

## TOWN OF SWANSBORO Economic Development Strategic Plan

Swansboro, in the coming years, is poised for significant growth that will bring economic opportunities. In accommodating that growth, the Town will be challenged on many fronts, to include impacts to the land, water, infrastructure, and the quality of life of its residents. Recognizing the need to formulate a proactive response to these opportunities and challenges, Swansboro's Board of Commissioners decided in the winter of 2016 to develop a comprehensive, vision-based Economic Development Strategic Plan that will serve as a comprehensive guide to policies, plans and ordinances that protect the Town's character and increases its prosperity amid the upcoming growth.

To this end, the Town established a twenty-member steering committee of residents / stakeholders and, in partnership with the Department of Commerce's Rural Planning Center, began work on the Plan in October 2017. The committee met six times through April 2018 and after reviewing extensive market analysis; growth forecasts; community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; and alternative futures, arrived at the economic positioning / vision statement as follows:

***Swansboro, the quaint and friendly city by the sea, is recognized by visitors and residents as a gem of North Carolina's coast. All who know and appreciate Swansboro celebrate the town's relaxed waterfront lifestyle; abundance of thriving, family-friendly locally-owned businesses; recreational opportunities; and a broad range of arts, historical, dining and shopping opportunities. The town remains committed to preserving its heritage, environment and small-town appeal.***

The Plan lists strategic goals, objectives, action items and tasks necessary to realize this 20-year vision. Tenets of the Plan include quarterly and annual reviews of implementation progress, allowing for modifications as appropriate to address future opportunities.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 26, 2018.



In the context of this Plan, the following definitions apply:

## Goals

...are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve – they are usually long-term and represent global visions

## Objectives

...define strategies or implementation steps to attain the identified goals. Unlike goals, objectives are specific, measurable (number, timeframe, percentage), and may have a defined completion

## Actions

...often, each objective is associated with a series of actions. Therefore, implementing a strategic goal typically involves implementing a series of actions along the way

## Tasks

...a step by step list that will help you accomplish each action, usually achievable in 1 year

## Steering Committee Members

Mayor and Board of Commissioners

Hal Silver	Merchant
Sarah Kendrick	Hammocks Beach State Park
J.R. Burt	Non-Profit
Randy Swanson	Merchant
John Freshwater	Developer
Ginger Robles	Realtor
Patrick Larkin	Young Professional
Linda Thornley	Tourism Industry
Donna Hammonds	Chamber of Commerce
Larry Philpott	Historical Association
Nyra Hogeland	Banking
Sarah Williams	Young Professional
Rick Welton	Chamber of Commerce, Retired Military
Father Bert Eaton	Faith Based Organizations
Meredith Meilleur	Mental Health Professional
Tim Bronstetter	Educator, Environmentalist
Scott Chase	Town Manager
Andrea Correll	Town Planner



**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Swansboro Economic Development Strategy**

***Vision: Swansboro, the quaint and friendly city by the sea, is recognized by visitors and residents as a gem of North Carolina's coast. All who know and appreciate Swansboro celebrate the town's relaxed waterfront lifestyle; abundance of thriving, family-friendly locally-owned businesses; recreational opportunities; and a broad range of arts, historical, dining and shopping opportunities. The town remains committed to preserving its heritage, environment and small town appeal.***

**Strategic Goal #1: Develop as a connected community in order to maximize local economic and social interaction.**

**Objective I.A: Connect current nodes through a system of greenways, streetscapes and multi-modal pathways.**

**Action I.A.1: Collect and review all current plans related to connectivity.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Present findings to Land Use Plan (LUP) steering committee.	Planner	DOT		11/18	Started
Task: Meet to review findings as formal agenda item.	Strategic Operating Committee (SOC)	LUP Steering Committee / Consultant		12/18	

**Action I.A.2: : Develop a conceptual connectivity plan (suitable for Board consideration, adoption and implementation) that achieves the intent of Goal #1.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Prepare formal presentation to Board as a component of Land Use Plan update.	LUP Consultant	DOT, COG, SOC, Colleges		12/18	
Task: Formally adopt final plan as component of Land Use Plan update.	Town Board			5/19	

**Objective I.B: : Identify and define all current and potential nodes, connecting commercial, residential and recreational areas.**

**Action Item I.B.1: Through public process, identify and prioritize actions for recommendation to the Town Board.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Complete as a component of Land Use Plan update	LUP Consultant	Public Works, Planner		5/19	

**Action Item I.B.2: Create incentives for developers to connect nodes as a component of all new development.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop incentive plan for presentation to the Town Board for decision on Town Code amendments.	Planning Board; Planner	SOC; Chamber of Commerce (COC)		12/18	
Task: Implement final version of the Planning Board's recommendations.	Town Board			5/19	

**Objective I.C: Identify, recruit, and incentivize development that is conducive to the realization of Goal #1.**

**Action Item I.C.1: Create, share and promote the connectivity plan with stakeholders in the development community.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Conduct a public outreach event to glean public and stakeholder input.	Planner	Planning Board, SOC		10/18	
Task: Include findings as part of Land Use Plan update.	Planner	Comp Plan Steering Committee		Ongoing	

