

# **Town of Surfside Beach Comprehensive Plan**



## **Priority Investment Element 2010**

PUBLIC HEARING DOCUMENT  
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# Town of Surfside Beach Comprehensive Plan

## PRIORITY INVESTMENT ELEMENT

### Foreword

The Town of Surfside Beach has long prided itself as being a family oriented beachfront community. The town is made up of quiet neighborhoods, community centered parks, and well-kept beach homes. At the same time, the town boasts entertainment, dining, and recreational attractions rivaling those of similarly sized coastal communities. The ability of the town to effectively balance the demands of the local tourist economy with those of the year-round resident population distinguishes Surfside Beach from other areas along the Grand Strand.

Community infrastructure, be it the town's streets and sidewalks, parks, pier, or public buildings and uses, is an essential component of the quality of life experienced by residents. The community's infrastructure is also important in attracting and retaining the town's visitor population. Over the years, the town council has committed substantial resources in enhancing local amenities and has in some cases (namely streets, drainage, and the Surfside Pier) assumed increased responsibilities. It is foreseeable that this commitment by town government will continue and, with each new investment, so too will the need for effective and efficient administration.

How we invest our resources speaks to our vision of Surfside Beach's future. All communities, including our own, face the challenge of applying limited resources to the task of prioritizing needs. This undertaking is often difficult, resulting from competing interests despite a common vision. This element seeks to build consensus on needed improvements and investments over the next ten years.

### Priority Investment Act and Capital Improvement Planning

In 2007, the South Carolina General Assembly amended the state's planning enabling laws to require the inclusion of a Priority Investment Element as part of any local comprehensive plan. The new law requires:

*"A priority investment element that analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools. The recommendation of those projects for public expenditure must be done through coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies. For the purposes of this item, 'adjacent and relevant jurisdictions' means those counties, municipalities, public service districts, school districts, public and private utilities, transportation agencies, and other public entities that are affected by or have planning authority over the public project. For the purposes of this item, 'coordination' means written notification by the local planning commission or its staff to adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies of the proposed projects and the opportunities for adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies to provide comment to the planning commission or its staff concerning the proposed projects. Failure of the planning commission or its staff to identify or notify an adjacent or relevant jurisdiction or agency does not invalidate the local comprehensive plan and does not give rise to a civil cause of action".*

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The Town of Surfside Beach adopted its current comprehensive plan in 2005. State law requires a mandatory review of the comprehensive plan every five years and the requirements imposed by the Priority Investment Act of 2007, namely, the preparation and adoption of a priority investment element, are to be implemented as part of this mandatory review. The Surfside Beach Planning Commission undertook the review of the *Town Surfside Beach Comprehensive Plan* in 2010 and has prepared this element to meet the statutory requirements imposed by the 2007 act.

Aside from meeting the statutory requirements, the priority investment element serves as an integral component of planning capital improvements. Capital improvements planning has long been a function of planning commissions, predating the 2007 act and the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994. The current planning enabling act provides:

*“In the discharge of its responsibilities, the local planning commission has the power and duty to prepare and recommend for adoption.....a capital improvements program setting forth projects required to implement plans which have been prepared and adopted, including an annual listing of priority projects for consideration by the governmental bodies responsible for implementation prior to the preparation of their capital budget” (SC Code §6-29-340).*

This element is designed to provide a unified listing of pending, anticipated, and needed projects within the town over the next ten years. The cost and potential funding sources associated with many of the recommended improvements are not fully known or may change over-time. As such, it is the intent of this element that an annual re-evaluation of the improvements recommended herein be conducted as part of the planning commission’s ongoing review of the town’s capital improvement program.

## **Investment Coordination**

State law requires that the preparation of this element include coordination with “adjacent and relevant jurisdictions.” Prior to the development of the project listings incorporated in this element, correspondence soliciting information on anticipated or needed projects, within or adjacent to the town, was sent to Horry County Government, the Horry County School Board, the Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA), the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (SCDHEC-OCRM), Santee Cooper, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). Projects as provided by these local service providers and jurisdictions are included in the project listings of this element (See Tables PI-2, PI-3, and PI-4).

