\$16,496,773,401
2023	\$16,248,748,250
2022	\$15,552,237,272
2021	\$13,393,078,043
2020	\$11,325,889,328
2019	\$11,957,865,054
2018	\$11,794,717,963
2017	\$11,297,018,127
2016	\$10,685,625,039
2015	\$9,999,531,153

Source: Horry County, 2024.

spending is significant considering the number of visitors to the county. Because Horry County’s economy is dependent upon tourism, it is susceptible to economic downturns. In addition, tourism can also be vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes, as travel can be impaired by flooded roadways, eroded beaches, and potential lack of power.

While retail sales volumes fell following both the 2008 economic recession (-\$1.2 billion) and the Covid-19 pandemic (-\$632 million), sales recovered quickly.

2024 was a record-setting year, with \$16.5 billion in sales representing an increase of 64.9% since 2015.

AIRPORT TRAVEL

The Horry County Department of Airports plays a tremendous role in the growing tourism economy. The South Carolina Aeronautics Commission's 2018 Statewide Aviation System Plan and Economic Impact Study announced that the Horry County

airport system’s total economic impact exceeds \$3 billion annually, supporting 26,240 jobs and creating \$122 million in annual tax revenue. Myrtle Beach International Airport continues to expand the number of its service destinations and airlines. The 2021 Airport Master Plan proposes continued expansion of the airport to accommodate additional passengers and freight.

SPORTS TOURISM

Sporting events are attracted to Horry County by the availability of additional tourism amenities for spectators. Top area sports tourism opportunities include the 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. It joined an 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.

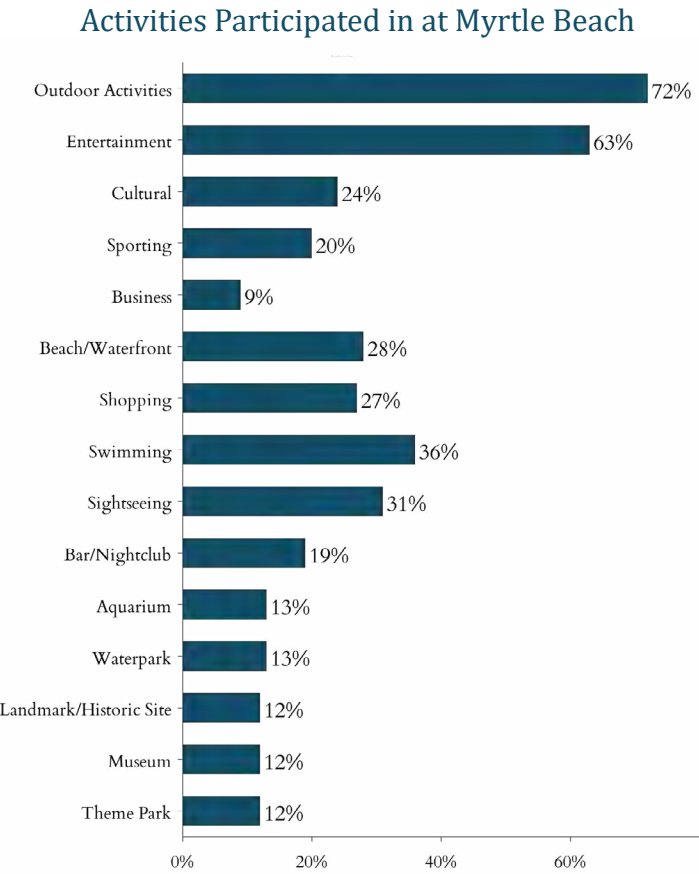
HEALTHCARE

Expanded population necessitates the need for expanded healthcare options and services, including a variety of healthcare service facilities, physician’s offices, medical laboratories, and information management firms. With 41.7% of Horry County residents over the age of 55, healthcare services for seniors are of special importance.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in healthcare occupations is projected to grow 15.2% from 2023 to 2033, adding 2.2 million new jobs nationwide.

This growth rate is much faster than average growth and is caused by an aging population and federal health insurance policies that increase health insurance coverage. The median annual wage for healthcare practitioners and technical occupations in Horry County was \$62,705 in 2024, which is higher than the median annual wage for all occupations.

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. Horry



Source: VisitMyrtleBeach, 2023.

Horry County Airports Employment and Spending					
Airport	Employment Impact	Annual Payroll	Annual Spending	Annual Economic Activity	Annual Tax Revenue
Myrtle Beach International (MYR)	23,474	\$688,803,990	\$2,003,376,340	\$2,692,180,330	\$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
Total	23,933	\$704,448,880	\$2,040,532,450	\$2,744,981,330	\$122,088,040

Source: South Carolina Power Team, 2024.

County Schools, including the Academy for the Arts, Science, and Technology (AASST) and 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, Tideland 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 local once their three-year residency ends. However, local hospitals have expressed 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, and ensures safety, wellness and security. Like tourism, construction is reliant upon national economic trends.

Construction has boomed in Horry County, surpassing pre-recession levels in 2022. Though county permit revenue decreased by 5.8% from \$11.1 million in FY 2023 to \$10.5 million in FY 2024, new Single Family Residential structure permit volume increased 9.1% from 5,278 to 5,759 permits.

Construction value decreased 5.8% over the same time period from \$1.629 billion to \$1.535 billion but grew 149.9% from \$614 million in 2016 (Planning and Zoning, 2025).

Construction growth continues to generally increase and reflects a strong economy. Additional information on housing can be found in the Housing Chapter.

Commercial development has also increased in recent years. In 2010, the greater Myrtle Beach area was defined by the Census as a metropolitan statistical area, attracting new national retailers to the region. Population growth will increase demand for more information on appropriate 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.

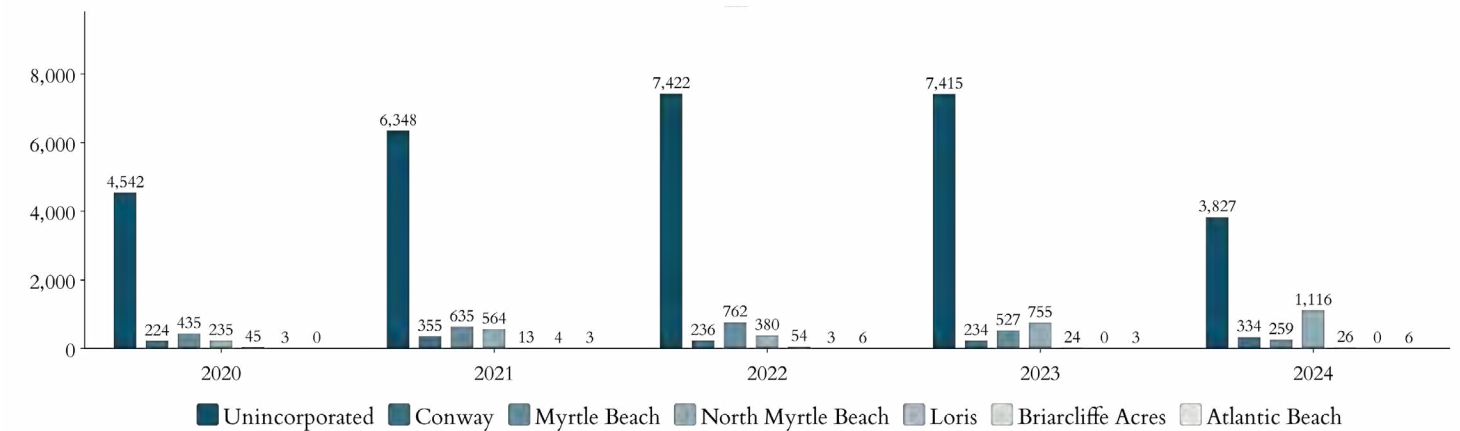
Infrastructure has implications for redevelopment. Development requires affordable construction materials which can necessitate expansion of local sourcing for sand, gravel, and lumber. The demand for skilled labor is also increasing.

In addition, the transportation network is impacted by new development. Increased pressure on urban streets would require adherence to a complete streets network. Improvements to rail systems to import industrial goods, road networks for increased 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.

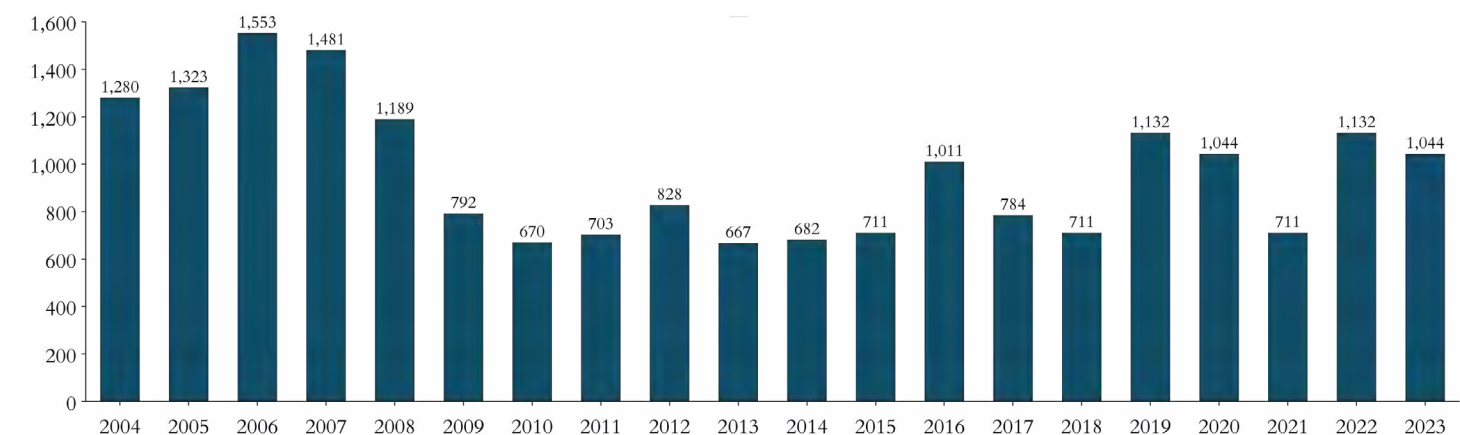
MANUFACTURING

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

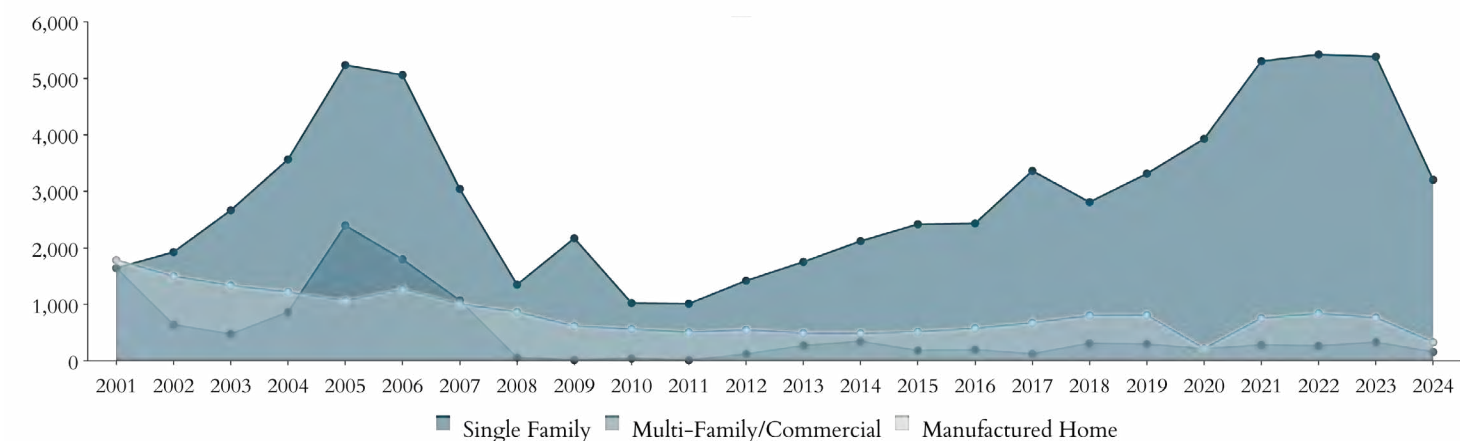
Unincorporated and Municipal Residential Units Permitted, 2020-2024



Unincorporated Horry County Commercial Plans, 2004-2023



Unincorporated Horry County Residential Permits, 2001-2024



Source: Horry County Code Enforcement, 2025.

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 several 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 major roadways and is a short drive from I-95. The property is zoned for 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 up of 100 acres located in the City of Loris. The property is zoned for 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 use. 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 lit with trailer spotlights, substantial trailer and truck parking. The building is in excellent condition with offices ready to build to suit.

The Palmetto Coast Industrial Park is a privately owned industrial park with 69 acres and 665,00 SF of industrial distribution space. The property is

zoned for industrial use and features direct access to Highways 31 and 22. An Amazon fulfillment center and Pepsi bottling plant have occupied the site.

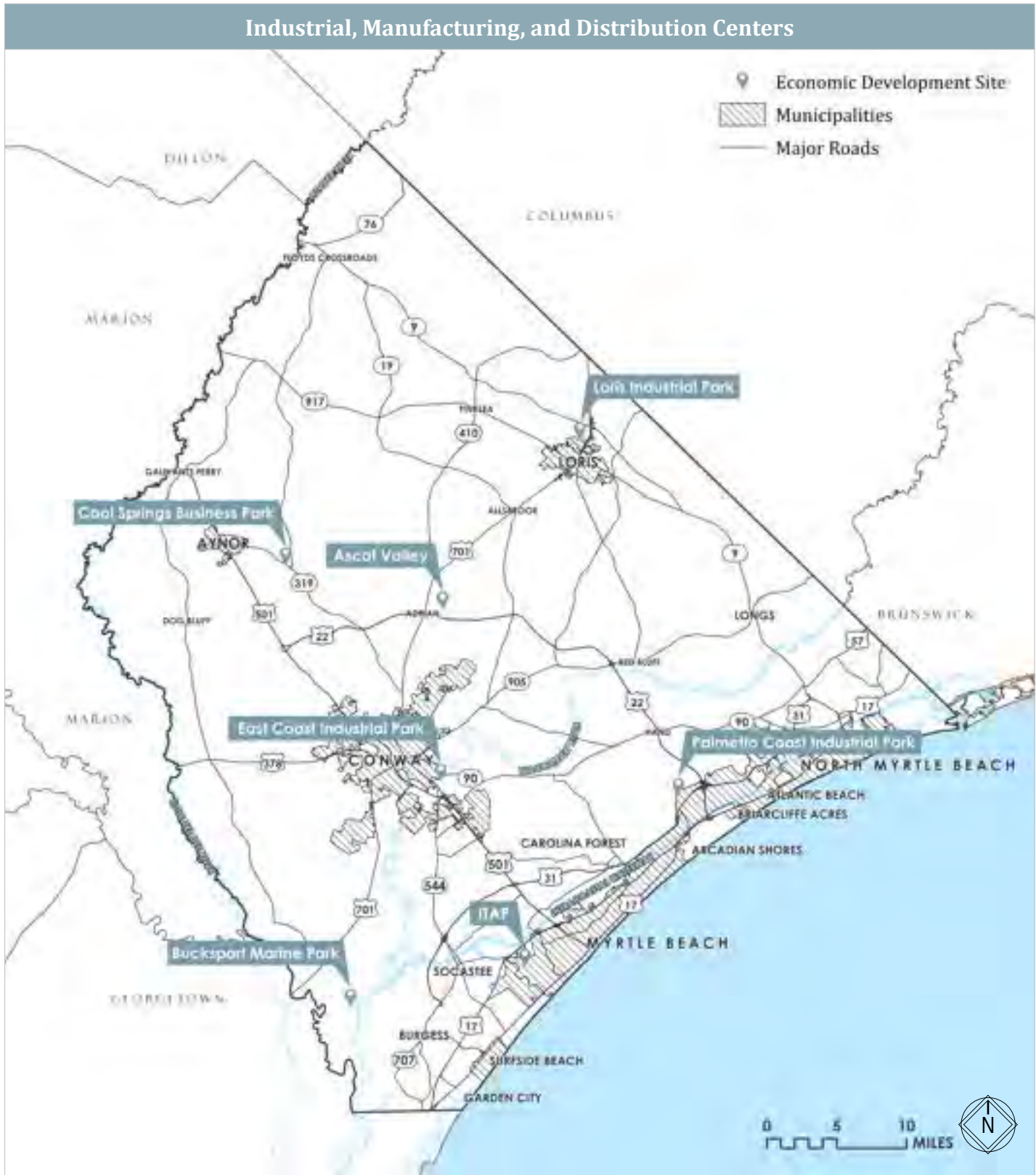
The Waccamaw Distribution Center is a perfect location for a business that is looking for a move-in-ready space with great accessibility, lots of space, and an abundance of other features.

The Myrtle Beach International Technology & Aerospace Park (ITAP) is the region's 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. The 84,000 square foot Veterans Clinic opened in the park 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 was recently completed to enhance access to 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, adequate utilities and infrastructure, appropriate zoning, and an available workforce.

The greatest limitation to expanding manufacturing jobs is lack of interstate access. Further details on planned transportation projects are included in the Transportation Chapter. 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 are needed.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning

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 only 569 people are employed 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 2022, Horry County generated \$105.2 million in crop and livestock sales, an increase of 19.8% from 2017 – even as total farm acreage decreased 11.1% (USDA, 2022).

The county ranked 11th in the state in cash receipts solely from timber harvests with a total delivered value of \$31,436,492. While the total delivered value was higher in 2013 at \$34,439,543 and the county's overall rank in South Carolina fell from 6th place, the total acreage of private forestland increased to 466,925 from 426,871 acres (Clemson, 2001; SCFC, 2022).

2022 agricultural sales included \$11.9 million in tobacco, \$35.9 million in grains and oilseeds, \$5.5 million in cotton, \$9.0 million in hogs, and \$7.9 million in poultry (USDA, 2022). While the county's major crop and livestock types saw decreases in sales volume from 2017, sales increased for grain, poultry, and a variety of crops, indicating increasing production diversification. In 2022, 36,815 acres were planted in soybeans and 17,713 in corn.

In 2022, 598 individuals were employed in farm labor, with \$8.9 million in payroll. While few people are employed directly by agriculture, there is a significant economic impact on the region. In 2013, there were 386 jobs in forest-based products (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, hayrides, 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 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 considering 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 present 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:

1. Provide support infrastructure for developing local food system;
2. Pursue a feasibility study for the development of a tourist oriented equestrian park;
3. Work with local peanut producers to pursue investment in peanut shelling facilities;
4. Leverage existing export networks to develop a market for locally grown sweet potatoes;
5. 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 (+4,166 jobs), Retail Trade (+2,143), and Construction (+1,291). Total employment is projected to expand by 2,718 jobs or +1.7% annually. Health Care and Social Assistance is expected to be the fastest-growing sector with 2.2% annual employment growth. Accommodation and Food Services is projected to add the greatest number of jobs (+588), followed by Health Care and Social Assistance (+406) and Retail Trade (+338). While employment growth will support economic diversification, tourism-based and service sectors will continue to lead in employment growth.

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 profes-

sions like engineering and teaching. While historic and projected occupational growth statistics are favorable, overall concentration and counts of key occupational sectors in the region are 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 accommodation, food service and retail trade is expected. While Horry County has recovered from the 2008 and 2020 downturns 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

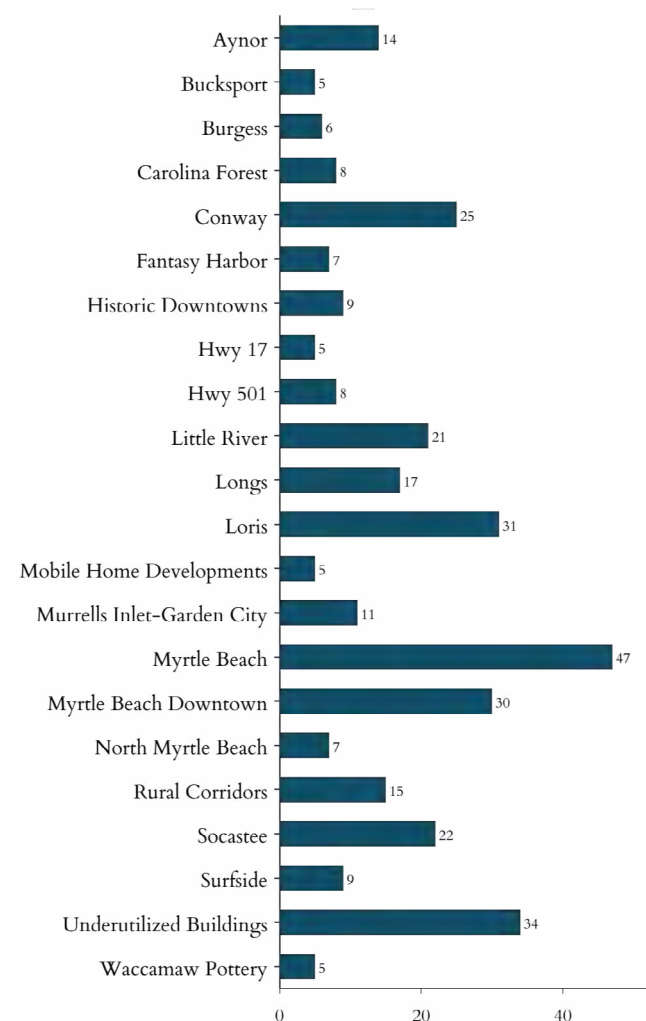
natural resources must rely on both public and private partnerships with shared economic goals.

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.

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The health of a community is often tied to the number

What areas of Horry County do you want to see revitalized or redeveloped?



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning, 2025.

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. The construction, design, and implementation of revitalization efforts provide employment opportunities and rejuvenated commercial and industrial centers provide new 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 a 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, 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 Hurricanes Joaquin and Matthew 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.

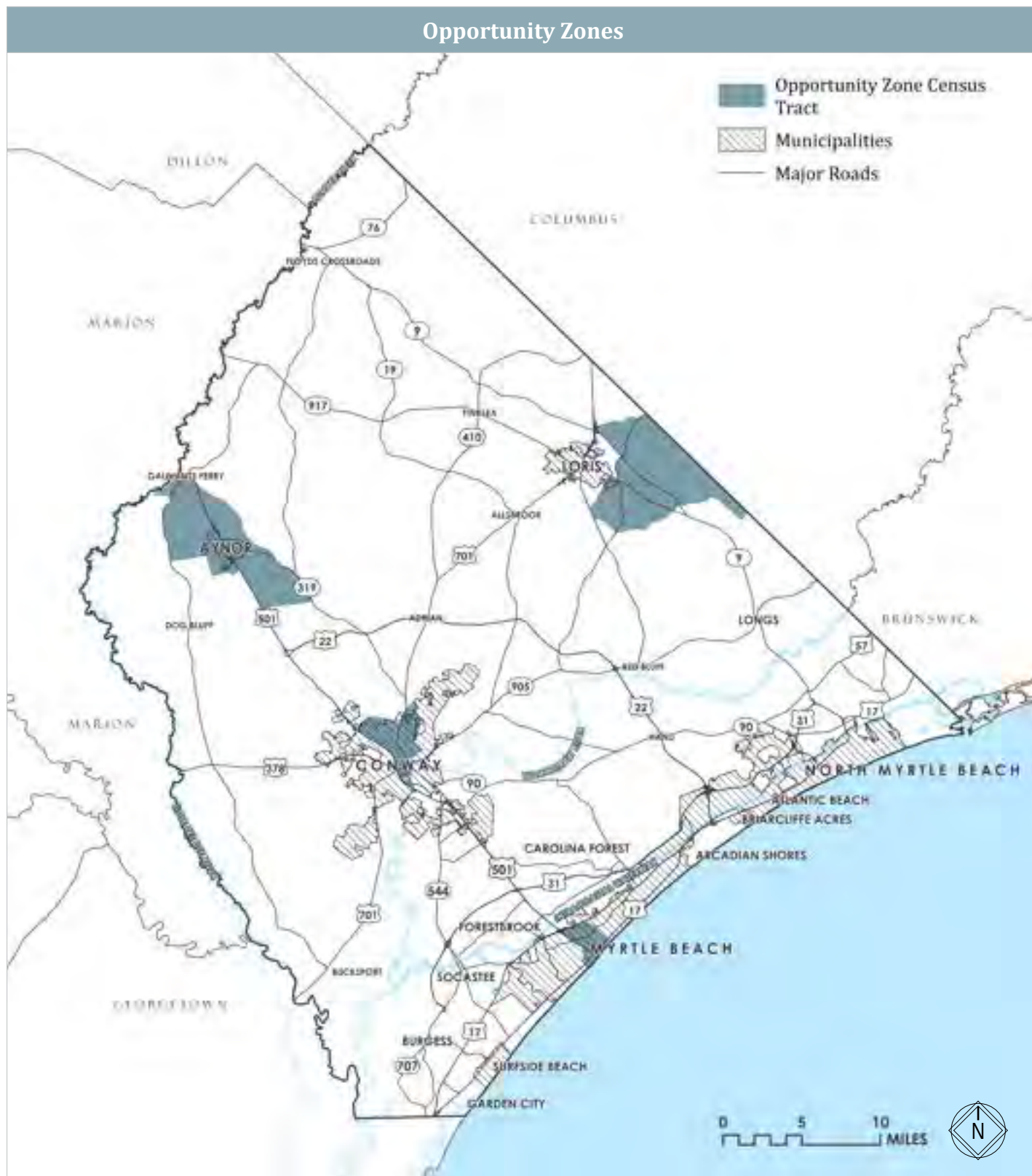
The Little River Waterfront is another area that has been identified by the county and property owners as in need of revitalization. The redevelopment of the fishing industry based in the area, but could also provide greatly needed commercial enhancements.

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 Tax Increment Financing districts may assist with the redevelopment of these areas.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Opportunity Zones are a community development program 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, specialized vehicles dedicated to investing in low-income Opportunity Zones.

Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts that offer investors the following incentives for putting their capital to work in low-income communities:



Opportunity Zones

Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

1. Investors 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 and a seven-year holding results in a 15% exemption;
3. Investors can defer their original tax bill until December 2026 or until they sell their Opportunity Fund Investments; and
4. Opportunity fund investments held for ten years waive capital gains tax on the investment's appreciation.

