



JAMES ISLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
Town Hall
1238-B Camp Road, James Island, SC 29412

MEETING AGENDA

April 9, 2015
6:00PM

NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS POSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PRAYER AND PLEDGE
- III. COMPLIANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
- IV. INTRODUCTIONS
- V. APPROVAL OF MARCH 12, 2015 MINUTES
- VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- VII. STAFF COMMENTS
- VIII. DISCUSSION - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- IX. VOTE – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – Vote for recommendation to Town Council
- X. CHAIR’S COMMENTS
- XI. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS
- XII. NEXT MEETING DATE: MAY 14, 2015
- XIII. ADJOURN

PLANNING COMMISSION

MARCH 12, 2015

The Planning Commission met in the Council Chambers of the Town of James Island, 1238-B Camp Road, James Island, SC on Thursday, March 12, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Members present: Chairman David Bevon, who presided, Bill Lyon, Warren Sloane, and Ed Steers. Absent: Commissioner Lyndy Palmer.

Also present: Councilman Leonard Blank, Kristen Crane, Senior Town Planner, James Hackett, Charleston County Planning Support Supervisor, Mark Johnson, Public Works Coordinator, and Frances Simmons, Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk.

Call to Order: Chairman Bevon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Prayer and Pledge: Chairman Bevon led the prayer and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act: Chairman Bevon announced that this meeting was noticed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Approval of February 12, 2015 Minutes: Chairman Bevon moved for approval of the February 12, 2015 meeting minutes; Commissioner Steers seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments: None

Staff Comments: None

Discussion and presentation of Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3:3.1 Land Use Element: Chairman Bevon introduced the agenda item for presentation and discussion by James Hackett.

Mr. Hackett described the Land use Element as a culmination of the nine (9) elements the Planning Commission has worked on over the past year. He said a big part of the draw to the Town of James Island is its natural environment and scenic vistas; such as Riverland Drive, Harbor View Road, and the natural and cultural scenery throughout the island. Part of the Land Use Element addresses how to properly manage those resources as the Town grows into the future. He said the Town is mainly situated in a residential/commercial use, with approximately 85% zoned RSL, (neighborhood-suburban); along with commercial clusters on Camp and Dills Bluff, Harbor View Road, and along Folly Road.

Mr. Hackett said moving forward to protect and manage the suburban character of the Town will not only require decisions about its zoning; but also about the traffic patterns, recreation, and other factors. He commented that the Town, City, and County have been able to work together on some issues regarding land use. He mentioned the redevelopment of Walgreen's on Camp Road, and a potential bus stop may be constructed there to help improve transportation throughout the island.

Mr. Hackett referred to the Current Zoning Map, the Existing Land Use Map, and Future Land Use Map and reviewed each. He noted that the Existing Land Use Map is different from the Town's Current Zoning map because of existing nonconforming uses. The areas shown in pink are recreation areas, churches, and the SC DNR/Hollings Marine Lab (which is a government enclave/employment center/public service building), and it is zoned RSL. Mr. Hackett asked if this is what the Town wants moving forward. These parcels in this might fit better in something other than RSL moving into the future. He said for example churches are often located in RSL zonings, but the structure, parking lot, and layout may not be most suitable for an RSL type of development. Parks are also located in this area; and another will be added on Fort Johnson Road. Mr. Hackett said these uses are not likely to change soon, but since the future is unknown, the Planning Commission should consider a separate zoning category for those types of parcels.

Mr. Hackett gave an overview of the Land Use Element Needs; Land Use Element Goal, and the Land Use Element Strategies and Time Frames. He reiterated the discussion regarding LU 6: that the Planning Commission should identify parcels currently in use as a different type than what the current zoning district allows (existing non-conforming) and examine rezoning or developing a new district to allow existing use.

Questions from the Planning Commission:

Commissioner Sloane asked about two parcels (duplexes) on Sterling (coded in orange, on the 2011 Existing Land Use Map). He asked if those parcels will become single family, or remain as they are. Mr. Hackett said duplexes; as they are now, are existing non-conforming uses if they are zoned RSL. He said as long as they retain that use they can continue to be used that way. Commissioner Sloane asked what would happen if a storm or a fire occurs causing damage the property. Mr. Hackett said the owner has a period of time to apply to rebuild in order to retain that use.

Commissioner Steers asked if the all of the parcels coded in orange were duplexes; to which Mr. Hackett said they are multi-family, and the Planning Commission could consider more than one zoning (classification) for multi-family to help control density.

Commissioner Sloane asked about the expansion of the Harbor View Circle Sewer Plant and what happens to our zoning if the plant is 5ft in the City and 5ft in the Town. Mr. Hackett said the zoning would remain as it is; but a different classification could be done so that other things could be done there. Mr. Hackett commented that the Land Use Element sets the stage for protecting and managing what the Town currently has and the 5 year update will be more informative because there will be specific census data that fits the Town's jurisdictional boundary. He said the Land Use Plan will give the Town a solid footing on where they are now. He said after the Plan is completed the Planning Commission could consider the parcels that do not fit into RSL or Commercial zonings. Councilman Blank asked why the tip of the DNR (MUSC Educational Center) is zoned as commercial on the Existing Land Use Map. Mr. Hackett said it is one specific parcel; but he will ask John Carullo at Charleston County to address it.

Commissioner Sloane asked about the RSL zonings (yellow on the 2012 Zoning Map). Councilman Blank explained that when the Town was formed, the City's parcels were coded white; and the Town in yellow. He also answered Commissioner Sloane's question about storm damage to non-conforming structures; that 50% damage to commercial, industrial, or mobile homes cannot be replaced; this does not apply to residential structures.

Chairman Bevon asked the next step in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hackett explained that Land Use is the final element. He will incorporate the changes to the nine elements that the Planning Commission has recommended over the past year. He will also do the pagination; and will include the recognition for former Commissioner Ed Lohr. The draft Comprehensive Plan will be presented at the April Planning Commission meeting for review and additional changes before it goes to Town Council for approval.

Chairman's Comments: None

Commissioners' Comments: None

Next Meeting Date: April 9, 2015

Adjourn: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Frances Simmons
Secretary to the Planning Commission and Town Clerk

Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan



Bill Woolsey
Mayor

Town Council Members

Leonard Blank, Mayor Pro Tem
Darren Troy Mullinax
Garrett Milliken
Joshua Stokes

Town Planning Commission Members

David Bevon, Chairman
Lyndy Palmer, Vice Chair
Bill Lyon
Ed Steers
Warren Sloane

Ashley Kellahan, Town Administrator
Frances Simmons, Town Clerk
Kristen Crane, Senior Planner

Adopted XXX --, 2015

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Special Thanks to former commissioner Ed Lohr for his efforts in the development of this Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.1: Introduction

The Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan Update is the future vision for preservation and development in the Town of James Island (the Town) for the next 10 years. In February of 2014, the Town of James Island planning committee began the comprehensive planning process with a discussion of the requirements of the state Planning Enabling Act of 1994. Previously in 2012, the Land Use and Community Facilities elements were completed as part of the process to establish the Towns Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance. These elements have been updated as part of the process to complete the Town's Comprehensive Plan by completing all required elements.

