



MEMORANDUM

Town of Nags Head

Planning & Development Department

To: Planning Board
From: Michael Zehner, Director of Planning & Development
Date: April 17, 2020
Subject: Discussion of FY20-21 Planning & Land Use Work Plan

In discussions with members of the Planning Board at their retreat in January 2020, the Board of Commissioners encouraged the Planning Board and Staff to work jointly on the development of a Work Plan for the next fiscal year in conjunction with the development of the budget, to establish priorities relating to planning and land use; in short, this Work Plan would be a collection of prioritized actions and activities serving as a strategic plan to implement various initiatives and plans.

Staff presented the concept of this Work Plan at the Planning Board's February 18, 2020 meeting; the Board indicated their support for the effort. Following the meeting, Staff developed an initial *Planning & Development Department and Septic Health FY2020-2021 Strategic Work Plan*, which is attached for the Board's review and input. This initial draft was developed based upon the considerations discussed below, and identified activity categories intended to highlight as well as focus the implementation of specific plans, the Vision, Goals, Key Concerns, and Guiding Themes.

For the Board's consideration:

- **Plan Implementation:** Staff would suggest that activities included in the Work Plan focus on implementing the following four (4) plans; implementation matrixes from each are attached:
 - *Town of Nags Head Comprehensive Plan*, July 5, 2017 [LINK](#)
 - *Vulnerability, Consequences, Adaptation, Planning Scenarios (VCAPS) Report*, August 2017 [LINK](#)
 - *Town of Nags Head Parks and Recreation Plan*, January 25, 2012 [LINK](#)
 - *Nags Head Pedestrian Plan*, July 16, 2014 [LINK](#)

Additional consideration should be given to activities contained in the Town's *Decentralized Wastewater Management Plan (2005)* and *Hazard Mitigation Plan (2015)*; however, an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan is expected to be presented for adoption in June/July 2020 and the update of the *Decentralized Wastewater Management Plan* is an active project, expected to be initiated in the current fiscal year.

- **Vision & Goals:** As noted, the Work Plan should serve as a strategic plan to implement various initiatives and plans, but activities in the Work Plan should also work towards achieving the accepted vision and goals for the Town. The following are the vision and goals established within the Comprehensive Plan:

VISION

The Town of Nags Head is a unique coastal community built upon a legacy rooted in shared values, including our most recognized common bond – a love for the Outer Banks. We recognize that the town must be a good place to live before it can be a good place to visit. We strive to preserve and protect the Nags Head character, environment, tourism based economy, and sense of place in order to ensure a high quality of life for residents and a memorable family vacation experience for present and future generations.

We uphold our legacy by protecting and promoting our small town character that includes a sustainable local economy based on family vacation tourism, a high quality beach experience, and small, locally owned businesses. Fundamental to our legacy and quality of life are preserving the historic architecture and culture that distinguishes our town; providing residents and visitors with excellent public services and well-maintained recreational amenities; and ensuring access to a well-protected natural coastal environment.

Our legacy will be strengthened and preserved by a focused, transparent decision making process that is comprehensive and consistent with the community's vision. In order to maintain that focus, our decisions are directed by the five goals described below.

GOALS

1. *Preserve our community's distinctive heritage and unique lifestyle*
 - a. *A relaxed-paced, family beach community comprised primarily of low-density development and open spaces.*
 - b. *A healthy, well-maintained oceanfront beach that is visually and physically accessible and usable; not blocked by large structures.*
 - c. *An environment that reflects the heritage of "Old Nags Head" with unique and eclectic architectural styles, scenic views, and coastal landscapes.*
2. *Protect our critical natural resources and coastal ecosystem*
 - a. *Build and promote a sustainable economy that supports residents and visitors.*
 - b. *A natural environment typified by clean water and a coastal barrier landscape with noninvasive, salt tolerant vegetation.*
 - c. *Ocean and estuarine shorelines that are carefully managed to preserve the natural and beneficial functions of the environment while balancing the need to respect private property rights and public access.*
 - d. *Plan for the future impacts of sea level rise; ensuring proper policies, plans, and practices for stormwater and wastewater*

management are in place to sustain the natural environment and maintain a viable family, tourism-based economy.

3. *Build and promote a sustainable economy that supports residents and Visitors*
 - a. *A diverse supply of housing, including single-family homes and multi-family dwelling units, that meet the needs of residents in all phases of life and for varying income levels.*
 - b. *A diverse supply of visitor accommodations, including single-family homes, hotels, cottage courts, and multi-family dwelling units for visitors who desire both short-term and long-term stays.*
 - c. *A thriving local business community that offers a wide range of goods and services available to residents and visitors.*
 - d. *A premier family beach destination on the Outer Banks, providing an enjoyable and memorable experience.*

4. *Plan for orderly and sustainable growth and redevelopment*
 - a. *A well-organized and compatible pattern of land development and redevelopment through proactive land use and transportation policies.*
 - b. *Development that is designed to reduce private property damage and loss of life from major storm events and natural hazards.*
 - c. *Safe connectivity and accessibility between neighborhoods, businesses, and recreational opportunities for a variety of travel modes, lessening traffic congestion, and enabling an active and healthy lifestyle for residents and visitors.*
 - d. *A place with active and passive recreational opportunities that serve all ages and abilities, creating opportunities for community interaction and healthy living.*
 - e. *Preservation and maintenance of legacy commercial businesses.*