## **Projects Identified by the Town’s Departments and Administration**

In preparation for this element, correspondence was sent to the town’s various departments requesting information on pending, anticipated, or needed projects over the next ten years. Where available, information was requested on the project’s cost and timeline for implementation. This activity was coordinated by the town’s building and zoning department. Projects identified are listed below in Table PI-1:

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**Table PI-1  
Priority Capital and Operational Projects (Departmental)  
2010 to 2020**

<b>General Administration Project (administration, finance, and building/zoning)</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>	<b>Projected Costs*</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source</b>
New Town Hall	Not Provided	Not Provided	Not Provided
<b>Fire Department Projects</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>	<b>Projected Costs*</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source</b>
New Departmental Pickup Truck	2011	\$25,000	CRB
Communications Upgrades	2011-2013	\$300 to 1,800 per unit (total unknown)	AFG/GF
Additional Firefighters (3)	2010	\$120,000	Safer Grant/GF
Airpack/SCBA Upgrades	2012-2013	\$3,500 to \$4,500 per unit (total unknown)	AFG/ GF
New Fire Engine (w/trade-in of Engine 3)	2013-2014	\$350,000 to \$400,000	AFG/CRB
<b>Police Department Projects</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>	<b>Projected Costs*</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source</b>
No Anticipated or Needed Projects Were Identified	N/a	N/a	N/a
<b>Public Works Department Projects</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>	<b>Projected Costs*</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source</b>
Street Sweeper	2011/2012	\$100,000	Sanitation Fund
Backhoe	2011/2012	\$60,000	A-Tax
Sidearm Garbage Truck	2012/2013	\$100,000	Sanitation Fund
<b>Recreation Department Projects</b>	<b>Estimated Timeline</b>	<b>Projected Costs*</b>	<b>Potential Funding Source</b>
New Civic Center	Not Provided	Not Provided	Not Provided
Gymnasium	Not Provided	Not Provided	Not Provided
<b>Total Need (Departmental)</b>		<b>Data Pending</b>	
<b>Note:</b> Project information is per the individual town departments. AFG = Assistance to Firefighters Grant, CRB = Capital Replacement Budget, A-Tax = Accommodations Tax and GF = General Fund.			

### Projects by Area Jurisdictions and Agencies

Listed in Table PI-2 are projects identified in the Surfside Beach area by Horry County, GSWSA, the Horry County School District, SCDHEC-OCRM, and Santee Cooper. Horry County is currently developing a Priority Investment Element for the unincorporated areas of the county.

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Upon adoption, reference can be made to the county's document for projects outside of the corporate limits of Surfside Beach.

Table PI-2 Priority Capital and Operational Projects (Other Agencies), 2010 to 2020			
County Projects (non-transportation)	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Funding Source
Surfside Beach Library Expansion	2011	\$3,800,000	County (Bond Issue)
Water and Sewer Projects (GSWSA)	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Funding Source
<b>No Projects Were Provided</b>	N/a	N/a	N/a
Horry County School District Projects	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Funding Source
Seaside Elementary School Expansion	2015-2019	\$10,000,000	Local Option Sales Tax
SCDHEC-OCRM Projects	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Funding Source
Per correspondence received, no pending or anticipated projects were identified within or adjacent to the town.			
Santee Cooper Projects	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Funding Source
Electrical Conversion (underground) – Ocean Blvd (3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave S to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave N)	2010-2013	\$1,400,000	Electric Franchise Agreement/Santee Cooper Match
Electrical Conversion (underground) – Surfside Drive	TBD	\$2,000,000	Electric Franchise Agreement/Santee Cooper Match
Note: The preceding projects were provided by representatives of the above agencies/jurisdiction in 2010.			

### Surfside Beach Area Transportation Projects (Funded and Unfunded)

Table PI-3 provides a listing of needed transportation projects (funded) based on information contained in the town's transportation element, the Grand Strand Area Long Range Transportation Plan, and per information received from SCDOT, the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study (GSATS), and Horry County:

Table PI-3 Programmed Transportation Projects, 2010-2020			
Transportation Projects (County or SCDOT)	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Potential Funding Source
US 17 Business/ 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue North	2010	\$160,000	GSATS/SCDOT
Bus Shelter Installation at Town Hall (Coast RTA)	2010-2011	\$20,000	GSATS
US 17 Business Landscaping	2011	\$50,000	GSATS/SCDOT/Town Match

