

Community Assessment Tybee Island Master Plan



Submitted to:

**Georgia Department of
Community Affairs**

By:

City of Tybee Island, Georgia

March 2007



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

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Table of Contents

1.	ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS	3
1.1.	EXISTING LAND USE	3
1.2.	COMMUNITY CHARACTER AREAS	5
1.2.1	<i>Arts, Eats, Eco Activity Center</i>	<i>5</i>
1.2.2	<i>Back River Neighborhood.....</i>	<i>6</i>
1.2.3	<i>Beaches</i>	<i>7</i>
1.2.4	<i>Beachfront Neighborhood.....</i>	<i>8</i>
1.2.5	<i>Coastal Marshlands.....</i>	<i>8</i>
1.2.6	<i>Inland Cottage Neighborhood</i>	<i>9</i>
1.2.7	<i>Lazaretto Creek Maritime District.....</i>	<i>10</i>
1.2.8	<i>Marshfront Neighborhood</i>	<i>10</i>
1.2.9	<i>North Beach Neighborhood.....</i>	<i>11</i>
1.2.10	<i>Riverfront Neighborhood.....</i>	<i>12</i>
1.2.11	<i>Tybrisa Neighborhood</i>	<i>13</i>
1.2.12	<i>The Strand.....</i>	<i>13</i>
1.3.	AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION	16
1.3.1	<i>Natural Resources.....</i>	<i>16</i>
1.3.2	<i>Cultural Resources.....</i>	<i>17</i>
1.3.3	<i>Areas where Rapid Development is Likely to Occur</i>	<i>18</i>
1.3.4	<i>Areas where the Pace of Development has and/or is Likely to Outpace the Availability of Public Facilities & Services.....</i>	<i>18</i>
1.3.5	<i>Redevelopment Areas.....</i>	<i>18</i>
1.3.6	<i>Large Abandoned Structures or Sites</i>	<i>19</i>
1.3.7	<i>Infill Development Opportunities</i>	<i>19</i>
1.3.8	<i>Areas of Significant Disinvestment and/or Under-Utilized Areas.....</i>	<i>19</i>
2.	ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES	21
2.1.	POPULATION	21
2.2.	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	22
2.3.	NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES	23
2.4.	FACILITIES & SERVICES	24
2.5.	HOUSING.....	25
2.6.	LAND USE.....	26
2.7.	TRANSPORTATION.....	26
2.8.	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION	27
3.	ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES	28
3.1.	TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS	28
3.2.	INFILL DEVELOPMENT	29
3.3.	SENSE OF PLACE	29
3.4.	TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES.....	30
3.5.	REGIONAL IDENTITY	31
3.6.	HERITAGE PRESERVATION	31

3.7.	OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION.....	32
3.8.	ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.....	33
3.9.	GROWTH PREPAREDNESS	34
3.10.	APPROPRIATE BUSINESSES.....	34
3.11.	EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS	35
3.12.	HOUSING CHOICES.....	35
3.13.	EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	36
3.14.	LOCAL SELF-DETERMINATION.....	36
3.15.	REGIONAL COOPERATION	37
4.	DATA ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	38
4.1.	POPULATION	38
4.1.1	<i>Population Projections</i>	38
4.1.2	<i>Year-Round Population vs. Seasonal Population</i>	40
4.1.3	<i>Population by Age Projection</i>	41
4.2.	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	42
4.2.1	<i>Place of Employment</i>	42
4.2.2	<i>Commuting Patterns</i>	43
4.3.	HOUSEHOLD INCOME & COST OF HOUSING	43
4.4.	PUBLIC FACILITIES.....	45
4.4.1	<i>Water System</i>	45
4.4.2	<i>Sanitary Sewer</i>	46
4.4.3	<i>Storm Sewer System</i>	46
4.4.4	<i>Parks & Recreation</i>	46
4.4.5	<i>Other Facilities</i>	47
4.5.	NATURAL RESOURCES	48
4.6.	TRANSPORTATION.....	49
4.6.1	<i>Roads and Highways</i>	49
4.6.2	<i>Alternative Modes of Transportation</i>	50
4.6.3	<i>Parking</i>	51
4.7.	PART V ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CRITERIA	51
4.8.	SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY	51

TABLES & FIGURES

Figure 1.	Existing Land Use Map.....	4
Figure 2.	Character Map	15
Figure 3.	Areas Requiring Special Attention Map.....	20
Table 1.	City of Tybee Island - Population Projections.....	38
Table 2.	Population Projections	39
Figure 4.	Population Projection Comparison.....	39
Table 3.	City of Tybee Island Rental Properties.....	40
Table 4.	Seasonal Population Increase.....	41
Table 5.	Population by Age Projections (percentage)	41
Table 6.	Tybee Island’s Employment Information	42
Table 7.	Tybee Island’s Major Employers.....	42
Table 8.	Commuting Patterns	43

Table 9. Average Household Income..... 43
Table 10. Housing & Rental Costs 44
Figure 5. Comparison of Average Household Income with Median Property Value..... 44

APPENDICES

Map of Existing Land Use Appendix A
Map of Community Character Areas Appendix B
Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention..... Appendix C

Introduction

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers Rules for Local Comprehensive Planning for all Qualified Local Governments in Georgia. The purpose of this program is to provide guidance for long range planning that will accomplish the following goals as outlined by the DCA:

- Involve all segments of the community in developing a vision for the community's future;
- Generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community;
- Engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and
- Provide a guide to everyday decision making for use by the local government officials and other community leaders.

The Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1: Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, "Local Planning Requirements," were recently updated in May 2005. The updated guidelines require the completion of three major elements, the Community Assessment, Community Participation Plan, and Community Agenda as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The Community Assessment summarizes the local government's evaluation of its development patterns, issues and opportunities, and level of compliance with the DCA's Quality Community Objectives. The Community Participation Plan is a proposal for a community involvement program that will offer a wide range of opportunities to local citizens interested in participating in the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Lastly, the Community Agenda includes an update of the material in the Assessment based on public input, as well as a short and long- term work program and list of policies for land use decision-making.

The Community Assessment and Community Participation Plan must be submitted to DCA for approval prior to the start of the public involvement phase and completion of the Community Agenda. Therefore, the Assessment and Participation Plan must be received by DCA well in advance of the final deadline for Comprehensive Plan submittal. The City of Tybee Island plans to submit the full plan by October 31, 2007.

This document represents the Community Assessment for the City of Tybee Island. It is being submitted to DCA along with the Community Participation Plan and a Technical Addendum containing a detailed census and inventory data assessment. Submittal in February 2007 will allow the City the time necessary to conduct a public involvement program and finalize a Community Agenda prior to the DCA mandated deadline.

The format of this document considers the outline proposed in the State Planning Recommendations, as well as Chapter 110-12-1 of the Rules.

- Section 1 addresses development patterns including current land use, proposed character areas, and areas requiring special attention.
- Section 2 identifies issues and opportunities as they relate to all of the traditional elements including, but not limited to, population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, and land use.
- Section 3 provides a summary of the analysis of the Quality Community Objectives and the City's implementation status.
- Section 4 provides a summary of the Data Assessment of the 2000 Census and community inventory, which is fully detailed in the Technical Addendum.

The City of Tybee Island is currently contending with several issues related to a changing population demographics, increasing property values, and economic development as it relates to drawing and retaining appropriate businesses. The City is fully committed to the comprehensive planning process and is hopeful that this Master Plan will provide an outline for the following:

- Preservation of the City's natural resources;
- Adequate regulation of new development and redevelopment projects;
- Creation of incentives for historic preservation;
- Creation of an alternative transportation network and a safe pedestrian environment;
and
- Development of the framework for an economic development strategy that will revitalize commercial areas and support the tourism industry.

It is the goal of this plan to preserve the quality of life for both seasonal and permanent residents.