**Action Item I.C.2: Compile and publish annual updates on progress of the connectivity plan.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Provide updates and seek input quarterly with Public Works and annually with Town Board.	Planner	Down East RPO (DERPO); DOT		Ongoing	

**Action Item I.C.3: Update the connectivity plan annually to reflect progress, emerging opportunities, incentives and revised prioritization.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Update and advise Town Board at annual retreat.	Manager; Planner	Public Works		3/19	

**Strategic Goal #II: Improve and protect the town's natural environment in order to attract new residents and maximize the town's economic development potential.**

**Objective II.A: Realize the watershed restoration plan.**

**Action Item II.A.1: Educate the public about the watershed improvement plan and its importance to the future prosperity of the town.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop objectives, agenda, briefing materials and speakers notes for generic presentation.	Watershed Restoration Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Planner		8/18	
Task: Deliver briefs at least quarterly, beginning in September, 2018.	Watershed Restoration Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Planner		9/18	

**Action Item II.A.2: Evaluate options for shoreline protection that best support the tenets of this objective.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop a white paper with recommendations for the Town Board to consider as part of the Land Use Plan update.	Watershed Restoration Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Planner; CAMA		7/18	

**Action Item II.A.3: Evaluate forms and types of density that may reduce impervious surface area.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Incorporate in Land Use Plan update process and subsequent Town Code Amendments	LUP Consultant; Planner	LUP Steering Committee; Planning Board		12/18	
Task: Conduct outreach with development community and other stakeholders in the evaluation process.	Planner	Realtors, Developers, Landowners, COC		12/18	

**Objective II.B: Entice and Incentivize residents and businesses to utilize best management practices.**

**Action Item II.B.1: Develop a suite of incentives for residents and businesses that support the achievement of Objective II.C.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop and present recommendations to Town Board.	Watershed Sub-Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Planner		8/18	

Action Item II.B.2: Establish and foster the growth of a volunteer community organization that supports education about, and application of, best management practices in town.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop and promote a local brand that achieves the tenets of this Objective.	Watershed Sub-Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Public Works; Planner	Town Hall Campus Education Site	9/18	
Task: Conduct at least one volunteer event in 2018 that serves to promote the brand.	Watershed Sub-Committee	NC Coastal Federation; Manager; Public Works; Planner	Town Hall Campus Education Site	12/18	
<b>Objective II.C: Encourage local government to acquire control of as many wetland acres as possible and be the leader in wetland stewardship.</b>					
Action Item II.C.1: Create a suite of incentives and available resources that promote land or easement donations.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Present recommendations to Town Board.	Watershed Sub-Committee	US Army Corps of Engineers; NC Coastal Federation; NC Coastal Land Trust; DOT; NC One Map	See Partners	2/19	
Action Item II.C.2: Create a single source map that definitively depicts wetland areas in town.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Working with Town Planner, present recommended map to Town Board.	Watershed Sub-Committee	US Army Corps of Engineers; NC Coastal Federation; NC Coastal Land Trust; DOT; NC One Map	County GIS; EPA 319 Grant; Onslow County	3/19	

**Strategic Goal #III: Foster and improve the town's sense of place in order to attract residents, visitors and business investment.**

**Objective III.A: Complete sidewalks in order to promote local commerce and relieve parking pressures.**

Action Item III.A.1: Ensure that the town's capital expenditure plan prioritizes sidewalks, depicts costs, and identifies resources to support construction.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Ensure that the tenets of this action item are incorporated in the CIP.	Town Manager	Public Works		7/18	

Action Item III.A.2: Evaluate the existing sidewalk policy and make recommendations for changes (that support this plan) to the Board.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop white paper that includes and supports specific recommendations related to the Town's sidewalk policy, for decision by the Board.	SOC	Manager; Public Works; Planner	Rural Planning Center (RPC)	10/18	

**Objective III.B: Construct median and streetscape NC 24 from Old Hammocks Beach Road to the White Oak River.**

Action Item III.B.1: Continue to interact with and influence the planning and actions of the Department of Transportation with regard to future NC 24 improvements.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Participate in all activities associated with the Highway 24 Corridor Study, ensuring the inclusion of the goals and objectives of this strategic plan.	Manager	Planner, DERPO, DOT		Ongoing	

Action Item III.B.2: Promote and ensure the robust participation of town residents and business owners in the transportation planning process.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Conduct a public meeting specifically addressing the Highway 24 median issue, in order to glean input from stakeholders and residents.	Manager	Planner, DERPO, DOT		8/18	



**Objective III.C: Develop a robust and multi-faceted communication plan that connects residents.**

Action Item III.C.1: Create a town newsletter that allows residents and visitors to “opt-in” among a variety of delivery methods (e-mail, website, regular mail, news media) and contributes to enhancement of the town's sense of place.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Take steps to incorporate the tenets of this Objective in regular communications with residents and visitors.	Public Information Officer	Manager; SOC		10/18	