Horry County has six Opportunity Zones in Myrtle Beach, Conway, Aynor, and Loris.

Some have sites ideal for expansion of existing manufacturing, while others include areas residents want to see revitalized.

INDUSTRIAL 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 manufacturing and service industries. It is important that these areas are not 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.

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.

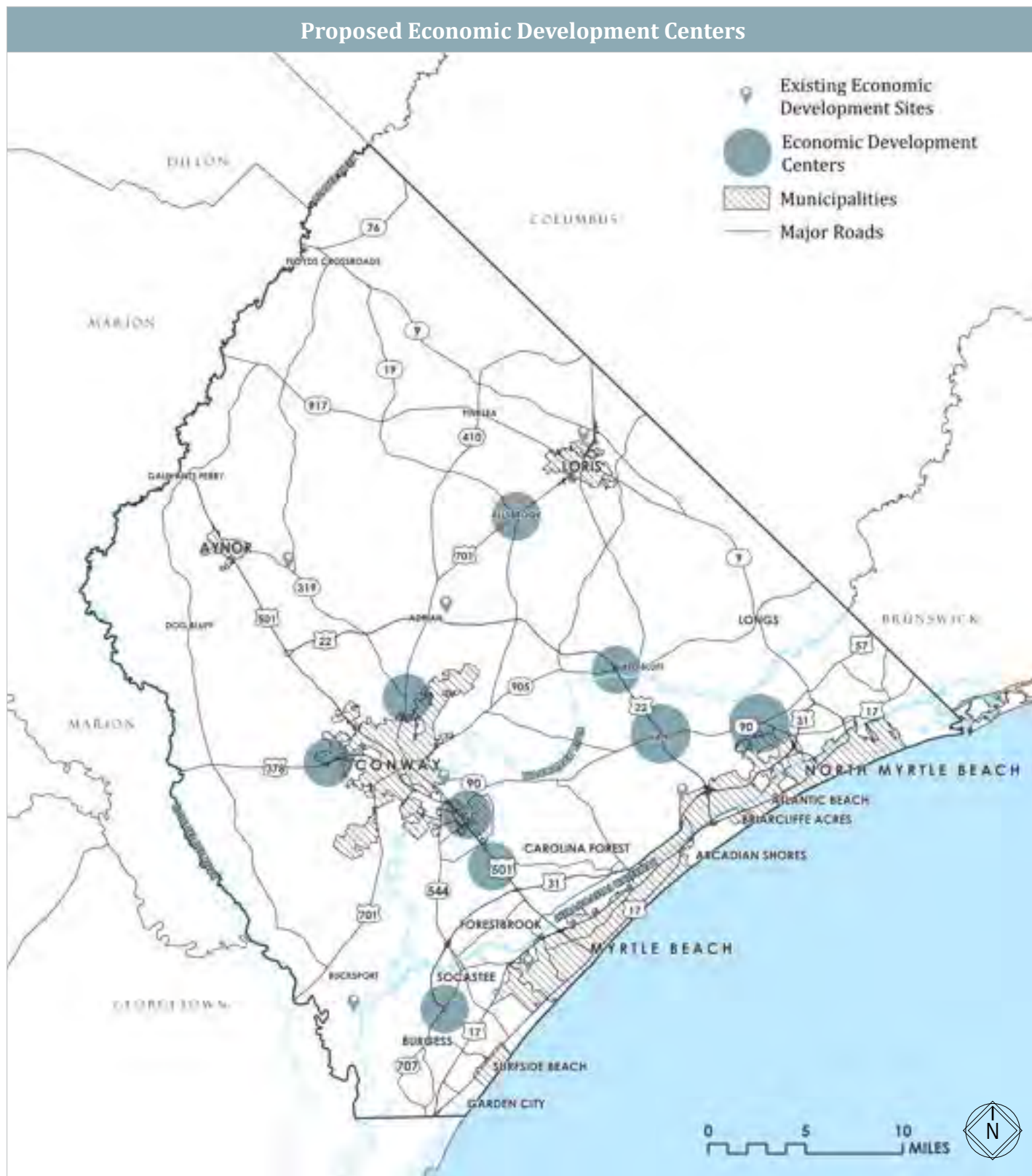
Redevelopment is also essential to perpetuating a sustainable and stable economy. Horry County must not only encourage redevelopment in urban areas where available land is limited for new development, but also in rural and suburban areas where unsightly vacant and underutilized building shells discourage new growth and investment. Encouraging development in opportunity zones through the creation of industrial and manufacturing centers will not only create centralized hubs for large employers but will create a loop of reinvestment into underprivileged 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 have 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 necessary for any jurisdiction, as it can stabilize a community even during economic downturns.

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, including small business enterprises, minority owned businesses,



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

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 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.

The airport is essential to maintaining tourism,

and Horry County should 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 agritourism opportunities, and future possibilities for ecotourism.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



PRIORITY INVESTMENT ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 11

PRIORITY INVESTMENT

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 necessary to support public facilities 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 anticipated beyond a five-year time frame. This element also does not prioritize projects, 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). The CIP provides Horry County Government and the public valuable information on each capital project, such as scope (size, capacity, etc.), the fiscal year in which the project will be undertaken, 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 as needed with the most recent revision Resolution 71-14 on September 16, 2014.

The CIP is a short-range schedule of public improve-

ment 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 years. These four years are subject to change annually and should be reviewed each fiscal year.

Each department evaluates its needs annually 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 a 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, it 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

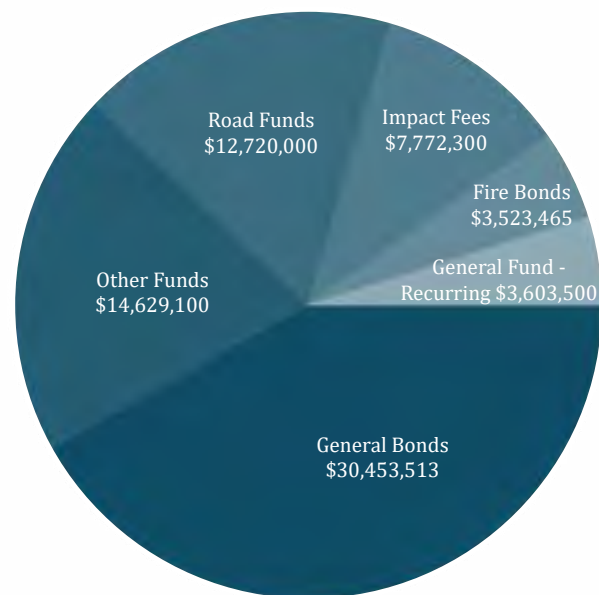
Capital improvements are funded through a variety of taxes and revenue streams including state and federal grants.

For example, in FY2026, 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 financing. 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, including Administration, Public Safety,

FY 2026 Breakdown of
Capital Budget Revenues - \$72,701,878



Source: Horry County, 2025.

and Infrastructure and Regulation. It also is used to record all financial transactions not required to be accounted for in other funds.

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 is the Capital Improvement Project fund which is maintained by the County Treasurer. 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 Apparatus Replacement

Fund represents revenue and expenditures for the purpose of providing fire apparatus replacement (pumpers, air trucks, 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 landline telephones. Monies from this fund are totally restricted to 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 for funding public defenders.

Road Maintenance Fund

The Road Maintenance Fund is used to account for the revenues collected from a \$50 fee charged for each motorized vehicle licensed within the county, CTC Allocations, and Stormwater fees. Funds are earmarked for the maintenance and improvement of the county's road system, public works operations, and allocations to COAST RTA.

Beach Nourishment Fund

The Beach Nourishment Fund is used to account for revenues and expenditures for beach renourishment projects on the unincorporated beaches of the county. Beach renourishment is funded from Local and State Accommodations Taxes 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 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 in 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 construction 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.

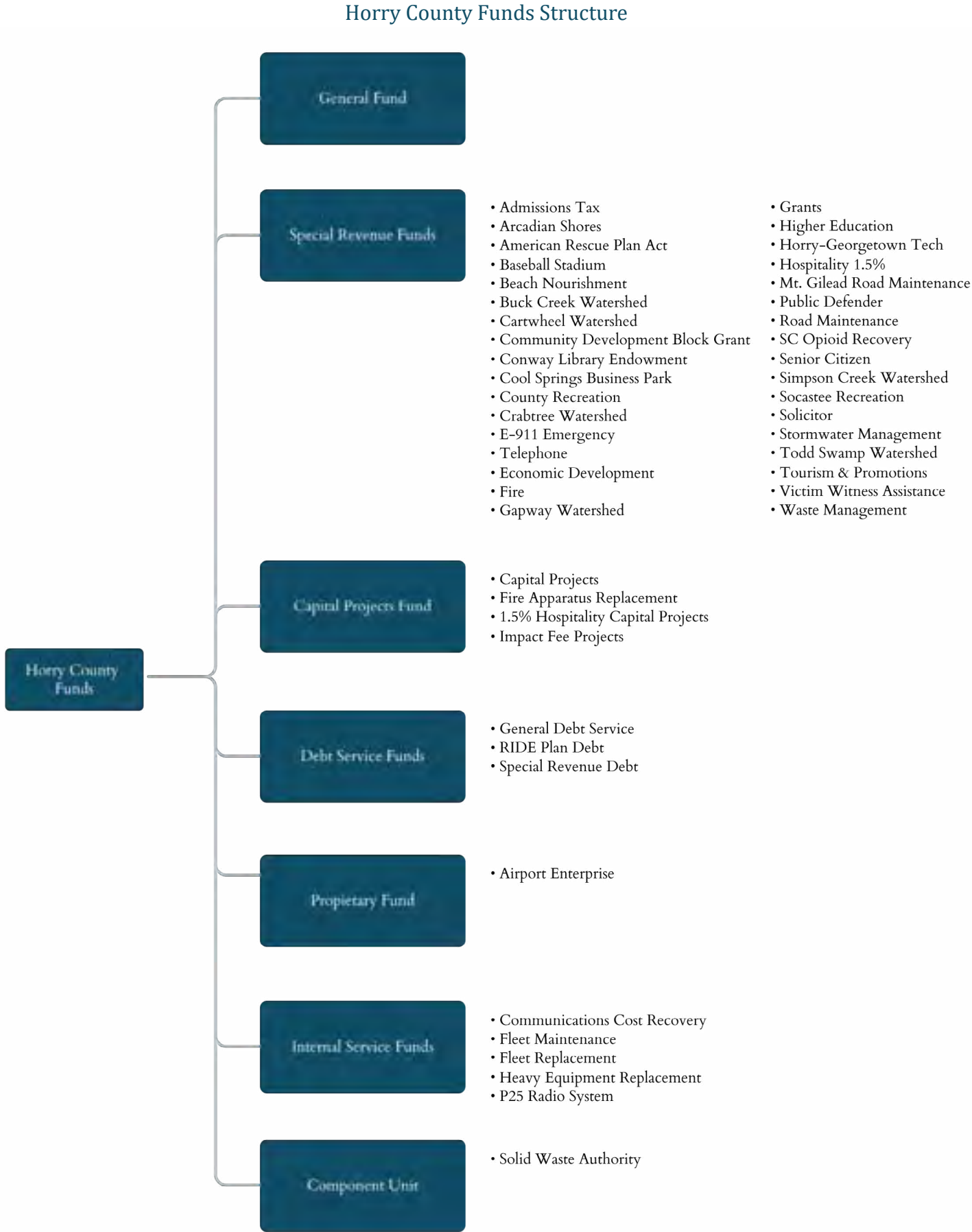
Horry County Department of Airports (Airport Enterprise) Fund

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 Fleet Maintenance and Replacement, Heavy Equipment Replacement, and P25 Radio System/ Communications Cost Recovery.



Source: Horry County, 2023a. pg. 14.

Fleet Replacement Fund & Heavy Equipment Fund

The Fleet Replacement Fund accounts for the replacement of county vehicles including some light equipment. The Heavy Equipment Replacement Fund accounts for the replacement 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.

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.

HOSPITALITY AND ACCOMMODATION TAXES

Hospitality and Accommodation tax revenue has steadily grown as visitation and the permanent population continue to increase.

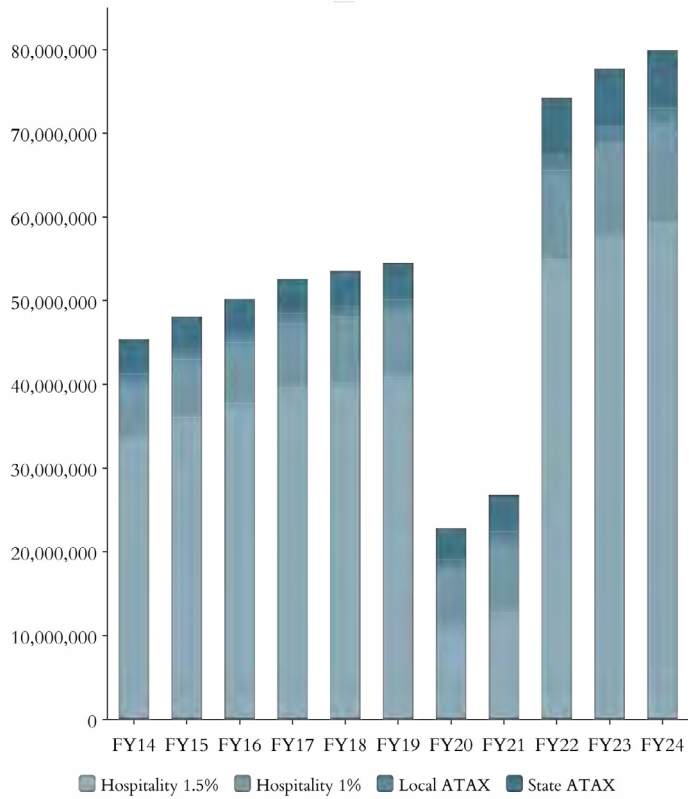
Hospitality Tax

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, 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 calculate the fee at 2.5% of gross proceeds from the sale of food and beverages, 3% of gross proceeds from rental of transient accommodations, and 2.5% of gross proceeds from paid admissions and amusements. This fee is currently allocated to the RIDE planning department.

The chart below 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 hospitality 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

Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Revenue



Source: Horry County, 2024.

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 Fund

The Tourism and Promotion Fund accounts for State revenue allocated to promote tourism in Horry County and for other tourism related expenditures. Revenues are derived from a State 2% room tax 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 FY2025 was estimated at \$6.9 million, with allocations to the general fund,

Hospitality and Accommodations Tax Allocation				
Items Being Taxed	Prepared Food and Beverages		Accommodations	
Taxes Imposed	Remitted to the State	Remitted to the County	Remitted to the State	Remitted to the County
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, 2025 and sunsets April 30, 2050)	1%		1%	
Local Education Capital Improvements Sales Tax (effective March 1, 2024 and sunsets February 28, 2039)	1%		1%	
Taxes to be collected	8%	2.5%	9%	3%
Indicates locally imposed taxes	10.5%		12%	

Source: Horry County, 2024.

tourism promotion, and beach services.

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 received \$425.3 million over the seven-year life of the one-cent Capital Projects Sales Tax. In 2018, County Council extended this tax as a fund, which is not limited like the following RIDE programs. An annual \$23 million of the fund is allocated to funding the county’s portion of I-73. It is projected that the county will make these payments from the hospitality taxes for about 20 years.

RIDE 4

On November 8, 2024, Horry County voters approved a one-cent Capital Project Sales Tax for roads by a 57% to 43% margin. This tax went into effect on May 1, 2025, and will expire on April 30, 2050. The RIDE4 initiative is slated to receive \$6 billion over its 25-year life, which 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 in the Transportation Element of this plan.

BONDING

Horry County utilizes General Obligation Bonds to finance major capital improvements when funding has been identified, but is 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.

GRANTS

While grants may be utilized to help fund the CIP, there is no guarantee of their availability 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, meaning substantial county contribution remains necessary to complete major capital projects.

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 allows counties and municipalities to impose by ordinance a requirement for payment of development impact fees 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 include water, wastewater, solid waste and stormwater services, roads, public safety, street lighting, capital equipment, and parks and recreation.

The impact fee rate must be based on actual improvement costs or reasonable estimates of the costs, supported by sound engineering studies and generally accepted accounting principles. State law requires that collected funds be expended within three years of collection and be allocated to projects that serve new needs.

Horry County began collecting impact fees in 2022 on new residential, commercial, industrial, lodging, and institutional development in unincorporated areas. The impact fee revenues are used to fund the capital costs of infrastructure necessary to support new development, including a public safety service area, countywide fire services, parks and recreation, and solid waste services. Fees are calculated based on the number of new housing units or square feet developed.

The county collected \$15.4 million in impact fees in FY2023 and \$24.4 million in FY2024.

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 substandard 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.

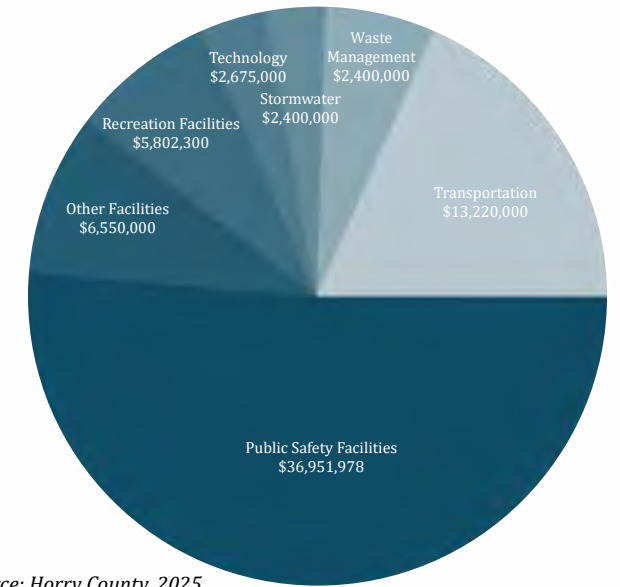
Admissions Tax Fund

Admissions Tax District established in the Fantasy Harbor 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

FY 2026 Breakdown of Capital Budget Expenditures - \$72,701,878



Source: Horry County, 2025.

into the community.

CAPITAL PROJECT NEEDS

The following pages include the summary FY2026-2035 Capital Improvements Plan with total expenditure and budgeted revenues charts, department projects funded in the Capital Budget, and unfunded projects.

Each year, the county adopts a new Capital Improvements Plan that reflects changing needs, population growth and development, and priorities and data set out in IMAGINE 2040 and other local and regional plans.

The following capital improvements lists do not include road projects, which can be found in the Transportation Chapter. Most bicycle and pedestrian projects are outlined in other regional plans and the county Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The following does not include school needs, which the Horry County School District is responsible for addressing.

FY 2026 to FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan—Budgeted Revenues											
	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034	FY2035	Totals
General Bonds	\$30,453,513	\$66,354,063	-	\$14,815,660	-	\$17,980,002	-	\$18,629,817	\$20,600,000	\$49,702,550	\$218,535,605
Fire Bonds	\$3,523,465	\$4,000,000	-	\$4,119,650	-	\$9,545,395	-	\$5,783,648	-	\$6,873,225	\$33,845,383
Intergovern- mental CTC	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$5,000,000
Intergov- ernmental Alcohol	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$320,000	\$3,200,000
Road Fund	\$12,720,000	\$11,250,000	\$11,725,000	\$12,485,000	\$12,675,000	\$13,150,000	\$13,625,000	\$14,100,000	\$14,575,000	\$15,050,000	\$131,355,000
General Fund - Recurring	\$3,603,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$3,553,500	\$35,585,000
General Fund - One Time	\$2,000,000	\$428,191	\$600,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$3,028,191
E911	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$5,250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$7,500,000
P25 Radio Fund	\$200,000	-	-	-	\$3,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	\$3,200,000
Stormwater Fund	\$2,479,000	\$2,729,000	\$2,679,000	\$2,529,000	\$2,779,000	\$2,779,000	\$2,779,000	\$2,779,000	\$2,779,000	\$2,779,000	\$27,090,000
Recreation Fund	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$5,500,000
Fire Fund	\$568,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$693,100	\$6,806,000
Waste Man- agement Fund	\$1,340,000	\$940,000	\$2,140,000	\$1,040,000	\$2,140,000	\$1,115,000	\$1,115,000	\$1,115,000	\$1,115,000	\$1,115,000	\$13,175,000
RIDE II	\$672,000	\$10,672,000	\$672,000	\$358,000	\$75,000	-	-	-	-	-	\$12,449,00
Economic Development Fund	\$2,000,000	-	\$1,000,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$750,000	-	\$5,250,000

FY 2026 to FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan—Budgeted Expenditures											
	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031	FY2032	FY2033	FY2034	FY2035	Totals
Public Safety Facilities	\$36,951,978	\$70,454,063	\$600,000	\$12,989,310	\$900,000	\$11,761,447	\$600,000	\$10,631,585	\$800,000	\$57,175,775	\$202,864,158
General Facilities	\$5,050,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,100,000	\$8,028,000	\$2,250,000	\$16,363,950	\$2,250,000	\$16,181,880	\$22,650,000	\$1,500,000	\$78,873,830
Infrastructure	\$1,500,000	\$3,428,191	-	\$18,000	-	\$1,500,000	-	-	-		\$6,446,191
Public Safety Equipment	\$898,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$8,698,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$698,100	\$15,181,000
Parks, Trails, Boat Landings	\$5,802,300	\$2,685,000	\$2,091,900	\$4,160,000	\$2,770,000	\$3,946,000	\$3,373,000	\$2,790,000	\$4,315,000	\$920,000	\$32,853,200
General Equipment	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$1,777,500	\$17,775,000
Stormwater Mngt	\$2,400,000	\$2,650,000	\$2,600,000	\$2,450,000	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$2,700,000	\$26,300,000
Waste Management Recycling	\$4,430,000	\$980,000	\$3,980,000	\$1,980,000	\$3,980,000	\$2,235,000	\$2,235,000	\$2,235,000	\$2,235,000	\$2,235,000	\$26,525,000
Public Transport Infrastructure	\$13,220,000	\$11,750,000	\$12,225,000	\$12,985,000	\$13,175,000	\$13,650,000	\$14,125,000	\$14,600,000	\$15,075,000	\$15,550,000	\$136,355,000
Wetland Mitigation	\$672,000	\$10,672,000	\$672,000	\$358,000	\$75,000	-	-	-	-	-	\$12,449,000

Source: Horry County, 2025.

FY 2026 to FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan—Budgeted Projects			
Public Safety Facilities	Project Cost	Parks, Trails, and Boat Landings	Project Cost
Station 9 - Antioch Fire Addition	\$2,926,080	Stalvey Creek Park	\$2,002,300
Station 10 - Ketchuptown Fire Replacement	\$3,886,500	Forestbrook Park	\$2,677,000
Station 11 - Windy Hill EMS (New)	\$4,746,300	River Oaks Park	\$3,974,000
Station 17 - Mount Vernon Fire Renovation	\$2,787,300	Carolina Forest Recreation Center Phase 2	\$2,620,000
Station 19 - Cherry Hill Fire Addition	\$2,500,000	Socastee Recreation Park	\$1,830,000
Station 21 - Maple Fire Expansion	\$2,500,000	Burgess Area Park	\$3,390,000
Station 25 - Mount Olive EMS Renovation	\$2,750,000	Sandridge Community Park	\$970,000
Station 26 - Goretown Fire Addition	\$2,500,000	Green Sea Floyds Recreation Center Amenities	\$723,000
Station 28 - Joyner Swamp Fire Renovation	\$2,787,300	Aynor Recreation Center Amenities	\$500,000
Station 30 - MB Olin Blanton Building Renovation	\$1,000,000	Pee Dee Park	\$850,000
Station 31 - Prestwick Fire/EMS (New)	\$5,406,300	Lewis Ocean Bay Trailhead	\$70,000
Station 32 - North Myrtle Beach EMS	\$2,750,000	Hardwick Road Trails	\$200,000
Station 34 - Red Bluff Fire/EMS Renovation	\$2,966,000	Trail TBD	\$900,000
Station 38 - Floyds Fire Renovation	\$3,971,500	Port Harrelson Landing	\$190,000
Station 44 - Public Safety Training Facility	\$5,000,000	Peter Vaught Sr. Park & Landing	\$1,011,900
Station 49 - Carolina Forest #3 (New)	\$5,406,300	Pitch Landing	\$200,000
Station 57 - Bay Road (New)	\$1,500,000	Lees Landing	\$120,000
M.L. Brown - Roof & Rehab	\$6,600,000	Boat Landing TBD	\$1,600,000
Public Safety Training Facility Phase II	\$17,500,000	Beach Bathrooms	\$825,000
Public Safety Training Facility Phase III	\$4,500,000	Parks & Fields - Tourist Related	\$3,200,000
Public Safety Training Facility Phase IV	\$20,000,000	Recreation Facilities Lifecycle	\$5,000,000
JRL Detention Center Bow Tie Addition/Renovation	\$60,000,000	General Government Facilities	Project Cost
JRL Detention Center Phase 2 Renovation	\$20,000,000	Library Renovations	\$50,000
Animal Care Center Clinic	\$2,000,000	Government/Judicial Center - Rehab & Expansion	\$28,722,500
Animal Care Center Improvement	\$600,000	Council Chambers A/V System	\$600,000
Mount Olive Magistrate	\$700,000	DSS Rehab	\$2,750,000
Aynor Magistrate	\$700,000	Ralph Ellis Complex Rehab	\$1,250,000
Police Sixth Precinct (New)	\$3,720,000	Agriculture Building Rehab	\$2,400,000
North Precinct Renovation	\$546,600	Bucksport Complex Rehab	\$1,000,000
South Precinct Renovation	\$546,600	South Strand Complex Rehab	\$2,500,000
Bond Issuance - Fire	\$1,097,403	Library Technology	\$400,000
Bond Issuance - General	\$3,094,975	Green Sea Floyd Community Center	\$1,100,000

FY 2026 to FY 2035 Capital Improvement Plan—Budgeted Projects			
General Government Facilities	Project Cost	Wetland Mitigation	Project Cost
DHEC - Conway	\$4,242,150	Land Purchase	\$10,000,000
Conway Library	\$3,150,000	Maintenance & Monitoring	\$1,132,000
CB Berry Community Center	\$711,750	Consultant Implementation Services	\$375,000
James Frazier Community Center	\$2,343,750	Non-Wasting Endowment Fee	\$942,000
Loris Library	\$646,350	Waste Management	Project Cost
Socastee Library	\$3,300,000	Land Purchase	\$2,500,000
Sanders Building Renovation	\$1,500,000	New Facility - Forestbrook	\$2,750,000
Piver Building	\$850,000	Replacement - Brooksville	\$3,000,000
Economic Development Land Purchase	\$5,250,000	Expansion - Longs	\$3,000,000
Infrastructure and Regulation Facilities	Project Cost	Expansion - Scipio Lane	\$500,000
Loris Recreation Center Land Purchase	\$500,000	Expansion - Red Bluff	\$500,000
Fleet Parking Lot	\$428,191	Expansion - Jackson Bluff	\$500,000
Fleet Expansion	\$3,000,000	Expansion - Browntown	\$600,000
Public Works Complex Paving	\$1,000,000	Expansion - Loris	\$600,000
Public Works Maintenance Shed	\$1,500,000	Expansion - Recycle Road	\$600,000
Public Transportation	Project Cost	Expansion - Aynor	\$600,000
Repaving - Engineering (20 miles)	\$86,250,000	Expansions - TBD	\$3,600,000
Drainage Improvements - County Roads	\$1,000,000	Machinery & Equipment	\$200,000
Traffic Calming - Speed Humps	\$2,000,000	Technology and Equipment	Project Cost
Traffic Signal Equipment	\$1,900,000	IT-CJIS security program	\$1,050,000
Dirt Road Paving (2 miles)	\$10,000,000	E911 Equipment	\$2,500,000
Dirt Road Paving - CTC (1 mile)	\$5,000,000	Fire SCBA Breathing Apparatus	\$3,431,000
Dirt Road Paving - PW (4 miles)	\$28,000,000	Communications - Motorola Radios	\$3,000,000
HC Fiber Line Relocation for SCDOT - County Roads	\$705,000	911 System Replacement	\$5,000,000
Prince Creek Parkway/SC 707	\$1,500,000	Pleasant View Tower Generator	\$200,000
Stormwater Management	Project Cost	IT Servers/Switches/Storage	\$3,675,000
Pleasant Meadow Swamp Clean out Phase 2	\$1,000,000	IT CISCO Core	\$5,250,000
Cowferd Swamp Clean out	\$1,400,000	IT Core Network Infrastructure	\$2,625,000
Legends Pipe Upgrade	\$500,000	IT Software Upgrades	\$1,260,000
Contingency (TBD)	\$13,100,000	IT Data Backup/Disaster Recovery	\$1,575,000
Condemnation	\$4,800,000	IT Computer Replacements	\$1,312,500
Drainage Improvements	\$4,000,000	Aerial photography	\$1,287,500
Private Construction	\$1,500,000	Aerial photography - SW	\$790,000

Source: Horry County, 2025.