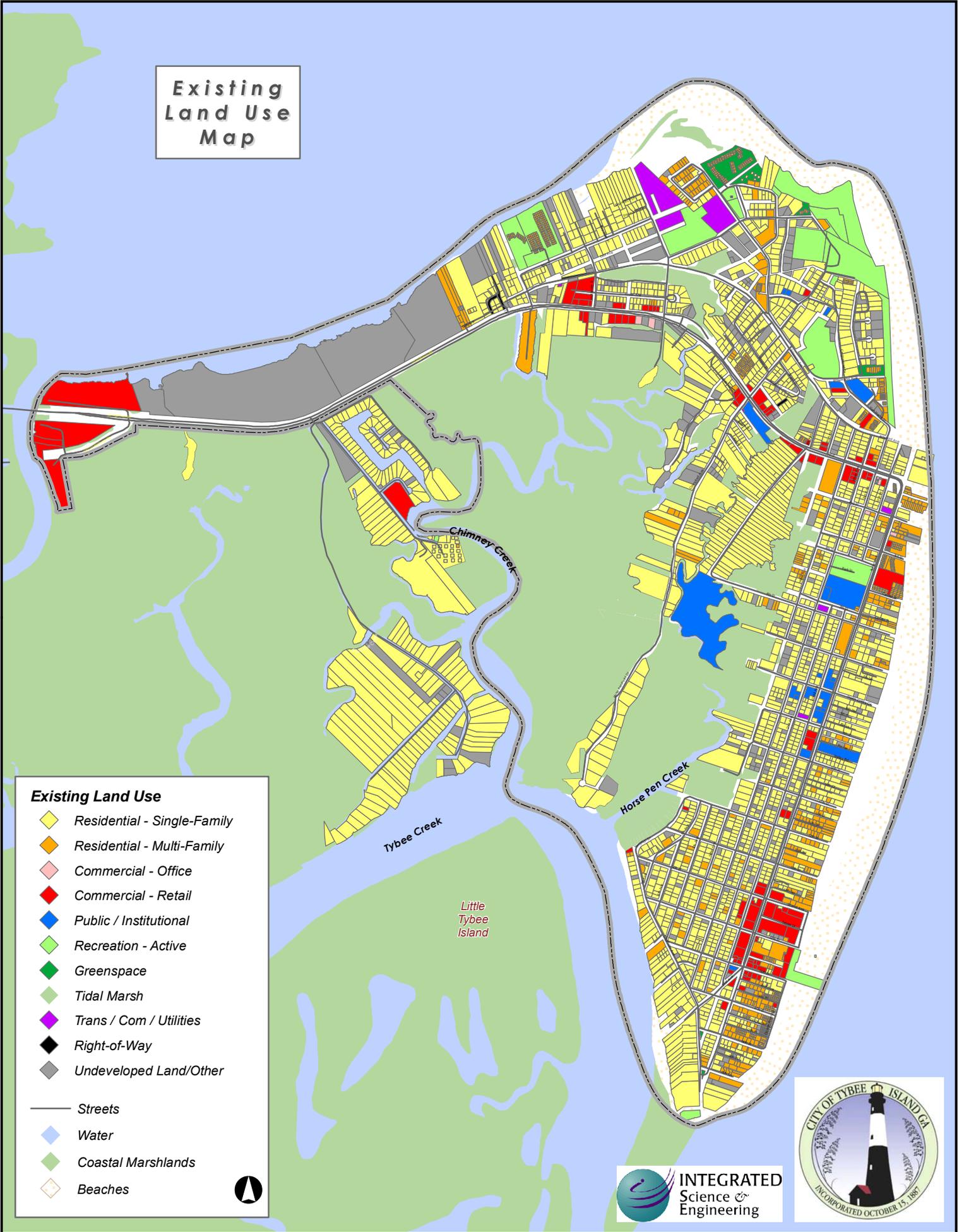
1. Analysis of Development Patterns

1.1. Existing Land Use

The first step in defining a community vision for future growth is to assess existing development patterns and current land use. The future vision must relate to existing development patterns if the goals developed are to be viable and achievable. In order to have an accurate record of the existing land use on a parcel-by-parcel basis, the City of Tybee Island conducted a field survey of existing land use in October 2006. The Standard Land Use categories described in the new DCA Rules for Comprehensive Planning were used as the basis for the Tybee Island's land use collection. The City opted to use additional categories, consistent with those used on the Chatham County-City of Savannah Comprehensive Plan for this assessment. The survey was conducted with a field tablet equipped with both GPS and GIS software. The electronic data meets the requirements set forth in the Rules and a map of current land uses is included in Figure 1 (page 4). For a full-size map please see Appendix A.

- **Residential – Single-Family.** This category is used to describe single-family homes that occupy a single lot.
- **Residential – Multi-Family.** This category is used to describe instances where multiple residential structures are located on a single lot (i.e. Mobile home park), or instances where one structure contains multiple units (i.e. duplexes or condos).
- **Commercial – Office.** This category is used to describe professional office space. Uses that fall into this category include law offices, doctors'/dentists' offices, realtors, etc.
- **Commercial – Retail.** This category is used to describe service related commercial activities, and includes, but is not limited to uses that include bars, restaurants, shops, lodging, gas stations, grocery stores, etc.
- **Public / Institutional.** This category is used to describe certain federal, state, or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls, government building complexes, police and fire stations, public libraries, post offices, schools, etc. Examples of institutional uses include colleges, churches, hospitals, etc.
- **Recreation – Active.** This category is used to describe areas of land specifically designed for active recreational use. Uses typically include parks, playgrounds, beaches, public swimming pools, etc.
- **Greenspace.** This category is used to describe designated areas of open space that are permanently protected and/or designed for passive recreation.
- **Tidal Marsh.** This category is used to describe undeveloped natural and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development.
- **Transportation / Communications / Utilities.** This category is used to describe tracks of land dedicated for use by public utilities. Infrastructure for electricity, gas, and water services such as power plants, sewage treatment plants, etc. are included in this category.
- **Right-of-Way.** This category is used to describe areas of undeveloped land used by public/private entities as a means of access to areas requiring routine maintenance or unopened roadways.
- **Undeveloped Land / Other.** This category is used to describe lots or tracts of land that are not currently developed for a specific use, but are likely to be developed in the future.

Existing Land Use Map



1.2. Community Character Areas

The DCA has required the development of “Character Areas” as part of the new Rules for Comprehensive Planning to acknowledge the visual and functional differences of various neighborhoods. By identifying desirable neighborhood characteristics, the City of Tybee Island will be able to provide more specific guidance for future development through appropriate planning and implementation within each Character Area. The Character Areas identified in Figure 2 (page 15) and defined below identify areas that presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved or have potential to evolve into unique areas. It is important to note while reviewing the Character Area map and descriptions that the identified character may not be accurate for every single parcel, but is rather the overall defining character of the area as a whole. The development strategies identified within each Character Area are not requirements, but recommendations for the desired types of development and redevelopment. The strategies will be utilized to help define short-term activities and long-term policies for future growth within the City of Tybee Island. The following development strategies should be considered citywide, where appropriate:

- Architectural and landscaping standards should be developed and enforced to reflect the character of the area.
- Enforce existing City codes, development standards, and design guidelines.
- Historic structures should be identified and preserved, and the City should provide incentives for their restoration.
- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.

1.2.1 Arts, Eats, Eco Activity Center

This area functions as an activity center with a concentration of uses including shopping, crafts, restaurants, and eco-tourism. There are a higher percentage of year-round residents and single-family homes within this character area.

Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.



- Down zoning within the Highway 80 commercial corridor should be discouraged. Establish a set of standards for a maximum percentage of residential use on a per parcel basis to allow for mixed-use.
- Encourage commercial and mixed-use infill development and redevelopment along Highway 80 commercial corridor.
- Architectural and landscaping standards should be developed and enforced to reflect the character of the area.
- Enhance pedestrian movement through streetscape improvements.
- Support the continued development of the Tybee Island bikeway including bike lanes and multi-use trails.
- Establish standards and design guidelines for signage. Develop a “theme” for signage to ensure that it is consistent and fits with the character of the area and the island as a whole.
- Allow for an appropriate mix of retail, residential, and tourist related uses consistent with the vision of the plan.