South Carolina State Law (§6-29-510) requires that comprehensive plans be reviewed at least once every 5 years and updated at least once every 10 years. In 2007, the South Carolina Priority Investment Act (The Act) was passed by The General Assembly to address affordable housing and transportation issues and to create a formal process for inter-jurisdictional coordination. The Act requires that two new elements be included in the Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Element and the Priority Investment Element. It also expands the Housing Element to require an analysis of local regulatory barriers to the provision of affordable housing and to utilize incentives to encourage development of affordable housing. The primary goal of The Act is to better coordinate the funding of necessary public facilities with available resources and adjacent jurisdictions through implementation strategies.

This Comprehensive Plan represents the original Plan to be reviewed in 5 years and updated in 10 years. The Town's Planning Commission held several workshops to review and refine the elements, goals and strategies for the Comprehensive Plan as part of the monthly meeting process. Each meeting was open to the public. The Town Council held a public hearing prior to adopting this Plan.

1.2: Purpose and Intent

The Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan Update will guide public decision-making affecting the quality of life in the Town through the year 2025. The elements of the Plan articulate goals for the future regarding the location, quality and intensity of land uses, the preservation of natural and cultural resources, economic development, housing availability, and the provision of public facilities. The Plan also establishes strategies or actions to implement the Town's goals.

1.3: Plan Organization

This Plan is organized based on the requirements of the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 (the Act), as amended, and contains the nine required Comprehensive Plan elements. Each element includes a purpose and intent statement, an inventory of existing conditions, a statement of needs and goals, and implementation strategies with time frames.

A goal is a statement of a desired end-state or target and sets the tone for the individual strategies for each element. A strategy is a focused, achievable action the Town or its designated agency could undertake in pursuit of a goal statement.

The nine Comprehensive Plan elements, along with a brief description, are listed below:

1. Land Use Element: Includes an overview of the existing land use and strategies to shape the future of the Town's landscape regarding location, quality, and quantity of land uses.
2. Economic Development Element: Includes a description of the Town's economic environment and strategies for future employment/business development in the Town to support the population.
3. Natural Resources Element: Recognizes the diverse natural features in the Town and includes strategies to preserve and protect them.
4. Cultural Resources Element: Recognizes the rich history and culture of the Town and includes strategies to preserve and protect the Town's historical and cultural assets.
5. Population Element: Includes an inventory of population and demographic data to establish existing conditions and strategies to monitor the needs of future populations.
6. Housing Element: Includes an assessment of the housing conditions and needs in the Town and strategies to ensure adequate and affordable housing availability.
7. Transportation Element: Describes the existing transportation system in the Town and includes strategies to coordinate with area transportation agencies.
8. Community Facilities Element: Inventories existing facilities serving the Town's population and includes strategies to coordinate with service providers to ensure continued quality service provision in the future.
9. Priority Investment Element: Prioritizes the investment of Town resources into the various strategies of the Plan and includes strategies to continue coordination with adjacent jurisdictions and service providers.

Chapter 2: Goals

2.1: Goal Statements

The following statements have been carefully crafted to establish specific goals for the various elements of the Plan. These goals are reiterated later in the Plan as part of the policies and capstones for each element.

1. Land Use Element Goal
The Town of James Island will encourage the orderly and environmentally sound development of the land with special consideration to maintaining the suburban character of the area.
2. Economic Development Element Goal
Improve the suburban character of the area by limiting commercial activities to designated areas and improving the Site Plan Review process.
3. Natural Resources Element Goal
Protect, preserve and enhance the natural environment.
4. Cultural Resources Element Goal
Promote the awareness and management of the island's historic resources and cultural heritage.
5. Population Element Goal
Continue population growth through annexation to fill in the pockets of land have not been annexed. This will allow the Town of James Island to have a better defined service area and more of a sense of community.
6. Housing Element Goal
Encourage high quality, affordable housing for people of all ages, incomes, and physical abilities.
7. Transportation Element Goal
A transportation system that respects the suburban character of the Town and its natural and cultural resources and that is coordinated with land use patterns.
8. Community Facilities Element Goal
Community facilities and services will be provided in a fiscally responsible manner with adequate levels of service and will be coordinated with surrounding jurisdictions and linked to land use planning and development decisions.

9. **Priority Investment Element Goal**

Adequate public facilities and services will be prioritized through coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies and will not have a negative impact on the Town's suburban character or its natural, cultural, and historic resources.

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Chapter 3: Comprehensive Plan Elements

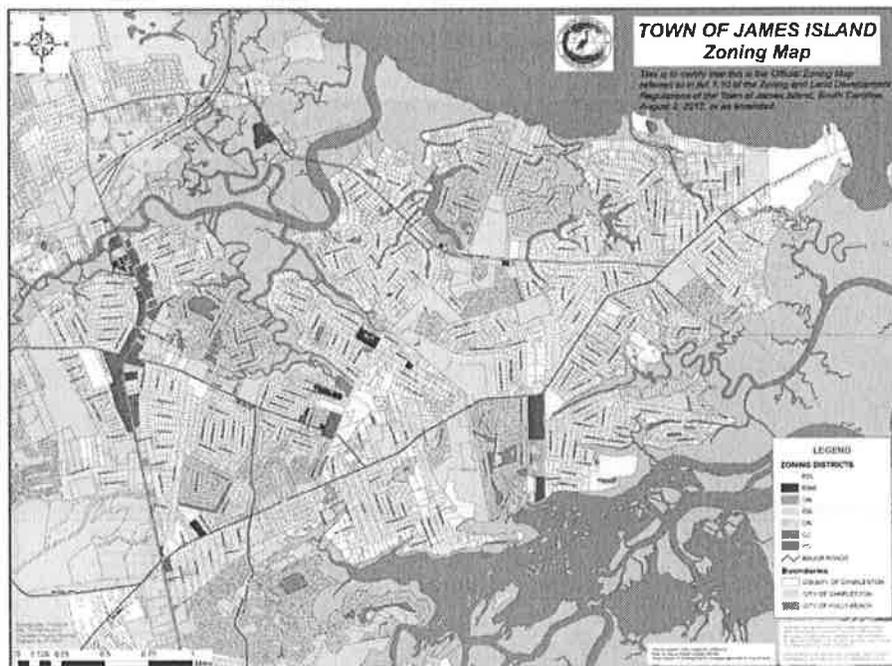
Chapter 3.1: Land Use Element

3.1.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Land Use Element of the Plan deals with the development characteristics of the land. It considers existing and future land use by categories including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional (schools, churches, government facilities, etc.), open space, and undeveloped land. All previously detailed elements influence the land use element. The findings, projections, and conclusions from each of the other Comprehensive Plan elements will influence the amount of land needed for various uses.

