



The Beacon

Behind the scenes at the City of Beaufort



Fall/Winter 2023



Scott M. Marshall
City Manager

Welcome to The Beacon!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the City of Beaufort Beacon. Printing a semi-annual newsletter for City residents, business owners and other stakeholders was an initiative approved by City Council in the City's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide useful information about City operations, upcoming events, capital projects and other initiatives.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue and that you find The Beacon to be a helpful resource. Please let us know what other topics you would like to see covered in future editions. You can email me at smarshall@cityofbeaufort.org with suggestions, or if you have questions about content in this newsletter. On behalf of Team Beaufort, thanks for reading and thanks for the privilege of serving you.



The Beacon

Fall/Winter 2023

Cover photo by Phil Heim, *A View From Lady's Island*
Inside photos by Shawn Hill and City Staff

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What do you most look forward to during Holiday Weekend?

Acting Mayor Mike McFee

Elected in 2008 to City Council (with brief hiatus), Mayor Pro Tem, Acting Mayor since September 2023



I always look forward to the Holiday Weekend as the season kickoff in Beaufort! Always a great time to visit with friends, and start new friendships at Night on the Town and Light up the Night Boat Parade. And the turnout for the Christmas Parade reaffirms that we live in the greatest Small Town on Earth!

Councilman Neil Lipsitz

Elected to City Council in 2020



Having grown up in downtown Beaufort, it's always fun for me to see downtown show its holiday spirit. This can be seen in the stores, on the streets, and in the park. This is a part of Beaufort's uniqueness that continues year round.

Councilman Mitch Mitchell

Elected to City Council in 2020



I love the natural beauty of our city – its live oaks, rivers, and marshes, and of course our iconic Woods Memorial Bridge. Christmas is when our city is most beautiful! Our Christmas Parade, decorated streets, and Chambers Park with its giant Christmas Tree make the whole experience purely magical! Merry Christmas & Happy New Year, everyone!

Councilman Josh Scallate

Elected to City Council in 2022



I have always enjoyed that our community puts emphasis on hosting events that highlight our history, while encompassing the cultural aspects we still cherish. We have many upcoming events that speak to this on our horizon, including Gullah Christmas where you can come and hear the story about the Sea Islands of Beaufort, S.C., 1860, which was the last Christmas before the Civil War began, and the Beaufort Boat Parade where holiday-themed marine vessels march through the City serving a reminder of how important marine life is and has been in our community. Hope to see you all there!

The basics of Beaufort City government

If you live in the City of Beaufort, you probably know that we have a City Council and mayor, but you may not know what, exactly, that form of government entails.

So here is a brief explanation of the kind of government we have, and how it functions.

In the Home Rule Act of 1975, South Carolina approved three different forms of municipal government, with varying responsibilities for the mayor and council:

- Mayor-Council Form
- Council Form
- Council-Manager Form

Beaufort has the Council-Manager form of government. Under the Council-Manager form of government:

City Council:

- Has all legislative and policy powers
- Employs the city manager, city attorney and municipal judge(s)
- Elects the mayor pro tem (essentially, the vice mayor)
- Establishes departments and functions
- Adopts a balanced budget annually
- Authorizes bond issues
- Adopts plats and official maps
- Provides for an annual audit
- Appoints boards and commissions with advice of the manager
- Exercises general police powers

The mayor:

- Presides over meetings
- Calls special meetings
- Acts and votes as a member of council
- Designates a temporary judge (if needed)

The city manager:

- Is chief executive
- Appoints, sets salaries, and removes employees at will
- Prepares and administers the annual budget

- Advises council on departments and appointments
- Designates a manager during absences

Elections

City Council elections are non-partisan, which means that candidates run without identifying themselves as members of a party. Elections are staggered, and Council members are elected to four-year terms. New council members are sworn in the December after the November election.

A Special Election for mayor will be held on Dec. 12, 2023, to fill the unexpired term of Stephen Murray, who resigned in September. The next regular elections for City Council and mayor will be on Nov. 5, 2024. To register to vote, please go to Beaufort County Board of Voter Registration and Elections for information:

www.beaufortcountysc.gov/vote/

Meetings

Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month for Work Sessions and Regular Meetings. Council can only vote on pending business if there is a quorum (at least three members present).