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Table PI-3 (Continued)			
Programmed Transportation Projects, 2010-2020			
Transportation Projects (County or SCDOT)	Estimated Timeline	Projected Costs	Potential Funding Source
Glenns Bay Road Improvements (widening and turn lane installation)	2011 to 2013	\$90,000,000 to \$100,000,000	Horry County (Penny Tax)
Glenns Bay Road/ US 17 Business/ Surfside Dr. Intersection Improvements	2011 to 2013	\$600,000	GSATS/SCDOT
US 17 Business Intersection Improvement between 13 <sup>th</sup> and 16 Avenue North	2011-2015	\$500,000	GSATS/SCDOT
US 17 Business/10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Intersection Improvements	2011-2015	\$500,00	GSATS/SCDOT
<b>Total \$ of Programmed Projects</b>		<b>\$ 91,820,000 – 101,820,000</b>	

Table PI-4 provides a listing of projects contained in the *South Strand U.S. Highway 17 Business Corridor Study* as referenced in the town's transportation element. These projects are currently not programmed (i.e. are unfunded), but have been identified as long range transportation needs for the Surfside Beach area. The inclusion of these projects in the Grand Strand Area Long Range Plan makes them eligible for federal funding:

Table PI-4		
Needed Transportation Projects (Unfunded)		
Transportation Projects (Long-Range)	Estimated Costs*	Potential Funding Source
<b>US 17 Business:</b> Close median cuts and consolidate curb access per arterial access standards	\$87,800	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>US 17 Business:</b> Modify existing signalized intersections to allow U-turn maneuver (coordinate with median cut closures)	\$217,500	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>US 17 Business:</b> Install signal interconnection cable to allow for traffic signal coordination	\$77,300	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>US 17 Business:</b> Frontage road closure/removal	\$1,525,300	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>US 17 Business:</b> Widen road by one lane (north and south) to accommodate acceleration/deceleration movements (coordinate with frontage road closures)	\$3,143,600	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>Platt Blvd and US 17 Business:</b> Connect Platt Blvd to US 17, install traffic signal, and <b><u>provide a multi-use path connection</u></b> (See US 17 Business Intersection Improvement Above)	\$719,400	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>Azalea Drive and Sandy Lane:</b> Improve to enhance rear access to US 17 Business frontage and connect segments of Azalea Drive	\$1,872,600	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
<b>Estimated \$ of Needed Projects</b>	<b>\$7,643,500</b>	
<small>Note (*): The estimated costs for the various projects do not include right-of-way acquisition (if needed). *Estimates are per the 1999 South Strand U.S. Highway 17 Business Corridor Study and have been adjusted to 2010 dollars. Estimates are rounded to the nearest \$100. FHWA = Federal Highway Administration</small>		

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## Priority Projects (Unfunded)

Table PI-5 provides a listing of priority project needs for the town as identified by the planning commission consistent with their review of the town's comprehensive plan. The listed projects are presently unfunded. For several of these projects, the project scope and estimated costs have yet to be finalized.

Table PI-5 provides a priority ranking for each project. The ranking assigned should be considered in decisions related to the expenditure of public funds; however, the ranking of projects should not be considered conclusive. Factors such as project scope, implementation timelines, the likelihood of funding, and resident support are all relevant in determining how limited funds are pursued or spent.

Table PI-5 Unfunded Capital Project Needs, 2010-2020		
Priority Ranking	Project	Potential Funding Source(s)
PENDING	Aesthetic Improvements (Façade & Green Space – US 17 Business)	TOWN/GSATS/SCDOT Enhancement Funding
PENDING	Aesthetic Improvements (Façade & Green Space/Plantings – Surfside Drive Downtown Area)	TOWN/GSATS/SCDOT Enhancement Funding
PENDING	Internet Upgrade (Establish Town-wide Wi-Fi Network)	AH-Tax/GF
PENDING	Surfside Beach Pier (Expansion)	PEF/AH-Tax
PENDING	Surfside Beach Pier (Stage Construction)	Pier Enterprise Fund
PENDING	Park Upgrade (Veterans' Park Band Shelter Construction)	AH-Tax/GF
PENDING	Park Upgrade (Floral Park Hut Enlargement)	AH-Tax/GF/PRDF
PENDING	Park Upgrade (Electronic Scoreboard at Martin Park)	AH-Tax/GF/PRDF
PENDING	Park Upgrade (Poplar Street Park)	AH-Tax/LWCF/PRDF
PENDING	Recycling Program (Institute 100% Recycling Initiative)	GF
PENDING	Storm Water (Improve Dogwood Lake Outfall)	AH-Tax/HMGP/GF
PENDING	Transportation (3 <sup>rd</sup> Ave. S Emergency Drive-Over)	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
PENDING	Transportation (Create Bike Lanes on Glenn's Bay Road)	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
PENDING	Transportation (Expand bus route and install bus stop/shelters at (1) 13 <sup>th</sup> Ave S and Ocean Blvd., (2) Pier and Holiday Inn, and (3) Melody Lane and US 17 Business)	COAST/GSATS/TOWN
PENDING	Transportation (Construct Parking Structure adjacent to Downtown)	AH-Tax/GF/User Fees (Bonding)
PENDING	Transportation (Intersection Improvements/Roundabout Installation – (1) Surfside Dr. and Popular Street, (2) Surfside Dr. and Ocean Blvd., (3) Hollywood and 5 <sup>th</sup> Ave. N, and (4) Hollywood and 10 <sup>th</sup> Ave S.)	GSATS/SCDOT/FHWA
PENDING	Transportation (East Coast Greenway Completion/Signage)	GSATS/TOWN
PENDING	Transportation (Bike Lane Creation with Repaving Projects)	TOWN/GSATS/SCDOT Enhancement Funding
	Improved Beach Access	GF/AH-Tax
<b>Note:</b> AH-Tax = Accommodations/Hospitality Tax, GF = General Fund, LWCF = Land and Water Conservation Fund, HMGP = Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, PRDF = Parks and Recreation Development Fund, and PEF = Pier Enterprise Fund.		