UNFUNDED PROJECTS

Rapid population growth and development mean Horry County's revenues available for capital improvements do not meet its total need. Tables on the following pages include unfunded projects by department, project name, and costs. This list does not include all of the county's equipment, technology, or vehicle needs. As facility planning efforts are completed and population growth analysis continues, the list of unfunded facility and equipment needs will need to be revised.

LIFECYCLE MAINTENANCE COSTS

Horry County continuously assesses reoccurring and lifecycle maintenance needs. This information will continue to fluctuate as equipment replacements are needed, new staff are added, and Horry County

Lifecycle Maintenance Budgeted Funds

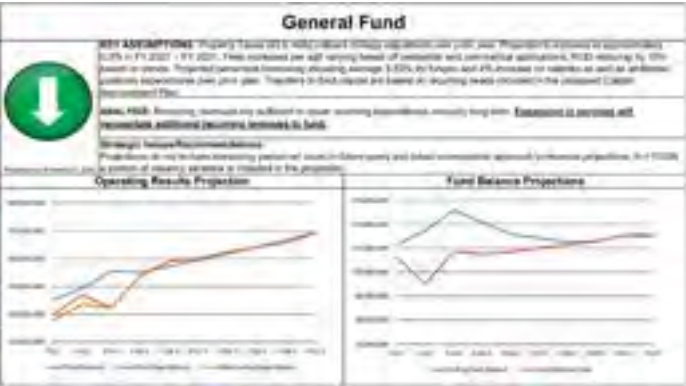
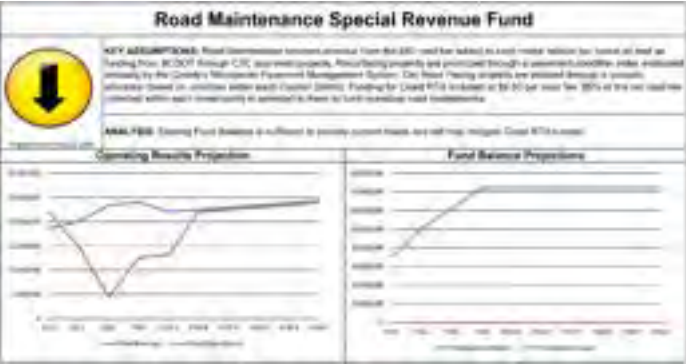
Lifecycle Maintenance	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Fire	\$225,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$350,000
Detention	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
Government Facilities	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Parks and Recreation	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000

Source: Horry County, 2025.

buildings and properties need repairs and major maintenance.

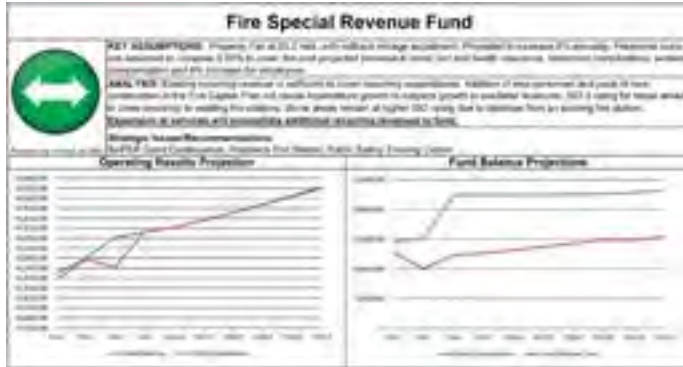
PROJECTED FUNDS AND GAPS

The current Capital Improvement Plan allocates the majority of capital improvement expenditures towards infrastructure and general government facilities. At this time, Horry County’s CIP only



Source: Horry County, 2025.





Source: Horry County, 2025.

projects revenues for the five future fiscal years. At FY2026 funding levels, not all eligible or necessary capital projects included in the General Fund, Fire Fund, Waste Management, and Recreation Fund can be funded in the near future. Additional population growth and development will increase the capital needs dependent on these funds. This will also have a direct impact on the ability to maintain or expand existing facilities and limit the ability to construct new facilities. Additional funding will be necessary as the county continues to grow.

CONCLUSIONS

Horry County has a tradition of sound financial management. The county generally uses the pay as you go method, which generally means it does not borrow money or use operational bonds. However, the county is in need of a facilities master plan to identify both its projects and complete needs. Such information is necessary 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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



LAND USE ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 12

LAND USE

Horry County's present land use pattern is a reflection of a myriad of influences, including its agricultural heritage, the construction of bridges, major highways, and railroads providing access to the county and the beach, the development of the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, Myrtle Beach's emergence as a tourist destination, and the recent surge in suburban development that accommodates both full time and seasonal residents. Existing land use patterns are often influenced by development that preceded zoning and land development regulations, as zoning is still a relatively new planning function in unincorporated Horry County, only initiated in the late 1980s and not fully encompassing the county until 2001.

In 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. These subdivisions primarily consist of single-family neighborhoods that emerged from former timberlands and farmland near the beach and in unincorporated areas of the county.

Horry County 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 near 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 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 for more specific land use, area, and neighborhood plans. 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.

PLANNING AND 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



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. Source: Congress for the New Urbanism, 2016.

and adopted to be compliant with comprehensive plan requirements outlined in the 1994 Planning Enabling Legislation. The 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 amended with the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. This was the first Plan to outline goals and implementation strategies and 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, excluding the adoption of area and neighborhood plans.

Area & Neighborhood Plans

Because Horry County is so large and diverse, it has several 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:

1. Bennett Loop Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (2015)
2. Burgess Community Area Plan (2012)
3. Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan (2011)
4. Mount Vernon Rural Area Management Plan (2008)
5. 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 incorporated into regulations or adopted as part of this plan through the Future Land Use Map.

The Little River Neighborhood Area Plan (2002) and the Garden City Area Plan (2006) both resulted in the development of overlays and 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.

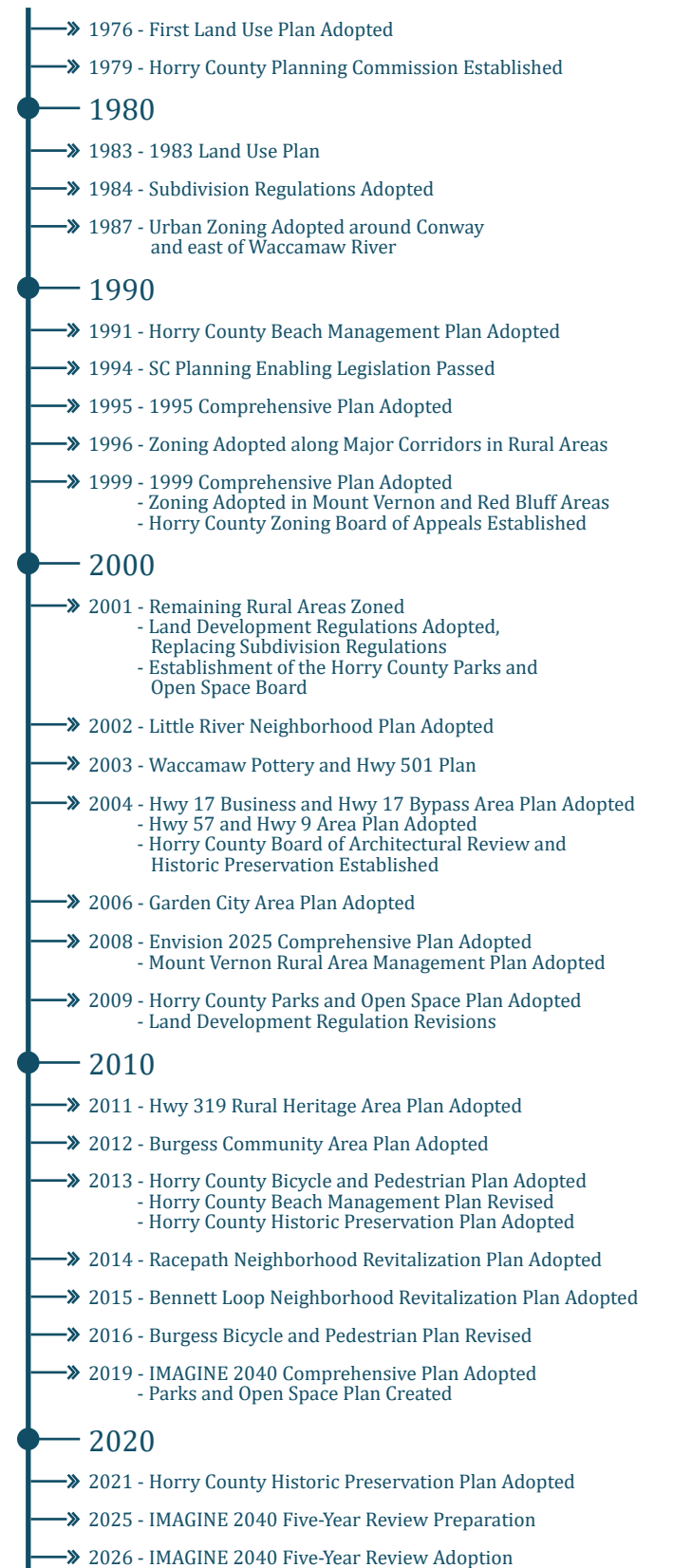
Land Development Regulations

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:

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. (MASC, 2024).

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 approved. 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. 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.

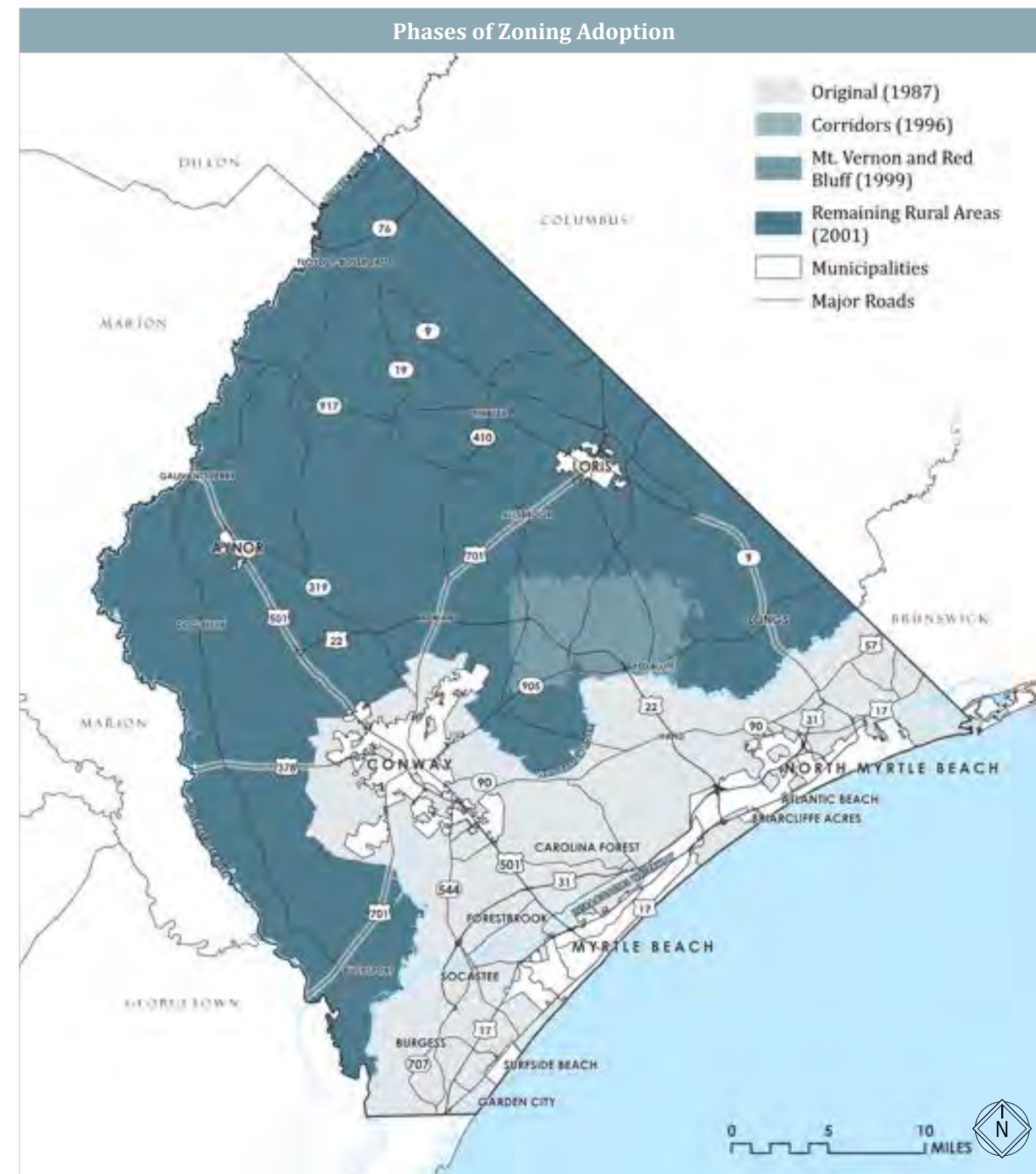
Zoning

As an extension of land use, zoning determines the intensity of any given use. Zoning is a govern-

ment 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 limited to, tree preservation, landscaping, buffers, lighting and curb cuts; and



Source: Horry County GIS. Horry County Planning and Zoning.

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.

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

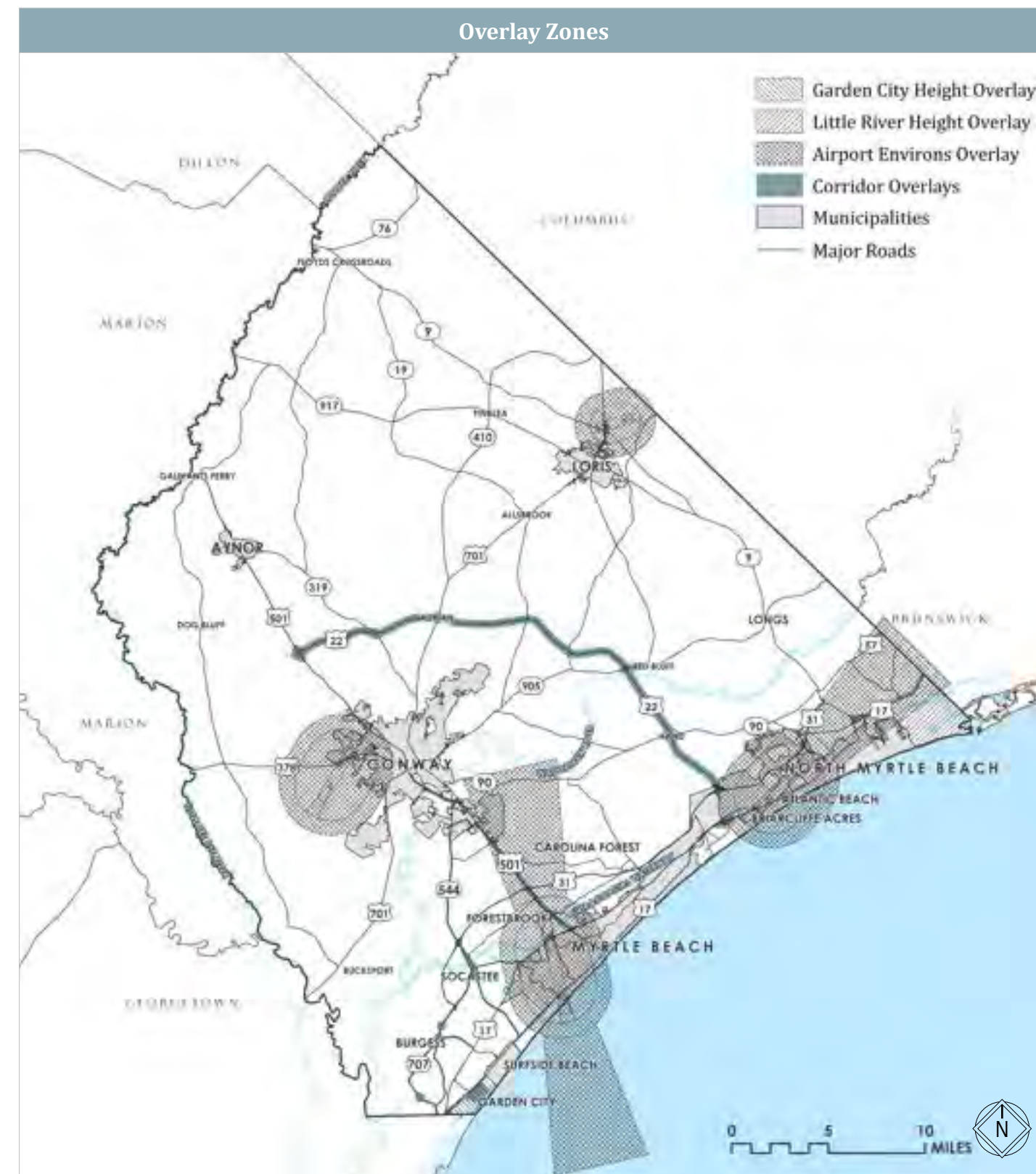
Overlay zones are applied only in conjunction with other zoning districts, and may impose a set of additional requirements or relax a set of requirements imposed by the underlying zoning district. Overlay zones are established to provide unified development that promotes a sense of place and provides 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 designs standards to address public safety issues.

The county has several 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.

Currently adopted overlay zones include the Airport Environs Overlay, Burgess Overlay, CCU Neighborhood Overlay, Garden City Height Overlay, Hwy 17 Business South Overlay, Highway 501 Overlay, Highway 544 Overlay, Highway 707 Overlay, Little River Corridor Overlay, Little River Height Overlay, Restaurant Row Overlay, Socastee Boulevard Overlay, South Kings Hwy Overlay, and Veteran's Highway Overlay.

There is also a Temporary Vending Overlay Zone to manage the number of vendor permits 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 to simplify the Zoning



Source: Horry County GIS. Horry County Planning and Zoning.

Ordinance, improve the review process, and ensure that the regulations are clear to the business community. Additionally, future overlays should be considered 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

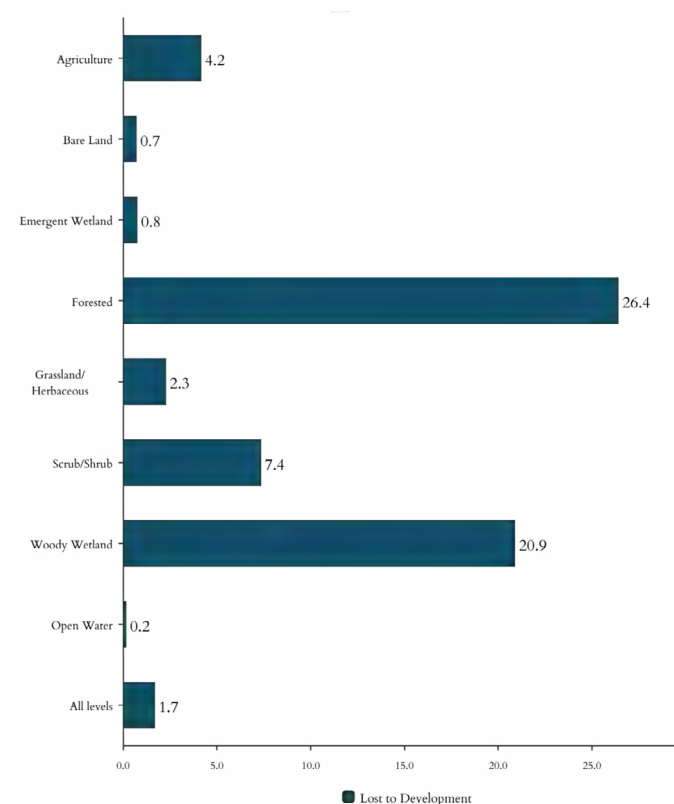
Since 2000, the county's permanent population has increased by more than 172,000 people. By 2040, an additional 211,000 are expected to call Horry County their home. Development has increased to keep up with the demand of retirees relocating to the area as well as working families to support the tourism, healthcare, and construction industries.

From 1996 to 2021, approximately 64.6 square miles of the county's land area were developed. The percentage of county land developed increased by 59.3%, from 8.4% of the total to 13.4%. The majority of undeveloped lands lost included forested areas (26.4 sq. mi.) and woody wetlands (20.9 sq. mi.) Development resulted in mostly low-intensity land use patterns (26.5 sq. mi.), medium-intensity (16.6 sq. mi.), and developed open space (16.4 sq. mi.)

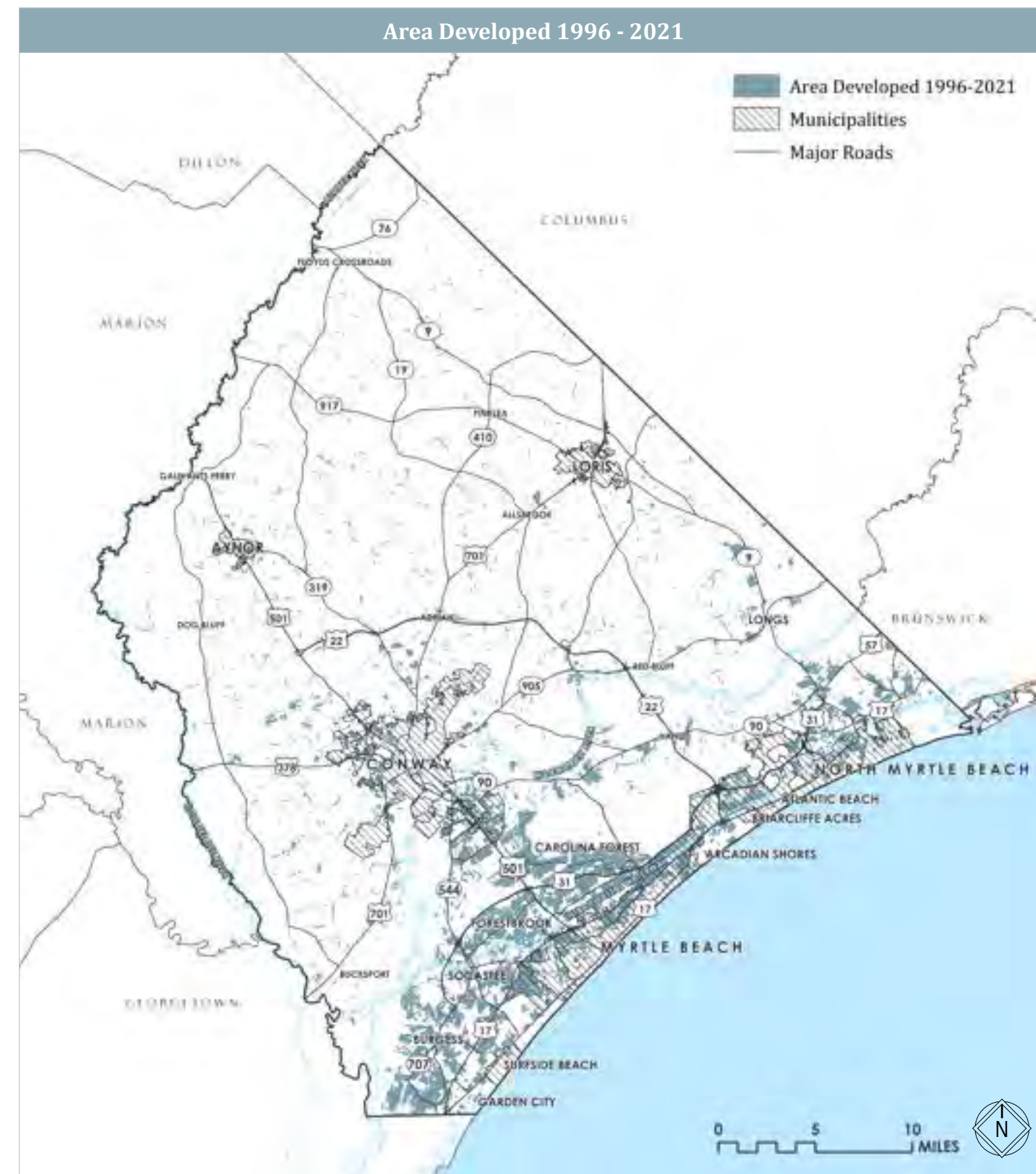
Development was largely concentrated in Little River, Carolina Forest, Forestbrook, Conway, Socastee, and Burgess and has generally moved inland and into unincorporated areas over time.

