

TOWN OF OAK ISLAND STRATEGIC PLAN 2025–2027

MAINTAIN A WELL-RUN & EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

- 1.1 Ensure infrastructure, equipment, and facilities meet community needs.
- 1.2 Maintain a strong and diversified financial position.
- 1.3 Provide friendly and accommodating customer service.
- 1.4 Optimize effectiveness of boards and committees



PRESERVE OUR COMMUNITY'S COASTAL LIFESTYLE

- 2.1 Promote a relaxed, family-oriented beach town atmosphere
- 2.2 Ensure healthy, well-maintained, and accessible oceanfront and waterfront areas.
- 2.3 Enhance recreational opportunities.
- 2.4 Improve and expand park facilities.



PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

- 3.1 Preserve waterways and promote environmental health.
- 3.2 Manage shorelines sustainably.
- 3.3 Preserve and enhance the town's tree canopy.
- 3.4 Enhance flood hazard mitigation efforts.



BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

- 4.1 Enhance the Business-Friendly Ecosystem.
- 4.2 Recruit and Retain Business.
- 4.3 Develop Amenities and Infrastructure to Create a Sense of Place.
- 4.4 Market Oak Island to attract people, visitors, and business.



PLAN FOR ORDERLY, SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- 5.1 Promote compatible land development.
- 5.2 Enhance multi-modal transportation.
- 5.3 Balance preservation and enhancement of commercial areas with new development opportunities.
- 5.4. Encourage a range of housing types and visitor accommodations.



CREATE A SAFE COMMUNITY

- 6.1 Strengthen emergency response.
- 6.2 Minimize emergency incidents through prevention strategies.
- 6.3 Enhance pedestrian traffic and safety.
- 6.4 Prepare for emergencies.





1.1 Ensure infrastructure, equipment, and facilities meet community needs.

1. Develop a 5-year CIP with detailed costs and funding sources for each, with a 10-year horizon for future projects.
2. Conduct a facilities condition assessment and begin life-cycle costing for all facilities, equipment, and infrastructure.
3. Create Asset Inventories and GIS mapping for all stormwater, water, sewer, and other infrastructure.
4. Develop a Stormwater Master Plan.
5. Evaluate possible locations for a Public Works Operations Center.

1.2 Maintain a strong and diversified financial position.

1. Achieve and maintain a minimum fund balance for all funds pursuant to Council policy.
2. Maintain a tax rate that is in the lowest quartile of all surrounding towns in Brunswick County.
3. Maintain differentiation between residents and nonresidents user fees.
4. Maintain an A+ or greater bond rating through sound financial management, reviewed annually.
5. Maintain a balanced revenue base of residential and commercial property tax, room occupancy tax, sales tax and user fees.

1.3 Provide friendly and accommodating customer service.

1. Achieve a minimum of 4.0 on our annual Customer Service survey.
2. Respond to 95% of citizen concerns within 48 hours.
3. Complete the Town Hall Lobby remodeling project.
4. Enhance our GIS mapping to capture all public infrastructure and facilities and make it publicly accessible.
5. Launch and promote the new Mobile App and increase the number subscribers by 25%.
6. Develop and maintain a Citizen Portal for Code Enforcement cases and Permitting.
7. Convert all public forms into electronic, fillable formats on the website.
8. Install an electric sign at Town Hall to disseminate important information.
9. Establish a cross-departmental Customer Service Committee to address and resolve customer concerns.
10. Add programming including a speaker's bureau and technology improvements as needed.
11. Establish a comprehensive communications strategy to streamline messaging across platforms, improve coordination, and enhance community engagement through public awareness campaigns.

1.4 Optimize effectiveness of boards and committees

1. Revise the Council's Rules of Procedure as necessary.
2. Ensure all Boards align with the Town's Strategic Plan.
3. Develop Council and staff Liaison program to Boards including training and require Quarterly Reports from Committee Chairs to Town Council.
4. Update handbook to include the Conflict of Interest, Code of Ethics, Gift Ban policies.
5. Implement a comprehensive orientation and training process for all new board members.
6. Expand the Citizens Academy to include information on Board and Committees.
7. Determine a process and timeline for adding Town Council seats for representatives from the mainland.



2.1 Promote a relaxed, family-oriented beach town atmosphere.

1. Execute at least twelve Town-run events each year including Summer Concerts Series, July 4th Celebration, SOS, Live and Local, and the Christmas Parade, with each event evaluated for resident satisfaction.
2. Collaborate with private sector and nonprofit organizations to promote at least five large non-Town events annually and improve the process to include clear guidelines and more time sensitive responses from staff.