The natural environment in which the Town is situated is an important asset which makes James Island a pleasing place in which to live, while at the same time making it attractive for future development. The economic and aesthetic well-being of the entire community is largely dependent upon the maintenance of its suburban setting. This Comprehensive Plan includes strategies to preserve the many desirable characteristics of the Town, while allowing for positive growth patterns.

The purpose of the following land use information, goal, and strategies is to encourage sustainable development¹ practices to allow for growth while preserving the environmental, cultural, historic and aesthetic integrity of the Town.



(Figure 3.1.1 Town of James Island Zoning Map)

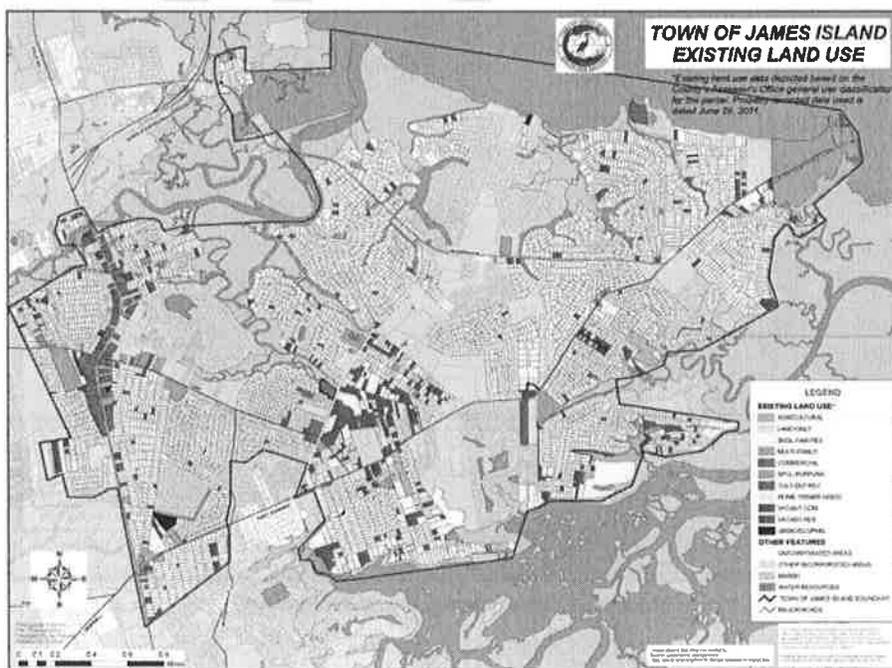
¹ Please see *sustainable development* definition on page (Resources and References).

3.1.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

The majority of the land within the corporate limits of the Town of James Island is currently in residential or commercial uses. The Town has retained its desired suburban residential character through policies encouraging residential and small commercial development. Commercial development across all of James Island serves the needs of the Town's population. Additionally, many of the residents do not work in Town; rather, they commute to the employment centers of Charleston and North Charleston.

As a result, the Town has a suburban character and many scenic views across marshland and tidal creeks. James Island is surrounded by expanses of wetlands and open waters which add to the beauty of the area. Cultural and historical resources are also abundant in the Town. Protection of these resources is very important to the Town as evidenced by the efforts of James Island residents to preserve and commemorate many locations and actions that have occurred on the island through the years.

The Town of James Island is bounded by unincorporated Charleston County, the City of Folly Beach, and the City of Charleston. The land uses in these jurisdictions are similar to those in the Town with the majority of land being used for single family residences and commercial activities. Single family residential and supporting commercial uses along Folly Road, Harbor View Road and the Camp Road/Dills Bluff Road intersection are cornerstones of the plan for the Town. One issue that should be addressed is the number of parcels currently in a state of legal nonconforming status that should be rezoned or have a new zoning classification created for the use of those parcels.



Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan

(Figure 3.1.2 Town of James Island Existing Land Use Map)

3.1.3: Future Land Use Categories

The following are the future land use categories in the Town of James Island.

Residential

The Residential Future Land Use Category is intended to maintain the Town's low density single family residential character. This area should generally be developed with low residential densities. Incentives to retain the suburban character of the area such as flexible site planning guidelines and conservation design should be provided in the zoning ordinance to preserve open space and protect natural and historic features.

Community Commercial

The Community Commercial Future Land Use Category is intended to allow retail and service uses that serve the residential population of the Island, and that do not negatively impact the surrounding community.

Neighborhood Commercial

The Neighborhood Commercial Future Land Use Category is intended to allow office uses and neighborhood oriented commercial uses that serve the residential population of the Town and that do not negatively impact the surrounding community.

Institutional/Special Purpose

The Institutional Future Land Use Category is intended to allow churches, schools, community and governmental centers, recreation, and other uses that comprise the Town's sense of community.

- LU 5. Encourage commercial structures that are in character with the suburban nature of the area.
- LU 6. Identify parcels currently in use as a different type than the current zoning district allows (existing nonconforming) and examine rezoning or developing a new district to allow the existing use.

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Chapter 3.2: Economic Development Element

3.2.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains information on the number and characteristics of the labor force, where people who live in the community work and available employment characteristics and trends. The purpose and intent of this element is to provide strategies to balance economic development with the suburban residential character of the Town.

3.2.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

Historically, James Island was inhabited by Native American wandering tribes who made their living by hunting. James Town was designated a “colony” of 12,000 acres in the late 17th century and settlers were granted half-acre lots in the town with ten-acre “planting lots” which were located adjacent to the town as well as several larger plantation tracts laid out for various settlers of the area. By this time, settlements were occurring primarily along navigable waterways. However, the size of the island garnered use for roadways with “the King’s Highway” (Riverland Drive) and “Drake’s Highway” (section of Secessionville Rd from Camp Rd to Ft. Johnson Rd) as the earliest known travel ways.

An important economic activity during the early colonial period included the raising of livestock for beef and pork which was salted and shipped to the West Indies. During colonial times, growing indigo was fairly common and rice was speculated to be grown on the island as well. It is believed that during the colonial period, the majority of the population on James Island was black, with the black settlers bringing their economic skills of cattle management, rice cultivation techniques, boating, fishing, hunting, leatherworking, pottery-making, basketry, woodworking, metal-working, weaving and herbal medicine to the islands. The plantation economy was based on Slave labor, brought from Africa for their agricultural expertise.

A shipyard operating from c.1742 to c.1772 was an industrial economic contributor to the Island with the largest vessel of record built being the Charming Nancy, which was 130 tons and built in 1752. Because boats were the principal means of transportation, facilitating boat traffic between Charles Town and the islands was a necessity and the opening of the Wappoo Cut during the colonial period gave the Island’s economy a boost. The economy at this time was largely water-based, due to the dependency on waterways for travel, trade and food.