Any other meeting that is called is deemed a Special Meeting.

Work Sessions

These are typically held at 5 p.m. in the Planning Conference Room on the first floor of City Hall. They are designed to be informative. This gives Council members the opportunity to hear presentations and studies, to ask questions and hold discussions.

Beaufort City Council is currently holding an extra Work Session on the third Tuesday of every month to review proposed changes to the Beaufort Development Code.

Regular Meetings

These are typically held at 7 p.m. in City Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall.

What is an ordinance?

- A local law of a general and permanent nature
- Must be introduced in writing and in the form required for final adoption
- Is approved upon the second reading

Examples of City of Beaufort ordinances include:

- Annual budget, including the levying of taxes
- Establishing fines, fees, and penalties
- Authorizing bonds
- Authorizing the sale or lease of land and property
- Contracts
- Annexations
- Adopting procurement policies
- Text amendments to the Beaufort Development Code
- Adopting comprehensive plan, zoning, and land development regulations
- Modifications to the City's Code of Ordinances

City ordinances are kept up to date on our website and are searchable here:



What is a resolution?

A resolution is a written motion of Council which generally expresses a policy or position on an issue. It is currently used to approve agreements and contracts, express support or opposition to an issue, or to provide formal direction to staff.

What is a proclamation?

Proclamations honor a person or organization, or recognize or proclaim a special day, week, or month.

Acting Mayor Mike McFee, center, presents a proclamation recognizing the new mascot of the Technical College of the Lowcountry, the TCL Tides, on Sept. 26, 2023. At left is TCL President Richard Gough.



Public outreach a priority for Beaufort Police

You could get dizzy trying to keep up with all the ways the Beaufort Police Department is reaching out to the community:

- Chill with a Cop
- Coffee with a Cop
- Stroll with a Cop
- Movie in the Park

And did we mention ... Lollipops with a Cop?

Yes, the Police Department, which has always tried to ensure good relationships with the neighborhoods and people of Beaufort, has ramped up that effort, particularly during a return to normalcy following Covid-19 restrictions.

And it's paying dividends, according to Police Chief Dale McDorman and Deputy Chief Stephenie Price. Not only are families and children coming out repeatedly to events like Movie in the Park and Chill with a Cop, but for the first time in years, the Police Department is fully staffed, with a waiting list of candidates.

Some of those officers come from out-of-state. The Police Department's lively, and at times very funny, Facebook page, Instagram and TikTok accounts have drawn fans from across the United States, some of them police officers who decided that the Beaufort PD is worth a closer look.

"There's a reason we are fully staffed and have a list of people who want to work here," said Chief McDorman. "It's not that we're doing anything really different in terms of policing. It's that we're more visible in the community, and we're doing



Food is always part of the equation at Chill with a Cop events.

more things to make the officers feel included. We're letting the officers get involved from the bottom up."

Taking ownership

That includes, for example, tasking each patrol team, the investigators, and the school resource officers, with organizing and executing an event. A patrol team will organize one of the Chill with a Cop events. They take care of the logistics. Which park will it be held in? What food will be offered? Who will flip the burgers? What games will be played?

"We're getting kids coming back to each event," said Lindsey Edwards, the department's Community Affairs and Standards Specialist (and the creative mind behind the PD's social media pages). "Parents are telling us, 'We're so appreciative.' "



Lady's Island Middle School student Ciasia Morgan enjoys Lollipops with a Cop, held at her school in April 2023. With her are School Resource Officer Keith Kastner-Smith, left, and Capt. Jason Day.

Continued on next page

Police Department Community Events

Chill with a Cop: Held every couple of months on a Friday late afternoon through early evening at one of the City's parks. Free food, fun games.

Movie in the Park: Held once a month during summer months at a City park, and if scheduling permits, held at Waterfront Park in December to celebrate the holidays. The PD has its own projector, screen, and sound system, as well as a popcorn machine!

Coffee with a Cop: Held periodically at

a local coffee shop in the morning. Gives residents a chance to ask officers any questions, or tell them what is on their minds.

Stroll with a Cop: Held periodically in various neighborhoods. Also encourages health and wellness among officers and residents. *Coming soon: Bike with a Cop!*

Play Ball with a Cop: The Exchange Club of Beaufort donated a variety of sports balls to the PD, which officers keep in their patrol cars. If they see kids outside

playing, or walking around, they will stop and throw a few balls, and give the balls to the kids.