1.2.2 Back River Neighborhood

This area is the unique residential neighborhood located on the south side of the island adjacent to the Back River. Characteristics of this neighborhood include waterfront lots, beach access along the Back River, public access to water, open space, and scenic views. A few low impact commercial service uses are also located within this area.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Encourage traffic calming measures to create safer pedestrian mobility.
- Historic structures in this area should be restored and/or preserved whenever possible.
- The City should provide appropriate incentives for historic restoration projects.
- Establish and enforce a set of landscaping and architectural guidelines to preserve the scenic value of the area.
- Preserve and enhance public access to waterways and beaches.

1.2.3 Beaches

The beaches character area includes the undeveloped natural and environmentally sensitive beachfront and dune system not suitable for private development. This area provides recreational opportunities for residents and a destination for tourists. Beachfront locations and access is an amenity and serves to increase property values and tax revenues for the City. Protecting this community resource is an essential to the quality of life on Tybee Island.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- Property should be maintained in a natural state.
- Prohibit any development of beach or dune system.
- Continue to buffer development from beaches and dune system through development regulations.
- Utilize the dune crossing boardwalks to provide education on the beach/dune system, local flora and fauna, and natural resources protection.
- Promote this area for recreation and as a destination for tourists.
- Promote the conservation of greenspace adjacent to beaches and dune system.
- Develop a plan to maintain beach access dune crossings with the least amount of impact to the dune system.
- Investigate a plan to reinstall some portion of the Strand along the beachfront adjacent to the Pavilion.

1.2.4 Beachfront Neighborhood

This area includes the neighborhood adjacent to the beach on the east side of Butler Avenue. It is defined by a mix of single-family, multi-family, condominium, and commercial properties. General characteristics of the area include old-growth trees, on-street parking, wide streets, alleys, and public & private beach access.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Historic structures in this area should be restored and/or preserved whenever possible.
- The City should provide appropriate incentives for historic restoration projects.
- The pedestrian environment should be enhanced where feasible.
- Old growth trees should be preserved.
- Public beach access should be preserved, maintained, and enhanced as necessary.

1.2.5 Coastal Marshlands

Coastal marshlands are undeveloped natural and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development. These areas provide a habitat for a number of marine and wildlife species and are among the richest source for nutrients in the world. Marshlands supply a buffer against flooding and erosions and offer natural recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- Property should be maintained in a natural state.
- Restrict development and encroachment into this area.

- Promote the use of conservation easements to protect marshland that is in private ownership, i.e. King's Grants.
- Promote areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations.
- Support the use of these areas for shellfish aquaculture as appropriate.
- Encourage the restoration of oyster reefs through established programs.
- Require the use of naturally vegetated buffers adjacent to marshland to mitigate the impacts of development.

1.2.6 Inland Cottage Neighborhood

This character area describes the traditional neighborhood along the west side of Butler, which contains narrow, tree-lined streets laid out in a grid pattern. The area is varied in land use as it contains permanent residential properties, multi-family homes, rental properties, parks, low-impact commercial establishments, and public buildings. Residential development within this area contains both traditional and historic cottage homes, large new residential houses and multi-family units. This area provides for alternative transportation routes by providing an alternative automotive travel route to Butler Avenue, a bike path, and stop signs to slow the movement of vehicular traffic creating a more pedestrian friendly environment.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Permit only compatible uses including low density residential, public/institutional, and low impact commercial.
- Develop and implement design and architectural standards.
- Implement streetscape improvement to improve the pedestrian/bicycle environment and encourage safety and mobility.
- Historic structures in this area should be restored and/or preserved whenever possible.
- The City should provide appropriate incentives for historic restoration projects.

1.2.7 Lazaretto Creek Maritime District

This area is comprised of developed and undeveloped land along Highway 80, adjacent to Lazaretto Creek that serves as a “community gateway” to the island. This area functions as a maritime and activity center for residents and tourists and offers public recreational access to the water via Lazaretto Creek. Uses currently found in this district include the shrimping industry, dolphin tours, parasailing, kayaking, recreational boating, restaurants, and residential properties.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- Establish standards and design guidelines for signage. Develop a “theme” for signage to ensure that it is consistent and fits with the character of the area and the island as a whole.
- Consider the design and installation of community gateway signage and associated beautification measures along Highway 80 as you enter/leave the island.
- Allow for development of retail, restaurants, and other services that serve the year-round and seasonal population.
- Provide signage for landmarks and commercial businesses in this area.
- Improve the pedestrian environment to allow for pedestrian/bicycle movement throughout the area.

1.2.8 Marshfront Neighborhood

These neighborhoods are fronted by coastal marshlands and contain a wide mix of new and old residential development and a sporadic mix of commercial properties. Coastal marshlands surround these areas and many lots contain access to the water via tidal creeks. The surrounding marsh provides scenic views, natural resources, a recreational amenity, and dock access to the water. Due to the close proximity of marshland and local waterways, land use and protection of natural resources



requires special consideration in these neighborhoods. The nature of existing zoning classifications has preserved some undeveloped land within these areas.

Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Permit only uses compatible with the character of the area.
- Permit only uses that will not adversely impact the marsh environment.
- The City should establish and enforce marsh buffer standards, and identify uses that will be allowed within the buffer and those that will be prohibited.
- Establish landscaping and architectural standards to maximize to scenic value of the area.

1.2.9 North Beach Neighborhood

This area contains a significant amount of natural, cultural, and historic resources. The broad collection of land uses also includes new larger-scale residential developments, traditional cottage-style homes, townhomes, condominiums, restaurants, and other public uses. Two of the City's most notable historic sites are located in this area including the Tybee Lighthouse and Fort Screven Museum/Battery. Other characteristics include narrow streets, street trees, public and private beach access, public parking, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and public parks.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Develop and implement design and architectural standards.
- Establish standards and design guidelines for signage. Develop a “theme” for signage to ensure that it is consistent and fits with the character of the area and the island as a whole.
- Historic structures in this area should be restored and/or preserved whenever possible.
- The City should provide appropriate incentives for historic restoration projects.
- Pursue Historic District/Historic Structure designations for appropriate areas within this district.
- Ensure continued preservation of old growth trees, parks, and greenspace.

- Allow for the development of low-impact commercial uses near to public amenities including North Beach access, Lighthouse, and Fort Screven.
- Support the continued development of the Tybee Island bikeway including bike lanes and multi-use trails.

1.2.10 Riverfront Neighborhood

This Character Area includes the developed and undeveloped area north of Highway 80. This area contains a significant amount of natural and environmentally sensitive areas with public and private access to the Savannah Harbor. There is existing residential development and the potential for additional development within this area. The neighborhood also has the potential to be connected to the Arts, Eats, and Eco Activity Center, North Beach Neighborhood, and McQueen's Trail/Fort Pulaski via the proposed multi-use trail/greenway system.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- New development, redevelopment, and restoration should be consistent with existing character of the area in terms of architecture, use and density.
- Permit only uses compatible with the existing character of the area, as well as uses that will not have an adverse impact on the marsh and riverfront environment.
- Establish a set of landscaping and architectural standards to maximize scenic value of the area.
- Continue to work to preserve Battery Halleck (and any other archeological resources) and its connection to multi-use trail system and Fort Pulaski.
- Encourage projects that will implement the proposed multi-use trail system.
- Consider the potential to provide additional parking within this area with transportation to other areas of the island.

1.2.11 Tybrisa Neighborhood

This Character Area is defined by a dense mix of residential uses that includes single-family, multi-family, and vacation rentals. The area is mainly defined by its proximity to the Strand, beach, and pier. There is a high ratio of rental property and seasonal residents in this neighborhood.



Recommended Development Strategies:

- Future development and redevelopment should be very pedestrian-oriented with safe connections to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- This area is appropriate for residential development that contains a mix of densities and housing options (i.e. multi-family homes, townhouses, condos, apartments, etc.).
- Mixed-uses should be encouraged to provide for the daily needs of residents and tourists.

1.2.12 The Strand

This area is the traditional “main street” district of the island that acts as a focal point for residents and tourists. The main street area provides for a mix of uses including shopping, restaurants, hotels/B&Bs, museums/public education, and the Tybee Pavilion and Pier. Due to the many activities available in this area, there is a significant amount of pedestrian traffic. Public parking is also available in this area.