After the economic depression of the Revolution had passed, cotton became the major cash crop of the Sea Islands due to the fact that “Sea Island Cotton” had a longer fiber and was more profitable than its inland counterpart. The emancipation of slaves had effects on labor and economy, resulting in the formation of the James Island Agricultural Society in 1872 to coordinate labor management policies. Eventually cotton ceased to be the cash crop that it was due to insects and disease (mainly the boll weevil), by the early 20th century. During this time, the growing of vegetables for market (truck farming), dairy farms, raising beef cattle and orange orchards were also economic contributors to James Island.

Transportation improvements in the early to middle 1900's included the opening of the John F. Limehouse Memorial Bridge, the Wappoo Bridge and the Stono River Bridge, as well as the creation of a bus line. These improvements helped foster the rise of suburbanization. The eventual decline of farming and dairy operations on the island increased the pace of development.

Many landowners, who had been growing tomatoes as part of their farms, turned more toward real estate development in the 1950s, 60, and 70's. By the 1980's James Island was a well formed suburban community. The economic hub was, and continues to be, the Folly Road Corridor. Folly Road serves as the main access route through the island and leads to Folly Beach along the Atlantic Ocean, which is a popular destination.

Many of the businesses along Folly Road cater to the needs of tourists traveling to the beach as well as the suburban community on the island. Most of these businesses are service oriented, including grocery stores, fast food restaurants, convenience stores, and neighborhood service activities. The same holds true for other business areas on the island such as Maybank Highway, Harborview Road, and the Camp Road and Dills Bluff Road intersection.

Current Business Environment

There are a high number of businesses along Folly Road to employ residents, but most businesses have less than 50 employees. The Town has approximately 750 Business Licenses registered for Fiscal Year 2014. About 200 of these licenses are for "brick and mortar" businesses. 454 licenses are for contractors, some of which operate as home occupations. Small business entrepreneurship is a major factor in the Town's economic cycle.

The Town is projecting close to \$200,000 for fiscal year 2013-14 business license fees. Fiscal Year 2014 saw \$210,000 in revenues, some of which likely will be accrued back to the previous year. \$190,000 is projected for fiscal year 2015. Overall business license revenues have been growing slowly region wide since 2011, following the housing market crash of 2008, but have not yet approached 2008 levels.

Conclusions

James Island has existed as a suburban, primarily residential, community for the past 50 years. Economic activities on the island reflect this setting. The land use pattern on the island has largely been determined as there is not much undeveloped land in the area, and what is undeveloped is largely expected to be residential in nature. The future of economic development in the Town must take this setting into account.

3.2.3: Economic Development Element Needs

Economic Development needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Identify economic indicators along with census information to better understand the variables affecting economic development in the Town; and

- Identify existing commercial corridors and investigate developing planning techniques to assist redevelopment efforts to improve Town aesthetics; and
- Identify appropriate future commercial areas and/or uses that could contribute to the local economy and serve the residents of the Town.

3.2.4: Economic Development Element Goal

Improve the suburban character of the area by limiting commercial activities to designated areas and improving the Site Plan Review process.

3.2.5: Economic Development Element Strategies and Time Frames

The Town should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Goal of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

- ED 1. Develop a list of employment codes suitable for attracting opportunities to the Town in anticipation of redevelopment opportunities in a suburban setting.
- ED 2. Ensure all new commercial development is of a style and character similar to the desired pattern of buildings and structures in the Town of James Island.

Chapter 3.3: Natural Resources Element

3.3.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Town's natural environment is an important asset which makes James Island an aesthetically pleasing place in which to live, work and play. The natural setting plays an important role in the way of life for many residents who enjoy fishing, boating and the many scenic vistas throughout the island.

The purpose and intent of the Natural Resources Element is to promote protection of the Town's natural resources, to sustain natural environments, habitats, and wildlife, to ensure that development does not have a negative impact on the environment, and to promote sustainable development² practices.

3.3.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

Climate

One of the best natural features of the James Island area is the climate. Winters are generally mild. Spring, summer, and fall are all usually well suited to outdoor activities and outdoor plant growth. The average annual temperature is 65 degrees Fahrenheit. The average temperature during January is 50 degrees Fahrenheit, while the average temperature in July is 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Precipitation averages approximately 48 inches per year. There are approximately 101 clear days, 151 cloudy days, and 113 partly cloudy days. The average date for the first frost is December 10, with the average date for the last frost being February 19.

There is a peak of rainfall in the summer months with the occurrence of afternoon thunderstorms. The greatest amount of rainfall usually occurs in July with an average of 7.7 inches for that month. Rainfall is usually at its minimum in November with an average of 2.1 inches for that month.

One of the most serious weather concerns to James Island is the occurrence of tropical storms and hurricanes. The height of hurricane season lasts from late summer to early fall. Hurricanes bring threats of high winds, flooding, and strong wave action. The last major hurricane to affect Charleston County was Hugo, which made landfall in September 1989. Building codes and ordinances to improve building quality help reduce storm damage from hurricanes and tropical storms.

Seismic Activity

One unusual feature of Charleston County's geology is its high level of seismic activity. The National Building Code has designated Charleston County as a zone of high susceptibility to earthquakes. The earthquake centered at Middleton Place on August 31, 1886 is estimated to have been a higher intensity than any other recorded quake east of the Mississippi River. Limited seismic activity centered in the North Charleston/ Summerville area continues to this day. Unlike those in other areas, the Charleston earthquakes are not associated with

² Please see *sustainable development* definition on page (Resources and References).

well-defined fault lines that can be mapped. The causes of the Charleston earthquakes are unknown. Because of the potential for these types of activities, it is important that building codes are used to reduce loss of life and structural damage as much as possible.

Soils, Geology, Ground Water and Drainage

The soils and geology of James Island are consistent with those typically found in the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The County is mostly level but in places is slightly undulating. Elevations range from sea level to 70 feet. Most of the area within the town limits of James Island is close to sea level. The region is indented by tidal streams that provide natural outlets for drainage. Unconsolidated, water-layered deposits of sands and clays, 6 to 20 feet in thickness, are underlain by thick beds of soft marl. Fine-textured sediments in the tidal marshes are of recent origin. New deposits are being aided by the action of tidal waters. James Island is classified as part of the Tidewater Area of Coastal South Carolina (SCDNR, 1997) with soils associated with the Bohicket – Capers and Kiawah – Foxworth – Yonges associations of soil types. These soils have the characteristics of loamy topsoil layers rich in organic matter with lower layers or highland layers of a mix of sand and clay. These soils are typical of those that experience flooding and sedimentary deposits on a regular basis making them good locations for agriculture uses (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, 2011).