With continued high projected population growth and low-intensity land use patterns, land development will continue to sprawl.

Land Development Between 1996-2021



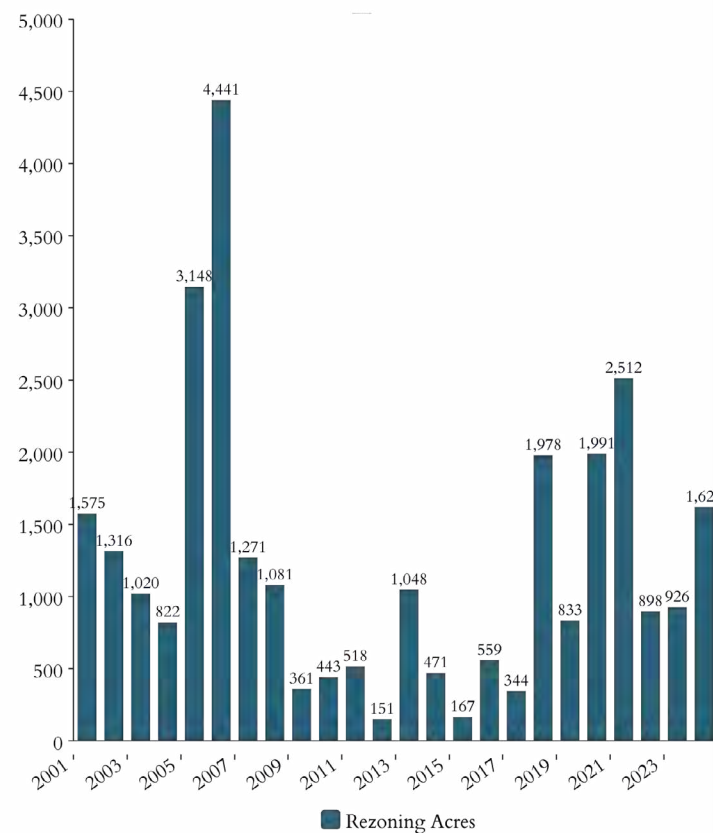
Source: NOAA, 2025.



Source: NOAA, 2025.

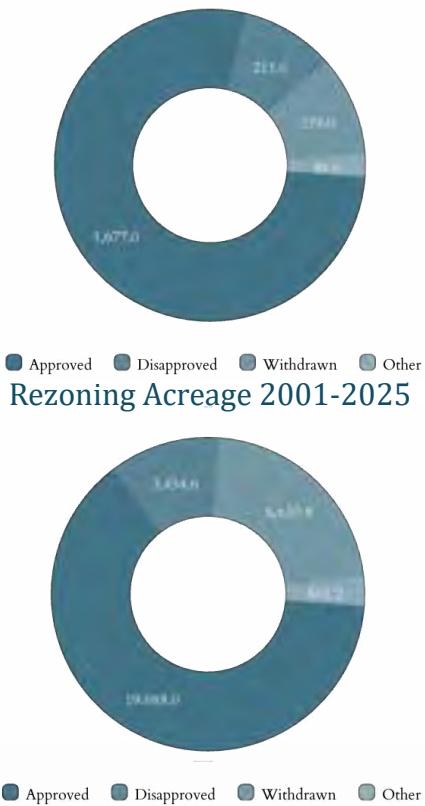
REZONING TRENDS

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 2008 economic downturn. At that point in time, housing was rapidly being constructed throughout unincorporated Horry County. Though rezoning acreage was depressed for several years following the downturn, acreage rose rapidly following the Covid-19 downturn. 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.

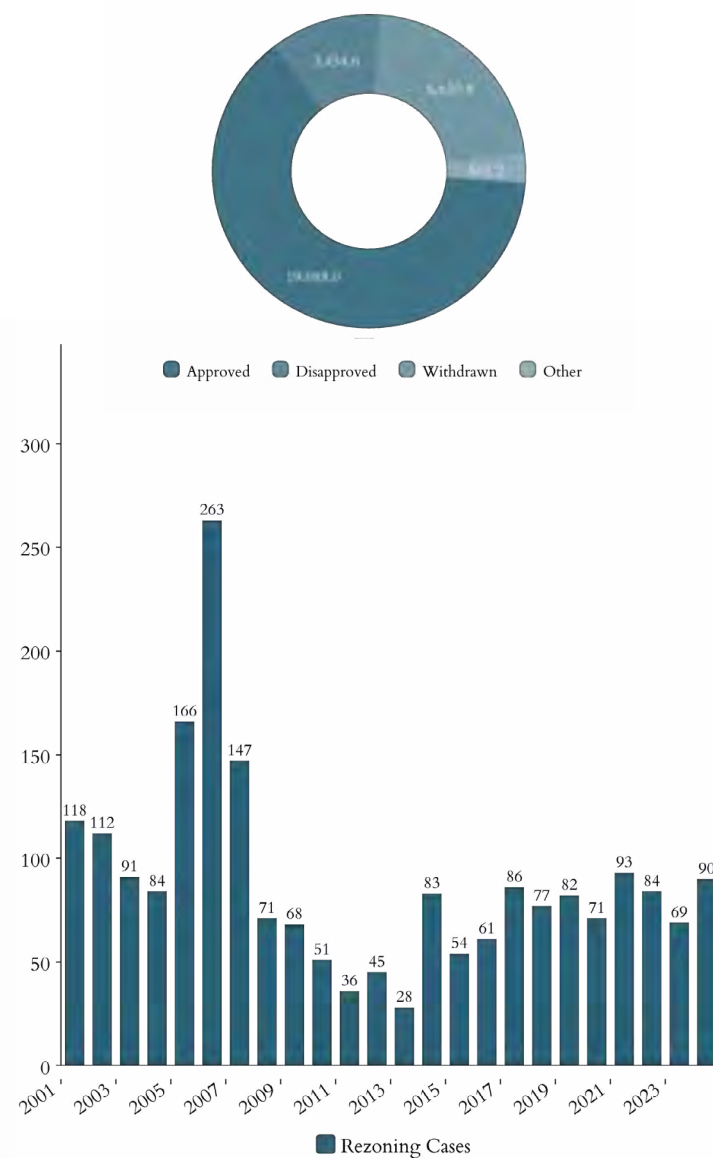


Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

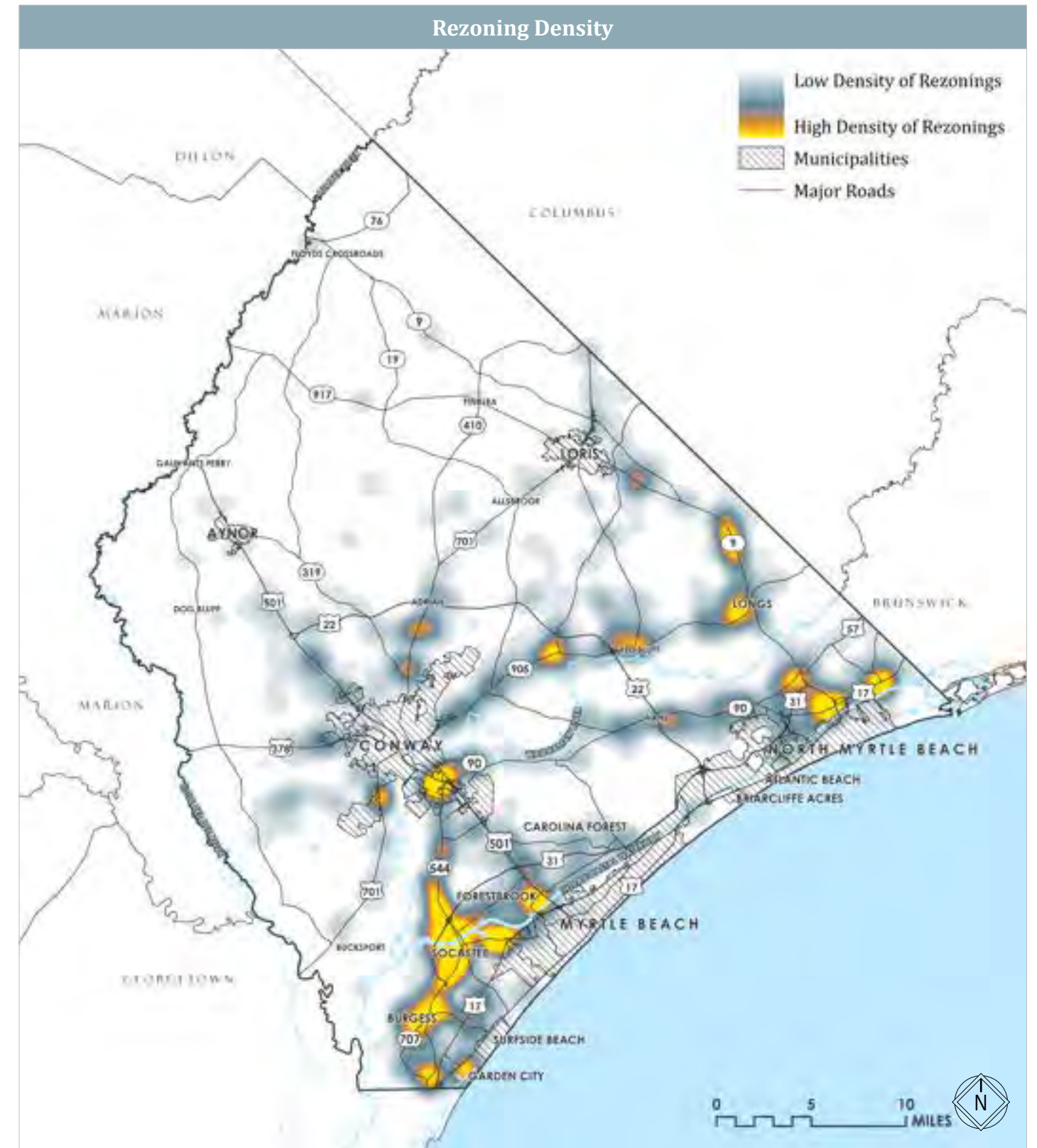
Rezoning Cases 2001-2025



Rezoning Acreage 2001-2025



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

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 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, most 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 believe density will cause traffic problems, decrease property values, and increase crime. However, appropriately sited density and distinct areas for higher density development can result in varied housing styles, improved traffic, increased

Visualizing Density		
Dwellings per Acre	Location	Image
1-2	Sandridge Road (near Hidden Ridge Ct.)	
2-8	James Island Ave. (in Charleston Landing)	
8-12	Mt. Zion Road (at Waterfall Cir.)	
12-40	Little River Neck Road	
40-100	Ocean Blvd. (Windy Hill)	

Source: GSATS, 2009.

economic activity, and more walkable communities. These are the same components that many working families, millennials, and seniors are seeking, yet are not readily available in our region.

Golf Course Redevelopment

As the Golfing industry wanes 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 often complicated by the narrow and linear nature of 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 to meet the Land Development Regulations and address safety concerns and disturbance to existing residents.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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. Many of these communities desire to maintain their rural character.

However, the availability of low priced land makes development easier than redevelopment or infill development in urban areas 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.

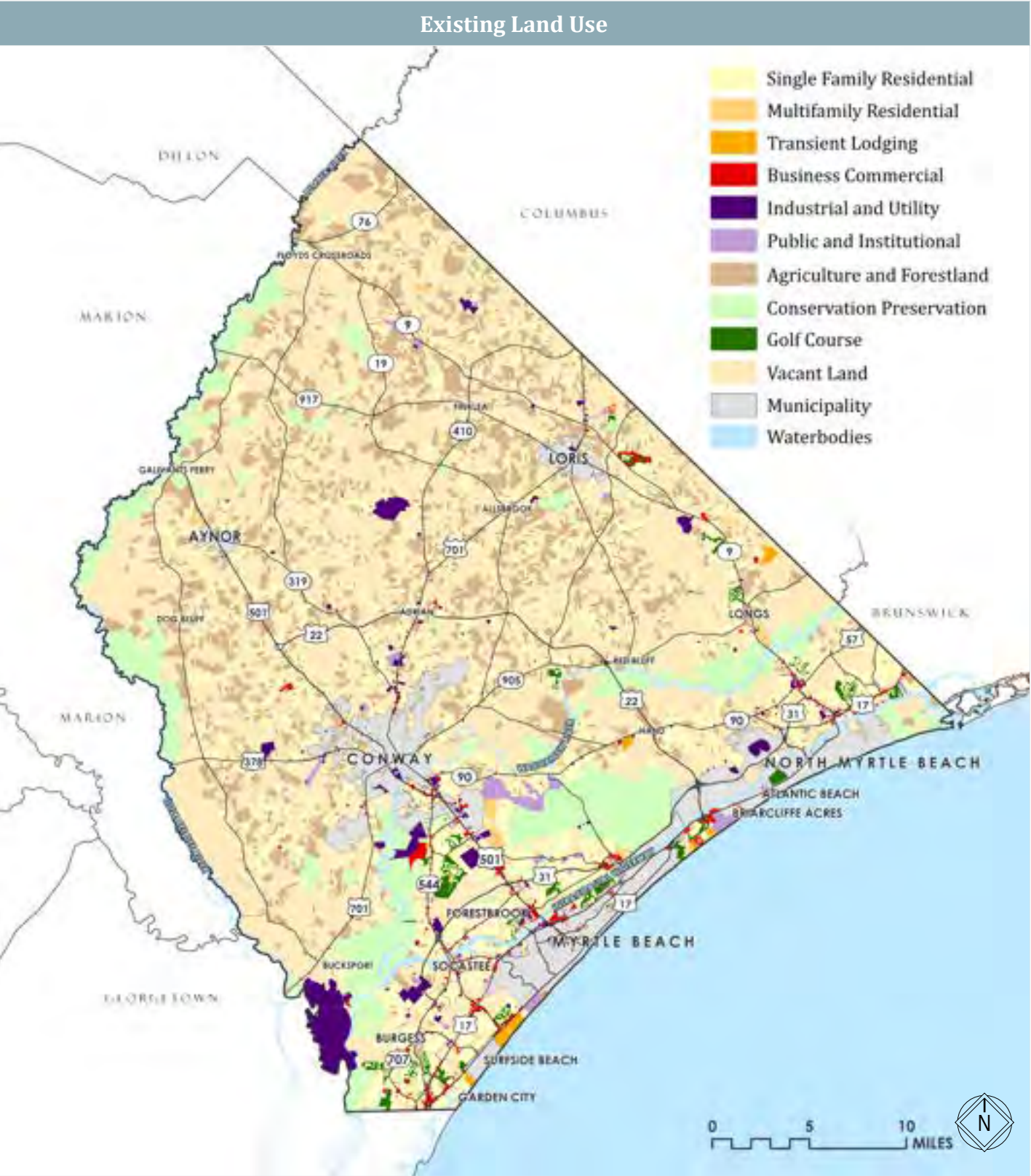
EXISTING LAND USE

Understanding existing 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 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



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.

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 man-made 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.

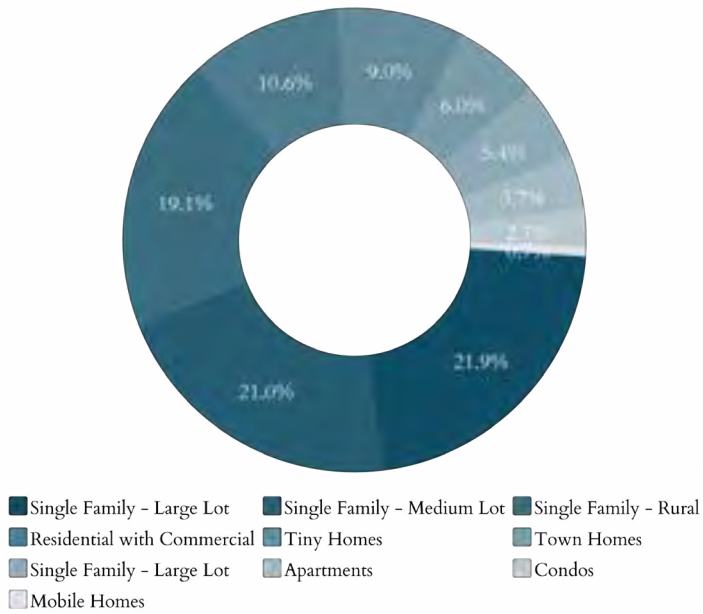
These ten predefined land use classifications broadly define the broad spectrum of the natural and built environment. The Current Land Use Map is one tool used to determine where future growth will be appropriately accommodated within the Future Land Use Map in this Chapter. It is important to note that 7.5% of the county's land area 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.

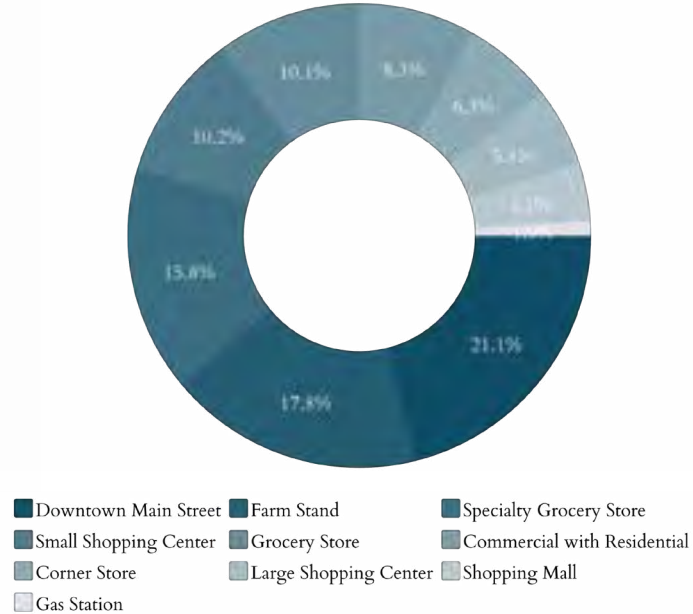
Most residential areas are located closer to the beach in areas like Garden City, Burgess, Socastee, Forestbrook, Carolina Forest, and Little River. Emerging high-growth areas include portions of the Hwy. 9, Hwy. 90 and Hwy. 905 corridors and the Hwy. 701, Hwy. 378, Kates Bay, and other corridors around Conway. Land use acreage was based upon the size of the parcel, and individual parcels were not assigned or divided into multiple land uses for the purpose of this analysis.

2025 Existing Land Use			
Land Use	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of County
Single-Family Residential	105,115.3	164.2	14.41%
Multi-Family Residential	6,407.1	10.0	0.88%
Transient Lodging	1,631.5	2.5	0.22%
Business and Commercial	5,947.7	9.3	0.82%
Industrial and Utility	12,960.5	20.3	1.78%
Public and Institutional	6,613.6	10.3	0.91%
Agriculture and Forestland	108,270.3	169.2	14.84%
Conservation Preservation	66,903.4	104.5	9.17%
Golf Course	5,497.0	8.6	0.75%
Vacant Land	327,627.6	511.9	44.90%
Municipal Land Area	54,695.2	85.5	7.50%
Other (Road Right of Way, Rivers, etc.)	28,006.6	43.8	3.84%
Total	729,676.0	1,140.1	100.00%

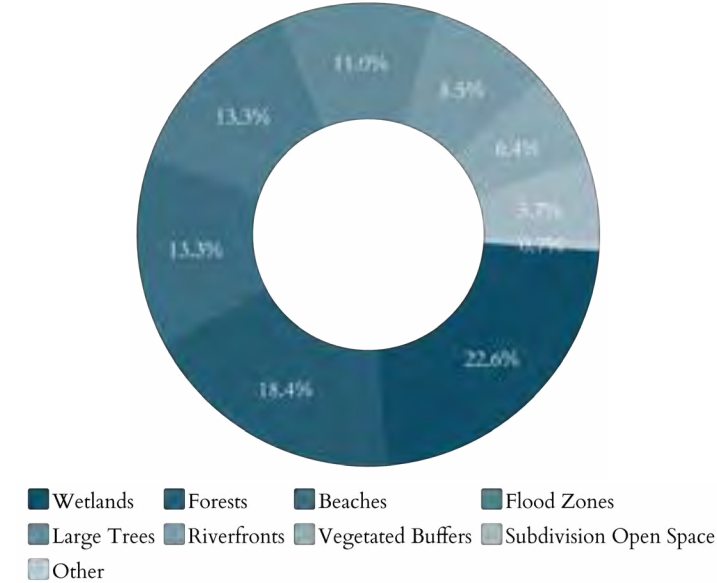
What do you want future residential development in Horry County to look like?



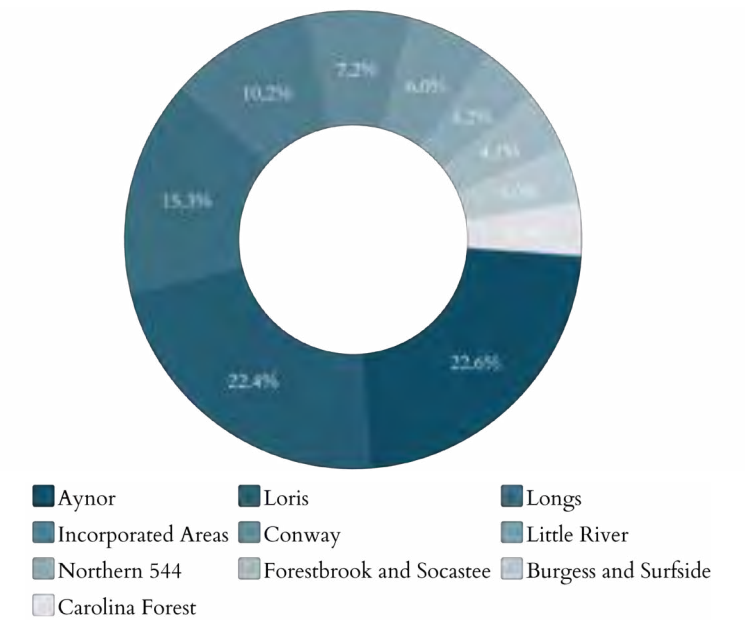
What do you want future commercial development in Horry County to look like?



What features of the natural environment are most important to protect?



Where would you prefer to accommodate future population growth over the next 20 years?



GROWTH STRATEGY

The Future Land Use Strategy brings together all the elements of the Plan and incorporates public input to define desired growth patterns and community form. It addresses all 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.

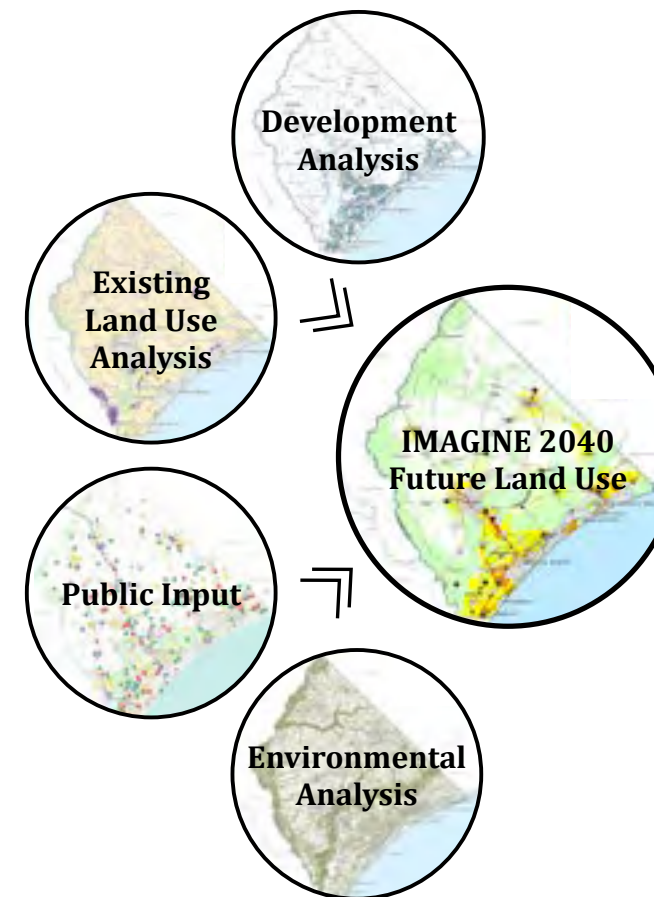
This chapter seeks to proactively guide future development through infill development, provide a variety of housing types, encourage economic development, and ensure safe communities with quality public services.

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



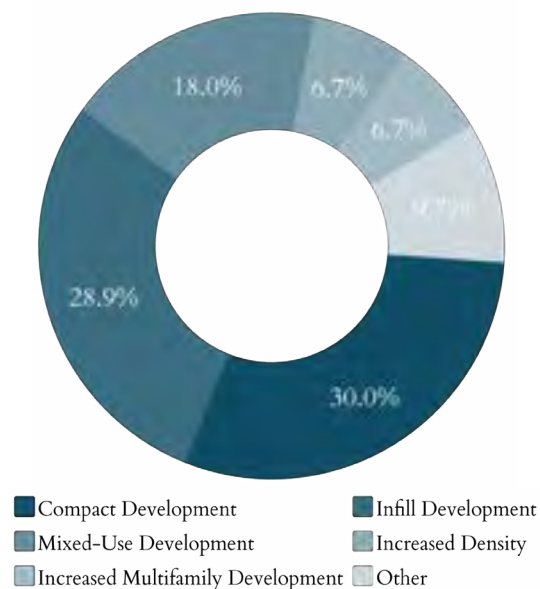
overlays, development agreements, and efforts of the development community.

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.