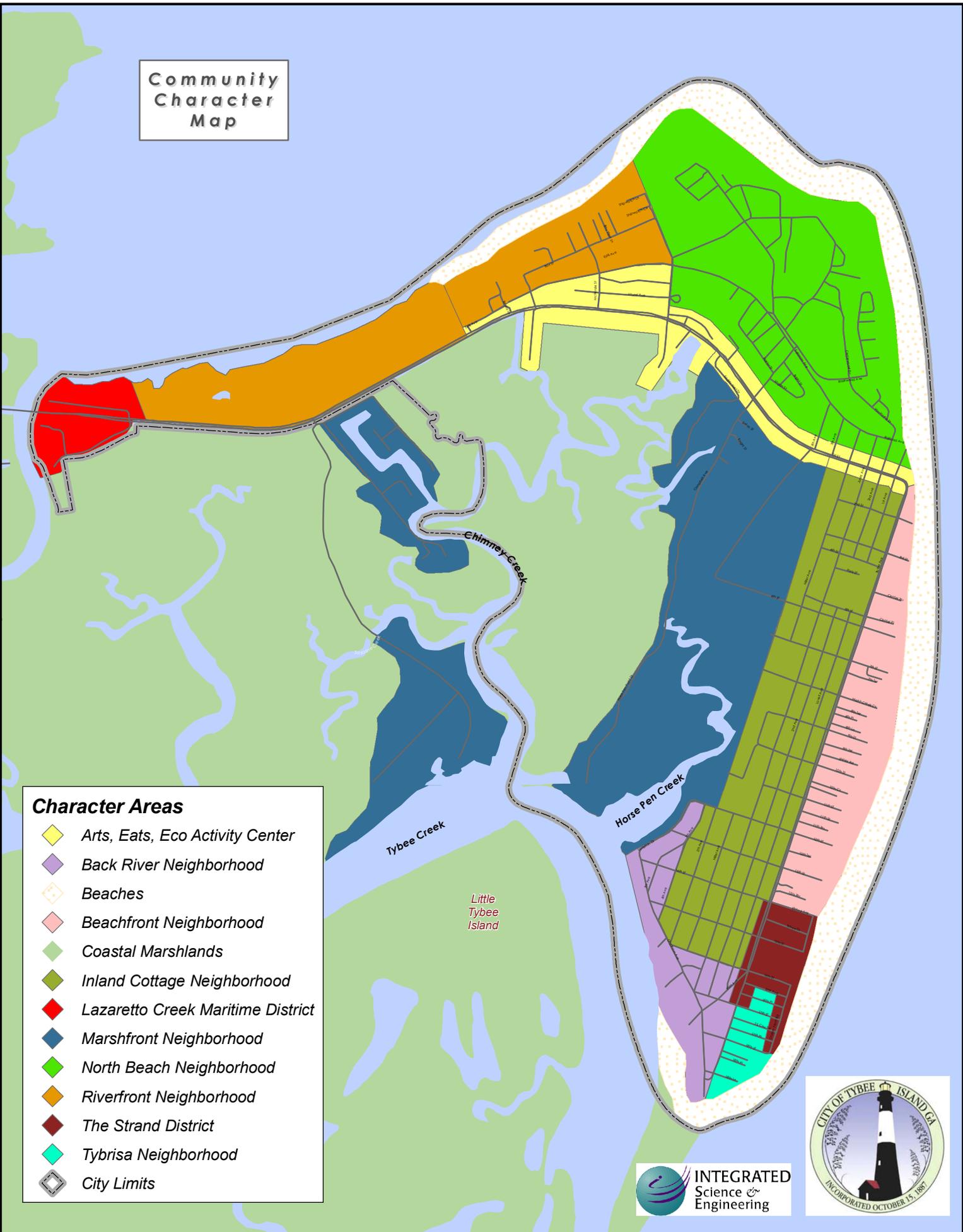
Recommended Development Strategies:

- Downtown development should include a mix of uses (i.e. retail, office, restaurants, etc.).
- Allow only uses that are compatible with desired main street character and uses.

- This area is appropriate for residential development that contains a mix of densities and housing options (i.e. multi-family homes, townhouses, condos, apartments, etc.).
- Implement streetscape improvements to encourage safe pedestrian mobility and improve stormwater drainage.
- Landscaping and beautification projects should be implemented and maintained to improve the aesthetics of the area.
- Establish a set of landscaping and architectural standards to maximize the scenic value of the area.
- Historic structures in this area should be restored and/or preserved whenever possible.
- The City should provide appropriate incentives for historic restoration projects.
- Encourage infill development or redevelopment of existing vacant property and structures.
- Encourage redevelopment of under-utilized properties.
- Develop a plan to “re-install” Strand boardwalk/multi-use trail.

Community Character Map

- Character Areas**
- Arts, Eats, Eco Activity Center
 - Back River Neighborhood
 - Beaches
 - Beachfront Neighborhood
 - Coastal Marshlands
 - Inland Cottage Neighborhood
 - Lazaretto Creek Maritime District
 - Marshfront Neighborhood
 - North Beach Neighborhood
 - Riverfront Neighborhood
 - The Strand District
 - Tybrisa Neighborhood
 - City Limits



1.3. Areas Requiring Special Attention

As a coastal community, the City of Tybee Island is faced with a unique set of circumstances. With an increasing demand for property on the island and a decreasing amount of developable land, the City is faced with difficult decisions to make with regard to land use and natural resources. As a result, it is important to address and plan for the impacts that future development will have on the City. This section discusses the effects that anticipated growth, demand for property, and development pressures may have on various resources on the island. The map of Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA) is included in Figure 3 (page 20).

The DCA has identified the following seven special conditions and requires that they be addressed where they exist within the community.

- Natural and cultural resources
- Areas where rapid development is likely to occur
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services
- Redevelopment areas
- Large abandoned structures or sites
- Infill development opportunities
- Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

The City has reviewed the existing land use and proposed Character Areas and has determined that the following areas within the City of Tybee Island require special attention.

1.3.1 Natural Resources

The City of Tybee Island is made up of a unique collection of natural resources. The island contains numerous water features that include tidal creeks, fresh water ponds, and the ocean. Other natural resources include the abundance of coastal marshlands and the beaches, which collectively account for roughly 35% of the total area of the island. The proper management of these resources is important as the City faces anticipated population growth and development pressure. The map of ARSA illustrates these natural resources.



The beaches and marshlands of Tybee Island are the City's most significant economic asset, which makes protection of this natural resource vital for the City. Unregulated development of beachfront property and areas adjacent to coastland marshlands can have a devastating effect on the local economy, as well as the natural habitat.

The City has prioritized natural resource protection and has adopted an "Environmental Ethics Resolution and Policy" to demonstrate their commitment to the protection and preservation of these important island resources.

1.3.2 Cultural Resources

The City of Tybee Island contains a wealth of historic and cultural resources. The Old Tybee Lighthouse, Fort Screven Museum, and civil war batteries are among the many historic resources available to residents and tourists. In addition, cultural resources currently available to the public, or under development, include the Post Theatre and the Tybee Island Pavilion. A significant number of historic homes also exist, which demonstrate the various architectural styles that have been



popular on Tybee Island over the years. The restoration of these houses provides a great opportunity to enhance the historic character of the island. However, rising land values and an increasing demand for property have made these structures one of the most threatened resources on the island. The City needs to work with developers and property owners to create incentives in order to encourage the restoration of these buildings.

1.3.3 Areas where Rapid Development is Likely to Occur

The City of Tybee Island is faced with a unique set of circumstances with regard to new development. Unlike many communities, significant tracts of undeveloped land do not exist on the island. Rather, development is primarily limited to smaller lots. Property is being purchased for the land value alone, and historic single-family cottages are quickly being replaced by modern dwellings that are often multi-family in nature. As a result, historic homes are being destroyed and new structures are often



out of place within the existing character and density of the neighborhood. This development pattern is especially prevalent in areas currently zoned R-2. The City needs to reevaluate its current zoning code to make sure that it is consistent with the vision of this plan. The City must also provide incentives to encourage the restoration of existing historic structures and to discourage their demolition and redevelopment.