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## Anticipated and Potential Funding Sources

### Budgetary Capabilities

Like most communities, the percentage of the town's budget available for discretionary capital expenditures is limited. As of 2010, the Town of Surfside Beach's annual budgetary expenditures were approximately nine million dollars. The general fund accounts for just over six million dollars of this total with the remainder consisting of enterprise funds (sanitation and Surfside Pier), capital project funds, and restricted use funds (accommodation and hospitality tax receipts). Personnel costs, operating expenses, and some equipment costs (capital replacement/reserve) are paid from the general fund.

As a coastal community, the city benefits from accommodations and hospitality tax receipts. These two taxes generate just over one million dollars per year. Revenues generated are budgeted by the town to fund special events, fund advertisement, and to supplement tourism related activities and expenditures incurred by the police, fire, and recreation departments. The town has established an accommodations tax committee to review and make expenditure recommendations to the council.

These funds are considered restricted as state law limits their use to the following:

- (1) tourism-related buildings including, but not limited to, civic centers, coliseums, and aquariums;
- (2) tourism-related cultural, recreational, or historic facilities;
- (3) beach access and renourishment;
- (4) highways, roads, streets, and bridges providing access to tourist destinations;
- (5) advertisements and promotions related to tourism development; or
- (6) water and sewer infrastructure to serve tourism-related demand.

Tax receipts may also be used, under certain conditions, to fund public safety functions related to the above activities.

Accommodations and hospitality tax receipts provide a partial funding source for several of the improvements denoted in Table PI-5; however, reliance on accommodations and hospitality tax receipts should be tempered by the following: First, both tax receipts are dependent on tourism and are thus susceptible to economic downturn. Second, increased public safety costs associated with the summer's surge of tourism have traditionally consumed a large portion of the town's overall accommodations and hospitality tax receipts.

### Grants

Federal grants provide communities a potential funding source for capital projects and, in some cases, provide monies for personnel and/or operating expenses, particularly public safety and

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emergency services. In the past, the Town of Surfside Beach has pursued grant funding with mixed success. Categorical grants are either project or formula based. Many grants, including Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), are geared toward low to moderate income and/or rural communities and for these the town may not be competitive or eligible to apply.

On the other hand, project based (competitive) grants do provide the town with a potential source for funding. These grants typically require a match by the local government. Grant opportunities that the town has pursued or may wish to consider pursuing include (but are not limited to):

- (1) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants (SAFER),
- (2) Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG),
- (3) Fire Prevention and Safety Grants (FP&S),
- (4) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP),
- (5) Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF),
- (6) Parks and Recreation Development Fund (PRDF), and
- (7) Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

The proceeding charts denote projects where these grants should be pursued as potential funding sources.

### **Transportation Funding**

Tables PI-3 and PI-4 provide a listing of funded (programmed) and unfunded projects in the Surfside Beach area. Table PI-5 provides a listing of additional projects that currently do not appear in the area's long range transportation plan. Identified transportation needs, excluding the Glens Bay Road improvements, are estimated at just over ten million dollars.