Action Item III.C.2: Establish the practice of preemptively pushing information in advance of events, meetings/workshops, hearings, or decisions.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Seek committee and resident input on methods that would contribute to the accomplishment of this action item.	Public Information Officer	Manager; SOC		8/18	
Task: Permanently incorporate preemptive practices in all Town communications.	Public Information Officer	Manager; SOC		10/18	

**Strategic Goal #IV: Actively recruit new businesses and support the expansion of existing businesses; and expand the physical accommodation of growth.**

**Objective IV.A: Develop a matrix that identifies key business recruitment targets.**

Action Item IV.A.1: Combine market analysis, building/site availability and community survey input to create a prioritized list of recruitment targets.

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Using market analysis in the Strategic Plan, as well as the community survey results, list and prioritize recruitment targets.	SOC	RPC; COC; Parks & Rec	RPC	8/18	
Task: Align recruitment targets with available sites and buildings and produce recommended next steps for the recruiting effort.	SOC	Realtors, Landowners, Developers	RPC	9/18	

**Objective IV.B: Develop and maintain a comprehensive list of available sites and buildings.**

**Action Item IV.B.1: Assemble and publicize the site/building list through established platforms.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Produce a list of available commercial / industrial buildings and sites that includes details such as location, zoning, allowed uses, size, utilities, cost, and contact information.	Public Information Officer	Realtors, Planner, Developers, Landowners	Jacksonville-Onslow Economic Development (JOED); NCEast Alliance; Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC)	9/18	
Task: Make the list available on the Town's website and provide to JOED, NCEast Alliance and the NC Department of Commerce.	Public Information Officer	RPC, EDPNC, NCEast, JOED		9/18	
Task: Ensure that the list is updated regularly and includes accurate contact information.	Public Information Officer			Ongoing	

**Objective IV.C: Build the economic development awareness and capacity of the Town.**

**Action Item IV.C.1: Create an economic development committee.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Develop a white paper that recommends Board actions for the creation of an economic development committee.	SOC	Manager, RPC, JOED	RPC	9/18	
Task: Formalize the creation of an economic development committee for the Town.	Town Board	SOC, JOED, RPC	RPC	10/18	

Action Item IV.C.2: Maximize affiliation with existing organizations that support the Town's economic development.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Attend and participate in JOED proceedings to provide updates on the Town's economic development posture.	Mayor/Manager	JOED		Ongoing	
Task: Host a meeting with JOED, NCEAST Alliance, and the Economic Development Partnership to socialize the tenets of the Town's economic development strategic plan as well as recruitment targets and available sites.	Manager	JOED, NCEast, EDPNC	RPC	10/18	
Action Item IV.C.3: Evaluate the Town's benefits of affiliation in the NC Main Street Program.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Evaluate the NC Main Street program and make recommendations to the Town Board related to the Town's participation in the program.	Manager	NC Main Street		9/18	
Task: Host a meeting in town with representatives of NC Main Street to build their awareness of local vision and goals.	Manager	NC Main Street		9/18	
Task: Attend at least one NC Main Street event in 2018 to build awareness of the program.	SOC ; Manager	NC Main Street		12/18	

**Action Item IV.C.4: Create and nurture, through partnerships, an environment that is conducive to the growth of free-lance entrepreneurial ventures in the town.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: Evaluate tenets of such an environment and identify top needs / priorities for the town.	Manager	MSRPC, Small Business Center, NC Rural Center, SOC		10/18	
Task: Identify necessary partners and resources required to meet unmet needs, as they relate to fostering the growth of free-lance entrepreneurship in town.	Manager	NC Main Street, SOC, NCEast		11/18	
Task: Host at least one outreach event in 2018 that brings together town leaders, economic development partners, and free-lance entrepreneurs in town to discuss needs and prioritize responses to those needs.	Manager	SOC		12/18	

**Objective IV.D: Expand the ability to accommodate and influence development that is compatible with the Town's vision and goals.**

**Action Item IV.D.1: Develop a suite of incentives to encourage voluntary annexation.**

	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: In conjunction with the Land Use Plan update, develop recommendations and justifications, for consideration by the Town Board, that address this topic.	LUP Consultant	Manager, SOC	RPC	12/18	
Task: Take formal action that codifies the intent of and commitment to the tenets of this Objective.	Town Board	Manager, SOC, Planner		5/19	

Action Item IV.D.2: Expand the Town's extraterritorial jurisdiction to influence development compatible with the strategic vision.					
	Person Responsible	Partners	Resources	Due By	Notes
Task: In conjunction with the Land Use Plan update, develop recommendations for consideration by the Town Board that address this topic.	Planning Board	SOC, COG, Manager, Planner, Land Use Plan Committee		12/18	
Task: Take formal action to implement, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Planning Board related to this Objective.	Town Board	SOC, COG, Manager, Planner, Land Use Plan Committee		5/19	