1.3.4 Areas where the Pace of Development has and/or is Likely to Outpace the Availability of Public Facilities & Services

Population growth and development on the island could potentially outpace the availability of existing public facilities and services. The projected population increase on the island combined with the season increase in visitors will require the City to assess the need for additional water and wastewater capacity or explore other alternatives for providing these services to residents. The City will also need to evaluate emergency services to determine if existing resources remain adequate as the population rises. Emergency evacuation capacity will also continue to be an issue as the population grows.

1.3.5 Redevelopment Areas

The Strand area presents the greatest opportunity for redevelopment. There are also a number of properties along the Highway 80 corridor that have the potential to be redeveloped. The City will work with developers and property owners to create incentives to encourage redevelopment projects that are consistent with the vision of this plan. A number of the current commercial businesses are located in properties that were previously single-family residential homes. This type of adaptive re-use may prove to be an effective method for redevelopment and historic preservation along this corridor.

1.3.6 Large Abandoned Structures or Sites

There are no large abandoned structures or sites in need of special attention in the City. However, there are sites in need of façade improvements and restoration.

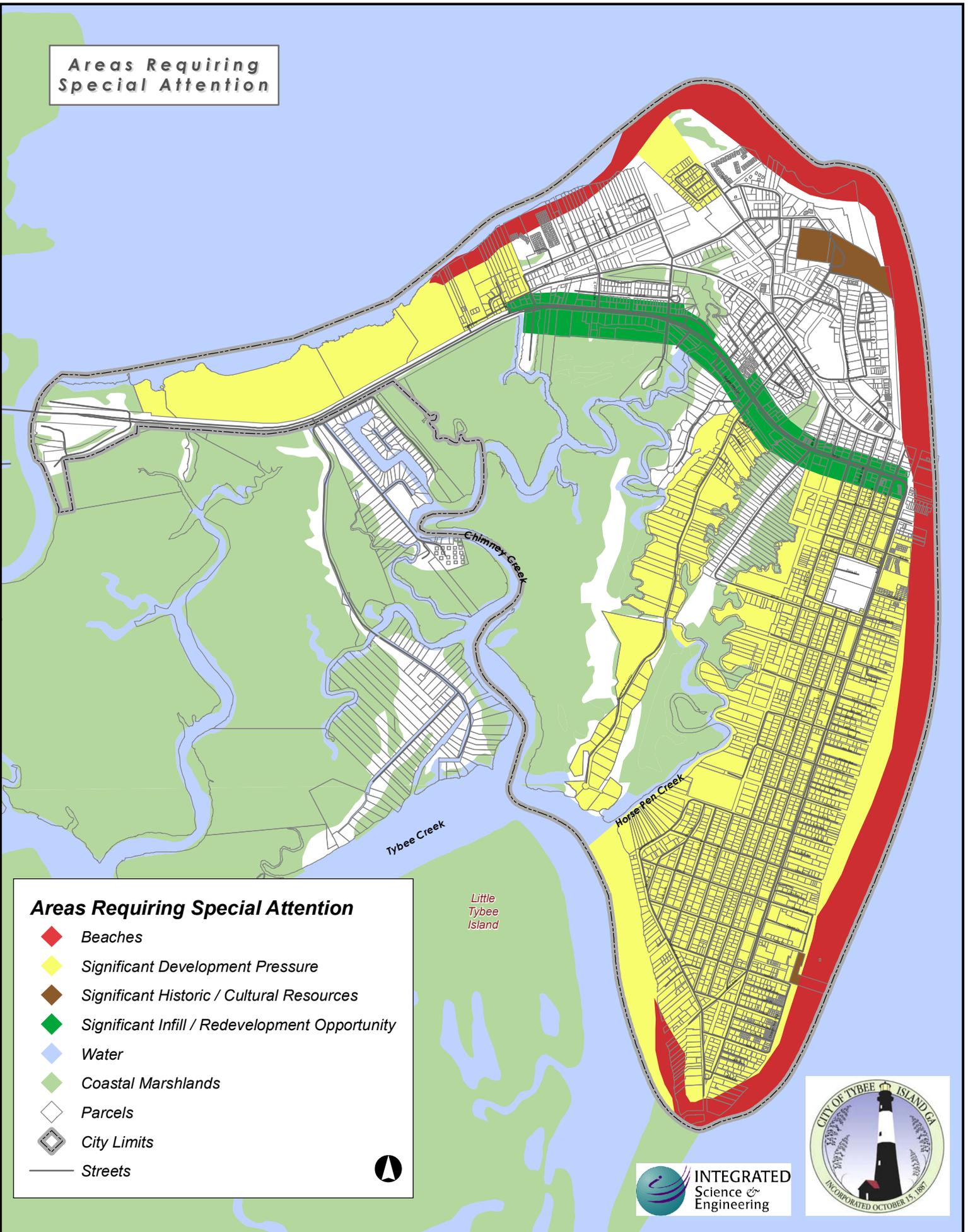
1.3.7 Infill Development Opportunities

The greatest potential for infill development on the island is along the Highway 80 corridor. This area currently consists of commercial development in the form of offices, retail establishments, and restaurants. The City will work with developers and provide incentives to encourage compatible infill development that matches the character of the area. The City will also take steps to discourage down-zoning in this area, which creates a significant negative impact on the vitality of this commercial district.

1.3.8 Areas of Significant Disinvestment and/or Under-Utilized Areas

There are no under-utilized lots or areas of significant disinvestment present on the island.

Areas Requiring Special Attention



Areas Requiring Special Attention

- ◆ Beaches
- ◆ Significant Development Pressure
- ◆ Significant Historic / Cultural Resources
- ◆ Significant Infill / Redevelopment Opportunity
- ◆ Water
- ◆ Coastal Marshlands
- Parcels
- City Limits
- Streets

Little Tybee Island

Tybee Creek

Chimney Creek

Horse Pen Creek



2. Issues & Opportunities

A truly effective Comprehensive Plan will not only identify issues faced by the community as it continues to develop, but will also provide solutions in the form of recommended land use policies, development standards, and community-based projects and programs. Part 110-12-1-.03 of the DCA rules for development of the Community Assessment requires the City of Tybee Island to identify potential issues and opportunities facing the City. Representatives of the City have worked together to identify issues and opportunities that are applicable to the City of Tybee Island. Additionally, the City has given ample consideration to objectives and strategies identified in other plans including the 1992 Comprehensive Plan and the Quality Growth Resource Team Report. This initial step has yielded a list of potential issues and opportunities for consideration during the public involvement phase of the planning process.

The City has organized the issues and opportunities by the major functional elements as defined in the Comprehensive Plan Rules. For each element, specific issues and related opportunities are presented. It is the hope of the City of Tybee Island that the list will be further researched and refined as the Community Participation program begins and Stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in the process.

2.1. Population

Long-Term Population:

Issues:

- There is a growing population of people over the age of 45.
- Rapidly rising land values have made real estate and existing property tax increasingly unaffordable.
- Some impacts related to the large seasonal population can be perceived as negative for permanent residents.

Seasonal Population:

Issues:

- The City must consider and provide facilities and services appropriate for daily visitors.
- There are not enough activities for tourists.
- Tourists are unaware of many of the activities and resources available on the island.

Opportunities:

- Develop informational/educational material to distribute vacation population about available activities/services/resources.
- Conduct a study to determine what types of tourists/visitors are coming to the island, and what types of services/commercial businesses they desire.

- Establish services and activities tailored to teens and seasonal visitors.
- Develop a tourism marketing campaign that focuses on drawing families to the island.
- Create better signage to direct people to the various activities on the island.
- Investigate the need to provide services/facilities tailored to an older, retired population.

2.2. Economic Development

Issues:

- It is difficult to draw/retain small businesses that rely on seasonal population.
- The off-season economy does not provide enough revenue to support small businesses.
- The City needs to be more proactive with encouraging commercial redevelopment projects in appropriate areas.
- The return on investment for redevelopment does not currently provide enough incentive.
- High property values is a serious obstacle for drawing new businesses and/or retaining existing businesses.