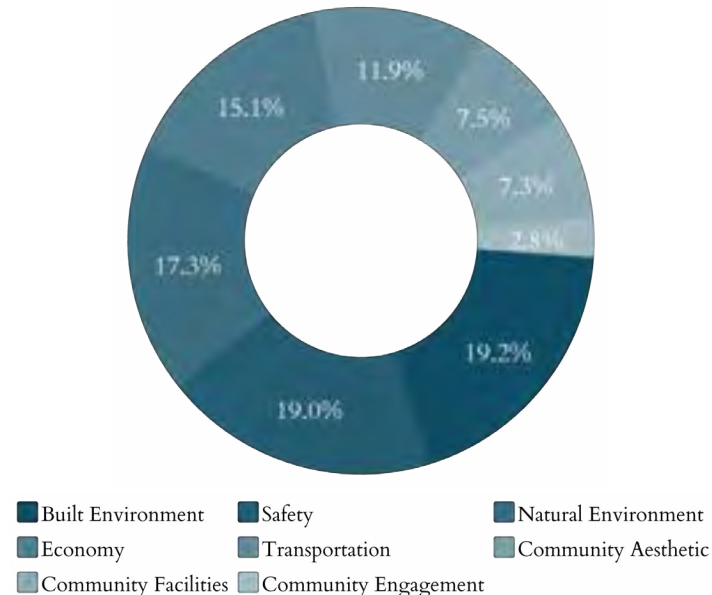
COMMUNITY INPUT

Horry County had multiple means of collecting public input 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 to better

How would you accommodate Horry County's projected growth of 100,000 residents by 2040?



In the next 20 years, what do you think will be the most concerning issue in your community?



understand residents' needs, for example, asking about desired growth patterns in a survey versus through a hands-on mapping effort.

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.

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 Improve-

ments

- In underutilized buildings and areas
- The City of Loris
- The City of Conway
- Socastee Boulevard
- Inlet Square Mall
- Little River
- Along rural highway corridors

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.

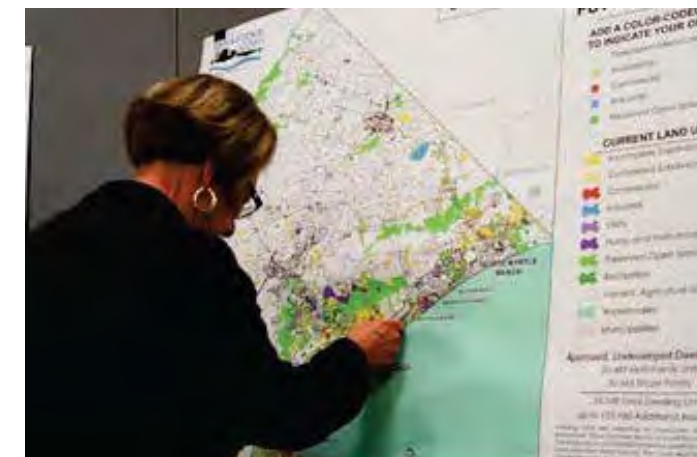
The survey showed that most respondents prefer future population growth be accommodated in vacant and underutilized properties and compact developments. In addition, respondents prefer commercial development that resembled a downtown main street and roadside farm stands.

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).

Unsurprisingly, respondents from rural areas (Green Sea and Aynor) showed a strong preference towards large single-family residential lots. Respondents in urban areas (Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach) showed more interest in residential mixed with commercial and small-size single-family lots. In suburban areas (Carolina Forest, Burgess, Forestbrook, and Socastee) respondents largely showed interest in single-family mid-size lots. Respondents from Garden City and Surfside 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.

While most geographic areas showed a preference



Resident participating in the Open House Mapping Exercise
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.

for increased walking paths and trails, some areas had differing opinions. Aynor and Galivants Ferry prefer that future open space remain farmland. The Green Sea area showed equal preference between walking paths, passive park areas, athletic fields, and playgrounds. Respondents from the Loris and Longs areas preferred farmland over athletic fields, parks, playgrounds, or amenity centers.

Open Houses

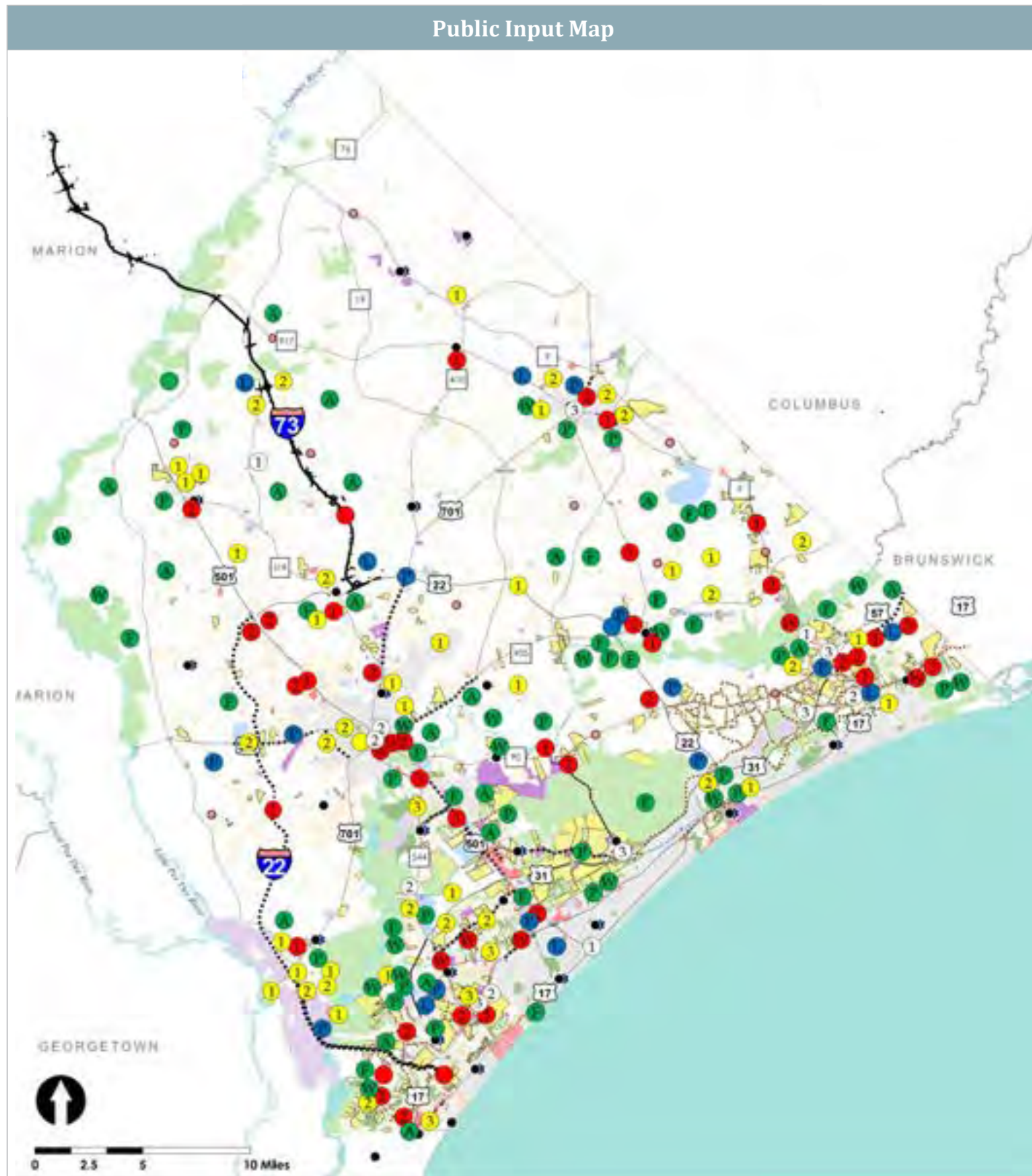
Attendees of the first four open houses were asked to identify locations where they desire future residential, commercial, industrial, and open space or recreational uses. Each participant was given eight quarter-inch colored dot stickers (two blue representing industry, two red representing commercial, 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.

Land Use Workshop

Over 100 members of the public attended the



County officials, city officials, residents, and community leaders discuss the future of the Burgess community
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.



Source: Horry County Planning & Zoning.



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.

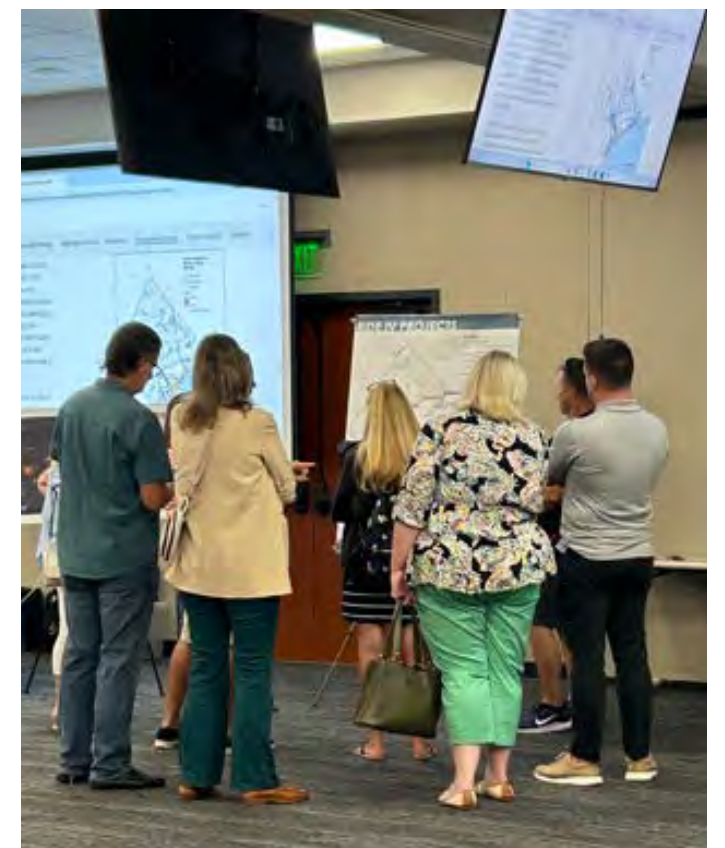
Attendees were asked to identify locations on a map

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.

LAND SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

As Horry County grows, development should occur in a manner that is consistent with the vision and goals of the plan.

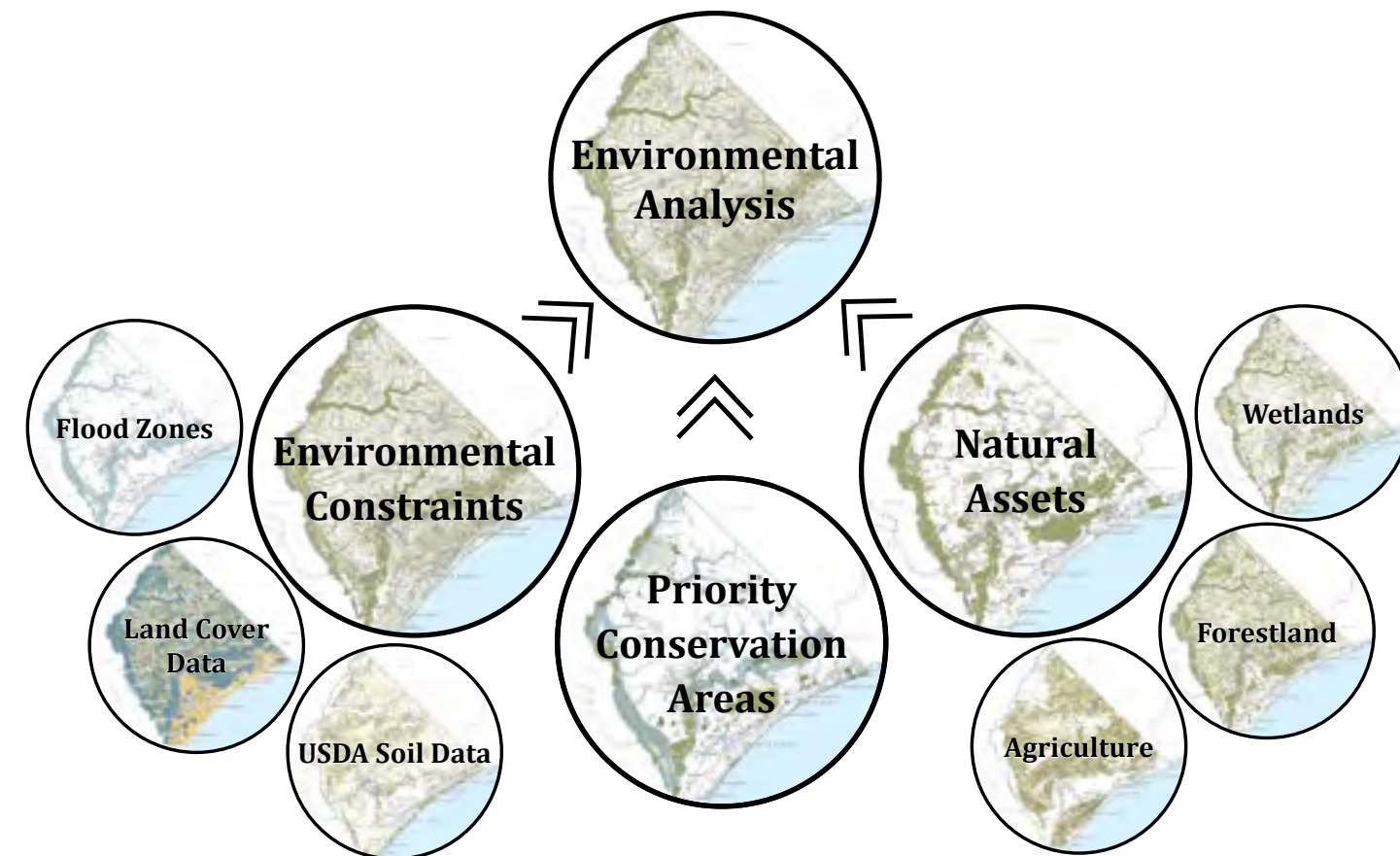
Conducting a land suitability analysis is one of the necessary steps to identify areas that are appropriate for future growth and where growth areas may conflict with environmental constraints. The following conveys the spatial analysis that was



August 12th Public Meeting in Conway.
Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.



Source: Horry County GIS; Horry County Planning and Zoning.



completed using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) utilizing existing data and input collected in the previous chapters of this plan.

Spatial analysis models problems geographically, derives results by computer processing, and explores and examines 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.

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's developable land is limited by wetlands, floodplains, and wildfire risk. 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:

1. Regulatory Floodzone
2. Poorly Drained Soils

3. Vegetation Indicative of Wetlands

The following map identifies areas that are likely environmentally constrained. Because all 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:

1. Proximity to major arterial roadways and proposed roadways;
2. Roadway capacity;
3. Proximity to existing and future major highway interchanges;
4. Water and Sewer Service Areas;
5. Areas along major gas lines;
6. Well drained soils;
7. Vacant properties in close proximity to other development;
8. Land that falls within a five mile coverage area of existing fire stations;
9. Properties zoned for major residential subdivisions that are incomplete or have not commenced construction; and
10. Redevelopment areas, 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 regula-



Example of Land Use Patterns intended by the Future Land Use Map
Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2004.

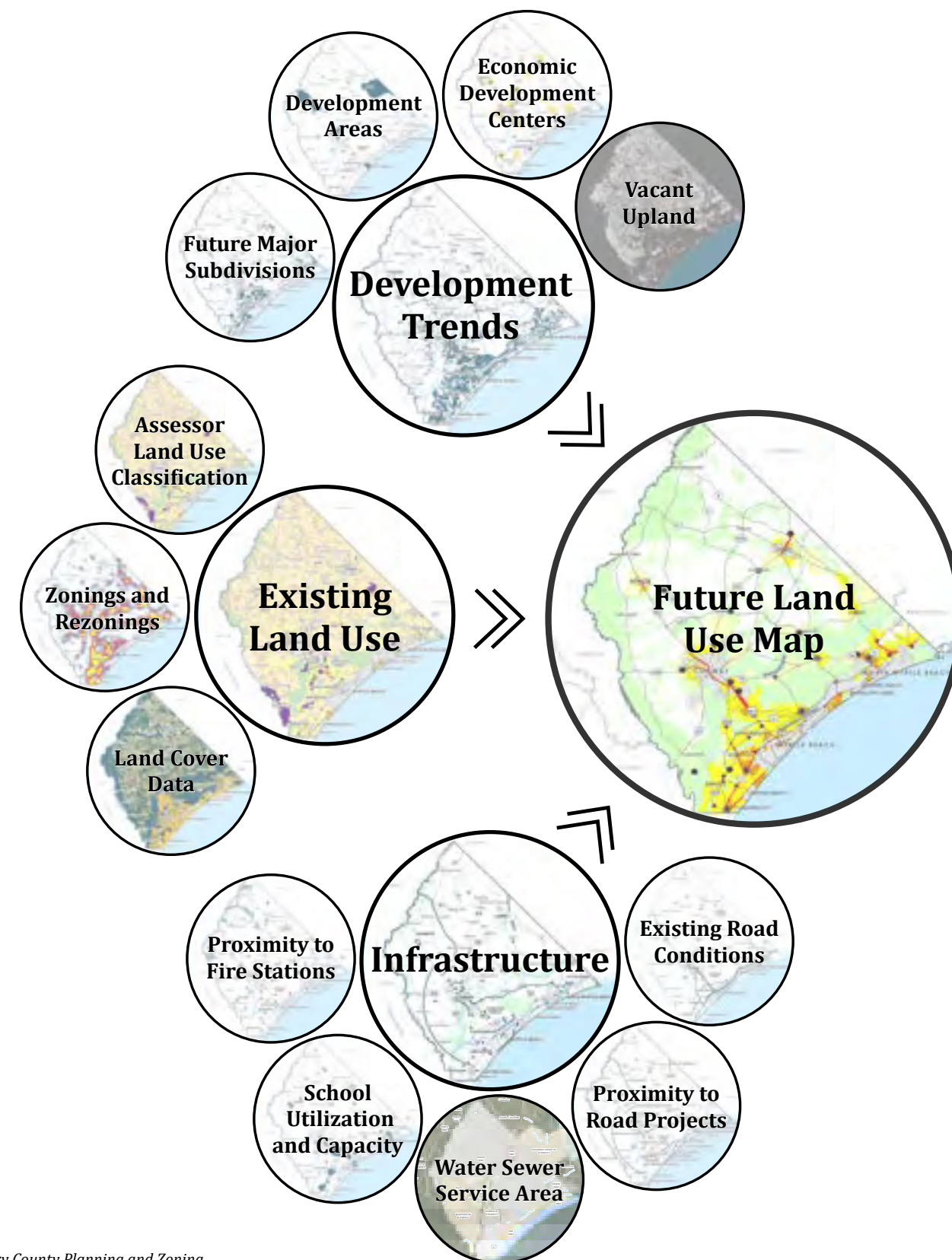
tions, capital improvements, and other regulatory and planning initiatives.

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 to achieve that vision. It does not convey the ultimate build out of Horry County.

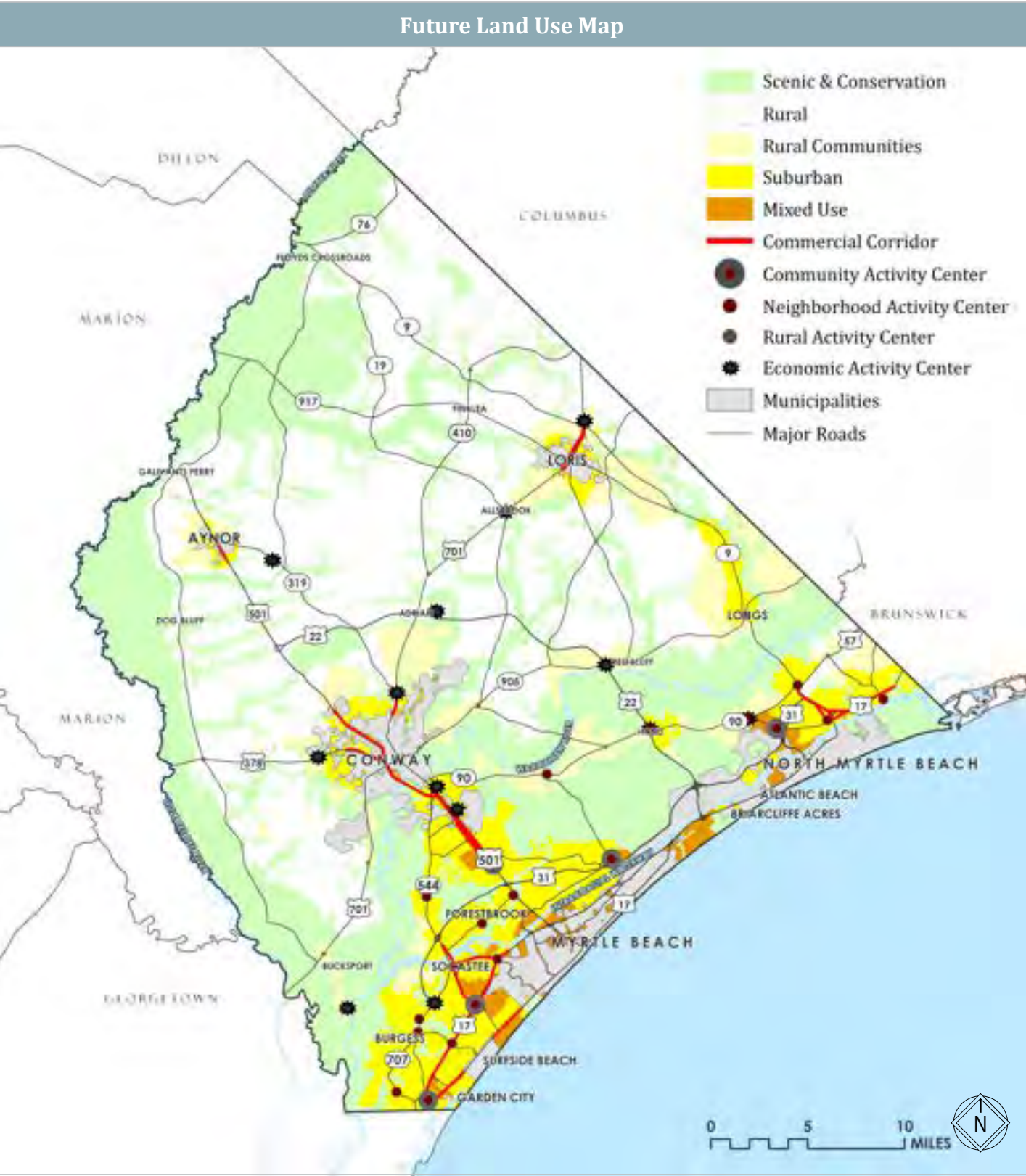
The Future Land Use Map defines where future development in neighborhoods, districts, along corridors, infill development, or in any defined planning area is most appropriate. The land use pattern and recommended uses are outlined in the definitions, and the mechanisms to achieve the desired form is 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



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning.



Source: Horry County GIS; Horry County Planning and Zoning.

definition.

The recommended land uses provide a breakdown of primary, secondary, and conditional uses 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.

Recommended Future Land Uses

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 chang-

ing 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 of 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.

The Future Land Use Map does not take away existing development rights granted through current zoning nor does it take away vested development rights; therefore, does not constitute a taking.

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.

2025 Future Land Use			
Future Land Use	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of County
Scenic & Conservation Areas	282,183.5	440.9	38.67%
Rural	256,081.6	400.1	35.10%
Rural Communities	54,006.0	84.4	7.40%
Rural Activity Center	502.4	0.8	0.07%
Suburban	63,997.6	100.0	8.77%
Neighborhood Activity Center	2,010.4	3.1	0.28%
Commercial Corridors	4,577.0	7.2	0.63%
Mixed Use	8,909.6	13.9	1.22%
Community Activity Center	2,513.2	3.9	0.34%
Economic Development Center	1,804.2	2.8	0.25%
Municipal Land Area	53,090.4	83.0	7.28%
Total	729,676.0	1,140.1	100.00%



SCENIC AND 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: Mining, 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 mining operations or 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

CP, CO1, AG1, AG4, AG5

RURAL

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 crossroads.

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 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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, and mining operations.

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, campgrounds, or mining operations are pursued, an evaluation of the surrounding natural resources and communities should strongly be taken into consideration.
4. If the county develops a Density Bonus Program, Rural Areas should be identified as sending areas for transferring out development rights to higher density receiving areas.



Generated by Adobe Firefly

RELEVANT PLANS

Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, Mount Vernon Rural Area Management Plan, Northeast Area Transportation Plan

EXAMPLE ZONING DISTRICTS

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

AG1-AG7, RE, SF/MSF 14.5-40, MRD1

RURAL ACTIVITY CENTERS

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 $\frac{1}{8}$ mile radius and be $\frac{1}{4}$ 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.



Generated by Adobe Firefly

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

AG2, AG3

SUBURBAN

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



Generated by Adobe Firefly.

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. Development 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 entrances 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

SF/MSF 6 – 14.5, MRD 2, MRD 3, PDD, TND, PR1, ME1

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTERS

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 neigh-

borhood 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 small-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

RE1-2, ME1, ME2, PR1, ME1

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

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, street-scaping 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

RE1-4, MRD 2, MRD 3, PDD, AM1, AM2, ME1, PR1, PR2

MIXED USE

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

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



Generated by Adobe Firefly.

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 tradesshops.

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



Generated by Adobe Firefly.

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.

8. 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.