James Island has a Floridian aquifer type at the layer under the surficial aquifer, which is the water table aquifer which is sandy and less than 40 feet thick. In Charleston County the depth to the ground water table is often very shallow (32.9% of the land area in Charleston County has a ground water table elevation of between 0 and 15" below grade, and an additional 22.3% of the land has a ground water table elevation of 0" below grade). Ground water is generally close to the surface on James Island, especially close to the wetlands, salt marsh areas and rivers. Monitoring wells are generally shallow as well, staying above whatever limestone layers are encountered (Waters, 2003).

James Island is located in the Charleston Harbor/Stono River Watershed Basin and consists primarily of the Charleston Harbor and its tributaries, and the Stono River with its tributaries from Wappoo Creek to the Atlantic Ocean. This segment of the Stono River, classified SFH (Shell Fish Harvesting), accepts drainage from James Island Creek or Ellis Creek (Simpson Creek, Wolfpit Run), Holland Island Creek, and Green Creek. The Folly River (Folly Creek, Oak Island Creek, Robbins Creek, King Flats Creek, Cutoff Reach, Cole Creek), classified SFH, drains into the mouth of the Stono River. Robbins Creek and King Flats Creek are also connected to the Stono River through Green Creek. Lighthouse Creek (Block Island Creek, Rat Island Creek, Ft. Johnson Creek, First Sister Creek, Second Sister Creek) flows between Folly Island and Morris Island and through Lighthouse Inlet to the Atlantic Ocean. Ft. Johnson Creek connects the Lighthouse Creek drainage to Clark Sound (Seaside Creek, Secessionville Creek). The sound drains into Charleston Harbor through Schooner Creek near Fort Sumter.

The Hydrography is that of a coastal interior island with salt marsh, tidal creeks, brackish rivers and estuaries and freshwater wetlands in the interior. Protected by the barrier

islands of Morris Island and Folly Beach from the Atlantic Ocean, James Island does not experience ocean wave action erosion.

Vegetation

The tidal waterways near James Island have a great deal of influence on regional vegetation. Most of the salt water tolerant vegetation is found in tidal marshes, which comprise about 20% of Charleston County. Common types of marsh grasses are spartina and smooth cordgrass. The region also contains extensive freshwater swamp areas. Deep water swamps support bald cypress - tupelo forest types while the shallow swamps support willow, hackberry-elm-ash, maple-redgum-oak, and alder-birch forests.

Drier areas support primarily loblolly pine forests, though longleaf and other pine varieties are common. Numerous varieties of oak trees, hickory trees, and other hardwood trees are also indigenous. The state tree, the cabbage palmetto, occurs naturally along the coast and has been introduced extensively throughout the area. In areas where forest management is not practiced, understory vegetation is very dense and consists of many varieties of shrubs and ferns.

Wetlands

Because of the tremendous ecological benefit of wetlands, extreme care must be taken to insure their continued existence. Wetlands hold water, purify water, create habitat for many types of animals and insects, and act as flood buffers from surrounding properties. Property located along rivers and streams is most likely to be classified as wetland. If there is any indication that a property is a wetland, all activity should stop until an official determination can be made by a qualified person or agency. The US Army Corps of Engineers provides wetlands determinations for South Carolina.

Flood Plains

As with wetlands, flood plain determination should be made prior to any construction activity. The US Army Corps of Engineers provides maps to use as guides for the location of flood plains. As a result of the Town's low elevation and close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, approximately one-half of the Town lies within the 100-year flood plain - meaning that those areas will be subjected to flooding on the average of once every hundred years.

Endangered Species

The only federally endangered species (listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act or ESA) that is tightly associated with James Island is the Wood Stork. A small colony of Wood Storks nest (the past few years in spring) at the Dill Sanctuary near Stono River. Wood Storks are also fairly common, particularly in summer and early fall, in and near marshes, tidal creeks and ponds on/within and adjacent to James Island. Wood Storks often roost in trees near tidal marsh and tidal waterways.

Within Charleston Harbor, and particularly in large tidal waterways within and adjacent to James Island, there is a possibility for at least the occasional occurrence of four species listed under the ESA. Florida Manatee (both federally and state of SC endangered) is seen in such areas, mostly in summer. Also, Loggerhead Sea Turtle (both federally and state of SC endangered) occasionally enters Charleston Harbor and even Stono River. Both

Shortnose Sturgeon and Atlantic Sturgeon (both listed as endangered under the ESA) occur in Charleston Harbor, and both (particularly Atlantic Sturgeon) could occasionally use Stono River and larger creeks and waterways within or adjacent to James Island.

Bald Eagle, though no longer listed under the ESA, is federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Bald Eagle is also listed as threatened by the state of SC. There is a Bald Eagle nest on James Island near the soccer fields south and east of James Island Charter High School.

Several species that at least pass over (through) James Island while foraging or migrating are listed as either endangered or threatened by the state of SC. Least Tern (state of SC threatened) does not nest on James Island, but it commonly forages for small fish in waters (mostly estuaries) within or adjacent to James Island. American Swallow-tailed Kite (state of SC endangered) also does not nest on James Island, but it likely passes through during migration.

Species that are listed as threatened or endangered by the state of SC are protected from any type of harassment, particularly activities that may disturb nesting or breeding. Such species are also obviously protected from any activity that may kill or injure these species. Protected species require a permit from the state of SC for any type of research that might include handling or disturbing the animals.

Billy McCord (Department of Natural Resources, 10/28/2014)

3.3.3: Natural Resources Element Needs

Natural Resources Element needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Ensuring that development does not have a negative impact on the environment; and
- Promoting sustainable development practices as defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development.

3.3.4: Natural Resources Element Goal

Protect, preserve and enhance the natural environment.

3.3.5: Natural Resources Element Strategies and Time Frames

The Town should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

- NR 1. Continue to encourage sustainable development practices to protect the environment from negative impacts of development.
- NR 2. Continue to work to improve the quality of James Island waterways.
- NR 3. Continue to work to reduce the amount of litter in Town limits.

- NR 4. Continue to work with the appropriate agencies to increase safety on the Intracoastal Waterway and other rivers and creeks.
- NR 5. Continue to manage defined trees through the tree preservation ordinance.
- NR 6. Continue to encourage retention of native vegetation in new developments to reduce the amount of polluted run-off, reduce the need for water, and maintain the suburban character of the Town.
- NR 7. Continue to monitor development in flood plains and adjacent to wetland areas to lessen the potential damage to property and the natural system that could result from natural disasters. Ensure that development activities on properties containing wetlands are developed according to regulations.

DRAFT

Chapter 3.4: Cultural Resources Element

3.4.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Town of James Island is rich in both history and cultural resources and, therefore, recognizes the importance of history and natural beauty to the quality of life in the Town. The purpose and intent of the Cultural Resources Element is to ensure the proper management of the Town's significant historic resources and cultural heritage.