Opportunities:

- Develop economic development strategy that focuses on small business retention/recruitment and identifying/acquiring redevelopment properties.
- Provide incentives, such as tax breaks and marketing/advertising assistance, to retain existing business and to encourage new businesses to locate on Tybee Island.
- Explore the potential to provide financial assistance to small businesses that are affected by high property values.
- Explore potential incentives for commercial redevelopment projects.
- Consider the creation of a City-sponsored small business incubation center to allow for small business development and establishment.
- Seek participation from local business owners and developers to ensure their concerns are addressed in this plan.
- Coordinate and offer package deals for business conferences to better market activities/services available on the island.
- Develop a marketing strategy to attract tourists/visitors to the City during the off-season.
- Encourage the development of the eco-tourism segment of the economy that will attract visitors to the island in the off-season and provide an incentive for natural resources preservation.

2.3. Natural & Cultural Resources

Issues:

- Development has the potential to adversely impact ecological integrity, historic character, and cultural significance of community resources.
- There is no electronic inventory/database of historic structures in the City.
- There is a lack of support and incentive for historic restoration projects.
- Land development activities are increasing stormwater runoff, which can affect water quality, increase demand on the existing stormwater infrastructure, and create flooding problems.
- There are not sufficient recreational opportunities for local residents.
- There is no designated area for artists to gather and exhibit work.
- There is currently no public venue for the performing arts.
- Water supply is affected by the threat of saltwater intrusion in the Floridan Aquifer and continued population growth.
- Fecal coliform contamination has resulted in beach closings.
- Seasonal visitors do not necessarily understand their impacts on the natural environment, or how they help to preserve natural resources.
- Existing recreational activities, parks, and open space are not well connected.

Opportunities:

- Complete an inventory of historic structures in the City and use it to prioritize restoration goals and projects.
- Work with historic preservation groups to seek funding to assist with restoration projects.
- Provide incentives for developers/investors for restore vs. rebuild.
- Increase support for historic restoration by publicly showcasing successful projects.
- Support the City Art's Commission and the development of additional cultural resources, including the Post Theatre.
- Investigate and acquire property to be used as a public arts center/artist incubator center.
- Conduct an inventory of the City's natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Utilize this inventory to prioritize the acquisition and preservation of greenspace, open space/parks, and conservation easements.
- Ensure that existing natural resources ordinances are protective of these areas, and ensure that the City has existing staff resources to administer these ordinances.
- Develop a plan for the River's End Campground to attract visitors and provide passive recreational activities.
- Continue to secure grant funding to purchase and preserve greenspace and open space.
- Continue to implement a water conservation that meets the requirements of the Coastal Plan as well as additional measures such as gray water and retrofit on resale.
- Continue to create linkages between greenspace, parks, cultural or historic interest points, local trail systems, bike routes, and existing trails in-between neighborhoods.

- Work to improve the pedestrian environment to encourage more people to walk.
- Support the preservation of Battery Halleck.
- Continue to support the Tybee Island Marine Science Center as they plan and construct the new center at the proposed North Beach location.
- Continue to implement SWMP in compliance with the City's Phase I MS4 NPDES permit.
- Explore the potential to enhance the existing fresh water wetlands and coastal marshlands.
- Implement a Citywide fecal coliform monitoring program to help identify the source of the fecal coliform contamination.
- Implement a sanitary sewer investigation and maintenance program (that complies with NPDES requirements) to ensure that there are no leaks or seepage that may contribute to fecal coliform contamination.
- Provide education to seasonal residents related to natural resources protection including, but not limited to: recycling, water conservation, stormwater pollution, and respect of marine and marsh life.
- Develop and implement an environmentally sound beach/dune management plan.

2.4. Facilities & Services

Issues:

- The capacity of existing community facilities and utilities must be evaluated to ensure it is adequate for existing, as well as projected future year-round and seasonal population growth.
- Wastewater and water supply capacity must be evaluated to ensure that seasonal and year-round population is accommodated.
- Increasing demand on the Floridan Aquifer is causing saltwater intrusion that will likely affect the City's existing water resources in the next 50 to 100 years.
- Facilities and services targeted at tourists, retirees, and teenagers are needed.
- There is a need for more public restrooms around the beach area and shopping districts.
- New residents are not aware of available City facilities and services.

Opportunities:

- Activities and facilities that appeal to teenagers (seasonal and year-round) should be encouraged.
- Evaluate existing wastewater and water capacity and determine if additional capacity will be needed. If it is needed, the City should begin planning for this expansion.
- Assess the capacity of existing and future planned services and facilities, and utilize this information when permitting new development.
- Evaluate and plan for alternative water supply and wastewater treatment options including the feasibility of connecting to City of Savannah water and sewer lines.
- Implement Inflow & Infiltration and water conservation programs to more efficiently utilize existing wastewater capacity and water supply.

- Install more public restrooms around the beach and other highly concentrated pedestrian areas.
- Continue to implement the planned greenway/bikeway/multi-use trail as funding and property become available.
- Investigate the potential to restore some parts of the original Strand boardwalk.
- Produce educational packets for new residents and visitors that include information about City services and conservation techniques.
- Explore providing reuse water for irrigation as a water conservation measure.
- Investigate the development of a public pool.
- Create a program for the new gym that provides activities and classes that will appeal to the year-round and seasonal populations.
- Explore the potential to bury power lines.

2.5. Housing

Issues:

- Historic Tybee Island cottages are being demolished and replaced by residential units that are out of character with the architectures/density of the surrounding area.
- There needs to be a variety of housing options for people of varying income levels and life stages.
- Property values and property tax are becoming increasingly unaffordable.
- Housing is not affordable for people working in the services industry.
- The combination of height restrictions and floodplain restrictions has led to unappealing rooflines and architecture in some areas.

Opportunities:

- Allow for and encourage the development of a variety of housing types with a range of housing costs in appropriate areas.
- Identify and keep an electronic database of historic houses.
- Investigate tools and incentives to encourage the restoration of historic housing.
- Evaluate the establishment of a historic district overlay and associated development standards.
- Work to develop an affordable housing development for year-round rentals that would serve island workers.
- Explore potential for a boarding house-like structure.
- Investigate a program to develop cheaper housing that restricts large profits.
- Allow for multi-use development in commercial area that will provide apartments/condos for year-round rental or habitation.
- Consider a variance procedure to allow rooflines (not livable area) to exceed the 35-ft height limit in areas where floodplains restrict first floor development.

2.6. Land Use

Issues:

- The commercial area along Highway 80 has not been developed to its fullest potential, and existing commercial development adjacent to this area is encroaching on residential areas.
- Demand for island property is leading to higher-density developments within traditionally single-family neighborhoods.
- New development is not taking place in a manner that is consistent with the desired character of the various neighborhoods.
- Certain zoning classifications allow for high-density developments in inappropriate areas.

Opportunities:

- Evaluate the current zoning ordinance and ensure that it restricts developments that are out of sync with the character, architecture, and density of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Identify areas suited for multi-family development, and direct this type of development to these areas exclusively.
- Restrict down zoning in commercial areas.
- Allow upstairs residential in C-2 zones as long as the commercial is the predominate use.
- Restrict upstairs residential in C-2 zones to permanent rentals, or year-round habitation.
- Require future housing developments to abide by “Smart Growth” guidelines including greenspace preservation, new urbanism, mixed-use, and conservation development.