9. 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

PDD, TND, MRD 3, RE1-3, ME1, PR1

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

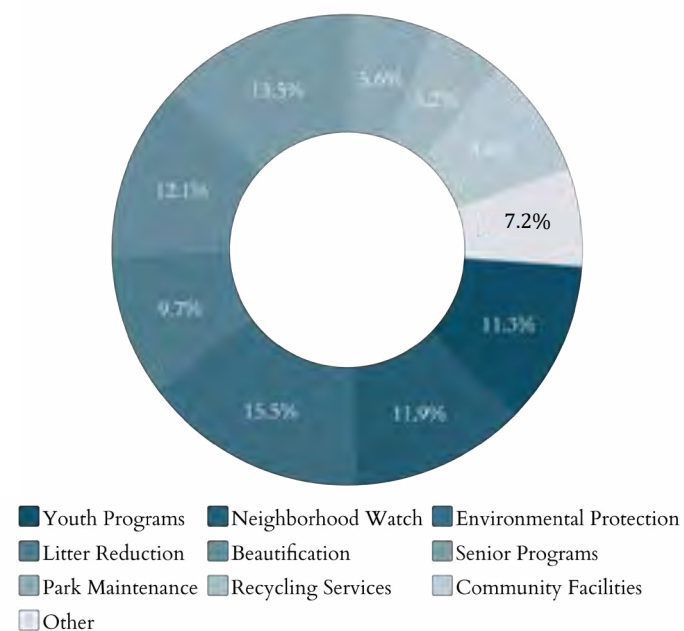
MA1, MA2, ME1, ME2, MI, PDD, PA1, PR1, PR2

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, mining, 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 HCConnect, the county's mobile

What would you volunteer your time to improve?



Source: Horry County Planning and Zoning, 2025.

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.



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



GOALS AND STRATEGIES ELEMENT

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

CHAPTER 13

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

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.

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 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.

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Establish resiliency strategies and actions and identify resources that can aid in strengthening Horry County's resilience.

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.

Goal CC: 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 CC-1: Develop and implement a community beautification and branding program.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-1.1	Continue to implement low maintenance beautification projects at Horry County facilities.	Continuously
CC-1.2	Develop and adopt a countywide Gateway Beautification Plan to improve roadway aesthetics along major corridors.	Short-Term
CC-1.3	Pilot a branding and beautification plan in the Burgess Community.	Short-Term
CC-1.4	Expand the county’s capacity to maintain and expand its corridor beautification program through dedicated funding and staffing.	Mid-Term
CC-1.5	Develop individualized community branding and beautification plans, as requested, to create distinct community identities.	Long-Term
CC-1.6	Assist community groups with implementation of their branding and beautification plans.	Long-Term

Objective CC-2: Develop and amend regulations that contribute towards distinct community character.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-2.1	Host charrettes to capture preferred forms and designs that can be translated into regulations that accurately reflect the desires of individual communities.	Continuously
CC-2.2	Revise rezoning criteria to ensure rezoning requests are evaluated in accordance to the guidance in this Plan.	Short-Term
CC-2.3	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
CC-2.4	Revise the MRD zoning district to align with the Future Land Use definitions.	Long-Term
CC-2.5	Revise Horry County’s Corridor Overlays to ensure they positively influence community aesthetics and result in quality design.	Short-Term
CC-2.6	Consolidate and simplify existing Overlays when feasible and appropriate.	Short-Term
CC-2.7	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

Goal CC: Community Character	Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.
------------------------------	--

Objective CC-3: Develop, update, and implement plans to ensure the character and form of communities are preserved and enhanced.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-3.1	Revise the Garden City Area Plan.	Mid-Term
CC-3.2	Develop a Garden City Downtown Master/Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan, incorporating design and hazard mitigation options.	Mid-Term
CC-3.3	Revise the Little River Neighborhood Plan.	Mid-Term
CC-3.4	Reauthorize the Highway 319 Rural Heritage Area Plan, Mt. Vernon Area Management Plan, and Burgess Area Plan.	Long-Term
CC-3.5	Develop other plans and studies, as needed, to establish and preserve distinct community character.	Long-Term

Objective CC-4: Revise and simplify Horry County’s sign regulations.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-4.1	Consolidate sign regulations to minimize duplication of content and inconsistencies between applicable ordinances.	Short-Term
CC-4.2	Ensure that Horry County’s sign ordinance can be upheld to Reed vs Town of Gilbert.	Short-Term

Objective CC-5: Increase the number of designated historic properties in Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-5.1	Revise the Horry County Historic Preservation Plan.	Short-Term
CC-5.2	Maintain a database of properties, structures, and districts that are eligible for the Horry County Historic Register and National Register of Historic Preservation.	Continuously
CC-5.3	Distribute information on the Horry County Historic Register and National Register of Historic Preservation to eligible property owners.	Continuously
CC-5.4	Host community education programs on how to obtain an historic property designation and to restore and protect their historic structures.	Mid-Term

Goal CC: Community Character	Promote a sense of place within our existing and emerging communities by preserving and cultivating their unique character and identities.
------------------------------	--

Objective CC-6: Expand efforts to educate residents and visitors about Horry County’s history.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CC-6.1	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
CC-6.2	Pursue the installation of new historic markers.	Continuously
CC-6.3	Add storyboards conveying Horry County history at appropriate public facilities.	Mid-Term
CC-6.4	Implement the Horry County Museum’s Strategic Plan.	Mid-Term
CC-6.5	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
CC-6.6	Ensure that communities and public facilities are appropriately named and signed according to their geographic location or historic figures.	Continuously

Goal RP: 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 RP-1: Preserve the historic properties, agrarian and natural landscapes, and way of life in western Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RP-1.1	Avoid suburban sprawl and leap-frog development patterns from encroaching into rural areas through zoning and land development regulations.	Continuously
RP-1.2	Continue to work with rural communities to develop individualized area plans, as needed.	Continuously
RP-1.3	Establish a list of priority properties and structures in western Horry to consider for the Horry County Historic Register.	Short-Term
RP-1.4	Add at least 10 properties in western Horry County to the Horry County Historic Register by 2025.	Mid-Term
RP-1.5	Assist with the establishment of at least 5 new Century Farms by 2025.	Mid-Term
RP-1.6	Pursue the designation of Pee Dee Highway as a SC Scenic Byway.	Long-Term

Goal RP: Rural Preservation	Preserve rural areas and lifestyles, along with natural resources and assets, through land use decisions and policies.
-----------------------------	--

Objective RP-1: Preserve the historic properties, agrarian and natural landscapes, and way of life in western Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RP-1.7	Encourage agricultural landowners to protect their property’s agricultural use through conservation easements.	Mid-Term
RP-1.8	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
RP-1.9	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 RP-2: Revise and simplify Horry County’s sign regulations.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RP-2.1	Distribute information to farmers, Clemson Extension, and the local USDA on Horry County’s agritourism permitting application.	Short-Term
RP-2.2	Support agricultural, ecotourism, and heritage tourism by developing special provisions within the Zoning Ordinance.	Mid-Term
RP-2.3	Partner with area Chambers of Commerce to promote agricultural and heritage tourism.	Continuously
RP-2.4	Develop a farmland preservation plan.	Long-Term
RP-2.5	Provide educational opportunities for youth and the public to learn about current and historical farming practices used in Horry County.	Continuously
RP-2.6	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
RP-2.7	Provide support infrastructure for local farmers markets at county facilities.	Continuously
RP-2.8	Revise roadside stand language within the Zoning Ordinance to support local agricultural activities and maintain the character of Horry County	Mid-Term

Goal RR: 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 RR-1: Develop, update, and implement neighborhood plans to encourage stabilization and revitalization.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RR-1.1 Implement the Bennett Loop and Racepath Neighborhood Plans.	Mid-Term
RR-1.2 Develop and adopt a Bucksport Neighborhood Plan.	Short-Term
RR-1.3 Develop and adopt a Socastee Area Plan.	Mid-Term
RR-1.4 Develop and implement plans for other highly distressed neighborhoods, such as, but not limited to, Cedar Branch and Freemont.	Long-Term

Objective RR-2: Decrease the number of blighted residential properties throughout Horry County.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RR-2.1 Establish and maintain an inventory of abandoned and blighted residential structures.	Short-Term
RR-2.2 Continue to implement the emergency homeowner repair program.	Continuously
RR-2.3 Pursue abatement orders on uninhabitable residential structures.	Continuously
RR-2.4 Enforce and track property management and illegal dumping citations.	Continuously
RR-2.5 Continue the Horry County Residential Nuisance Abatement Program.	Continuously

Objective RR-3: Identify and develop targeted commercial revitalization areas.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RR-3.1 Create an inventory of potential commercial revitalization areas and establish a priority.	Short-Term
RR-3.2 Develop and begin implementing revitalization plans for the highest priority areas.	Mid-Term
RR-3.3 Support efforts to pass legislation allowing counties to demolish blighted commercial properties to reduce unsafe, nuisance properties.	Mid-Term
RR-3.4 Consider the establishment of Priority Investment Zones that will incentivize commercial redevelopment and infill.	Long-Term
RR-3.5 Promote the Economic Opportunity Zones for commercial and mixed-use infill development in urban areas.	Continuously

Goal RR: 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.
---	---

Objective RR-4: Promote revitalization and infill efforts.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RR-4.1	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
RR-4.2	Support TIF Districts or provide other incentives that will spur revitalization of unincorporated blighted commercial areas and municipal downtowns.	Continuously
RR-4.3	Support municipal efforts to provide safe, affordable housing through partnerships and funding assistance provided by Community Development.	Continuously

Goal HC: 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 to 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 HC-1: Revise the Horry County Zoning Ordinance and Land Development Regulations to support a full range of land uses and form.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-1.1	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
HC-1.2	Remove obsolete and unutilized zoning districts from the Zoning Ordinance.	Short-Term
HC-1.3	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
HC-1.4	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
HC-1.5	Revise the zoning ordinance to allow for vertical mixture of residential and commercial uses.	Mid-Term

Goal HC: 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.
--	--

Objective HC-2: Continue to monitor changes in population and demographics, in addition to trends in seasonal populations.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-2.1	Update the Comprehensive Plan upon the availability of the decennial Census data and the release of new population projections.	Mid-Term
HC-2.2	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
HC-2.3	Share population and housing trend information with County Council, area utilities, Horry County Solid Waste Authority, Horry County Schools, and others.	Continuously

Objective HC-3: Encourage safe, affordable housing throughout Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-3.1	Create developer incentives to incorporate affordable housing into new developments.	Mid-Term
HC-3.2	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
HC-3.3	Assist with the establishment of a non-profit organization dedicated to fair housing education and assistance in the region.	Mid-Term
HC-3.4	Host a fair housing and first time home buyer education program annually.	Mid-Term
HC-3.5	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 HC-4: Increase the number of cultural and performing arts facilities, programs, and displays.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-4.1	Work with schools, galleries, and artisans to display artwork and other exhibits in Horry County government buildings.	Continuously
HC-4.2	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
HC-4.3	Incorporate art and exhibit display space into new county buildings that are open to the public.	Continuously
HC-4.4	Support the development of a regional public-private performing arts facility.	Long-Term
HC-4.5	Consider the creation of an Arts Commission to assure arts and culture are addressed in county decision-making.	Long-Term

Goal HC: 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.
--	--

Objective HC-5: Identify active and passive recreation needs throughout unincorporated Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-5.1	Re-Adopt the Parks and Open Space Plan.	Short-Term
HC-5.2	Maintain a Recreation Inventory, cataloging and mapping all recreational facilities, trails, and properties in Horry County.	Continuously
HC-5.3	Develop a Recreational Facility Maintenance and Expansion Plan.	Mid-Term
HC-5.4	Develop and adopt a comprehensive countywide Greenways and Blueways Master Plan which will replace the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	Mid-Term
HC-5.5	Develop a standardized park and directional signage plan for all county recreation facilities.	Mid-Term
HC-5.6	Develop one conceptual recreation facility master plan annually to inform cost estimates, phasing options, and to leverage grant funding and donations.	Continuously

Objective HC-6: Ensure recreational amenities and programs are accessible for all residents.		
Strategy		Timeframe
HC-6.1	Revise the open space criteria within the Land Development Regulations to ensure that open space is more integral to neighborhood design.	Short-Term
HC-6.2	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
HC-6.3	Add 10 miles of trails and greenways by 2025.	Long-Term
HC-6.4	Coordinate with federal and state agencies and conservation organizations to identify passive recreation opportunities on existing conservation land.	Mid-Term
HC-6.5	Coordinate with area developers and businesses on the donation of land and equipment to support future recreational facilities.	Mid-Term
HC-6.6	Maintain and enhance existing boat landing and beach access sites.	Continuously
HC-6.7	Consider the development of waterfront parks, walking trails, scenic overlooks, picnic sites, fishing docks, boardwalks, and eco-learning experiences where space allows.	Continuously
HC-6.8	Actively seek grants to help fund the development of new recreational facilities and programs.	Continuously
HC-6.9	Ensure that playgrounds, parks, and other recreational spaces meet the latest National Safety Guidelines and ADA accessibility regulations.	Mid-Term

Goal HC: 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.
---------------------------------------	--

Objective HC-6: Ensure recreational amenities and programs are accessible for all residents.	
Strategy	Timeframe
HC-6.10 Conduct recreational programming assessment and fee evaluation to ensure effective use of available public space and staffing for recreation.	Mid-Term
HC-6.11 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
HC-6.12 Develop an advertising plan to increase public awareness of facilities, programs and leagues.	Short-Term

Goal SC: 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.	

Objective SC-1: Improve Public Safety response times.	
Strategy	Timeframe
SC-1.1 Ensure that public safety departments are adequately staffed and properly equipped to meet the needs of the existing and growing population.	Continuously
SC-1.2 Develop and implement a Text to 9-1-1 system.	Short-Term
SC-1.3 Educate the public about when to call 9-1-1 and availability of non-emergency phone numbers.	Continuously
SC-1.4 Ensure that the 9-1-1 Center is informed of large special events occurring throughout the county.	Continuously
SC-1.5 Establish an adequate level of service for all public safety departments to inform funding needs and inform staff rezoning recommendations.	Short-Term
SC-1.6 Add and staff a 5th Police Precinct to accommodate future growth.	Short-Term
SC-1.7 Add a 5th Fire Rescue Battalion to accommodate future growth.	Mid-Term
SC-1.8 Develop a public safety facilities and staffing assessment to inform existing and projected capital improvement and funding needs.	Short-Term
SC-1.9 Strategically add EMS service throughout the county to improve coverage.	Continuously
SC-1.10 Transition Volunteer Fire Rescue Stations into Career Stations as merited and funding is available.	Continuously

Goal SC: 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.
---------------------------	--

Objective SC-1: Improve Public Safety response times.	
Strategy	Timeframe
SC-1.11 Limit new major residential subdivisions in areas of the county that do not have Career Fire Rescue Stations.	Continuously
SC-1.12 Ensure that new development has an interconnected road network, both internal and external, to allow for faster public safety response.	Continuously

Objective SC-2: Improve the overall feeling of safety throughout Horry County.	
Strategy	Timeframe
SC-2.1 Train officers, building inspectors, and planners in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.	Short-Term
SC-2.2 Develop and implement a comprehensive environmental design crime prevention assessment and plan for Horry County facilities and public spaces.	Mid-Term
SC-2.3 Conduct environmental design community assessments in high crime areas and undertake activities to mitigate identified challenges.	Continuously
SC-2.4 Horry County Public Safety departments will attend at least 20 HOA and Community meetings each year.	Continuously
SC-2.5 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
SC-2.6 Horry County Police Department will Increase traffic enforcement contacts by 5% more than previous year.	Continuously
SC-2.7 Each Horry County Police precinct will implement and update their community problem solving plans annually.	Continuously
SC-2.8 Increase the social media presence and communications from departments in the Public Safety Division.	Mid-Term

Goal SC: 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.
Objective SC-3: Reduce the degree of risk to life and property from disasters through adequately trained staff, educated public, and adequate facilities.		
Strategy		Timeframe
SC-3.1	Conduct staff training for Horry County’s disaster response and recovery operations.	Continuously
SC-3.2	Construct a new emergency operations center to meet the county’s existing and growing needs.	Mid-Term
SC-3.3	Ensure staff are trained and equipped to rapidly assess damages after a flood, fire, or other disaster.	Continuously
SC-3.4	Conduct public education events on natural disaster preparedness and recovery annually.	Continuously
SC-3.5	Establish a Disaster Fund Reserve so the county does not need to wait on state and federal assistance to begin recovery efforts.	Mid-Term
SC-3.6	Establish a Waste Management Fund Reserve of a minimum of \$10 million for debris clean up in the event of a disaster.	Mid-Term
Objective SC-4: Minimize future flood losses through regulations, policies, education, and training.		
Strategy		Timeframe
SC-4.1	Adopt a revised flood hazard ordinance that includes State model language and coastal A-zone regulations.	Short-Term
SC-4.2	Adopt policy or regulation to prohibit new critical facilities from being constructed in the 100 and 500 year floodzone.	Short-Term
SC-4.3	Adopt revised flood maps as part of the flood ordinance.	Short-Term
SC-4.4	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
SC-4.5	Develop and implement a Flood Resiliency Plan.	Short-Term
SC-4.6	Improve the county’s Community Rating System Score to 6 or lower.	Mid-Term
SC-4.7	Evaluate the feasibility of prohibiting fill within the floodzone.	Mid-Term
SC-4.8	Maintain at least six Certified Floodplain Managers on staff.	Continuously
SC-4.9	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
SC-4.10	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

Goal SC: 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.
Objective SC-4: Minimize future flood losses through regulations, policies, education, and training.		
Strategy		Timeframe
SC-4.11	Decrease grade changes between existing and planned development as an amendment to the Land Development Regulations and Stormwater Ordinance.	Mid-Term
SC-4.12	Update the Stormwater Ordinance and Design Manual.	Mid-Term
SC-4.13	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
SC-4.14	Provide incentives for developers to preserve contiguous areas of natural vegetation and wetlands in residential communities for flood retention.	Mid-Term
Objective SC-5: Become a Fire Adapted Community through wildfire education, mitigation, development regulations, and improved interagency coordination.		
Strategy		Timeframe
SC-5.1	Coordinate with SC Forestry Commission to host a bi-annual Community Wildfire Education Day.	Continuously
SC-5.2	Assist SC Forestry Commission on the establishment of additional Firewise Communities.	Continuously
SC-5.3	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
SC-5.4	Work with SC Forestry, existing Firewise communities, and relevant agencies to develop a countywide Wildfire Prevention Plan.	Mid-Term
SC-5.5	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
SC-5.6	Develop a floating overlay zone with construction and development criteria that result in communities that are safer from the start.	Short-Term
SC-5.7	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
SC-5.8	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
SC-5.9	Support SC Forestry and SC Department of Natural Resources efforts to conduct controlled burns of Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve.	Continuously

Goal CS: 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 CS-1: Regularly assess Horry County Government’s facility and staffing needs.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CS-1.1	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
CS-1.2	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
CS-1.3	Analyze and establish base service levels for all countywide services and associated costs.	Mid-Term
CS-1.4	Consider the development of an Adequate Public Facilities ordinance.	Mid-Term
CS-1.5	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 CS-2: Identify funding opportunities or efficiencies to support capital improvements and services.		
Strategy		Timeframe
CS-2.1	Utilize Development Agreements when appropriate.	Continuously
CS-2.2	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
CS-2.3	Evaluate the feasibility of impact fees.	Short-Term
CS-2.4	Evaluate franchise feasibility for curbside waste and recycling pick up in suburban and urban areas.	Long-Term
CS-2.5	Decrease the need for foot traffic in government buildings by improving the availability of information and services on our website.	Continuously
CS-2.6	Consolidate county buildings to provide better customer service and reduce maintenance costs.	Continuously

Goal MT: 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 MT-1: Provide long term transportation safety and capacity solutions.		
Strategy		Timeframe
MT-1.1	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
MT-1.2	Modify the local road plan to include vehicular and pedestrian related safety/capacity enhancements.	Mid-Term
MT-1.3	Allocate local funds for the construction of I-73 and SELL.	Continuously
MT-1.4	Establish a permanent source of funding to support the construction of planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities in unincorporated Horry County.	Mid-Term
MT-1.5	Conduct traffic counts annually for Horry County maintained collector and arterial roadways.	Continuously
MT-1.6	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
MT-1.7	Revisit the Future Land Use Map after the completion of major road projects.	Continuously
MT-1.8	Host public meetings to ensure the community is informed of the progress of planned transportation projects.	Continuously

Objective MT-2: Complete the RIDE 3 Program on schedule.		
Strategy		Timeframe
MT-2.1	Keep the public informed of the progress of the design and construction of all RIDE 3 projects.	Continuously
MT-2.2	Post highly visible RIDE 3 signage along all major roadways that will experience improvements.	Short-Term
MT-2.3	Create a wetland mitigation bank to support RIDE 3 and other transportation projections.	Short-Term

Goal MT: Mobility and Transportation	Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.
--------------------------------------	--

Objective MT-3: Maintain county road and transportation infrastructure.	
Strategy	Timeframe
MT-3.1 Update local road plan regularly.	Continuously
MT-3.2 Review local road plan to ensure equitable distribution of road user fee revenues.	Short-Term
MT-3.3 Repair signage deficiencies as identified by inspections.	Continuously
MT-3.4 Repair potholes within three days of identification	Continuously
MT-3.5 Mow road Right-of-Ways at least two-times per year.	Continuously
MT-3.6 Repair and replace major drainage crossings as needed.	Continuously
MT-3.7 Scrape unpaved roads as needed.	Continuously
MT-3.8 Perform formal evaluations of every county roadway every three-years (rotating basis).	Continuously
MT-3.9 Utilize pavement management system to develop annual resurfacing program.	Continuously
MT-3.10 Repair local pavement failures to prevent expansion of damages.	Continuously
MT-3.11 Clip paved road shoulders every three-years.	Continuously
MT-3.12 Resurface roads as programmed each year.	Continuously

Objective MT-4: Pursue Complete Streets policies and regulations to support an integrated road network and transportation options road and transportation infrastructure.	
Strategy	Timeframe
MT-4.1 Update Horry County’s Land Development Regulations to support shorter block lengths in Suburban Communities, Mixed-Use, and Community Activity Centers.	Mid-Term
MT-4.2 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
MT-4.3 Allocate funds towards COAST RTA annually.	Continuously
MT-4.4 Update Horry County’s Land Development regulations to clarify where sidewalks are required external to new commercial and residential developments.	Short-Term
MT-4.5 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

Goal MT: Mobility and Transportation	Promote development patterns and fund infrastructure projects that result in a well-integrated and maintained transportation system.
--------------------------------------	--

Objective MT-4: Pursue Complete Streets policies and regulations to support an integrated road network and transportation options road and transportation infrastructure.	
Strategy	Timeframe
MT-4.6 Revise the Land Development Regulations to require that developers make traffic improvements based on future planning horizon of area and corridor capacity.	Short-Term
MT-4.7 Require complete streets within unincorporated donut holes within municipalities when development and redevelopment is pursued.	Continuously

Goal ES: 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 ES-1: Improve the aesthetics and environmental quality of development through the preservation of trees and installation of native landscaping.	
Strategy	Timeframe
ES-1.1 Simplify the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance and landscape requirements within Overlays.	Short-Term
ES-1.2 Remove all invasive plant species from the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance and Overlays.	Mid-Term
ES-1.3 Expand the list of protected tree species within the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance beyond live oaks.	Mid-Term
ES-1.4 Promote the use of native plants by distributing the county’s landscaping guide to developers and property owners.	Short-Term
ES-1.5 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
ES-1.6 Revise the Landscape Buffer and Tree Preservation Ordinance to increase the width of vegetated buffers for major residential subdivisions along major roadways.	Mid-Term

Goal ES: 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.
---------------------------------------	--

Objective ES-2: Minimize habitat fragmentation in environmentally sensitive areas.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-2.1	Consolidate the conservation preservation zoning districts.	Short-Term
ES-2.2	Rezone all state and federal conservation lands to a conservation preservation zoning to better reflect their use.	Short-Term
ES-2.3	Update Horry County regulations to encourage contiguous open space within new major developments.	Short-Term
ES-2.4	Update the Horry County Parks and Open Space Plan to identify priority conservation areas and future recreation sites.	Short-Term
ES-2.5	Utilize density bonuses and 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
ES-2.6	Identify and maintain a list of priority properties to preserve the county’s green infrastructure network.	Mid-Term
ES-2.7	Distribute conservation easement information to priority conservation properties.	Mid-Term
ES-2.8	Mitigate the impacts of existing and future transportation corridors to ensure that wildlife habitat fragmentation is minimized.	Continuously

Objective ES-3: Improve the county’s understanding of water quality and drainage problems.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-3.1	Continue to implement a countywide water quality monitoring program through the Waccamaw Watershed Academy and the Waccamaw Riverkeeper’s Volunteer Monitoring Program.	Continuously
ES-3.2	Continue to cooperate with local universities in understanding the effects of our land use decisions on watersheds.	Continuously
ES-3.3	Prepare comprehensive drainage maps for the county using up-to-date stormwater infrastructure, landcover and elevation data.	Mid-Term
ES-3.4	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
ES-3.5	Develop a Stormwater Capital Improvements Plan.	Mid-Term

Goal ES: 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.
---------------------------------------	--

Objective ES-4: Maintain and improve water quality in Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-4.1	Continue to implement an illicit discharge detection and elimination program based on the county National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase II Stormwater Management Plan.	Continuously
ES-4.2	Continue to implement a Construction and Post-Construction Site Runoff Program based on the county NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Plan.	Continuously
ES-4.3	Work with known sources of point source water pollution to maintain and reduce pollutant discharges.	Continuously
ES-4.4	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
ES-4.5	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
ES-4.6	Seek grant funding from SCDHEC and federal agencies to remediate water quality and flooding problems, such as failing septic systems, leaking underground storage tanks, and brownfield sites.	Continuously

Objective ES-5: Encourage development techniques which maintain and improve water quality and drainage maintenance.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-5.1	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
ES-5.2	Incorporate low impact design techniques into future county facilities to serve as a model for private developers.	Continuously
ES-5.3	Provide for the inclusion of low impact development techniques in the Zoning Ordinance, Overlays, and Stormwater Design Manual.	Continuously
ES-5.4	Provide incentives for developers to incorporate low impact development techniques into their developments.	Mid-Term
ES-5.5	Reduce the use of impervious surfaces and encourage the use of pervious surfaces through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.	Long-Term
ES-5.6	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

Goal ES: 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.
---------------------------------------	--

Objective ES-6: Conserve the essential pollution filtering, groundwater recharge, and habitat functions of wetlands and floodplains.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-6.1	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
ES-6.2	Encourage the establishment of local wetland mitigation banks for local developers and road construction projects to mitigate their wetland impacts within the county.	Continuously
ES-6.3	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
ES-6.4	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

Objective ES-7: Preserve and enhance existing dune systems, beaches, and marshes to provide habitat for wildlife and protect coastal property.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-7.1	Work closely with property owners and Government Agencies to maintain the protective, ecological and recreational functions of the beach/dune system.	Continuously
ES-7.2	Update the Horry County Beach Management Plan.	Short-Term
ES-7.3	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
ES-7.4	Pursue available state and federal funding for beach and dune restoration.	Continuously
ES-7.5	Coordinate with natural resource agencies and trained volunteer organizations to protect and restore critical habitats for threatened or endangered species.	Long-Term
ES-7.6	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
ES-7.7	Coordinate with natural resource agencies and trained volunteer organizations to protect and restore critical habitats for threatened or endangered species.	Long-Term
ES-7.8	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

Goal ES: 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.
---------------------------------------	--

Objective ES-8: Reduce litter to protect the county’s habitats, wildlife, and recreation spaces.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-8.1	Track county and volunteer litter reduction efforts annually to assess changes litter patterns and the need for targeted community education and enforcement.	Continuously
ES-8.2	Maintain year-round litter reduction crews and enforcement efforts.	Continuously
ES-8.3	Support volunteer-led litter cleanups by providing clean up supplies and safety training.	Continuously
ES-8.4	Educate residents and visitors about the impacts of litter on the environment and property values.	Continuously
ES-8.5	Actively engage businesses, churches, and community groups to lead and support litter reduction and beautification initiatives of roadways, parks and other open spaces.	Continuously
ES-8.6	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 ES-9: Identify renewable energy opportunities that may be harnessed by local businesses, industries, and residents.		
Strategy		Timeframe
ES-9.1	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
ES-9.2	Explore off-shore wind industries as an economic opportunity for the Grand Strand.	Continuously
ES-9.3	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
ES-9.4	Participate in the regional Air Quality Coalition led by the Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments.	Continuously

Goal EG: 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 in the wake of a national economic downturn or natural disaster.	