Appropriations by the town have traditionally addressed minor street repairs, the resurfacing of town owned streets, and sidewalk construction. In 2010, the town budgeted \$300,000 for street improvements. Larger transportation projects have been funded by the Grand Strand Area Transportation Study and/or the South Carolina Department of Transportation. These improvements have in some instances, such as street enhancements, required a match from the town.

Approximately six million dollars is available annually for regional transportation projects through GSATS. This MPO organization also coordinates approximately \$260,000 in annual transportation enhancement funds, of which the town would be eligible for up to \$40,000 per project. In addition to funding available through GSATS, the County Transportation Committee (CTC) coordinates the expenditure of 2.8 million dollars of transportation improvements annually within Horry County.

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## Needs, Goals and Objectives

The town's ability to secure needed projects will require the ongoing identification, prioritization, and coordination of projects; the identification and securing of funding sources; and the designation of staff, committees, or other groups to oversee project execution. The needs of the town are 1) to establish a formalized process for planning and implementation and 2) to secure funding essential to implement the projects identified by this element.

Goal 1: ***Review and update needed or programmed projects as new opportunities and funding sources become available. Objectives include:***

- (A) Develop a capital improvements program (CIP) with a time-horizon of not less than five years;
- (B) Investigate the creation of a capital budget;
- (C) Develop, through the planning commission, a process for the annual review of the CIP with a recommendation to the town council on needed amendments (SC Code §6-29-340); and
- (D) Investigate funding options for the CIP including the use of impact fees, user fees, direct budgetary appropriations, grants, or bonding.

Goal 2: ***Encourage and actively solicit the input of residents in the identification and prioritization of projects. Seek public input and support prior to project implementation.***

Goal 3: ***Actively solicit project funding. Objectives include:***

- (A) Seek representation for the town on boards, commissions, and advisory boards responsible for the identification, funding, and oversight of capital projects;
- (B) Assign a member of the town's staff with the ongoing responsibility of grant and funding research. Consider supplementing this activity through the use of grant tracking web-based services;
- (C) Investigate the need to fund a full-time grant writer position; and
- (D) Coordinate with regional efforts to deliver locally funded projects.

Goal 4: ***Require the coordination of public project identification and construction with relevant agencies and service providers. Objectives include:***

- (A) Develop a process for public facility review in accordance with §6-29-540 of the State Code;
- (B) Request and, when appropriate, require that plans for capital improvements, performed by other agencies or jurisdictions, be submitted to the town for review, comment, and permitting;
- (C) Consider the development of an official map that delineates planned roadways, infrastructure, and public buildings; and
- (D) Develop, as part of the site plan and subdivision review process, a method for soliciting the comments of relevant agencies and service providers.

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## Implementation Activities

The following implementation activities, with corresponding timelines, are designed to assist in the realization of this element’s goals and objectives. These activities should be undertaken and coordinated with the other elements of the town’s comprehensive plan:

### Goals and Objectives Implementation Strategies

Identified Need	Activities
<p><b>Project Identification, Prioritization and Funding</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>New Project Identification and Element Update:</b> Following the adoption of this plan, the planning commission should annually review and, when needed, update the listing of priority projects contained in this element. For projects identified, the planning commission (with the assistance of town staff) should begin the process of developing a preliminary project scope, as well as, cost estimates. <b>Initiator:</b> Planning Commission <b>Duration of Activity:</b> Annually</li> <li>● <b>CIP Development:</b> The town council should consider the development of a formalized capital improvements program. If developed, the planning commission should make recommendations to the council at least annually. This activity and the preceding may be combined by the commission.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Review and Coordination</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Public Project Review:</b> The planning commission should formalize the process for requiring that public facilities are reviewed pursuant to Section 6-29-540 of the State Code. The town’s code of ordinances and the planning commission’s rules of procedure should be amended to specify the process and project requiring review. <b>Initiator:</b> Planning Commission <b>Duration of Activity:</b> 12 to 18 months following the adoption of this element</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Review and Coordination</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Coordination:</b> The review of new projects and major subdivisions within the town should include coordination with adjacent jurisdictions. These jurisdictions include, but are not limited to, Horry County, SCDOT, Santee Cooper, and GSWA. The building and zoning department should incorporate into the project review process a standardized method of soliciting comments from the affected jurisdictions/agencies. Comments related to applicable agency requirements should be incorporated into the project’s staff report or compliance agreement. <b>Initiator:</b> Building and Zoning Department <b>Duration of Activity:</b> 3 to 6 months for process initiation and thereafter continuously</li> </ul>