3.4.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

Area History

In the prehistoric era, James Island was inhabited by wandering tribes of Native Americans who made their living by hunting. Their homes probably were temporary, crude shelters of animal hides or makeshift lean-tos. When the game in any area was depleted, they moved on to new hunting grounds. By the time the Native American inhabitants of James Island came into contact with Europeans in the first part of the seventeenth century they were settled agrarian tribes.

The Stono Indians and the European settlers appear to have had a brief period of good relations. But trouble arose because the Stono, apparently not understanding the concept of domesticated animals, treated the settlers' hogs, turkeys, and geese as fair game, and the settlers retaliated by killing some of the Indians. This led to a rebellion in 1674 which was subsequently put down within the next decade and the Stono were weakened as a result. The 1707 Act for Regulating the Indian Trade contains the last documented reference to the Stono tribe.

Charles Towne was the first permanent European settlement in South Carolina, founded in 1670. In December 1671 the Council of the Province ordered a town to be established on James Island. The town was named for James, the Duke of York, brother and heir of Charles II. The town survived for a short time, last showing up in contemporaneous records in 1686. By this time James Island had scattered settlements located primarily along navigable waterways. The name "James Island" was being used in public documents.

In the early 1700s more activity came to James Island. A legislative act creating highways led to the establishment of the "King's Highway" along part of present day Riverland Drive, and "Drake's Highway" along present day Secessionville Road from Camp Road to Fort Johnson Road. As a result of an invasion that took place during the War of the Spanish Succession, in which a French squadron loaded with Spaniards and Indians attacked James Island, a fort was constructed in 1709 at Windmill Point to guard the entrance to Charles Towne harbor. It was named Fort Johnson after Sir Nathaniel Johnson, the Governor of the Province from 1703 to 1709.

The raising of livestock was important to the colonial economy before the development of successful cash crops. The major cash crop for planters on James Island was indigo, which was used to produce a beautiful blue dye used by England's developing textile industry. There was also a shipyard operating on James Island during the 1700s. It was during this

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time that Proprietary rule was brought to an end and South Carolina became a royal colony. The Province was divided into parishes and James Island became a part of Saint Andrew's Parish.

Following an economic downturn coinciding with the Revolutionary War years, prosperity returned to James Island in the 1790's due to the development of Sea Island cotton. Also, Belle-Vue, an establishment containing a rice mill, sawmill, and cotton gin, was in operation from 1821 until the Civil War. Several summer villages also appeared as planters sought a respite from malaria and yellow fever.

In the 1820's tensions began to rise between the North and South over tariffs, slavery, and states' rights. By 1860 South Carolina had seceded from the Union. Fort Johnson was held by rebel forces while Federal forces still occupied Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. On April 12, 1861 shells were fired upon Fort Sumter, signifying the start of the Civil War. Federal forces quickly gained control of Port Royal, Beaufort, and Folly Island. In order to protect the approaches to Charleston, Confederate forces constructed defensive fortifications throughout James Island. Engagements took place on James Island, particularly along the Stono River and in the Secessionville area.

Emancipation occurred following the end of the Civil War which brought a change to the labor system on James Island. The Freedman's Bureau worked to negotiate contracts between the planters and groups of wage-earning workers. By 1870 the tenant farm system was in place. Landless black farmers preferred tenancy because it enabled them to be free from direct white supervision, and gave them the hope of accumulating capital with which to buy their own land. This system resulted in the division of great plantations into small farms. Sea Island cotton continued to be of great importance and was improved upon with the development of "Rivers Cotton" or "Centerville Cotton" which was resistant to wilt diseases. In 1917 the boll weevil was observed on the Sea Islands and within a few years Sea Island cotton had vanished.

Truck farming (the growing of vegetables for market) became an important aspect in the island way of life. This began to decline in the 1920's when changing demographics lead to a labor shortage. Also, Lawton Plantation had become the largest dairy in the Charleston area. Beef cattle were also raised on the island. Eventually a move toward suburbanization began. Wappoo Hall and Riverland Terrace were first laid out in the 1920s.

World War II brought an expansion of suburbanization as the region began a buildup in support of the war effort. Bridges were in place that connected James Island to Folly Island and the mainland in West Ashley. More land was converted to residential use and major roads were paved. The influx of more residents and development has continued to the turn of the century, converting James Island from a rural agrarian focused area to a largely suburbanized region.

One community that has persevered through all the changes that have occurred on James Island is the Gullah-Geechee way of life that has abided with the descendants of former slaves throughout the coastline of South Carolina, Georgia and northern Florida. While

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suburbanization has had an impact on the fabric of this culture, there has been a revived appreciation of the customs and language among the younger generation of island inhabitants.

Source: James Island and Johns Island Historical Survey. Preservation Consultants, 1989

Historic Sites

Because of the area's long history, James Island contains a number of sites of historic interest. The sites below were identified in the James Island and Johns Island Historical Survey.

Individual National Register Listings on James Island:

- Fort Pemberton
- Fort Johnson Powder Magazine
- Unnamed Beach Battery at Fort Johnson
- Marshlands Plantation House
- Stiles Point Plantation
- McLeod Plantation

Secessionville National Register Historic District:

- Fort Lamar and Union Soldiers Grave Site
- Seabrook-Freer House
- William B. Seabrook House
- Elias Rivers House

Civil War Defenses of Charleston National Register Thematic Resources Listing:

- Fort Pemberton
- Unnamed Beach Battery at Fort Johnson
- Fort Lamar
- Battery #1, James Island Siege Line
- Unnamed Battery #1
- Unnamed Battery #2
- Historic Battery #5
- Fort Pringle
- Battery Leroy
- Battery Tynes
- Battery Cheves

3.4.3: Cultural Resources Element Needs

Cultural Resources Element needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Preserving the Town's significant historic resources and cultural heritage; and
- Documenting more of the Island's history and historic resources.

3.4.4: Cultural Resources Element Goal

Promote the awareness and management of the island's historic resources and cultural heritage.

3.4.5: Cultural Resources Element Strategies and Time Frames

The Town should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

- CR 1. Support efforts to identify and document the Island's cultural resources and history.
- CR 2. Monitor inventories and studies conducted by other agencies to identify new or recently discovered historic or cultural resources.
- CR 3. Support efforts to preserve and restore important community buildings, sites, districts and landscapes.
- CR 4. Encourage and support the efforts of nonprofit groups to promote the Island's history and culture.

Chapter 3.5: Population Element

3.5.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Population Element of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the demographics of the current and future population of the Town. This element typically includes past demographic trends, existing conditions, and future projections regarding the number, size, and characteristics of households; educational levels and trends; income characteristics and trends; race; sex; age and other demographic information.

