

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2019 - 2021



Statement of Purpose

We believe that all citizens should have economic opportunity, a well-run government, access to housing that is affordable, and confidence in their community to weather future environmental impacts. This plan seeks to achieve our goals while maintaining the diversity, authenticity, and balance between the built and natural environment that is Beaufort SC.

***Where History, Charm and
Business Thrive***

GOAL 1: Encourage sustainable economic growth through new businesses and expansions to achieve tax base diversification and career paths into or beyond middle income through targeted recruitment and expansion of businesses in technology, knowledge management, advanced manufacturing and emerging sectors.

GOAL 2: Create a long-range plan and identify available revenue streams to address the City's infrastructure and development needs.

GOAL 3: Create and coordinate programs and opportunities for the development of housing that is affordable to be constructed in the City to provide the needed housing for our workforce.

GOAL 4: Through tourism and an active, vibrant downtown, attract those who wish to relocate their offices and businesses here to live, work, and play by capitalizing on that which gives Beaufort unmatched quality of life opportunities.

GOAL 5: Continue our plan to accommodate balanced growth through infill and community development throughout the City. The emphasis for 2019 and 2020 will be in the Northwest Quadrant, parts of the Old Commons, and the Dixon Village areas.

GOAL 6: Create and coordinate an Environmental Sustainability Task force to address and mitigate the effects of storm water, flooding, rising sea levels, and natural disasters.

GOAL 7: Coordinate and collaborate with community stakeholders to identify the overall educational needs within the City, resulting in a sound educational needs and workforce development plan.

Our Values: ·Transparency ·Stewardship ·Respect ·Integrity ·Collaboration ·Resiliency

Background: *As a City, we use our retreat, strategic plan, and budget to provide updates on City activity, to better explain challenges we address, and to set a path forward as we work toward the goals, we have set to enhance this community and preserve our culture and history. We believe we must provide our Citizens with:*

- **LEADERSHIP** – through a transparent and well-run government
- **PUBLIC SAFETY** – demonstrated through a welcoming, safe, and active City
- **ROBUST INFRASTRUCTURE** – including storm water management, roads, sidewalks, trails, and parks
- **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES** – providing a vibrant environment for businesses to grow and thrive
- **FINANCIAL STABILITY** – strong fund balances and ratings from credit agencies
- **PROTECTION OF OUR CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT** – we are a place where families thrive, tourists are welcomed, and students have excellent educational opportunities

LONG-TERM CONCERNS: 2019/2020 Discussions for Future Planning Work Sessions:

1. Parking needs in the Downtown - Public/Private
2. Increase diverse career opportunities for early and mid-level professionals
3. Move from deferred maintenance to pro-active management for all City assets
4. Environmental resilience
5. Financial resilience – impact fees, local option sales tax, tiff options, bonding needs
6. The Lady’s Island Plan – implementation and coordination
7. Rural/Urban/Growth and annexation
8. Implications of Reconstruction National Park Service growth
9. Parks/Recreation Services changing needs of our citizens
10. Regional/Intergovernmental Cooperation
11. Work with Human Service organizations to address the “soft” issues facing our community
12. Provide opportunities for improved collaboration with businesses and non-profits in the City.

ACTION PLANS TO ADDRESS LONG-TERM CONCERNS:

- A senior staff member will be assigned the tasks of overseeing our environmental resilience planning and management as well as monitoring and reporting on all long-term tasks and oversee Goal 6.
- Council will appoint a task force to oversee Goal 7, Educational needs.
- A Communications Manager will be added to City staff reporting to the City Manager to ensure the City is providing a strong communications program.