Objective EG-1: Develop an economic development framework for Horry County with a consortium of key stakeholders and county staff.	
Strategy	Timeframe
EG-1.1 Formalize a group of key economic development stakeholders to analyze and inform the county of economic opportunities.	Short-Term
EG-1.2 Develop a comprehensive Economic Development Plan.	Mid-Term

Objective EG-2: Improve the business climate by enhancing government services and communicating processes to the business community.	
Strategy	Timeframe
EG-2.1 Improve county website by adding/maintaining businesses and economic development pages.	Mid-Term
EG-2.2 Training and resources for new business, such as ‘How to Open a Business’ flow chart.	Mid-Term
EG-2.3 Map out and review business services, zoning, plan and construction approval processes and identify potential impediments to business growth.	Mid-Term

Objective EG-3: Improve awareness of the local impacts of economic development activities.	
Strategy	Timeframe
EG-3.1 Develop an economic indicator report and present annually to County Council.	Continuously
EG-3.2 Present economic trend analysis every quarter.	Continuously
EG-3.3 Share economic trend reports and analysis to interested parties.	Continuously
EG-3.4 Make information available and easily accessible on the county website.	Continuously

Goal EG: 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.
---------------------------------	---

Objective EG-4: Develop a variety of high quality industrial land and building ‘products’ that can attract new and/or expanding business.		
Strategy		Timeframe
EG-4.1	Continue to work with GSWSA and Santee Cooper on the development of the Bucksport Marine Park.	Continuously
EG-4.2	Continue to work with Santee Cooper on the development of Ascott Valley.	Continuously
EG-4.3	Seek additional strategically located properties and construct spec buildings to attract new industries.	Short-Term
EG-4.4	Attract new industry, expansions, and reinvestment to locate in Economic Opportunity Zones.	Continuously
EG-4.5	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 EG-5: Assist in infrastructure investment and development efforts that spur economic development.		
Strategy		Timeframe
EG-5.1	Work to establish interstate highway connectivity.	Long-Term
EG-5.2	Complete and implement the Horry County Department of Airports Master Plan.	Short-Term
EG-5.3	Complete the TIGER Grant to upgrade the R.J. Corman rail line improvements.	Mid-Term

Objective EG-6: Continue to foster the development of tourism throughout the county.		
Strategy		Timeframe
EG-6.1	Increase air service to Myrtle Beach International Airport.	Continuously
EG-6.2	Continue to aggressively market MYR to prospective airlines.	Continuously
EG-6.3	Keep costs and fees as competitive as possible.	Continuously
EG-6.4	Complete the Myrtle Beach renourishment project.	Short-Term
EG-6.5	Continue working to secure funding for future beach renourishment.	Continuously
EG-6.6	Support resort and tourism uses that are appropriately sited according to the Future Land Use Map.	Continuously

Goal EG: 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.
--------------------------	---

Objective EG-7: Diversify tourism niches throughout Horry County.		
Strategy		Timeframe
EG-7.1	Tap into the sports tourism market by adding lighting to county athletic fields that could host tournaments.	Mid-Term
EG-7.2	Expand the number of agritourism permits to foster our agricultural industry and heritage.	Continuously
EG-7.3	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
EG-7.4	Coordinate with area Chambers of Commerce to promote area agritourism, ecotourism, and heritage tourism businesses, attractions, and events.	Continuously
EG-7.5	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
EG-7.6	Consider the development of a Multi-Purpose Agricultural/Equestrian Center to host large scale equine events.	Long-Term
EG-7.7	Serve as a partner and host of major events to attract tourism to areas beyond the beach.	Continuously

Goal RC: Resilient Communities	To establish resiliency strategies and actions and identify resources that can aid in strengthening our resilience.
Avoid or reduce the potential for life loss, injury and economic damage to Horry County residents from hazard events, increase the ability of the county government to serve the community during and after hazard events, protect the unique character, scenic beauty and values in the natural and built environment from being compromised by hazard events, and encourage mitigation activities to increase the disaster resilience of institutions, private companies and systems essential to a functioning Horry County.	

Objective RC-1: Coordinate resilience-related efforts within the county and across jurisdictional boundaries.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RC-1.1	Continue to identify resources to implement strategies, administer programs, pursue funding opportunities, and provide standards to coordinate resilience-related efforts of county departments, municipalities and adjacent jurisdictions, applicable regulatory agencies, and regional partners.	Continuously
RC-1.2	Continue to create, implement, maintain and assist in public information programs in order to educate citizens about resilience practices including, but not limited to: assisting business owners with developing continuity of operations plans; educating the public, including children, about contributing factors related to flood risks, sea level rise, and ways to reduce environmental impacts; creating targeted messaging that is understood at all educational levels, ages, and nationalities to better inform the public; and incorporating K-12 educational efforts to promote resilience, mitigation and disaster preparedness at the school-aged level.	Continuously

Goal RC: Resilient Communities	To establish resiliency strategies and actions and identify resources that can aid in strengthening our resilience.
--------------------------------	---

Objective RC-1: Coordinate resilience-related efforts within the county and across jurisdictional boundaries.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RC-1.3	Continue to identify and pursue amendments to existing county policies and regulations including, but not limited to, the Floodplain Management Program, All Hazards Mitigation Plan, Stormwater Ordinance, Building Ordinance, and Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance, to improve the county’s resilience towards long-term stresses and acute disasters, using the best available data to inform decisions.	Continuously
RC-1.4	Continually monitor local, state, federal, and private initiatives and recommendations regarding resilience.	Continuously
RC-1.5	Utilize the knowledge gained from the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain and enhance resilience towards health-related disasters.	Mid-Term
RC-1.6	Develop a contact database of resilience related agencies and organizations.	Short-Term
RC-1.7	Develop and implement a system for outreach and coordinate with these stakeholders regarding resilience related efforts.	Short-Term
RC-1.8	Develop a public education and outreach strategy for all resilience related efforts.	Mid-Term
RC-1.9	Continue to monitor local, state, federal, and private initiatives and best management practices related to resilience strategies.	Continuously
RC-1.10	Develop an asset management plan, lifecycle cost analysis, and risk register for county owned utilities and facilities.	Mid-Term

Objective RC-2: Consider all categories of resilience (natural resilience, health resilience, energy resilience, and food systems resilience) in the development of resilience projects, plans, and policies.		
Strategy		Timeframe
RC-2.1	Review the location, frequency, and severity of hazards to set forth recommendations that influence development that does not increase risks to life and property.	Mid-Term
RC-2.2	Encourage new housing units to be net-zero energy and water efficient.	Long-Term
RC-2.3	Implement programs to reduce and mitigate potential health hazards in older homes, such as lead pipes, mold, and carbon monoxide, and encourage environmental sustainability in housing stock and residential construction.	Long-Term
RC-2.4	Monitor and update regulations to promote flood risk reduction, heat island mitigation, stormwater management, renewable energy, and energy resilience, among other practices.	Continuously
RC-2.5	Support the Strategic Framework for Improving Community Health, which seeks to improve public health outcomes while promoting equity across a range of social determinants that include health, race, gender, income, age and geography.	Continuously

Goal RC: Resilient Communities	To establish resiliency strategies and actions and identify resources that can aid in strengthening our resilience.
--------------------------------	---

Objective RC-2: Consider all categories of resilience (natural resilience, health resilience, energy resilience, and food systems resilience) in the development of resilience projects, plans, and policies.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-2.6 Develop guidelines for new development and substantial land improvements that consider the threat of naturally occurring stressors and hazards (e.g., flooding, extreme heat, and wind), determine potential impacts to assets over the expected life cycle of the asset, and identify cost-effective risk-reduction options.	Long-Term
RC-2.7 Promote an increase in tree planting and vegetated spaces landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate urban heat islands, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces.	Mid-Term
RC-2.8 Develop resilient design principles for historic and cultural resources, with guidance on resilience planning and project implementation.	Mid-Term
RC-2.9 Support development of a system of food hub and processing centers where nutritious and local food can be aggregated, safely prepared, and efficiently distributed to agencies and shelters for persons experiencing homelessness.	Long-Term
RC-2.10 Identify best practices and potential locations for food hubs, food business incubators, and community kitchens to expand healthy food access and food-based economic opportunity in under-served areas through co-location with job training, business incubation, and entrepreneurial assistance programs.	Mid-Term

Objective RC-3: Examine economic resilience in depth.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-3.1 Investigate the economic impacts and bounce back capabilities of previous disaster events in Horry County.	Short-Term
RC-3.2 Build an understanding of localized economic vulnerability through focused discussion and data analysis regarding business continuity.	Mid-Term
RC-3.3 Examine tourism occupancies and revenue throughout the year to include hotels, campground and RV parks, vacation rentals, and second homes. Examine employment in the tourism sector.	Short-Term

Objective RC-4: Consider social vulnerability in all preparedness, mitigation, and disaster recovery projects.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-4.1 Conduct targeted outreach on resilience in socially vulnerable areas.	Continuously
RC-4.2 Sponsor a workshop series for all residents of Horry County to engage in environmental education and learn about opportunities to positively impact their county.	Long-Term
RC-4.3 Identify the needs of the entire community, particularly vulnerable populations or people with characteristics such as age-related and health conditions that make them more susceptible to pollutant exposures. Incorporate these needs into plans, programs, and investments.	Mid-Term

Goal RC: Resilient Communities	To establish resiliency strategies and actions and identify resources that can aid in strengthening our resilience.
--------------------------------	---

Objective RC-5: Enhance natural resilience through responsible land use and preservation.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-5.1 Continue to advocate for the preservation of wetlands and floodplains through policy amendments like wetlands protection and buffer ordinances.	Continuously
RC-5.2 Limit the increase of impervious surfaces to prevent increased runoff into county tributaries and worsening impacts from heavy rainfall events.	Long-Term
RC-5.3 Pursue a free study though the Trust for Public Lands to develop a strategy and explore funding options for land conservation.	Mid-Term

Objective RC-6: Identify vulnerable infrastructure.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-6.1 Plan for the impacts of sea level rise within the county, ensuring that all future projects consider sea level rise adaptation in their planning.	Mid-Term
RC-6.2 Expand stormwater planning and infrastructure to mitigate flood impacts with an emphasis on green infrastructure techniques.	Long-Term
RC-6.3 Use the EPA's flood resilience checklist to ensure the county is resilient to the threat of coastal and riverine flooding.	Short-Term

Objective RC-7: Update and adopt the Horry County All Hazards Mitigation Plan.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-7.1 Participate in the update of the Horry County All Hazards Mitigation Plan and adopt the most recent plan.	Short-Term
RC-7.2 Annually review the current strategies of the Horry County All Hazards Mitigation Plan and consider implementation.	Continuously
RC-7.3 Identify opportunities for integrating mitigation and resilience strategies into other county programs, plans, and policies.	Continuously

Objective RC-8: Identify funding opportunities for implementing mitigation and resilience strategies.	
Strategy	Timeframe
RC-8.1 Develop an inventory of federal, state, and local funding opportunities.	Short-Term
RC-8.2 Assess the feasibility of using hospitality tax funding for implementing mitigation strategies to protect vulnerable hospitality and tourism assets.	Continuously

Goal CE: 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 CE-1: Increase community engagement and communications.	
Strategy	Timeframe
CE-1.1 Maintain and coordinate Horry County’s social media pages.	Continuously
CE-1.2 Develop and maintain a listserv of community groups and businesses that can be shared with all departments for communication and public engagement.	Short-Term
CE-1.3 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
CE-1.4 Maintain the Capital Improvements Dashboards on the Horry County website so the public can follow the progress of major projects.	Continuously
CE-1.5 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
CE-1.6 Conduct community surveys to gauge public opinions and obtain input on important planning efforts.	Continuously
CE-1.7 Begin advertising volunteer opportunities on the county’s employment website.	Short-Term

Objective CE-2: Make information readily available to the public in regards to future development and development proposals.	
Strategy	Timeframe
CE-2.1 Create an online map showing all active rezoning, variance, mining, and telecommunications proposals.	Short-Term
CE-2.2 Develop and track all major subdivisions and remaining units to be constructed in tabular and GIS format and make publically available.	Short-Term
CE-2.3 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
CE-2.4 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, mining, telecommunications, and agritourism applications.	Mid-Term



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



RESOURCES

YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE

RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

City of Cayce. (2020). Comprehensive Plan Resilience Element. <https://caycesc.gov/comprehensiveplan/resiliency.pdf>

Municipal Association of South Carolina. (2021). Including All Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. <https://www.masc.sc/uptown/04-2021/including-all-elements-comprehensive-plan>

POPULATION

Census Bureau. (2018-2022). American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.

..... (2019-2023). American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.

..... (1990-2016). American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.

..... (2010). Decennial Census.

..... (2020). Decennial Census.

..... (2024). Tiger/Line Shapefiles: Urban Areas 2020. <https://www.census.gov/geographies/mapping-files/time-series/geo/tiger-line-file.html>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC). (2024). Places Project. <https://www.cdc.gov/places/index.html>

Coastal Carolina University (CCU). (2017). Medicaid Secondary Data Study.

..... (2023). Coastal Carolina University Master Plan.

..... (2024). CCU Board of Trustees Celebrates Total Enrollment Milestone of 11,000-Plus Students. <https://www.coastal.edu/news/ccustrusteescelebratetotalenrollmentmilestoneof11000-plusstudents/>

D.K. Shiffett & Associates. (2025). Statistical Abstract for the Myrtle Beach Area. Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce.

Horry County Schools. (2024). Academic Achievement (2024). <https://www.horrycountyschools.net/about-hcs/annual-report-2024/academic-achievement-2024>

Horry County Solid Waste Authority (HCSWA). (2022). Waste Management Plan.

Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC). (2024). About HGTC. https://www.hgtc.edu/about_hgtc/

..... (2025). HGTC Announces Historic 11% Spring Enrollment Increase Amid National Downward Trend. https://www.hgtc.edu/about_hgtc/news_center/2025/hgtc-announces-historic-11-percent-spring-enrollment-increase.html

Lothian, A. (2010). Health and Restorative Benefits of Viewing Landscapes.

Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce (MBACC). (2016). Myrtle Beach Economic Impact Study.

..... (2023). Travel USA Visitor Profile. <https://visitmyrtlebeach.app.box.com/s/uvf45lons2sz51g6rthsw9wcpbgjagmk>

Myrtle Beach Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (MBCVB). (2024). Visitor Volume and Spending, 2023.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2016). Culture of Health Blog: 6 Reasons Why Parks Matter for Health.

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDOE). (2023). State Dropout Data. <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/school-safety/discipline-related-reports/dropout-data/2018-2023-state-dropout-data/>

South Carolina Department of Public Health

(SCDPH). (2013). Horry County Obesity Fact Sheet.

..... (2022). South Carolina Vital and Morbidity Statistics 2022. <https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/media/VMS-2022.pdf>

South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (SCRFAO). (2024). Population Estimates and Projections. <https://rfa.sc.gov/data-research/population-demographics/census-state-data-center/estimates-projections-dashboard>

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). (2006-2010).

Visit Myrtle Beach. (2023). Travel USA Visitor Profile of Myrtle Beach. Prepared by Longwoods International. <https://visitmyrtlebeach.app.box.com/s/uvf45lons2sz51g6rthsw9wcpbgjagmk>

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Adventures with Karen and Kelly. (2014). L.W. Paul Living History Farm - Syrup Day. <https://adventureswithkarenandkelly.wordpress.com/2014/11/19/l-w-paul-living-history-farm-syrup-day/>

Blue Crab Festival. (n.d.) Locally caught Blue Crabs.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023). Time Use Survey.

Burroughs, Ben. Horry County Historical Society. Horry County Archives and History Center.

Carolina Thread Trail. (n.d.) Pee Dee River Blueway. <https://www.carolinathreadtrail-map.org/trails/trail/pee-dee-river-blueway>

Carolina Country Music Festival. n.d. 2025 on Sale. <https://carolinacountrymusicfest.com/news/>

- ccmf-2025-on-sale-next-week/
Chicora Indian People of South Carolina. (2018).
<http://www.ChicoraIndianTribe.org>
Clemson Cooperative Extension. (2025). Ag + Art
Tour. <https://www.agandarttour.com>
Colleges of Distinction. (n.d.) Coastal Carolina
University. <https://collegesofdistinction.com/school/coastal-carolina-university/>
Fotospot. (n.d.) Myrtle Beach SkyWheel. <https://fotospot.com/attractions/south-carolina/myrtle-beach-skywheel>
Horry County Historic Preservation
Commission. (2025). <https://www.horry-countysc.gov/boards-and-commissions/historic-preservation-commission/>
Horry County Historic Resources Survey. (2007).
Survey Results.
John Coletti. (n.d.) Myrtle Beach. <https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/photo/myrtle-beach-south-carolina-royalty-free-image/604557189>
Life Made Simple. (2023). Chicken Bog.
<https://lifemadesimplebakes.com/one-pot-chicken-bog/>
MyHorryNews. (2020). A hard row. https://www.myhorrynews.com/news/local/horry_county/a-hard-row-wet-weather-new-development-and-covid-19-create-tough-times-for-freewoods/article_c130edb8-cce5-11ea-a8e5-fb344ab8f338.html
..... (2023). June festival will celebrate Gullah
Geechee culture in Atlantic Beach.
<https://www.myhorrynews.com/news/june-festival-will-celebrate-gullah-geechee-culture-in-atlantic-beach/>
article_40242b46-e9f1-11ed-abeb-bb2d94224781.html
Myrtle Beach.com. (n.d.) Art Museum of Myrtle
Beach. <https://www.myrtlebeach.com/things-to-do/art-museum-of-myrtle-beach/>
Myrtle Beach Online. (n.d.) 23rd Annual Cultural
Arts Festival and Pauwau. <https://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article43625916.html>
Myrtle Beach Vacation Rentals. (n.d.) Myrtle
Beach History. <https://www.myrtlebeachvacationrentals.com/myrtle-beach-history/>
National Citizens Survey (NCS). (2015). Horry
County, SC: Community Livability Report
..... (2017). Horry County, SC: Community
Livability Report.
..... (2017). Horry County, SC: Dashboard.
..... (2017). Horry County, SC: Technical
Appendices.
..... (2017). Horry County, SC: Trends over Time.
..... (2017). Horry County, SC: Results by Council
District.
National Golf Foundation Survey. (2013). Golf
Participation in the United States.
New York Times. (2019). At the Country's Oldest
Stump, a Presidential Twist. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/16/us/politics/galivants-ferry-stump.html>
North Myrtle Beach Golf. (n.d.) Crow Creek.
<https://www.northmyrtlebeachgolf.com/>
Pee Dee Indian Tribe. (2025). About. <http://www.peedeetribe.org/about.html>
RunMyrtleBeach, (n.d.) Home. <https://www.run-myrtlebeach.com/>
SCIWAY. (n.d.) Native Americans in South Carolina.
<https://www.sciway.net/hist/indians/>
..... (2018). Chicora Indians- Native Americans in
SC. <https://www.sciway.net/hist/indians/chicora.html>
..... (2018). Waccamaw Indians- Native Americans
in SC. <https://www.sciway.net/hist/indians/waccamaw.html>
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
(SCDNR). (2016). Deer Harvest Report.
South Carolina Hall of Fame. (n.d.) Home. <http://www.theofficialschalloffame.com/>
South Strand News. (2018). Local Tales Told By A
Story Teller.
Strange Carolinas. (2022). Horry County Museum.
<https://www.strangecarolinas.com/2022/07/horry-county-museum.html>
Ted Gragg. (2018). Guns of the Pee Dee.
Visit Myrtle Beach. (n.d.) Ocean Lakes Family
Campground. <https://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com/listings/ocean-lakes-family-campground>
..... (n.d.) Miniature Golf in Myrtle Beach. <https://www.visitmyrtlebeach.com/things-to-do/attractions/mini-golf>
Waccamaw Indian People. (2025). Tribal Grounds.
<https://www.waccamaw.org/>
NATURAL RESOURCES
Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANS).
(2005). Apple Snail. <http://www.anstaskforce.gov/spoc/applesnail.php>
Bennett, S.H. and J. B. Nelson. (1991). Distribution
and Status of Carolina Bays in South
Carolina. SC Wildlife and Marine Resources
Department. Nongame and Heritage Trust
Publications.
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM).
(2016). https://www.boem.gov/BOEM-Fact-Sheets/#Renewable_Energy_Fact_Sheets
Center for Watershed Protection (CWP). (2003).
Impacts of Impervious Cover on Aquatic
Systems. Watershed Protection Research
Monograph No. 1.
City of Myrtle Beach. (2023). Myrtle Beach
Awarded Beach Renourishment from Federal
Government. https://www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com/news_detail_T6_R1776.php
Clemson. (2014). Kudzu Bugs. <http://www.clemson.edu/extensionkudzubugsindex.html>
Clemson Institute for Economic and Community
Development. (2008). The Economic
Development Strategic Plan: Horry County, SC.
Colbert-Busch, E., Carey, R. T., and E. W. Saltzman.
(2012). South Carolina Wind Energy Supply
Chain Survey and Offshore Wind Economic
Impact Study.
Daily, G.C. et al. (1997). Ecosystem Services:
Benefits Supplied to Human Societies by
Natural Ecosystems. Issues in Ecology.
Number 2, Spring 1997. Ecological Society of
America.
Dennis, F.C. (2003). Creating Wildfire- Defensible
Zones. Colorado State University Cooperative
Extension. Natural Resources Series No. 6.302.
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2017).
Urban Runoff: Low Impact Development.
..... (2024). EnviroAtlas Interactive Map.
<https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/interactivemap/>
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

- (2021). Horry County Flood Maps. <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps>
- Grand Strand Magazine. (2019). History and Life Along the Grand Strand's Intracoastal Waterway. https://grandstrandmag.com/feature/history_and_life_along_the_grand_strand_s_intracoastal_waterway
- (2023). Our Magnificent River Basin. https://grandstrandmag.com/feature/our_magnificent_river_basin
- Grande Dunes. (2019). Grande Dunes Announces New Waterway Trail Along the Intracoastal Waterway. <https://grandedunes.com/grande-dunes-announces-new-waterway-trail-along-the-intracoastal-waterway/>
- Holland, A.F. and D.M. Sanger. (2008). Tidal Creek Habitats: Sentinels of Coastal Health. SC Sea Grant Consortium and NOAA.
- Jones, Steve. (2014). Feds to Talk About Next Steps for Wind Energy in SC in the Fall. The Sun News.
- Lesikar, B. (2008). Septic Tank/Soil Absorption Field. Texas A & M.
- Lothian, A. (2010). Health and Restorative Benefits of Viewing Landscapes.
- Miller, J. H., Chambliss, E. B., and N. J. Loewenstein. (2010). A Field Guide for the Identification of Invasive Plants in Southern Forests. USDA Forest Service.
- Musial, W. and B. Ram. (2010). Large-Scale Offshore Wind Power in the United States: An Assessment of Opportunities and Barriers. National Renewable Energy Laboratory.
- Myrtle Beach Sun News. (n.d.) Tobacco Day at the L.W. Paul Living History Farm.
- National Land Cover Database. (2008). 2008 Land Cover Products. <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/eros/science/annual-national-land-cover-database>
- (2021). 2021 Land Cover Products. <https://www.sciencebase.gov/catalog/item/649595d8d34ef77fcb01dca1>
- National Park Service (NPS). (1995). Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors. Real Property Values. 4th Edition, Revised.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). (2024). Sea Level Rise Viewer. <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/#>
- (2025). Relative Sea Level Trends. <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/>
- (n.d.) Coastal County Snapshots: Horry County. <https://coast.noaa.gov/snapshots/>
- National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). (2025). Web Soil Survey. <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>
- Oceana. (2021). Gov. McMaster Signs State Budget Extending Offshore Drilling Infrastructure Ban. <https://usa.oceana.org/press-releases/gov-mcmaster-signs-state-budget-extending-offshore-drilling-infrastructure-ban/>
- Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). (2012). The Outdoor Recreation Economy: South Carolina.
- Pee Dee Land Trust (PDLT). (2025). Horry County Properties. <https://www.peedeelandtrust.org/conservation-work/protected-places/horry-county>
- Resource Environmental Solutions (RES). (n.d.) Independent Heritage Preserve Wetland Mitigation Bank. <https://res.us/projects/independent-heritage-preserve-wetland-mitigation-bank/>
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2010). The Economic Benefits of Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Walkable Community Design. Active Living Research.
- Santee Cooper. (n.d.) Solar at Home. <https://www.santeecooper.com/programs-incentives/empowersolar/solar-home/>
- (2021). Grand Strand Solar Station Celebrates 10 Years. <https://www.santeecooper.com/global-news/2021/041421-Grand-Strand-Solar-Station-Celebrates-10-Years.aspx>
- South Carolina Conservation Bank. (2014). Conservation Bank Grants by Region- Coastal. <http://sccbanc.sc.gov/grantscoastal.html>
- South Carolina Heritage Trust. (n.d.) Find a Heritage Preserve. <https://heritagetrust.dnr.sc.gov/properties.html>
- South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES). (n.d.) SC Watershed Atlas. <https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/gisportal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5748b81cf2d-84668be4175eed2511654>
- (2004). Beach Monitoring Program, Quality Assurance Project Plan.
- (2009). State of the Beaches Report.
- (2012). State of South Carolina Integrated Report for 2012. Part II: Section 305(b) Assessment and Reporting.
- (2012). List of 303 D Impaired Waters.
- (2013). Shellfish Maps. <http://www.scdhec.gov/FoodSafetyShellfishMonitoringMap>
- (2013). South Carolina Fish Consumption Advisories. <https://www.scdhec.gov/administration/library/ML004042.pdf>
- (2013). Pee Dee Basin Watershed. <http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/Water/Watersheds/PeeDeeWatershed/>
- (2014). South Carolina Beach Advisories.
- (2020). Active Mines Viewer. <https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/activeminesviewer/>
- (2024). South Carolina 303(d) List of Impaired Waters and TMDLs. <https://des.sc.gov/programs/bureau-water/south-carolina-303d-list-impaired-waters-tmdls>
- (2025a). SCDES Swimming Advisories. <https://gis.dhec.sc.gov/swimmingadvisories/>
- (2025b). Conditional Shellfish Harvest Closures. <https://sc-dhec.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f-305d270358e426da4e4d9f4c1653df0>
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). (n.d.) GAP Map Layers. <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/GIS/gap/download.html>
- (1988). South Carolina Public Beach and Coastal Access Guide.
- (2001). Species Richness. GIS Layer. SC Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism et al.
- (2008). South Carolina Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan. <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/invasiveweedsaisfilesSCAISplan.pdf>
- (2012). Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species and Communities Known to Occur in Horry County, SC. <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/species/pdf/Horry2012.pdf>
- (2014). SCDNR Managed Lands Program.
- (2025). Bear. <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/wild-life/species/bear.html>
- South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC).