2.7. Transportation

Issues:

- Traffic congestion is a big issue during the tourism season.
- There is a lack of parking available during peak tourism season.
- Requirements for parking at seasonal vacation rentals are loosely defined.
- Fast moving traffic along Butler Avenue is not a safe environment for pedestrians.
- The pedestrian/biking environment needs improvement.
- Alternative forms of transportation to and from Tybee Island are lacking.
- Lack of public transportation/shuttle services around the island.
- Signage is not controlled well or designed in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

Opportunities:

- Implement a streetscape initiative to plant more trees on Butler Avenue.
- Consider implementation of vegetated median along Butler Avenue to ease traffic, make crossing safer for pedestrians, and to improve the aesthetic of the corridor.
- Identify alternative biking and walking routes and work to improve the pedestrian environment to encourage people to walk short distances rather than drive.
- Continue to develop the Tybee Greenway/Bikeway and connect it to McQueen's Trail.
- Acquire property easements and right-of way from property owners to complete the Tybee Island Greenway/Bikeway.
- Work to create an on island shuttle service.
- Investigate potential to offer an off-island public transportation system.
- Explore charging additional "hotel tax" to help fund a city subsidized island transportation system.
- If Highway 80 widening project is scheduled for implementation, ensure that a bike lane over the bridge is included in the project design and funding.
- Conduct a study that evaluates parking alternatives.
 - Explore alternative locations for a park and ride, i.e. remote parking and shuttle services to the island.
 - Require seasonal renters to obtain a permit if on-street parking is being utilized.
 - Investigate parking alignments along Butler Avenue that are more conducive to pedestrian crossing and traffic movement.
 - Identify additional parking areas on Tybee Island and explore attractive multi-level parking.
 - Consider the potential of an attractively designed multi-use public parking structure, potentially associated with hotel.
- Explore taking over control of Highway 80.
- Review and revise the existing sign ordinance to create design standards and a "theme" for signage along the roadways.
- Utilize the unopened road right-of-ways to create multi-use trails.

2.8. Intergovernmental Coordination

Issue:

- Tybee Island could benefit from more coordination with other local, county, and State governments/agencies, regional agencies, private agencies, the business community, and the public.

Opportunities:

- Tybee will need to work with other local governments to identify remote park and ride sites.
- Continue to participate in regional transportation planning efforts to work towards implementation of this objective.

3. Assessment of Quality Community Objectives

The following assessment was conducted to address the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), adopted by the Board of the DCA to highlight the development patterns and policies that will help local governments protect their unique cultural, natural and historic resources as their communities continue to grow. The assessment was modeled on the QCO Assessment tool created by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth. A status report is included below to illustrate the City's strengths and needs as they related to local zoning, ordinances, and policies. In most cases, the City has already begun to address the QCOs, and will continue to work towards fully achieving the quality growth goals set forth by the DCA.

3.1. Traditional Neighborhoods

“Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.”

The City of Tybee Island has a number of traditional neighborhoods dispersed throughout the City. The largest traditional neighborhood within the City is found within the “Inland Cottage Neighborhood” as illustrated in the Community Character map. This neighborhood contains a traditional grid street pattern with a mix of ranch homes and raised cottages typical of a beach community. The City supports redevelopment efforts within these areas and wishes to preserve the existing character of the neighborhood by encouraging new development to be consistent with existing neighborhood fabric.

Strengths:

- Small lot sizes prevent high-density development from intruding.
- Grid pattern makes for an easy transportation connection and pedestrian access to other areas of the City.

Needs:

- Streetscape improvements should be examined to make pedestrian movement safer.
- Current R-2 zoning classification should be evaluated and amended to ensure that it is not encouraging higher density development.
- Architectural and design standards have not been developed to ensure that future development/redevelopment is consistent with traditional styles.
- The City should provide incentives to encourage the restoration of existing historic structures.

3.2. Infill Development

“Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.”

While this QCO is more appropriate for those communities with large undeveloped tracts of land, the City of Tybee Island has identified the Highway 80 corridor as an area with the potential for commercial infill development. This area is the main access point to the island and is already experiencing infill development and redevelopment in the past. Single-family homes along this corridor have been redeveloped into restaurants, shops, and offices. There are also a number of single lots dispersed throughout the City that have the potential for infill development.

Strength:

- There are a number of successful redevelopment and infill development projects on the island.

Needs:

- The City needs to complete an inventory of vacant buildings and properties to target for redevelopment and/or infill development.
- The City should provide incentives for redevelopment and infill development projects along the Highway 80 corridor consistent with this plan.
- The City needs to prevent the down-zoning of property along the Highway 80 corridor because it adversely impacts the vitality of this commercial area. More neighborhood commercial development is necessary to provide a destination for shoppers and to create more pedestrian traffic to support the commercial businesses.

3.3. Sense of Place

“Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment”

The City of Tybee Island contains a significant number of unique features and attractions that add to the island’s sense of place. When crossing the Lazaretto Creek Bridge onto the island, visitors know they have arrived in the City of Tybee Island. The surrounding coastal marshland, beaches, and water contribute to the sense of place on the island. The architectural styles of the raised cottages and historical landmarks also help define the City. The Strand District is the focal point, or “main street” of the community. This area contains a wealth of resources for visitors that include shopping, restaurants, beach access, the Pavilion, etc. A revitalization and beautification effort in this area will be a great benefit to the City by enhancing the island’s sense of place.

Strengths:

- The City already contains a significant amount of unique features and attractions.
- The City's resources and defining features attract a sizable tourist base during the summers.
- There are an abundance of natural resources that add to the island's sense of place.

Needs:

- There is a need for revitalization and façade improvements in the Strand District.
- The City needs better and clearer signage to identify resources available to visitors.
- The City should create better pedestrian connections between island features.

3.4. Transportation Alternatives

“Alternatives to transportation by automobile (including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities) should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.”

The City of Tybee Island has a large percentage of residents commuting to work outside of the City. Due to a need for carpooling, these people are mainly traveling alone. The lack of convenient public transportation options leads to more traffic congestion on the island. As a beach community with large numbers of seasonal visitors, safe pedestrian mobility is increasingly more important. The high volumes of seasonal visitors cause a significant increase in the amount of pedestrian traffic around the City. Additionally, the year-round and seasonal populations enjoy activities around the island that involve biking, walking, etc. The City is dedicated to providing and creating a pedestrian/bicycling environment that is safe and easily accessible to both seasonal and permanent residents.

Strengths:

- There is an existing demand for pedestrian/bicycling opportunities.
- A network of bike paths and multi-use trails exists or is planned within the City.
- The City has begun acquiring land for a path along the north side of Highway 80.

Needs:

- The City can better signage to notify vehicles of high pedestrian areas.
- Improvements need to be made along Butler Avenue to create a safer area for pedestrian traffic.
- Sidewalk improvements should be included in new road and development projects around the City.
- The City should continue to support the development/implementation of the Tybee Island Bikeway and Multi-use Trail.
- The City should investigate alternative transportation options including an island-wide shuttle/trolley system, an off-island transit system, and a park and ride operation.

3.5. Regional Identity

“Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.”

The City of Tybee Island is part of Chatham County and shares a close connection with the surrounding communities in the area. The intertwined history of Tybee Island, Savannah, and the other jurisdictions has created a wealth of events and landmarks that help identify the entire area. Tybee Island is also the northern most barrier island in the State of Georgia. The barrier islands are remarkable examples of the unique coastal ecosystem in the State of Georgia and provide residents and visitors with a wide range of activities and opportunities.

Strengths:

- The combined characteristics of Tybee Island and the surrounding communities offer a variety of activities for residents and visitors alike.
- The tourist industry is already well established in coastal Georgia, which supports Tybee Island’s reliance on this industry.

Needs:

- The City needs to coordinate with the City of Savannah to better market available activities in the region.
- Improvements to signage along Highway 80 to better direct visitors to island landmarks.
- Educational materials should be developed to identify Tybee Island and regional landmarks and to tie them to the history and character of the region.

3.6. Heritage Preservation

“The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.”

The City recognizes the importance of its historic features as a means of providing more than just a destination for tourists. There are currently three nationally designated Historic Districts within the City, including Fort Screven, the Tybee Island Lighthouse, and the Tybee Pier & Pavilion. While the major historical landmarks such as the Tybee Lighthouse and Fort Screven are clearly defined, the historic homes within the designated districts are not. The inventory of historic structures will assist the City in calling attention to these sites.

Strengths:

- The City currently has three nationally designated historic districts.
- The history of the region creates an added value for the historic features located on the island.

Needs:

- People need to be better educated with regard to the historic structures on the island.
- An inventory of historic structures needs to be completed.
- Restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures needs to be encouraged.

3.7. Open Space Preservation

“New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.”