2.2 Ensure healthy, well-maintained, and accessible oceanfront and waterfront areas.

1. Maximize paid parking spots where feasible, including space for LSVs.
2. Expand handicapped-accessible mobi-mats at Keziah Street and 46th street accesses, adhering to CAMA guidelines.
3. Add satellite paid parking sites and explore off-island transportation options to include public-private partnerships and/or third-party vendors.

2.3 Enhance recreational opportunities.

1. Increase usage of the Par 3 Golf Course by promoting awareness and achieving a year over year revenue growth.
2. Develop a long-range plan for the Oak Island Pier, Pier House, and 801 Ocean Event Center.
3. Complete the feasibility study, design, and a funding strategy for a Recreation Center based on study results.
4. Coordinate and implement the items from the new Recreation Master Plan as funding allows.

2.4 Improve and expand park facilities.

1. Enhance the use of the Nature and Ocean Education Centers by increasing visitation by 15% and securing a sustainable revenue stream.
2. Implement improvements at Bill Smith Park, including support for the new Oak Island baseball team.
3. Enhance our greens improvement program at the Par 3 Golf Course
4. Implement improvements to the Templeton Park dog park facilities.
5. Construct an additional Davis Canal walkover at SW 6th Street.
6. Review options for a new Parks and Recreation organizational structure to enhance efficient coordination efforts.
7. Review the possibility of adding trails along the north side of the Davis Canal.

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PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS



3.1 Preserve waterways and promote environmental health.

1. Research and implement options for maintaining navigability of the Davis Canal, side canals, and the ICW.
2. Expand our oyster reef plantings and other natural shoreline initiatives along the ICW in coordination with the town's Environmental Advisory Committee and the NC Coastal Federation.
3. Promote clean water and coastal resilience by implementing a program to enhance coastal barrier landscapes using non-invasive, salt-tolerant vegetation.

3.2 Manage shorelines sustainably.

1. Develop policies to preserve the natural and beneficial functions of the environment while balancing respect for private property rights and enduring public access.
2. Implement the Beach Nourishment project, placing sand in the middle section of Oak Island.
3. Fund and execute the Wilmington Harbor and the Lockwood Folly Nourishment projects at the East and West ends of the island.
4. Complete the Dune Plating project to stabilize vulnerable areas.
5. Collaborate with the US Army Corps of Engineers to secure Federal Beach status for Oak Island.

3.3 Preserve and enhance the town's tree canopy.

1. Develop a planting map and implement an annual tree planting program on public land, including rights-of-way, while also providing trees to residents to encourage plantings on private property.
2. Maintain and enforce the Vegetation Ordinance, including annual reviews and updates as needed.
3. Preserve and promote the Serenity Oak at Bill Smith Park and develop a program from future iconic tree preservation on public and private land.
4. Maintain Tree City USA status and promote through enhancements in education and awareness.

3.4 Enhance flood hazard mitigation efforts.

1. Conduct an analysis to identify steps required to improve the Town's Community Rating System (CRS) score to 5 or better.
2. Develop and implement a community education and outreach program on flood hazard awareness, mitigation strategies, and emergency preparedness.
3. Explore and propose updated regulations and policies to improve flood resilience.
4. Continue the Dune Infiltration project for flood prevention.
5. Implement the recommendations of the Stormwater Master Plan as funding allows each year.



BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY



4.1 Enhance the Business-Friendly Ecosystem.

1. Develop and adopt a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan to guide commercial growth toward achieving an optimal residential to commercial ratio.
2. Launch a quarterly workshop series for small business owners to share resources, foster collaboration, and address key challenges.
3. Establish and promote a “Business of the Month” program to highlight exceptional local businesses.
4. Create and execute a campaign encouraging positive reviews of local businesses to strengthen community engagement and support.
5. Expand the reach and impact of the Business Bulletin e-newsletter, aiming for a 20% increase in subscribers.

4.2 Recruit and Retain Business.

1. Strengthen the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program to proactively identify and address the needs of local businesses.
2. Build partnerships with regional economic organizations to attract high-value businesses aligned with Oak Island’s vision.
3. Develop initiatives to enhance communication and collaboration among local business owners, managers, fostering a unified and supportive business community.