The purpose and intent of the population data contained in this element is to identify future service and land use needs of the population which can be addressed through this Comprehensive Plan update and to help guide policy decisions.

3.5.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

The population data contained in this element is derived from the 2000 and 2010 Census, the most recent Census data available at the time of this update. One problem due to the timing of the Town's incorporation is that Census information was not collected at the level of the Town's jurisdictional boundary. Census Tracts that included any of the Town's parcels were identified and the population is included. Information from the 2010 Census was able to be determined at the Census Block level, which more closely aligns with the Town's jurisdictional boundary. The same level of information was not available from the 2000 Census. Complete population and demographic information will not be available until the 2020 Census is complete. That information will be available to be included in the next Comprehensive Plan ten year update.

Population

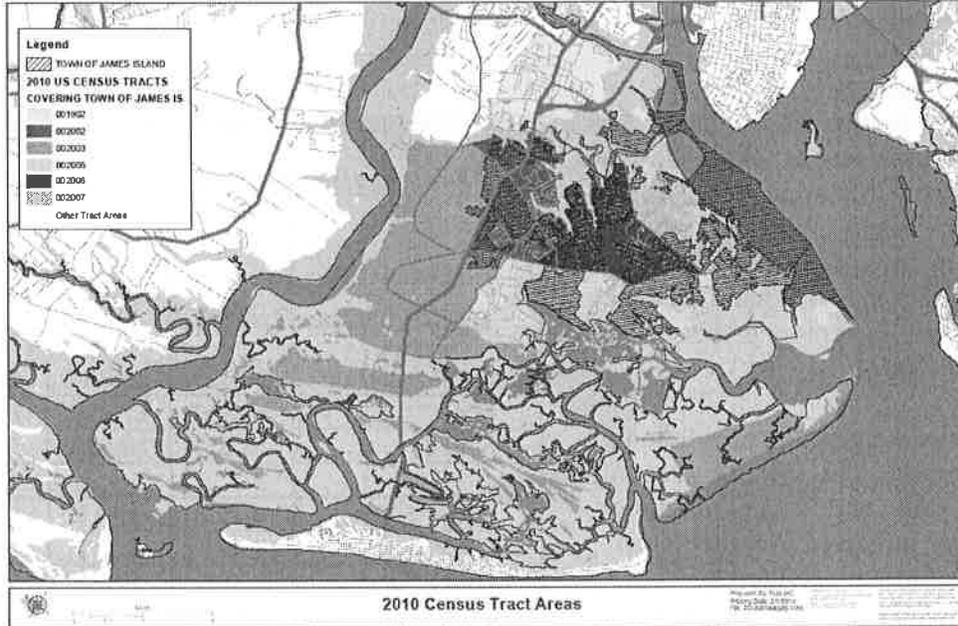
Population growth in Census Tracts that contain Town parcels increased significantly between 2000 and 2010 when the population grew by approximately 35 percent. Figure 3.5.1 shows the population change in Census Tracts that include Town parcels between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 3.5.1: Town of James Island Census Tract Population Growth, 2000-2010*

Census	Population	Change	Percentage
2000	24,005	0	0
2010	32,417	8,412	35

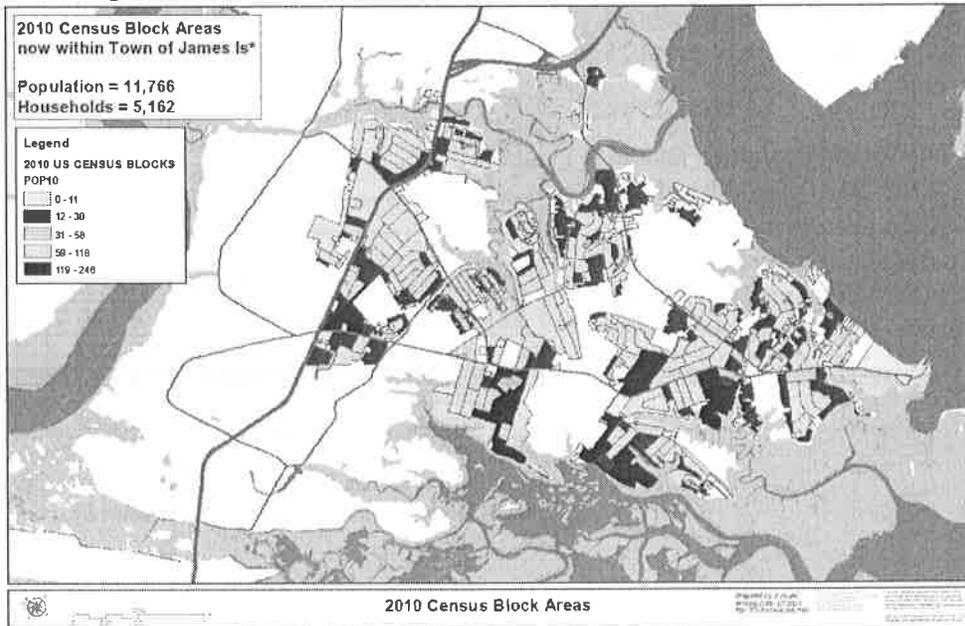
*Source: All data was derived from the U.S. Census Bureau and includes only Census Tracts that contain parcels located in the Town of James Island.

Figure 3.5.2 James Island Census Tracts containing Town of James Island Parcels



An analysis of Census Block data, which is smaller than a Census Tract, and is the measurable data unit that most closely matches the Town’s jurisdictional boundary, indicates that the 2010 population of the Town is 11,766. The data also indicates there are 5,162 households in the Town.

Figure 3.5.3 James Island Census Tracts containing Town of James Island Parcels



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Due to the constraints of available Census information the closest reliable data for demographics is based on the 29412 Zip Code, which includes all of James Island. The 2020 Census will contain demographic information at the Town of James Island scale.

Age and Gender Distribution

Age/Gender/Race information was available from both the 2000 and 2010 Census at the Zip Code level. This includes parcels within the Town of James Island, City of Charleston, and unincorporated James Island. While the figures do not exactly match the Town's boundary, some general trends and issues may be identified to help direct the Town's future until more precise data is acquired in the 2020 Census.

The island, as a whole, increased in population by more than twelve percent. This increase is evenly distributed between males and females. Children aged five and younger increased by over eleven percent while all other minor aged groups declined, particularly the ten to fourteen year old age group which dropped by more than twenty-five percent.

The number of young adults (age 20-34 years) increased significantly while the 35-44 year age group was the only adult age group to see a decline. The older adult age groups experienced large increases, particularly the 85+ age group, which increased by almost sixty percent.

The percentage of adults living on James Island increased during the 2000-2010 period by almost eighteen percent, with the percentage of males slightly leading the percentage of females. This pattern holds for the other adult categories as well, with all groups increasing between ten and twenty percent.