Lollipops with a Cop: At these quarterly events, led by the School Resource Officers, officers hand out lollipops to students.

Open House: The plan is to hold this annually at the Police Department on a Saturday. The Investigations Division hosts this, and demonstrates some of the methods used to conduct investigations.

Developing relationships is important, Chief McDorman said. Which is why the Police Department has school resource officers in each public school in the City of Beaufort, why they are starting a mentoring program to follow students as they progress through grades, and why the PD started Lollipops with a Cops.

Which may sound a bit silly, but is a hit, even in middle and high schools. The officers staff a school each quarter, set up a table, and proceed to hand out lollipops. “The kids realize, you’re not here for a bad reason, and then they help pass them out,” Deputy Chief Price said.

“We’re just trying to be creative, to have that positive encounter with kids, instead of out on the streets,” said Chief McDorman.

And for the officers themselves, there is a new mandate: “We have to have fun,” the Chief said.

“We’re encouraging officers to have fun.”

*Dale McDorman,
Police Chief*

Helping morale

So, besides giving each team ownership of an event, the department began an internal photo contest, with winning entries being hung in the Police Department. The administration also set up a coffee bar in their suite of offices where cops can grab a cup of coffee and have a chat with the chief.

“I have seen an increase in morale,” Chief McDorman said. “It’s something that all police departments struggle with. The national narrative hasn’t changed a lot. But now we have more ownership within the department. We’re encouraging officers to have fun. We’re ramping up training. We’re trying to ensure that there is more job satisfaction.

“We’re seeing ripple effects — in staffing, hiring and retention. And that’s very rewarding.”

City of Beaufort Community Events



Beaufort firefighters take part in an egg-drop experiment at Bridges Preparatory School.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Community engagement is part of the job description for the Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department. Here are some of the events and activities they conduct for the public:

Family Safety Education House

With the Family Safety Education House, learning safety has never been more fun. The interactive house allows students to actively participate in their education. This house is available to groups, businesses, and families.

Fire trucks

Bright red fire trucks are always intriguing and are an attraction for everyone. The department has an open-door policy and welcomes residents to stop by anytime. However, due to training and response requirements, it is best to call ahead to 843-525-7055 to ensure firefighters are available.

Classroom presentations

The department makes regular appearances in classrooms to teach and preach fire safety.

Lunch at the school

Every Friday the local fire station will go to the neighborhood school to have lunch with the kids.

Friendly firefighter program

This program introduces children and adults to firefighters and their equipment. Firefighters use this program to reduce the anxiety children may feel when seeing firefighters for the first time in our gear.

Birthday parties

Yes, our firefighters will even make a guest appearance at your child’s birthday party!

Safety training

The department provides safety training for businesses as well. Everything from fire extinguisher training to emergency planning, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first-aid training.

PUBLIC WORKS

You can always see our Public Works crews out and about in neighborhoods and parks, making Beaufort a better place to live by keeping the City ship-shape. Public Works also sponsors two big events a year:

Touch a Truck

This event is held on a Saturday in June, usually at Southside Park. The Public Works crews set up some of their biggest pieces of equipment, and give kids a chance to sit in the driver’s seat — making for some big smiles and great photos for mom and dad. Touch a Truck also features free T-shirts and hard hats, lots of games, and free food.

South Carolina Arbor Day

South Carolina Arbor Day is always held the first Friday in December. The Public Works Parks Division coordinates with local garden clubs to plant trees, usually at a City park or along a City street. Beaufort is a longtime Tree City USA, thanks to the efforts of the Public Works Department.

Planning for the biggest weekend of the year

Night on the Town scheduled for Dec. 1

For Downtown Operations, the City of Beaufort department that works closely with merchants to ensure a vibrant and successful downtown, no event is more demanding, and more rewarding, than Holiday Weekend, the first weekend in December.

The fun (for visitors!) starts the First Friday in December, and goes throughout the weekend. But the planning starts a year earlier. For Downtown Operations Director Linda Roper and her team, success is built on past successes. And every year, Night on the Town, as Friday night is called, grows more and more crowded, as word spreads that Beaufort knows how to celebrate the Christmas season — in style.