GOAL 1: Encourage sustainable economic growth through new businesses and expansions to achieve tax base diversification and career paths into middle income (defined as \$50,000 annually) through targeted recruitment of businesses in technology, knowledge management, advanced manufacturing and emerging sectors.			
Lead Parties: Stephen Murray, Bill Prokop			
Staff Assigned: Linda Roper, David Prichard			
RATIONALE: <i>Increasing the focus on economic development by encouraging sustainable economic growth and partnerships through business workforce development and diversification will create jobs that enable and encourage the private sector to create well-paid, career oriented, positions. Using strategies for infrastructure, maximizing use of appropriate city-owned properties, focusing on promising growth sectors, and expanding desired economic activity will positively impact our tax base and improve revenue for the City.</i>	Measures of Success:	Target Date:	
	1. Four (4) new business startups located in the Beaufort Digital Corridor.	12/31/20	
	2. 100 new well-paying (\$15-\$20/hour minimum) jobs created in the city.	6/30/20	
	3. One (1) startup from BDC progressed to larger, in-City location and increased number of employees.	12/31/19	
	4. Road and infrastructure projects completed in the Commerce Park.	12/31/19	
	5. Two (2) new businesses recruited into Commerce Park.	6/30/20	
	6. Encourage USCB Beaufort campus expansions to exceed 300 undergraduate and graduate students.	6/30/21	
	7. Host one technology industry conference in the City to encourage relocation.	12/31/20	
	8. Build 50,000 sq. ft. spec building in Commerce Park.	12/31/20	
	9. Data collection of key economic indicators established for the City.	6/30/20	
	10. Review and update all small business start-up requirements for permits, licenses, fees, and training needs. Goal to have approval within 30 days.	12/31/19	
	Objectives:		
	1. Expand collaboration and look for opportunities to support expansion with the University of South Carolina Beaufort and the Technical College of the Low country.		
	2. Expand collaboration with the business community to identify opportunities for expansion, cooperative programs and new ventures.		
	3. Develop a marketing scope, leveraging contemporary methods and techniques to market Beaufort as a locality that welcomes technology innovators.		
	4. Develop a local incentives package (permitting, tax abatement, private incentives from communication/utility companies) targeting startups, business expansion and relocating companies, predominately in the technology, knowledge management, advanced manufacturing and emerging sectors.		
5. Continue connecting the Beaufort Digital Corridor with local stakeholders			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue support of Code Camp and other educational programs b. Restructure BDC agreement to more equitable partnership
	<p>6. Develop 500 Carteret</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider up-fits to parts of the building not renovated b. Evaluate benefit/cost of “Launchpad” for foreign firms
	<p>7. Develop the Commerce Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review Palmetto Sites reports and work on recommendations such as covenants, wetlands delineation, etc. b. Complete fiber loop install c. Work with BCEDC and County to build spec building d. Re-request tax credit support from SCE&G and others for improvements e. Analyze park boundaries and surrounding properties for possible inclusion and/or completion of the park
	<p>8. Target technology and advanced manufacturing sectors (including Aerospace & Automotive) in partnership with the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation and Southern Carolina Alliance</p>
	<p>9. Advantage existing businesses for their commitment to Beaufort</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continue to review the permitting process to reduce unnecessary regulatory requirements, when identified b. Continue to review and implement adding license and permitting functions to the City website
	<p>10. Convene a City Business Roundtable in Fall 2019</p>
	<p>11. Work with DMO to better align and integrate our economic development messaging with our tourism marketing</p>

GOAL 2: Create a long-range plan and identify available revenue streams to address the City's infrastructure and development needs.

Lead Party: Bill Prokop

Staff Assigned: Matt St. Clair, Kathy Todd

RATIONALE:	Measures of Success:	Target Date:	
<p><i>The public and the political leadership deserve to know what is needed to practice exemplary stewardship of City resources. Detailed analysis must be conducted that informs budget decisions regarding the City infrastructure. Finally, the detailed analysis will assist in making decisions regarding the needs for improved storm water, flooding, sidewalk, street, and facility improvement plan and construction needs for the short and long-term needs of the City.</i></p>	1. Conduct an analysis of all City infrastructure to include lifecycle as it relates to major systems	12/31/20	
	2. Develop a priority list that identifies requirements based on public input.	12/31/20	
	3. Develop a long-term phased maintenance & upgrade plan	6/30/20	
	4. Identify means and methods to reduce expenditures while maximizing capability	6/30/20	
	5. Develop storm water/rising sea level task force to develop long-term needs.	12/31/19	
	6. Develop proposal of new revenue options	6/30/20	
	7. Refine financial forecasting model	6/30/20	
	8. Establish 6 months' review schedule of key data and update Council	12/31/19	
	Objectives:		
	1. Identify and automate the vagaries of each City structure down to the most minute detail to fully understand each building's individual requirements, function and benefit while making logical and well-reasoned recommendations to the City's leadership.		
2. Rigidly adhere to a priority list based on the potential for greatest impact to the City and more specifically the greatest number of persons affected by a specific action.			
3. Cause the maintenance and upgrade plan to undergo continuous evaluation to achieve the greatest benefit in terms of effectiveness and efficiency for the City.			
4. Continually look for ways to gain efficiency and effectiveness, maximizing occupancy/density, and reduce expenditures to guard against the unnecessary allocation of resources that can best be deployed elsewhere for a greater effect or impact on the City.			

GOAL 3: Create and coordinate programs and opportunities for the development of housing that is affordable, for different segments of our populace, to be constructed in the City to provide the needed housing for our workforce.