5. *Maintain a well-run and efficient government that provides high quality and cost effective services*
 - a. *Develop, fund, and prioritize the Capital Improvement Plan annually to provide for the infrastructure, equipment, and facility needs of the community.*
 - b. *Provide the highest quality public safety services possible, and routinely review the public safety needs of the community to ensure that resources are available to meet these needs.*
 - c. *Provide friendly and accommodating customer service.*
 - d. *Communicate town information to residents and visitors through a variety of media that demonstrates the results of measurable goals and objectives.*
 - e. *Advocate for the provision of high quality, responsive services, legislation, resources, and policies from government partners and other organizations that further the vision of the Town of Nags Head.*

- **Key Concerns & Guiding Themes:** In the process to develop the Comprehensive Plan, both *Key Concerns* and *Guiding Themes* were identified. These are referenced below, and further expanded upon the Comprehensive Plan.

Key Concerns			
Embracing the Town's Vision	Sustaining the Beach Road's Commercial Character	Diversifying Housing Options	Educating Residents on Regulatory Realities
Preserving Commercial Character	Connecting Key Town Destinations	Adapting to Sea Level Rise	

Guiding Themes		
Architectural Integrity	Beach Road vs Bypass	Protecting Conversion of Commercial Property to Residential
Shopping Centers and Large Format Development	Character Areas	Oceanfront
Preservation of Existing Business	Greater Diversity in Housing and Accommodations	Connectivity
Healthy Small, Local Business Economy	Arts and Cultural Resources	Environmental Quality

- **Work Plan Categories:** For the purpose of the Work Plan, and intended to highlight as well as focus the implementation of specific plans, the Vision, Goals, Key Concerns, and Guiding Themes, Staff is suggesting that Work Plan activities be categorized in at least one of five categories, as follows:
 - Community Character
 - Sustainability & Resiliency
 - Economic & Cultural Development
 - Hazard & Emergency Planning
 - Responsive & Transparent Government

It is likely that many activities will qualify for more than one category. Staff will expand on the criteria for each category within the Work Plan

Despite the above and previous work to establish this Work Plan, Staff is cognizant that this Plan will be affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic and impacts to the Town's budget. Operating or CIP funds were anticipated to be used or sought for several

projects, but there is obvious uncertainty with respect to the availability of these funds. Projects impacted most are the Workforce Housing, Estuarine Shoreline Master Plan, and Skate Park Renovation projects. Some aspects of these projects may be able to move forward with the use of internal resources, but there will likely be extended timelines. Staff is actively exploring and applying for grants to offset budget shortfalls.

Staff would recommend that the Planning Board review the information outlined above, and specifically the implementation matrixes from the four (4) plans, as well as the initial *Planning & Development Department and Septic Health FY2020-2021 Strategic Work Plan*, and provide feedback as to whether the Plan sufficiently implements and advances specific plans, the Vision, Goals, Key Concerns, and Guiding Themes in a strategic manner. At the Board's meeting Staff will be prepared to discuss ongoing projects, tentatively identified priorities, and timeline and resource limitations.

Planning & Development Department and Septic Health FY2020-2021 Strategic Work Plan

Activity Categories

- Community Character
- Sustainability & Resiliency
- Economic & Cultural Development
- Hazard & Emergency Planning
- Responsive & Transparent Government

Current FY Projects

- Skate Park Renovation; Phase 1, Assessment of Preferences (Pre-Planning)
- Updated Flood Maps & Ordinance
- UDO Cleanup
- Online Permitting
- Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Workforce Housing
- CAMA Land Use Plan Update*
- UDO Reference Manual & Permitting Workflow Development*
- Art Mast Project*
- Decentralized Wastewater Master Plan Update*
- Islington Street Beach Access*
- Review of Residential Stormwater Regulations

FY20-21 Projects

- Estuarine Shoreline Master Plan**
- Emergency Operations Plan Update**
- Skate Park Renovation; Phase 2, Design & Construction**
- Records Management/Digitization, Phase 1**
- Whalebone Park; Phase 1
- UDO Update for N.C.G.S. 160D
- Biba Interactive Playground
- Development of Complete Streets Policy
- GIS Platform Update, Phase 1
- CAMA Access Grant**
- Workforce Shuttle Coordination; Project CASSI Pilot
- Water Quality Testing
- Develop Business Retention & Succession Resources
- LID Stormwater Demonstration Project
- Update Sign Ordinance

Future Projects

- Implementation of Estuarine Shoreline Master Plan**
- Records Management/Digitization, Phase 2**
- GIS Platform Update, Phase 2
- CAMA Access Grant**
- Skate Park Renovation; Phase 3, Design & Construction**
- Whalebone Park; Phase 1
- Weather Station Installation
- Soundside Tidal/Flood Gauges
- Wayfinding Signage Plan