“It’s a Hallmark Christmas — without the snow,” said Downtown Events Manager Ashley Brandon.

The first Night on the Town was held in 1986, organized by Main Street Beaufort USA. In 1988, Lise Sundrila became executive director of Main Street (she is now with Historic Beaufort Foundation), and the event grew over time.

“The first year we welcomed almost 1,000 people,” Lise said. “It was a thank you from the downtown merchants to their customers for shopping year-round. Each merchant sent out personal invitations to their customers. They went all out — turkey, ham, hors d’oeuvres, and libations.”

Kevin Cuppia, who owns Modern Jewelers with his wife, Rosemary, and son, Chase, remembers those early years well.

“We’d send out 150 invitations, and other stores would send out their invitations, and customers would come in with six or seven different invitations and they were so excited to go from store to store. My father-in-law would smoke a turkey and smoke a ham, and we’d set up a full dining table in the store, with meat and sandwiches and a bar.”

The event expanded and was opened to the public — streets were closed, puppet theater was added, dance clubs began to participate.



Night on the Town is a family affair, and definitely includes the youngest!

“It’s so much work to get ready for Night on the Town. But once 5 o’clock that Friday comes, you can sit back and you have fun. It’s absolutely a great event, and it still kicks off the holiday.”

Kevin Cuppia, owner, Modern Jewelers



The Pirettes, ambassadors for the annual Water Festival, gather for Night on the Town.

In 2018, the City of Beaufort took over the event.

“We started to incorporate the lighting of the Christmas tree,” Linda said. “The Marine Corps band performed. The event became more and more family-friendly, and we added pictures with Santa. Then we started to add food booths, operated by non-profits, that

they could use as fund-raisers.”

Linda and her staff also must gather sponsors for the event, to help defray the costs. She coordinates with the City’s Public Works staff to ensure that all the decorations are set up ahead of time (including our 30-foot tree!), and with the Police and Fire Departments and Beaufort County EMS to ensure that first responders are on

Stay safe during the holidays



Cheer teams, bands, Scouts — everyone loves the Christmas Parade!

alert. She works with sponsors of the other events held during the weekend to check that everything is coming together.

And the most important thing? Make sure you get Santa! Early! This particular jolly guy is a favorite of Beaufort County kids, so Linda gets him signed up quickly.

Here is what you can look forward to this year, from Friday, Dec. 1, through Sunday, Dec. 3.

Friday, Dec. 1

Night on the Town

Streets will close at 4:30 p.m. Merchants will be open, most offering complimentary food and drinks. There will be plenty of food booths on Bay Street, and downtown restaurants will be open.

- Christmas music and caroling throughout evening
- The Parris Island Marine Corps Band, concert stage, Charles and Bay streets
- 6 p.m., Santa photos begin
- 8 p.m., “The Night Before Christmas” reading
- 8:30 p.m., tree lighting



No bling is too much during the Boat Parade!

Saturday, Dec. 2

Sea Island Gullah Christmas Celebration

Enjoy the Sea Island Gullah Christmas Celebration at Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park from Nov. 30-Dec. 3.

- 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Gullah Taste of Christmas and Rice Cook-off

Lighted Boat Parade

The Boat Parade, sponsored by the America’s Boating Club of Beaufort, begins at 5:30 p.m. Grab a seat along the seawall at Waterfront Park.

Sunday, Dec. 3

The annual Christmas Parade begins at 3 p.m. and typically concludes about 5 p.m. Santa rounds it out as he sits atop a Beaufort-Port Royal fire truck.



Santa and Mrs. Claus are guests of honor at the Christmas Parade.

Internet shopping tips

- Be wary of shops that take you to separate websites for payment. This could be a phishing attempt to gain credit card information.
- Shop from reputable brands
- Only shop on secure sites
- Keep your software up-to-date

Travel tips

- Check your tire pressure, fluids, and windshield wipers before leaving on a trip
- Allow yourself extra travel time and take frequent breaks
- Always use your seatbelt
- Obey speed limits

Holiday shopping tips

- Be alert and aware of your surroundings
- Park in well-lit areas
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash
- Don’t leave your handbag unattended in a shopping cart; keep your wallet safe
- Always lock your vehicle

At-home safety

- Remember to break down your boxes from any big purchases this holiday season. Be wise and don’t advertise your holiday purchases!
- Always leave doors and windows locked
- Avoid putting trees and presents close to windows that allow others to see what’s under the tree
- If you are going out for a few hours, consider leaving the TV on or using timers to control lights
- Don’t run extension cords to Christmas decorations through unlocked/partially opened windows, as it creates easy entry points

As always, if you see something in your neighborhood that looks suspicious, call the Beaufort non-emergency dispatch at 843-524-2777.