Lead Party: Phil Cromer

Staff Assigned: David Prichard, Deborah Johnson

RATIONALE:	Measures of Success:	Target Date:
<p><i>By, 2027, if not sooner, the supply of affordable housing is expected to fall short for many income groups but especially for relatively lower-income renters and higher-income homebuyers, even taking into account new units in the development pipeline. The recent study on housing completed by the County shows the need very clearly. If we are going to be successful with our economic development plans affordable housing must be made available. There is a need now, and by 2027 the need is expected to peak.</i></p>	1. Creation of a comprehensive plan, together with other community groups and the County that will be communicated to Council and adopted for implementation.	12/31/19
	2. Work with developers to achieve at least a 10% reduction in the affordable housing needs via new construction.	12/31/20
	3. Review City ordinances and permitting requirements to ensure affordable housing needs can be met.	12/31/19
	4. Develop a list of site locations where affordable housing could be located.	6/30/20
	5. Explore financing alternatives, incentives that could be utilized in addressing the housing shortage.	6/30/20
	Objectives:	
	1. Establish a task force of interested stakeholders to develop an action plan to address the short and long-term issues of affordable housing.	
	2. Develop a list of all code, zoning, and ordinance issues that must be reviewed to streamline the process and regulations of building affordable housing.	
	3. Coordinate with the County and the Housing Authority on programs that could be of common interest.	
	4. Meet with builders and developers to obtain a clear understanding of the key cost issues that affect building affordable housing	
5. Coordinate efforts with the Beaufort County School District to explore developing teacher housing in the City		

GOAL 4: Through tourism and an active, vibrant downtown, attract those who wish to relocate their offices and businesses here to live, work, and play by capitalizing on that which gives Beaufort unmatched quality of life opportunities.

Lead Parties: Nan Brown Sutton

Staff Assigned: Linda Roper, David Prichard, Rhonda Carey, Kathy Todd

<p>RATIONALE: <i>The City of Beaufort is one of South Carolina’s most historic and iconic cities, with a vibrant Lowcountry character, well-preserved historic buildings, and a natural beauty and lifestyle that attracts visitors and inspires devotion in residents. The City has worked to maintain the vibrancy and economic viability of the Downtown Commercial Core and our historic sites. Our Downtown, a strong anchor for the community and a prime destination for visitors, requires ongoing attention to ensure sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>The Waterfront Park is broadly enjoyed by our residents and our guests as they take in the beauty of Beaufort River. The playground is frequented by children as their parents’ watch nearby. We consider our Marina and the Waterfront Park to be jewels, which must be polished from time to time. Now is such a time.</i></p>	<p>Measures of Success:</p>	<p>Target Date:</p>
	1. Three (3) vacant or underutilized properties in downtown are redeveloped.	6/30/20
	2. Assessment of business license trend data on new or closed businesses as well as locations.	6/30/20
	3. Comprehensive long-range plan for the Waterfront Park & marina created.	12/30/21
	4. Infrastructure plan for the Waterfront Park	12/31/19
	5. Playground masterplan created, approved.	12/31/19
	6. Create and disseminate community calendar of events.	12/31/19
	7. Explore creation of façade improvement program for retail establishments.	6/30/20
	8. Explore incentives for increasing a more diverse retail base.	12/31/20
	9. Manage physical side of tourism (e.g., parking, shuttle service, ferry service)	On going
	<p>Objectives:</p>	
	<p>1. Collaborate with, and advocate for, effective partner organizations with missions that foster a vibrant and active downtown, and complement other redevelopment economic growth initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Annually convene a meeting or meetings with representatives from the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Merchants Association, TBD Downtown Management organization/department, Restaurant & Lodging Association, Cultural District Advisory Board and National Park Service Reconstruction Era National Park to collaborate on their goals and those of the City. (marketing, ambassadors, enhancements/incentives, business mix) 	
	<p>2. Maintain a <i>Downtown Property & Business Inventory</i>, regularly updating the status of properties and working with property owners and/or businesses to encourage development of unutilized or under-utilized properties for residential or commercial use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Merge & expand the existing inventories to cover all of City; distribute quarterly b. Meet with owners of vacant or underutilized properties in downtown to explore development opportunities including type of use, financing, incentives, and other resources c. Assess the health and stability of the business climate through annual evaluation of multi-year business license data, segregated by geographic boundaries of the downtown core, the downtown as a whole, the City as a whole. 	