4.3 Develop Amenities and Infrastructure to Create a Sense of Place.

1. Implement the Streetscape Plan to enhance the Town’s appearance, accessibility, and walkability.
2. Design and construct improved town gateways to establish a stronger sense of arrival and community pride.
3. Organize seasonal events to boost community engagement and support for local businesses.
4. Continue the Façade Improvement Grant Program to improve building aesthetics and support businesses adapting to new regulations.
5. Identify and develop new public parking areas to address demand in high-traffic commercial zones.

4.4 Market Oak Island to attract people, visitors, and business.

1. Develop a suite of marketing materials aimed at visitors, including brochures, maps, and digital content.
2. Leverage digital marketing campaigns to target key demographics and increase business visitation and revenues.
3. Develop a Town-Owned Land Plan to determine what can be sold and what can be acquired to encourage the Business-Friendly environment and use as needed to attract business.



5.1 Promote compatible land development.

1. Review and revise the Unified Development Ordinance to align with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan
2. Implement prioritized recommendations in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
3. Identify and evaluate additional commercial zoning opportunities based on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan recommendations and an Oak Island Industrial Park.
4. Collaborate with Brunswick County and the Southeast Sanitary Sewer District to support mainland growth and ensure capacity needs are met.

5.2 Enhance multi-modal transportation.

1. Update the Bike Plan using available grant funding, and initiate implementation in coordination with Greenways and Sidewalks Plans.
2. Develop and adopt a Low-Speed Vehicle Plan and initiate improvements in commercial areas of Oak Island Drive, to include alleys behind businesses.
3. Begin development of a Greenway Plan for Yacht Drive to enhance connectivity.

5.3 Balance preservation and enhancement of commercial areas with new development opportunities.

1. Develop strategies to strengthen and improve the commercial districts around the airport.
2. Encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings in commercial areas through incentives and outreach initiatives.
3. Create Zoning, Ordinance, and Supplemental Regulations that are friendly to the Airport District.

5.4 Encourage a range of housing types and visitor accommodations.

1. Explore opportunities to support diverse visitor accommodations in targeted areas through regulatory review and potential policy adjustments.
2. Explore and implement policies and programs to encourage a variety of housing types that align with community needs, infrastructure, and vision of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

6 CREATE A SAFE COMMUNITY



6.1 Strengthen emergency response.

1. Maintain a low crime rate and achieve a high clearance rate for such offenses as speeding, petty theft, and DUI.
2. Ensure Police Department accreditation is sustained through compliance with best practices, annual reviews, and updates.
3. Enhance the Beach Services Units to improve safety and emergency response capabilities.
4. Achieve a response time of under 5 minutes for 90% of fire apparatus calls.
5. Attain and sustain Advanced Level EMS status.
6. Plan for future Fire and Rescue needs on the mainland to match the island's ISO rating.

6.2 Minimize emergency incidents through proactive prevention strategies.

1. Increase annual commercial inspections to ensure compliance and educate businesses on fire prevention techniques.
2. Host monthly CPR and Fire Prevention booths during summer concerts and an annual fire safety camp for residential awareness.
3. Expand crime prevention strategies through outreach programs and educational initiatives.
4. Ensure staff readiness and safety through regular training programs, including OSHA compliance, CPR, AED operation, and active shooter response, while providing proper tools, safety gear, and ongoing education.
5. Revive the Community Watch programs throughout the town.

6.3 Enhance pedestrian and traffic safety.

1. Develop and adopt street design policies to implement pedestrian-friendly features in key areas.
2. Complete six additional crosswalks on Beach Dr.
3. Install crosswalks on Oak Island Drive at 51st Street and additional sidewalks as required by NCDOT.
4. Plan, design, and install additional crosswalk on Oak Island Drive at 79th and 58th Streets including additional sidewalks as required by NCDOT.
5. Respond to all potholes and broken sidewalks work orders within 48-hours and remedy the problems within 30-days.
6. Eliminate right-of-way street safety hazards, including vegetative obstructions on private property.
7. Conduct monthly inspections of sidewalks and streets to proactively address broken areas.

6.4 Prepare for emergencies.

1. Update the Town's Emergency Operations Plan and hold tabletop exercises and staff training as needed.
2. Develop a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to ensure service delivery during disruptions.
3. Hold an annual Emergency Preparedness Conference to educate residents.
4. Provide regular staff training on emergency preparedness using NIMS and ICS protocols.