SeeClickFix: an easy way to report issues

Maybe this is you: You're walking along a street in the City of Beaufort, and you see that an overgrown shrub is obscuring a street sign. You make a mental note that you need to notify someone in the City, and then get home and forget what exactly you meant to do.

If you have your phone with you, there's an easy way to notify the City right away.

It's called SeeClickFix, and it's an easily downloadable app that will make reporting issues and concerns to Public Works, in particular, simple to do. *(Note: SeeClickFix is scheduled to be available in mid-November.)*

You can download this app from the App Store on your phone. Once you have SeeClickFix downloaded and installed, search for Beaufort, S.C. Keep SeeClickFix somewhere on your phone where it is easy to find.

We will also have a link on our website called SeeClickFix, under the Public Works Department. There will be a button from the Home Page that goes to it.

Once you have the app, you simply press the plus at the bottom of the home screen, which says New Request. You can take a picture of the offending shrub (or tap no picture – but we prefer you to send a photo if you can). Once you indicate you want to use that photo, a map of Beaufort will come up, with that location pinpointed. Hit next, and then you begin to fill out the request.

Currently, SeeClickFix has several categories, and issues under each category. These categories include:

- Streets & Stormwater Division
- Traffic Division
- Parks
- Solid Waste & Recycling
- Code Enforcement

Go to the category and issue that is closest to your concern. For our purposes, this concern is under Traffic/Street Sign is Blocked or Damaged.

If you can't find the exact issue, just look for the best category, and then tap other.

Answer the questions that are prompted, and add any details that are pertinent. Hit submit. You will then get a reply acknowledging that the issue has been received a ticket started.

On the back end of this app, the Traffic Division supervisor will receive this request, as will several other managers in Public Works.

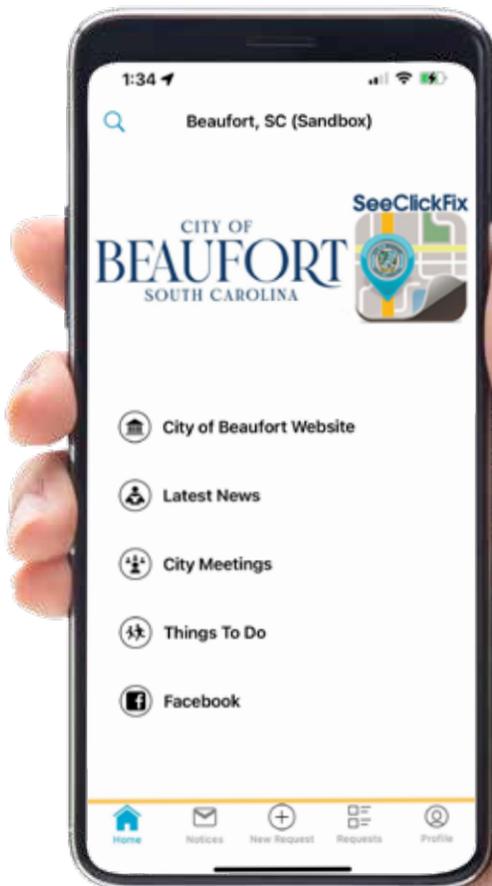
Once the work is completed, you will be notified.

SeeClickFix is the first of several online improvements the City of Beaufort is making to the customer experience.

In 2024, the Community Development Department will be unveiling two new software applications that will make submitting architectural designs and development plans much easier.

EnerGov: This permitting software will allow contractors and residents to submit plans online, and will make all permits searchable. It will be a more efficient way to go through the permitting process, and also be more transparent, as all projects at all stages will be searchable.

Bluebeam: This is for architects and builders, and will allow blueprints to be submitted online and reviewed online. This will save both paper and space for architects and the Planning staff.



“These new tools will help with the trifecta we continue to improve upon; accessibility, responsiveness and transparency. Making it easier for the public to communicate with City staff is essential to providing great service and we are confident these applications will help with that communication.”