	<p>3. Annually evaluate multi-year data on collection, distribution and policies/ordinances on Parking Fees, Accommodations Tax Fees and Hospitality Tax Fees to determine how available funds can best be leveraged for Downtown initiatives</p>
	<p>4. Champion and encourage aligned evening hours or other marketing ideas through incentive program.</p>

GOAL 5: Initiate a plan to accommodate balanced growth through infill and community development within targeted areas of the City.		
Lead Parties: Mike McFee, Staff Assigned: David Prichard, Linda Roper, Ken Meola		
RATIONALE:	Measures of Success:	Target Date:
<i>We welcome opportunities to expand our population and to expand the revenue streams that accompany new development. Expansion within relatively fixed borders calls on us to look inward for opportunities. Through thoughtful infill we can stabilize, enhance, and promote preservation in select neighborhoods. Increasing occupation of once struggling properties creates broad, deep communities of individuals who value the beauty of Beaufort. We put a street-by-street plan in an overall 5-year project context.</i>	1. Target areas for redevelopment throughout the city to be identified and analyzed for quantifiable redevelopment goals.	12/31/2019
	2. City-wide redevelopment incentives revised and disseminated by 6/30/19 and assessed annually for use/effectiveness.	6/30/2019
	3. Value of added buildings to tax base summarized annually, showing increase in new tax revenues year-to-year.	6/30/2020
	4. 25 new houses or buildings constructed or under-construction in the Street-by-Street project areas (Carteret to Ribaut/Duke to Boundary; not including properties facing Boundary Street) by close-out of the 5-year project. The full Street-by-Street timeframe is 7/1/16 to 6/30/21.	6/30/2021
	Objectives:	
	1. Complete and close out the Street-by-Street: Greene Street project.	
	2. Start the Street-by-Street: Congress/Baggett Street (1/1/2020); close out by 6/30/2021 (same analysis, walkabout, incentives, letters to property owners)	
	3. Utilize <i>Civic Master Plan, 2019 Comprehensive Plan</i> and existing <i>Redevelopment District</i> documents to create a list of new and revised redevelopment target areas within the city.	
	4. Revise the City-wide Redevelopment Initiatives program to match the city's priorities and needs in the redevelopment target areas.	
	5. Analyze the property tax implications of all new construction in the city on an annual basis, cumulative and broken out by targeted redevelopment areas, including analysis of factors such as the Bailey Bill and other tax abatement programs for redevelopment properties.	
	6. Expand scope of the task force to include broader community development goals.	
	7. Use on-line survey to discover causes for residential leakage and what amenities the broader community would prioritize. Develop targeted outreach and incentives to attract investment toward the goal.	

GOAL 6: Create and coordinate an Environmental Sustainability Task Force to address and mitigate the effects of storm water, flooding, rising sea levels and other natural disasters.

Lead Parties: Mayor Keyserling

Staff Assigned: Matt St. Clair, Neil Desai

RATIONALE:	Measures of Success:	Target Date:
	1. Completion of Mossy Oaks storm water projects	6/30/20
	2. Establish a task force to analyze the projected effects of flooding, rising sea levels on the economy and well-being of the City	6/30/19
	Objectives:	
	1. Foster a collaborative partnership between the City, the City of Charleston, the College of Charleston, and other internal and external stakeholders.	
	2. Evaluate mechanisms and recommend adoption of guidelines to City Council to ensure that "Resiliency" remains a high priority of the City.	
	3. Create a 5-year masterplan of infrastructure needs and projects.	
4. Create and promote an advocacy platform for working with the state & county on tools to develop regional plans.		

GOAL 7: Coordinate and collaborate with community stakeholders to identify the overall educational needs within the City, resulting in a sound educational needs and workforce development plan.

Lead Parties: Stephen Murray, Jon Verity

Staff Assigned: Bill Prokop, Deborah Johnson

<p>RATIONALE: <i>The effects of not having the skills that are needed by high tech industry will have continuing impacts on the City. These are real and are being felt. The need for a better educated and trained workforce is a national problem. We must better understand the impact and how we can plan, prepare, fund, and safeguard the development of our workforce. These challenges will be one of the greatest our community has ever faced and will require the assistance of a multitude of agencies.</i></p>	<p>Measures of Success:</p>	<p>Target Date:</p>
	1. Create a Task Force to include internal and external stakeholders.	12/31/19
	2. Create a working definition of the scope of the problem.	6/30/20
	3. Fund and initiate comprehensive study that provides a roadmap for policy, funding, and priorities.	Ongoing
	4. Create and implement communications strategy to inform businesses, residents and stakeholders of the issues, solutions, and roles they can play in preparing for the challenges.	12/31/2020
	<p>Objectives:</p>	
	1. Create shared understanding of the magnitude of the challenges Beaufort faces regarding the development of workforce skills.	
	2. Explore lead strategies for addressing workforce needs.	
	3. Find funding mechanisms for implement progressive measures.	
	4. Develop a plan that can grow with the economic growth and needs of our community.	