- (n.d.) Wildland-Urban Interface. <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-prevention/wildland-urban-interface/>
- South Carolina Green Power. (2025). Solar Energy. <http://www.scgreenpower.com/Renewable-Generation/Solar.aspx>
- South Carolina Governor. (2020). Gov. Henry McMaster Applauds President Trump's Decision to Halt Offshore Drilling Exploration.
- South Strand News. (2018). Groups react to Feds opening Atlantic up to offshore drilling.
- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). (1987). Wetlands Delineation Manual. https://www.sac.usace.army.mil/portals/43/docs/regulatory/1987_wetland_delineation_manual_reg.pdf
- (2024). Myrtle Beach Renourishment. <https://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Myrtle-Beach-Renourishment/>
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2012). 2012 Census of Agriculture. County Profile: Horry County, SC.
- (2007). 2007 Census of Agriculture. County Profile: Horry County, SC.
- (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture. County Profile: Horry County, SC. https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/South_Carolina/cp45051.pdf
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). (2013). Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge. <http://www.fws.gov/waccamaw/>
- (2025). Listed species with spatial current range in South Carolina. <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/species-listings-by-state?state=SC&stateName=South%20>
- Carolina&statusCategory=Listed
- United States Geological Survey (USGS). (2021). National Land Cover Database. <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/eros/science/national-land-cover-database>
- Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments (WRCOG). (2011). Waccamaw Region Section 208 Water Quality Management Plan. <http://www.wrcog.org/environmental-planning/>
- Waccamaw Watershed Academy. (n.d.) Datasets. <https://www.coastal.edu/wwa/datasets/>
- WBTW. (2022). Horry County Rising wants better wetland protections. <https://www.wbtw.com/news/grand-strand/horry-county/horry-county-rising-wants-better-wetland-protections-suggests-incentives/>
- Zolch, Teresa et al. (2017). Regulating urban surface runoff through nature-based solutions. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0013935117309611>
- ## HOUSING
- Anderson Economic Group (AEG). (2024). Housing Availability, Affordability, and Zoning in the Carolinas. https://scca.screaltors.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Final%20CCAR_Housing%20report%20AEG-%2003.18.2024%20%281%29.pdf
- ATTOM. (2024). Horry County, SC Real Estate and Property Data. <https://www.attomdata.com/data/us-real-estate/sc/horry-county/>
- Census Bureau. (2018-2022). American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.
- (2019-2023). American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.
- (2020). 2020 Decennial Census.
- Coastal Carolina Association of Realtors. (2018). InfoSparks. <https://www.ccarsc.org/pages/marketstats/>
- (2024). Infosparcs 2024. <https://www.ccarsc.org/pages/marketstats/>
- (2025). Grand Strand Local Market Update. https://www.ccarsc.org/clientuploads/2025_Market_Stats/Coastal-Carolinas_MMI_2025-05.pdf
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). (2023.) 2023 Income Limits. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#year2023>
- Eastern Carolina Housing Organization (ECHO). (n.d.) Coordinated Entry System Assessment. <https://echousing.org/get-help/>
- Horry County. (2024). HOME Consortium HOME Income Limits. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/wsvm4q10/2024-home-income-limits.pdf>
- Horry County. (n.d.) Community Development Block Grants. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/community-development/grants/housing/cdbg/>
- Horry County Code Enforcement. (2025). Residential building permit volumes by year.
- Horry County Community Development. (2016-2020). Consolidated Plan.
- (n.d.) Community Deveopment Block Grants. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/community-development/grants/housing/cdbg/>
- (2016). Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report.
- Horry HOME Consortium. (2017). Assessment of Fair Housing.
- Myrtle Beach Online. (2024). Does Myrtle Beach, SC follow rules when removing personal property? <https://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article285323627.html>
- National Housing Conference. (2023). Paycheck to Paycheck Database. <https://nhc.org/paycheck-to-paycheck/>
- National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC). (2023). Out of Reach: South Carolina. <https://nlihc.org/oor/state/sc>
- (2024). South Carolina Factsheet. https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/oor/2024_OOR-south-carolina.pdf
- South Carolina Council of Homelessness (SCCH). (2020). 2020 State of Homelessness Report. https://www.schomeless.org/media/1172/final-edits-actual-final-scich-state-of-homelessness_final.pdf
- Trulia. (2018). Heat Map: Horry County, SC.
- United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2023). FY 2023 Income Limits. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#year2023>
- Zillow. (2018). Horry County Home Prices and Values Index.
- ## RESILENCE
- ABC 4. (2018). Waccamaw River finally dips under flood stage. <https://abcnews4.com/news/local/waccamaw-river-in-south-carolina-finally-dips-under-flood-stage>
- ABC 15. (2024). Conway Medical Center receives \$750K grant for Horry Co. health program.
- Census Bureau. (2023). American Community

- Survey Five-Year Estimates. <https://data.census.gov/>
- Dennis, Cindy-Lee. (2003). Peer support within a health care context: a concept analysis. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0020748902000925>
- EnergySage. (2025). Cost of Electricity in South Carolina. <https://www.energysage.com/local-data/electricity-cost/sc/>
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2025a). Extreme Heat. <https://www.epa.gov/climatechange-science/extreme-heat>
- (2025b). What are heat islands? <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/what-are-heat-islands>
- Federal Practitioner. (2017). Minimizing Postdisaster Fatalities. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6372032/>
- Feeding America. (2025). Map. <https://map.feedingamerica.org/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). (2025a). National Risk Index: Horry County. <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/report/viewer?dataLOD=Counties&dataIDs=C45051,C4504>
- (2025b). WUI Structure Centroids. <https://gis-fema.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/FEMA:wui-structure-centroids/about>
- (n.d.) National Risk Index: Social Vulnerability. <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/social-vulnerability>
- Hayakawa, M. (2016). Increase in disaster-related deaths: risks and social impacts of evacuation. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0146645316666707>
- Horry County. (n.d.) Socastee Area Buyout Program. <https://horrycountysc.gov/resiliency-project/buyout-program/socastee-area/>
- (2021). Flood Resilience Master Plan. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/lxap4xrq/floodresiliencemasterplandraft.pdf>
- (2023). Beach Management Plan.
- (2024). County Financial Plan: Fiscal Year 2025.
- (2025a). Emergency 911 Call Volumes.
- (2025b). Annual Comprehensive Financial Report: Fiscal Year 2021. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/zv0hl3ec/2021acfr.pdf>
- (2025c). Horry County Initiates Burn Ban Until Further Notice. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/news/articles/horry-county-initiates-burn-ban-until-further-notice/>
- (2025d). Grocery Stores and Residential Structures. GIS Layers.
- Horry County Emergency Management (HCEM). (2021). Horry County Multijurisdictional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/y3mn5t-2j/2021-hc-multijurisdictional-all-hazards-mitigation-plan_updated-112021.pdf
- (2024). Horry County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/emergency-management/plans/>
- Horry County Schools (HCS). (2025). Average Daily Membership and Capacity Estimates.
- (2024). Horry County Schools Strategic Plan 2022-2027. <https://www.horrycountyschools.net/about-hcs/district-strategic-plan>
- My Horry News. (2024). How Santee Cooper plans to decrease carbon emissions.
- National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS). (2025). National Current Conditions. <https://www.drought.gov/current-conditions>
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). (n.d.) Historical Hurricane Tracks. Link.
- (2018). Hurricane Florence. <https://www.weather.gov/ilm/hurricaneflorence>
- (2025a). Storm Events Database. Link.
- (2025b). Sea Level Rise Viewer Scenarios. Link.
- (2025c). Drought Conditions for Horry County. <https://www.drought.gov/states/south-carolina/county/Horry>
- (2025d). Annual High Tide Flooding Outlook, Springmaid Pier. <https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/high-tide-flooding/annual-outlook.html?station=8661070>
- (2025e). Climate at a Glance County Time Series. <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/county/time-series/SC-051/tavg/1/8/1895-2025>
- (2025f). Annual Mean Relative Sea Level Since 1960 and Regional Scenarios. https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/sltrends_station.shtml?id=8661070#tabscenario
- (2025g). Relative Sea Level Trend. https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/sltrends_station.shtml?id=8665530
- Santee Cooper. (2024). Santee Cooper Announces First Round of Grid Resiliency Grants. <https://www.santeecooper.com/global-news/2024/051524-Grid-Resilience-Grant.aspx>
- Sea Level Rise. (n.d.) Forecast. <https://sealevel-rise.org/forecast/>
- Soda Citizen. (2021). Water World: Socastee, South Carolina. <https://www.sodacitizen.com/home/water-world-socastee-south-carolina>
- South Carolina Department of Education (SCDOE). (2022). School Report Card. <https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/sc-school-report-card/>
- South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR). (2020). State Climatology Office: Horry County. https://www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco/ClimateData/countyData/county_horry.php
- (2024). SC Hurricanes Comprehensive Summary. <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco/hurricanes/pdfs/SCHurricanesExecutiveSummary.pdf>
- (2025). Tornadoes. https://www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco/ClimateData/cli_table_tornado_stats.php
- South Carolina Department of Public Health. (2023a). Drug Overdose Deaths. <https://dph.sc.gov/sites/scdph/files/2025-03/Drug-Overdose-Report-2023.pdf>
- (2023b). South Carolina State Health Assessment. <https://livehealthy.sc.gov/state-health-assessment>
- (2023c). South Carolina Opioid Overdose Death Trends. <https://dph.sc.gov/diseases-conditions/substance-use-prevention-resources/opioid-epidemic>
- South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD). (2025). Annex C to Hurricane Plan: Evacuation Zones and Timing. <https://www.scemd.org/media/1996/annex-c-evacuation->

zones-and-clearance-timings.pdf

pdf

South Carolina Energy Office. (2022). SC Electric Vehicle Stakeholder Initiative. <https://energy.sc.gov/sites/energy/files/Documents/view/EVSI%20Stakeholder%20Initiative.pdf>

South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC). (n.d.) Wildfire Facts. <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/fire-resources/wildfire-facts/>

..... (2024). Wildfire Statistics. <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/fire-resources/wildfire-statistics/>

..... (2025). Wildfire History. <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/fire-resources/wildfire-history/>

South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR). (2021). Strategic Statewide Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan. <https://scor.sc.gov/resilience#:~:text=The%20Resilience%20Plan%20evaluates%20South,%2C%20wildfires%2C%20and%20drought%20conditions.>

..... (2024). Horry County Buyout Program Begins Demolition. <https://scor.sc.gov/news/2024-06/horry-county-buyout-program-begins-demolition>

..... (2025). CDBG Mitigation Program. <https://scor.sc.gov/CDBGmitigation>

South Carolina Opportunity Zones. (n.d.) What are Opportunity Zones? <https://scopportunity-zone.com/>

South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office. (2023). Estimating Motor Fuel Demand in South Carolina. [https://rfa.sc.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/2023%20Motor%20Fuel%20Demand%20Projections%20Report.](https://rfa.sc.gov/sites/default/files/2023-09/2023%20Motor%20Fuel%20Demand%20Projections%20Report.pdf)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2011). Mapping Food Deserts in the United States. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2011/december/data-feature-mapping-food-deserts-in-the-u-s>

..... (2022). Food Security in the US. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/interactive-charts-and-highlights/>

..... (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture. County Profile: Horry County, SC. <https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/>

..... (2024). Food Security in the U.S. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics>

..... (2025a). Air and Water Database Public Reports. <https://wcc.sc.egov.usda.gov/nwcc/rgrpt>

..... (2025b). Food Security in the US - Key Statistics and Graphics. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics>

..... (2025c). US Drought Monitor. <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

..... (n.d.) Farmers Local Dashboard. <https://www.farmers.gov/dashboard/south-carolina/horry>

United States Drought Monitor (USDM). (2025). Drought Time Series. <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/DmData/TimeSeries.aspx>

United States Energy Information Administration (EIA). (2025). South Carolina State Profile. <https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=SC>

United States Forest Service. (2006). History and Legacy of Fire Effects in the South Carolina Piedmont and Coastal Regions. https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/gtr/gtr_srs098.pdf

..... (2009). Over 50 Years of Prescribed Burning on the South Carolina Coastal Plain. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1034&context=jfspbriefs>

United Way Horry County. (2024). Breaking Barriers receives \$350,000 from Duke Endowment for mental health and addiction services.

WMBF. (2022). Thousands without power as Hurricane Ian wreaks havoc on Grand Strand, Pee Dee.

..... (2024). Today in History: Tornadoes touch down in Myrtle Beach in 2001.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

abc4 News. (2016). Gone in 10 seconds. <https://abcnews4.com/news/local/gone-in-10-seconds-smokestacks-at-sc-power-plant-imploded>

Clemson Extension. (n.d.) Preventing and Repairing Shoreline Erosion. <https://www.clemson.edu/extension/water/stormwater-ponds/problem-solving/shoreline-erosion.html>

Coastal Carolina University (CCU). (2023). Coastal Carolina University Master Plan.

Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium. (2018).

Explore North Myrtle Beach. (n.d.) Horry County Government. <https://www.explorenorthmyrtlebeach.com/listing/horry-county-government/3470/>

Grand Strand Water and Sewer (GSWSA). (2021). GSWSA 2040 Plan. https://www.gswsa.com/gswsa_public_site/userfiles/file/GSWSA%202040%20Plan%20-%20Final%20Copy%20-%202011-18-2021.pdf

..... (2023). Public Service Area. https://www.gswsa.com/gswsa_public_site/pdfs/GSWSA-Service-Area-2023.pdf

Horry County Council on Aging. (2018).

Horry County Library. (2025). FY 2024 Circulation and Membership Estimates.

Horry County Parks and Recreation. (2025). Property and Amenity Estimates.

Horry County Schools (HCS). (2024). Average Daily Membership and Capacity Estimates.

..... (2025). Future Growth Projections.

Horry County Stormwater. (2018). Stormwater Management Program Strategic Plan.

Horry County Solid Waste Authority (HCSWA). (2022). Horry County Solid Waste Management Plan.

Keep Horry County Beautiful (2025). FY 2024 Activity Estimates.

MyHorryNews. (2023). J. Reuben Long Detention Center. https://www.myhorrynews.com/news/j-reuben-long-detention-center-inmate-pronounced-dead-at-hospital-after-found-unresponsive-in-cell/article_63dde548-0497-11ee-8944-eb5d603f6bc0.html

South Carolina Department of Public Health (SCDPH). (2017). Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Ordinance.

..... (2022). Drug Overdose Deaths Report.

..... (2025a). Horry County Child Care Facilities.

<https://sc-dhec.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e8b4eea-83cab491bb3e3663093e14656>

..... (2025b). Horry County Medical and Aging Care Facilities. <https://sc-dhec.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e8b4eea-83cab491bb3e3663093e14656>

PUBLIC SAFETY

ABC 15. (2024). J. Reuben requests funds for renovations as Horry Co. population surge causes overcrowding.

Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). (2023). Crime Data Explorer. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/home>

Horry County. (2025a). Emergency Operations Dispatch Center.

..... (2025b). Animal Care Center.

Horry County Emergency 911 Call Center (E911). (2025). 2024 Call Counts.

..... (2013-2024). Incoming Call Counts.

..... (2013-2024). Dispatch Volumes by Responding Department.

Horry County Emergency Management. (2025). Horry County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/emergency-management/plans/>

Horry County Fire Rescue. (2025). Historic Response Volumes.

Horry County GIS. (2025a). Existing Police Precincts.

..... (2025b). Fire and EMS Stations, ISO-10 Areas.

Sheriff's Office. (2025). Sex Offender Registry. <https://horry.scor.sled.sc.gov/>

[GeographicalSearch.aspx](#)

South Carolina Forestry Commission. (n.d.) Fire and Burning. <https://www.scfc.gov/protection/fire-burning/>

WBTW. (2024). Family Justice Center breaks ground on new domestic violence shelter in Horry County.

TRANSPORTATION

American Planning Association (APA). (2007). The Transportation/Land Use Connection: Revised Edition. <https://www.planning.org/publications/report/9026872/>

Bikocity. (n.d.) This 3,000 Mile Bike Path Will Go From Maine To Florida. <https://bikocity.com/3000-mile-bike-path-will-go-maine-florida/>

Coast RTA. (2018-2025). Annual Ridership Reports.

Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU). (n.d.) Street Networks 101. <https://www.cnu.org/our-projects/street-networks/street-networks-101>

..... (2017) CNU/ITE Manual. <https://www.cnu.org/our-projects/cnu-ite-manual>

East Coast Greenway. (2025). South Carolina. <https://greenway.org/states/south-carolina>

..... (n.d.) East Coast Greenway Plan in Horry and Georgetown Counties.

Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS). (n.d.) About. <https://gsats.org/about/index.php>

..... (2013). Origin Destination Study.

..... (2017). Grand Strand Area Community Wayfinding Guidelines.

..... (2023). 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update. <https://cms3.revize.com/revize/waccamawgsats/Documents/Plans%20And%20Studies/MTP/Adopted-GSATS-2045-MTP.pdf>

..... (2025). 2024 to 2033 Transportation Improvement Program. <https://cms3.revize.com/revize/waccamawgsats/Documents/TIP/GSATS-FY24-33-TIP-FINAL-24-6-12-DEE-.pdf>

Horry County. (2009). Northeast Area Transportation Plan (NATP).

..... (n.d.) RIDE. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/departments/ride/>

..... (2025). Land Development Regulations. https://library.municode.com/sc/horry-county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH18LADERE

Institute of Transportation Engineers. (n.d.) Street Dimensions for Thoroughfares under Constrained Conditions.

Kimley-Horn and Associates. (n.d.) Collector Streets in Hierarchical Networks.

Myrtle Beach International Airport. (2025). Deplanements by Year.

..... (2021). Airport Master Plan. <https://www.flymyrtlebeach.com/wp-content/uploads/MYR-Executive-Summary.pdf>

..... (n.d.) Where we Fly. <https://www.flymyrtlebeach.com/flight-information/route-map/>

Myrtle Beach Sun News. (2019). 'Funding is out biggest concern'. <https://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/news/local/article232312722.html>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

(NHTSA). (2015).

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). (2005). I-74 Feasibility Study.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). (2025). 2050 OKI Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update. <https://2050update.oki.org/>

PAS. (2020) The Evolution of Surface Transportation Policy.

Smart Growth America. (n.d.) National Complete Streets Coalition. <https://www.smart-growthamerica.org/programs-and-coalitions/national-complete-streets-coalition/about/>

South Carolina Airports. (2025). Compatible Land Use Evaluation Tool. <https://clue-scaeronautics.sc.gov/CLUE/TrialArea>

South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS). (2013-2022). Traffic Collision Fact Books. https://scdps.sc.gov/ohsjp/stat_services/factbooks

South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). (2023a). GIS Mapping. <https://www.scdot.org/travel/travel-mappinggis.html>

..... (2023b). Investing in South Carolina's Road and Bridge Network. <https://www.scdot.org/inside/new-gastax-trustfund.html>

..... (2025). I-73 Project. <http://www.i73insc.com/>

Streetmix. (2025). Streetmix. <https://streetmix.net/-/3037269>

StreetsMN. (2015). The Critical Ten. https://streets.mn/2015/04/02/the-critical-ten/?utm_content=buffer23514&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Thomas and Hutton. (n.d.) The Market Common.

https://www.thomasandhutton.com/portfolio_page/the-market-common/

WMBF. (2016). New plan to help drivers get around Grand Strand streets easier. <https://www.wmbfnews.com/story/31616541/new-plan-to-help-drivers-get-around-grand-strand-streets-easier/>

..... (2020). Population spike creates speeding issues for Horry County Police Department. <https://www.wmbfnews.com/2020/09/23/population-spike-creates-speeding-issues-horry-county-police-department/>

..... (2023). Construction on Garden City road improvement project could start in late 2025.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2024a). Historic Unemployment Rate in Horry County, SC.

..... (2024b). County Employment, Workforce, and Payroll Statistics.

..... (2024c). Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Census Bureau. (2023). 2019-2023 American Community Survey.

..... (2020). 2016-2020 Commuting Flow Survey.

..... (2025). Quick Facts. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>

Clemson. (2013). The Horry County Agribusiness Strategic Plan.

Coastal Carolina Association of Realtors. (2018)

Employers Association of South Carolina. (2018). May 2018 South Carolina Unemployment Rates.

Grand Strand Opportunity Zones. (n.d.) Our Opportunity Zones. <https://www.grandstran->

[dopportunityzones.com/](https://www.dopportunityzones.com/)

Horry County. (2024). Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. <https://horrycountysc.gov/media/ay5dqu5o/horry-county-acfr-6-30-2024-website.pdf#page=2>

Horry County Code Enforcement. (2025). Annual Permits Issued. Includes data from the municipalities of Conway, North Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, Briarcliffe Acres, Atlantic Beach, and Loris.

JobsEQ. (2024). Horry County Profile. CHMURA Economics and Analytics.

LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES). (2020). Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics. Private Primary Jobs

Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce (MBACC). (2024). Vacation Rental and Hotel Occupancy and Daily Accommodations Costs.

Myrtle Beach Economic Impact Study. (2016). Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce.

Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation (MBREDC). (2023). The Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). (2012).

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2022). South Carolina Agricultural Statistics.

Salvino, Robert F. (2018). Regional Economic Outlook: Summer 2018. Grant Center for Real Estate and Economic Development. Coastal Carolina University.

Salvino, Robert and Loftus, Gary. (2016). The Economic Impact of Tourism in the Grand Strand: Grand Strand Tourism Activity Fiscal

Year-end June 30, 2015.

South Carolina Aeronautics Commission. (2016). Statewide Aviation System Plan and Economic Impact Study.

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW). (2011). Mass Layoff Statistics Annual Report.

..... (2010). Commuting Patterns.

..... (2017). Community Profiles.

..... (2024). Annual Employment Rate for Horry County. <https://lmi.sc.gov/Data-Hub/Other-Dashboards>

South Carolina Power Team. (2017). Labor Force Survey.

..... (2024). Labor Force Study. <https://www.scpowerteam.com/site-selection-tools/labor-study/>

South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC). (2017). Value of SC's Timber Delivered to Mills in 2013.

US Travel Association. (2016). Economic Impact of Travel.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). (2022). Census of Agriculture County Profile: Horry County. https://data.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/South_Carolina/cp45051.pdf

Visit Myrtle Beach (VMB). (2025a). KeyData Average Daily Rate and Occupancy Estimates.

..... (2025b). STR Average Daily Rate and Occupancy Estimates.

..... (2023). Travel USA Visitor Profile of Myrtle Beach. Prepared by Longwoods International.

<https://visitmyrtlebeach.app.box.com/s/uv-f45lons2sz51g6rthsw9wcpbgjagmk>

PRIORITY INVESTMENT

Horry County. (2025). County Financial Plan: Fiscal Year 2026.

..... (2024). County Financial Plan: Fiscal Year 2025. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/d5zcrdda/horry-county-fy2025-financial-plan-compressed.pdf>

..... (2023a). County Financial Plan: Fiscal Year 2024. <https://www.horrycountysc.gov/media/rd2pg0rr/horry-county-fy2024-financial-plan-reduced.pdf>

..... (2023b). Annual Comprehensive Financial Report: Fiscal Year 2023. <https://horrycountysc.gov/media/ay5dqu5o/horry-county-acfr-6-30-2024-website.pdf#page=2>

LAND USE

Adobe Firefly. (2025). Generated Future Land Use Images.

Congress for the New Urbanism. (2016). The Transect: a Diagram of Diversity. <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/transect-diagram-diversity>

Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS). (2009). Northeast Area Transportation Plan.

Horry County Planning and Zoning. (2025). Survey Results.

Kimley-Horn and Associates. (2004). Wake County Collector Plan.

Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC). (2024). Comprehensive Planning Guide for Local Governments. <https://www.masc.sc/>

sites/default/files/uploads/land-use-plan-
ning/comp-planning-guide.pdf

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(NOAA). (2025). CCAP Lancover Atlas.
<https://coast.noaa.gov/ccapatlas/>



YOUR COUNTY • YOUR VOICE • OUR FUTURE



HORRY COUNTY
IMAGINE 2040



WWW.HORRYCOUNTYSC.GOV