Scott Marshall, Beaufort City Manager

What your taxes support

Before July 1 of every year, Beaufort City Council must pass a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which extends from July 1 through June 30 of the next year.

Preparing that budget involves extensive work led by City Manager Scott Marshall, who works closely with Finance Director Alan Eisenman and all City department heads.

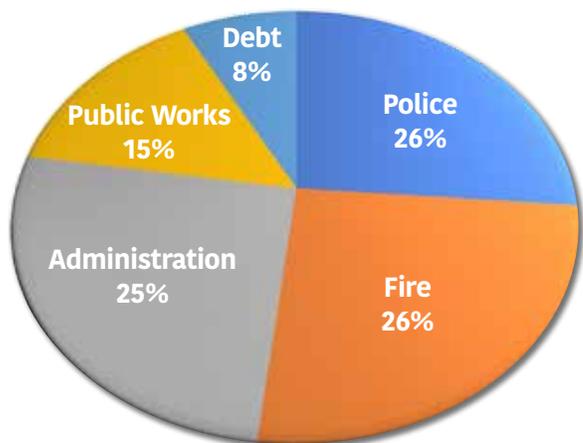
The annual budget is ultimately directed by the priorities set by City Council, and aligns with the City's objectives set out in its Strategic Plan (our current Strategic Plan covers 2023-2025). City Council invites public input throughout the process – at the City's annual retreat, usually held in February, and at Work Sessions, a Public Hearing, and readings of the budget leading up to its adoption.

City Council authorized a Consolidated Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 of \$57.6 million. This included, for the first time, a Capital Projects Fund, which accounted for \$27.2 million, to be funded primarily through grants, committed fund balance, stormwater bonds, and TIF funds.

WHERE YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO			
THE TAX AMOUNT FOR EACH FUND LISTED IN THE DESCRIPTION BOX BELOW IS CALCULATED BY MULTIPLYING THE ASSESSED VALUE BY THE MILLAGE RATE. THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO "FEE" CHARGES.			
DESCRIPTION	MILLAGE	ASSESSED VALUE	TAX/FEE/INT
COUNTY OPERATIONS	0.05170	14,000	723.80
COUNTY DEBT	0.00340	14,000	47.60
RURAL & CRITICAL LANDS	0.00440	14,000	61.60
SCHOOL - OPERATIONS	0.12180	14,000	0.00
SCHOOL - DEBT	0.03630	14,000	508.20
CITY OF BEAUFORT OPERATIONS	0.05830	14,000	816.20
CITY OF BEAUFORT DEBT	0.01730	14,000	242.20
SW Municipal Fee			135.00
City of Beaufort Solid Waste			270.00
TOTALS	0.2932		2,110.20



- This is a portion of a tax bill for a \$350,000 house in Beaufort, which shows the millage and property tax breakdown. It includes nine line items, and four of them are related to the City of Beaufort: Operations, Debt, Stormwater Fee, and Solid Waste Fee. The Stormwater Fee is assessed each year, and helps to support stormwater projects in the City. The Solid Waste Fee is for trash, recycling, and yard debris pickup services, which used to be billed monthly. Now it is billed annually as a line item on annual taxes.



- This chart shows what a Beaufort homeowner's property taxes support. As you can see, Fire and Police Departments command 52% of the property taxes you pay to support the City of Beaufort.



21% County **54% School District** **25% City**

- In this dollar bill graphic, you can see how the millage rate breaks down to support various jurisdictions: County, 21%; School District, 54%; and City, 25%.

Infrastructure improvements coming soon

Drainage, parks and streetscapes will be receiving upgrades

If you live in, work in, or visit the City of Beaufort, be prepared.

In the coming months, we will be making many improvements to our infrastructure. These projects will extend over the next three years. It will be messy and inconvenient at times, but the payoff will be worth it: Better drainage, more attractive streets, and parks with more amenities.

The Point/Downtown Drainage Projects

The Point and Downtown neighborhoods are some of the most flood-prone in Beaufort. Drainage is poor after heavy rains and king tides. Stormwater pipes are old, and overall drainage infrastructure has not kept up with population growth, greater tourism, and changing weather patterns.