Figure 3.5.2: Age/Gender Breakdown, 2000-2010

	2000	2010	Percent Change (2000-2010)
Total Population	31,923	35,850	12.30%
Male	15,311	17,217	12.45%
Female	16,612	18,633	12.14%
Age			
Under 5 Years	1,721	1,912	11.10%
5-9 Years	1,809	1,729	-4.42%
10-14 Years	2,140	1,601	-25.19%
15-19 Years	1,814	1,703	-6.12%
20-24 Years	2,058	2,852	38.58%
25-34 Years	4,669	6,865	47.03%
35-44 Years	5,197	4,475	-13.89%
45-54 Years	4,628	4,959	7.15%
55-59 Years	1,723	2,304	33.72%
60-64 Years	1,456	2,068	42.03%
65-74 Years	2,493	2,860	14.72%
75-84 Years	1,744	1,771	1.55%
85+ Years	471	751	59.45%
18+ Years	25,079	29,570	17.91%
Male	11,788	14,095	19.57%
Female	13,291	15,475	16.43%
21+ Years	24,079	28,459	18.19%
62+ Years	5,574	6,575	17.96%
65+ Years	4,708	5,382	14.32%
Male	1,909	2,258	18.28%
Female	2,799	3,124	11.61%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census for zip code 29412, which includes all of James Island including the Town, City of Charleston and unincorporated James Island.

Race

Between 2000 and 2010, the African American population decreased just over eleven percent while the White population increased just more than seven percent. The Hispanic population had the largest percentage increase while the Other Race category had the largest decrease at more than sixty-eight percent.

Figure 3.53: Population by Race, 2000-2010

	2000	2010	Percent Change (2000-2010)
White	24,898	29,183	17.21%
African American	6,364	5,650	-11.22%
Hispanic (of any race)	383	704	83.81%
Other Race	992	313	-68.45%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

3.5.3: Population Element Needs

Population Element Needs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Monitoring local and national demographic trends and shifts; and
- Developing policies to meet the needs of the Town’s population.

3.5.4: Population Element Goal

Continue population growth through annexation to fill in the pockets of land have not been annexed. This will allow the Town of James Island to have a better defined service area and more of a sense of community.

3.5.5: Population Element Strategies and Time Frames

The Town should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

- P 1. Identify and propose annexation of the pockets of land surrounded by the Town limits.
- P 2. Monitor population growth trends and demographic shifts as indicators of population change and use this information in future updates to the Comprehensive Plan.
- P 3. Continue to monitor and evaluate local and national demographic trends for their potential impacts on land use and development patterns.

Chapter 3.6: Housing Element

3.6.1: Overview and Purpose and Intent

The Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan helps to tell the story of where the community has been and how it will progress in the future. As the Town of James Island continues to expand its boundaries, the need for a variety of housing options could be one of the greater challenges of the future. Each dwelling brings with it a set of issues that will be addressed by Town government at one time or another including how utilities will be extended to new development and how safe access will be provided.

The purpose and intent of the Housing Element is to help answer these and other questions by ensuring policies are in place to promote a supply of safe and structurally sound homes and the preservation of the existing housing stock.

3.6.2: Background and Inventory of Existing Conditions

The following data is provided to illustrate the inventory of housing on the whole of James Island (zip code 29412). The housing data contained in this element is derived from the 2000 and 2010 Census, the most recent Census data available at the time of this update. One problem due to the timing of the Town’s incorporation is that Census information was not collected at the level of the Town’s jurisdictional boundary, leaving the zip code area as the closest boundary with information that can be compared. This document presents the Town’s view of how housing issues should be addressed within the Town’s jurisdictional boundary, and should contribute, along with the Charleston County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Charleston’s Comprehensive Plan, to the overall issue of housing on the Island.

Total Housing Units

Between 2000 and 2010, James Island had a 24% increase in the number of housing units. This increase in housing units grew faster than the rate for Charleston County.

Figure 3.6.1 shows the total number of housing units on James Island, which increased by 24 percent, rising from 13,948 units in 2000 to 17,302 units in 2010.

Figure 3.6.1: Total Housing Units, 2000-2010

	2000	2010	% Change
James Island 29412	13,948	17,302	+24
Charleston County	141,031	169,984	+20

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Households

The trend of decreasing household size has been seen around the nation. As couples elect to have fewer children or no children at all, as the numbers of single parents and adults living alone increase, etc. household size decreases. This trend is slightly different for James Island. While there has been a decrease in household size for owner occupied units, there

Figure 3.6.2: Average Household Size, 2000-2010

	2000	2010
Owner occupied	2.48	2.34
Renter occupied	2.1	2.12

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

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has been a slight increase in the size for renter occupied units. It is important to note that the number of households and the population both increased.

Occupancy

Figure 3.6.4 illustrates the change in owner versus renter occupied housing units. The majority of the housing in James Island is owner occupied. Rental property is only a minor facet of the housing market here. Rental

units can be a lower cost alternative to purchasing a home. They can also serve to provide decent housing until a down payment for a home can be made. Decent and affordable rental units can be a bonus to a local economy by keeping people within an area until a permanent housing alternative can be found.

However, it should also be noted that those who are renting are often spending a higher percentage of their total income on rent alone, as opposed to homeowners. This fact can be caused by high rents combined with lower incomes.

As shown in Figure 3.6.3, owner occupied units increased in both James Island and Charleston County over the past decade, although the percent increase in James Island was lower than that of the County. Meanwhile the percentage of renter occupied units increased at a much higher rate on James Island than in the County as a whole.

In 2000 The homeowner occupied units vacancy rate was .8% and the renter occupied vacancy rate was 5%. In 2010 the homeowner occupied vacancy rate rose to 2.3% while the rental vacancy rate climbed to 10.8%. A community's vacancy rate is an indication of the health of the housing market. On average, a municipality wants to have some vacant, quality housing to encourage new people to buy a home and move to the area. On the other hand, too much vacant housing can indicate a flooded housing market with depressed prices or a substandard quality of available housing.

Homes for Seasonal Use

Housing units for seasonal or recreational use can be a significant factor in housing issues for an area like James Island, which is close to Folly Beach and the Downtown Charleston peninsula. In 2000 112 (.8%) units were listed as being seasonal/recreational housing units. This figure increased to 308 (1.8%) in 2010.

Conclusions

James Island has seen some changes in the real estate market since 2000. While every community experiences fluctuations in housing for a variety of reasons it may be likely that many of the changes James Island is experiencing are related to the economic downturn that

Figure 3.6.3: Occupancy, 2000-2010

<i>Owner Occupied Housing Units</i>			
	2000	2010	% Change
James Island 29412	9,676	10,650	+10%
Charleston County	75,267	87,068	+16%

<i>Renter Occupied Housing Units</i>			
	2000	2010	% Change
James Island 29412	3,662	5,071	+38%
Charleston County	48,059	57,241	+19%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census