In 2022, the City of Beaufort began to address this problem with a comprehensive study that gathered data and modeled flooding threats for the future, including assessing the likelihood of severe tropical storms and hurricanes.

The City contracted with Davis & Floyd, a Lowcountry engineering firm, to conduct the study and make recommendations – to prioritize what needed to be done to address flooding and drainage problems.

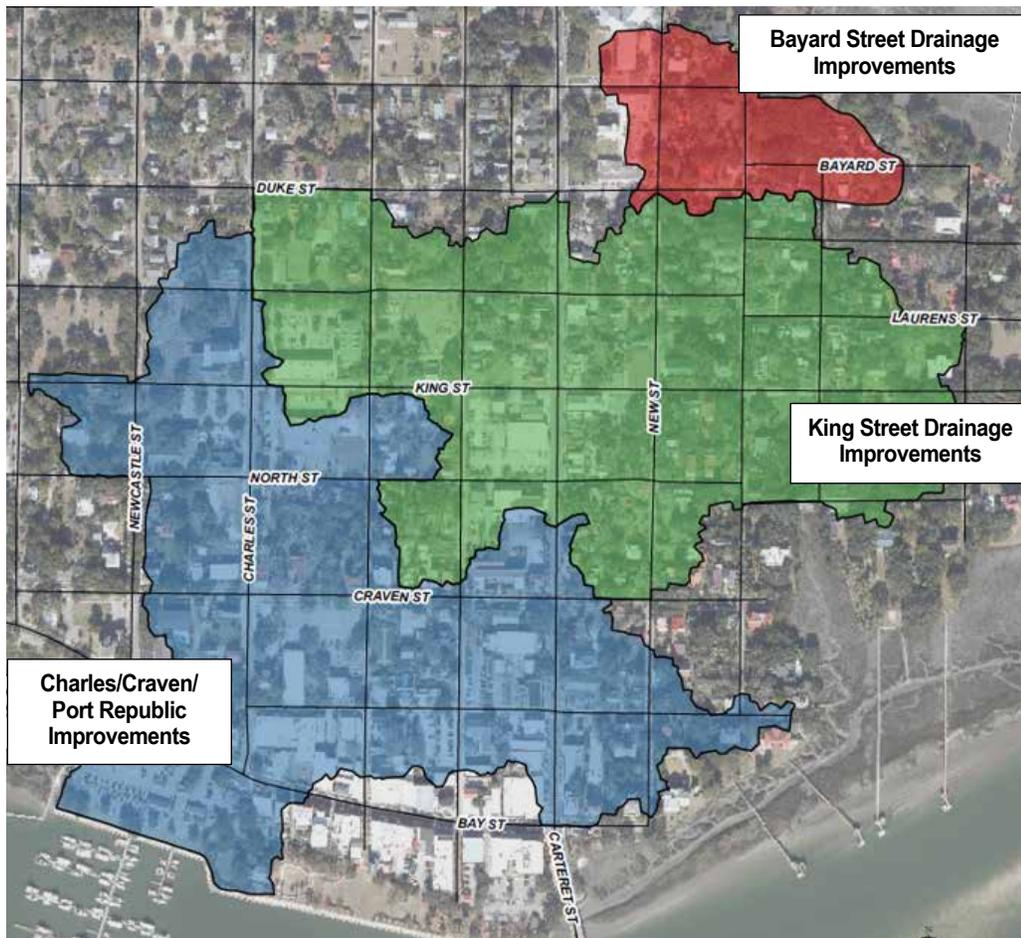
The improvement area extends north to south, from Boundary Street to Waterfront Park, and west to east, from Charles Street to the Beaufort River.

The estimated cost of all improvements is \$28 million. The City has secured \$18 million in grants and other funding toward this effort.

Three areas have been identified as the highest priority, and will be the focus of construction through 2026. These are:

King Street

- Install new drainage infrastructure
- Upsize pipes and place at correct elevation
- Install a stormwater pumpstation with backup
- Estimated cost: \$9.5 million



Charles, Craven and Port Republic Streets

- Install new drainage infrastructure
- Upsize pipes and place at correct elevation
- Estimated cost: \$7.5 million

Bayard Street

- Install new drainage infrastructure
- Upsize pipes and place at correct elevation
- Estimated cost: \$1 million

Streetscapes

Allison Road

The Allison Road project is a pedestrian connector streetscape that will include an 8-foot sidewalk on the south side of the road to connect Ribaut Road and the Spanish Moss Trail. The project will include:

- Installing pipe in a ditch on the south side of the street
- Adding a sidewalk to the south side of the road
- Adding new curbs, gutters and catch basins

- Putting utilities underground except for large transmission lines on the north side of the road
- Resurfacing the road
- Adding new streetlights and landscaping
- Estimated cost: \$3.02 million, funded through a Tap Grant, ARPA funds, a stormwater bond, and partnerships
- Timeline: Expected to be completed by late spring of 2024

Calhoun Street

A streetscape/stormwater improvement project will take place on Calhoun Street from Pigeon Point Road to Rogers Street. Its purpose is to improve stormwater drainage and collect runoff more efficiently. The project will include:

- New asphalt street lanes, parking stalls and sidewalks, with ADA-compliant ramps, on both sides of the street
- New pedestrian sidewalk lighting
- New landscaping, including trees
- New curbs and gutters

Continued on next page

- Utilities to be put underground where possible
- Estimated cost: \$2.73 million, funded through a Community Development Block Grant, a stormwater bond, and ARPA funds
- Timeline: Expected to be completed in the summer of 2024

Parks

Southside Park

Southside Park, in the Mossy Oaks neighborhood, will soon be the scene of much activity as Phase 1 of a planned re-design is implemented.

Phase 1 includes:

- New vehicular access
- Woodland Playground: Adjacent sites with age-appropriate equipment for children ages 2-5 and 5-12. The equipment has been selected and will include slides, climbers, swings, and picnic area, among other features.
- Event Pavilion
- Parking improvements
- Estimated cost: \$3.04 million, funded through the Capital Projects Fund and Parks & Tourism Revenue Bond
- Timeline: The construction bid is expected to be awarded by Dec. 1 of this year, and construction should begin early in 2024. Phase 1 should be completed by late spring of 2024.

Reimagine Ribaut Road



City Council heard a detailed presentation of the Reimagine Ribaut Road project at its Work Session on Oct. 24. Jared Fralix, assistant county administrator for infrastructure, spoke about the genesis of the project, and the stakeholder and public input that has been received to date.

The concept presented so far is a very preliminary design, still subject to ample additional public input and many changes before any construction would begin. Projects of this magnitude and expense do not happen quickly. As an example, the Boundary Street redevelop-

ment project was 14 years from concept to completed construction.

To find out more about this project, please go to reimagineRibautRoad.com (or scan this QR code with your mobile phone).



Feel free to email your feedback to City Council members or City Manager Scott Marshall. Email City Clerk Traci Guldner (tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org) and she will forward your comments.

Washington Street Park

Washington Street Park, in the City's Northwest Quadrant neighborhood, is a historically significant park as it was founded in the early 1940s as the Beaufort County Negro Recreation Center by African-American leaders. At the time, parks and recreation centers in the City of Beaufort were segregated, and there were no parks for Black families and children. Today, the City manages the park but it is owned by a non-profit African-American community organization.

A master plan was adopted in 2017, and Phase 1 included new rest-rooms and playground equipment. Phase 2 is now being worked on and includes:

- A pavilion with a Gullah design influence
- An event lawn
- Relocation of a basketball court to become a multi-use court
- Estimated cost: \$1.3 million with \$275,000 coming from grants and City matches. The balance is expected to be paid for by a Parks & Tourism Revenue Bond.
- Timeline: Expected to be completed by the summer of 2024

The Washington Park Design Committee, comprised of community members and City employees, is providing input during this process.



Mark the calendar for 2024!

Downtown Beaufort events

Tides to Tables Restaurant Week. Jan. 11-21
 Oyster Festival Jan. 20-21
 First Friday Feb. 2
 First Friday March 1
 First Friday April 5
 Taste of Beaufort (includes First Friday) . . . May 3-4
 First Friday June 7
 Firecracker 5K. July 4

First Friday July 5
 Water Festival July 12-21
 First Friday Aug. 2
 First Friday Sept. 6
 Shrimp Festival (includes First Friday) Oct. 4-5
 First Friday Nov. 1
 Turkey Trot Nov. 28
 Holiday Weekend. Dec. 6-8



STAFF CONTACTS

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CITY HALL

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2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