There is a limited amount of dedicated open space or Public Parks on the island. There is also a limited amount of space available for preservation in the future. However, the City is constantly seeking grants and funding assistance to preserve additional greenspace. The City is currently working to acquire a piece of property on the north side of Highway 80 for a passive park and is assisting Chatham County with the preservation of Battery Halleck, located outside the city limits south of Highway 80. Both sites are primarily coastal marshlands, but offer limited upland areas that will provide scenic views of the local waterways, marshlands, and historic landmarks. The City has also been working to acquire easements along the north side of Highway 80 to allow for connection to the McQueen’s Island Trail.

Strengths:

- Development is restricted in the coastal marshlands, which accounts for a large percentage of land area in the City.
- The City has recently acquired the River’s End Campground, and will ensure its perpetual preservation as publicly available open space.
- The City is working with regional and state entities to preserve land both north and south of Highway 80.
- The City has established a plan for a bikeway/multi-use trail that will run from Lazaretto Creek Bridge all the way to the Tybee Island Pier & Pavilion.

Needs:

- Future developments should be required to incorporate pockets of greenspace connected to a regional network of open spaces.
- The City should inventory environmental sensitive areas not appropriate for development and work to permanently protect these areas.

3.8. Environmental Protection

“Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.”

Because environmental conservation is vital to the overall quality of life in any city, Tybee Island continues to make protection of natural resources a high priority within the community. The City contains beaches, marshlands, waterways, the ocean, and a variety of different plants and animals that rely on the health of these resources for survival. As a result, the City of Tybee Island and the residents have taken an active role in the protection of these environmental resources.

Strengths:

- The City has buffer requirements that restrict development from taking place in environmentally sensitive areas.
- There are a number of successful local and state programs that support local wildlife management.
- The City is working to set standards for marsh buffer protection.
- There is a curbside recycling program on the island.
- The City encourages water conservation.
- The island is home to a variety of different bird species and is identified regionally as a bird watching destination.
- The City has a tree ordinance.

Needs:

- The City should encourage the preservation of old growth trees and encourage new tree and native vegetative plantings.
- The City should develop a Water Conservation Ordinance.
- The City should ensure that local environmental protection regulations are enforced.
- The City should develop a marsh buffer ordinance that establishes a buffer and identifies uses allowable and prohibited within this buffer.
- The City should develop educational materials related to the island’s natural resources.
- The City should promote these resources to help support/grow the eco-tourism industry.

3.9. Growth Preparedness

“Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.”

The City of Tybee Island has been working to accurately assess the need for new infrastructure and economic development programs that accommodate the City’s desired growth patterns.

Strengths:

- Population projections, both year-round and seasonal, have been forecasted for the City for the next 20 years, and these numbers will be referenced when making infrastructure decisions.
- There are limited areas of land available for new development.

Needs:

- The City needs to better document trends in tourism to accurately determine the number of seasonal visitors and to assess their needs and desired services.
- As the existing wastewater treatment plant and water supply system near capacity, the City will need to explore expansion options and/or other alternatives.
- The City needs to evaluate its transportation system and parking availability as it relates to the significant increase in summer population.

3.10. Appropriate Businesses

“The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.”

Tybee Island has had a difficult time in retaining small businesses due to high property values, property taxes, and a seasonal stream of customers and associated revenue. In addition, down-zoning and vacancy in commercial districts has robbed these areas of the vitality necessary to support a commercial district. These small businesses are dependant on the tourist industry and support the tourist industry, and this relationship is essential to the economy of Tybee Island as a whole.

Strengths:

- There is a strong presence of service related businesses on the island.
- Professional businesses such as doctors’ and real estate offices have been opening, which is leading to a more diverse set of businesses on the island.

- The Strand District and Highway 80 have the potential to be focal points for retail and service related businesses.

Needs:

- The City needs to establish an Economic Development Strategy that will focus on retention and recruitment of small businesses appropriate for the City's demographics, infrastructure, and long-term vision.
- The City needs to develop an incentive packet in order to recruit and retain the desired types of businesses.
- There is a need for more businesses that can cater to the year-round residents, as well as the seasonal population.
- There is a need for more services and facilities closer to the beach (i.e. vendors, restroom facilities, etc.).

3.11. Employment Options

“A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.”

Due to the lack of large tracts of commercial and industrial sites, the City does not have a wide range of employment options. The majority of employment opportunities on the island are found in the retail and service related industry. However, due to the City's unique character as an island community and tourist destination, this QCO is not a priority, nor it is a realistic objective for the City.

3.12. Housing Choices

“A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.”

The City of Tybee Island has a variety of housing options, yet is lacking in affordable units. Distributed around the island is a mix of low-density single-family residential homes, multi-family residential, townhouses, high-density condos, and apartments. The City is working to ensure that redevelopment and new development of residential housing is consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood. The City is also aware that housing continues to become increasingly unaffordable, especially for people who work in the service industries on the island.

Strengths:

- A variety of different housing types exist throughout the City.
- There is a strong demand for island property and housing.
- A significant amount of revenue is generated from vacation rentals.

Needs:

- Income ranges are not increasing at the same pace as the price of housing.
- There is a need for more affordable housing for people that work on the island.
- The City needs to develop policies and regulations to ensure that new housing is consistent with the existing neighborhood fabric.
- The City needs to develop a set of guidelines to illustrate the desired types of development for different areas within the City.

3.13. Educational Opportunities

“Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.”

There are a number of colleges, universities, and technical training opportunities in Chatham County. Residents of Tybee Island have relatively easy access to these resources. There is also a large population of local artists in the City of Tybee. The City is working with the local arts community to identify and develop a public arts center in the North Beach area of the City, where classes would be offered.

Strength:

- Training and educational opportunities are available to residents of Tybee Island in the Chatham County area, including colleges and universities, satellite campuses, and continuing education classes.

Needs:

- The City should explore the opportunity to provide continuing educational classes on the island through the Tybee Island Marine Science Center, the YMCA, and the Tybee Island Gym.
- The City should continue to work with the Arts council to provide public spaces for art classes.

3.14. Local Self-Determination

“Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.”

Residents in the City of Tybee Island have taken an extremely active role in the various issues affecting the island. City government offers a number of different venues for residents to be directly involved and provide feedback in the decision making process. The City operates a cable access channel and maintains a website that allows citizens the opportunity

to learn about the development process and other government operations. There are also a number of active citizen groups and homeowners' associations that meet on a regular basis to go over the current issues on the island.

Strengths:

- The City has a process in place to make it simple for the public to stay informed on island issues.
- The City has a public awareness element in the comprehensive planning process. This element has a number of different levels of participation so that citizens can find a comfortable level of involvement in the process.
- Residents are active and organized with regard to issues affecting the community.

Need:

- The City must ensure that opportunities exist for all residents and property owners to be involved in the decision making process.

3.15. Regional Cooperation

“Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.”

The City of Tybee Island has a good working relationship with the City of Savannah, Chatham County, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, and other neighboring jurisdictions.

Strengths:

- The City works closely with neighboring cities and the County where applicable.
- A cooperative relationship exists with the City and other adjacent cities.

Need:

- The City will need to coordinate its planning efforts with those of the County to ensure consistency on overlapping issues and opportunities.

4. Data Assessment Summary

The following section summarizes the major findings of the Data Assessment performed in accordance with DCA requirements. For a full discussion of the Data Assessment including maps, figures and tables, please see the Technical Addendum to this document.

4.1. Population

4.1.1 Population Projections

Whether a city is experiencing rapid growth or steady decline, population projections provide valuable information and can be used as a planning tool to assist local governments and agencies in making future decisions. In an effort to provide a solid database for the Comprehensive Plan, the City of Tybee Island has developed a detailed and accurate population estimate utilizing the US Census 2000 information provided by the DCA and the City's Certificates of Occupancy (CO) database for new residential units.

Table 1. City of Tybee Island - Population Projections

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Tybee Island	2,240	2,541	2,842	3,117	3,392	3,536	3,832	4,100	4,346	4,564	4,746
Rate of increase		13.44%	11.85%	9.68%	8.82%	4.25%	8.37%	7.00%	6.00%	5.00%	4.00%
New residents		301	301	275	275	144	296	268	246	217	183

Source: DCA, City of Tybee Island

Population figures for 1980 through 2000 were gathered from the US Census 2000 information. In order to accurately estimate Tybee Island's population in 2005, the number of residential COs issued between 2001 and 2005 was multiplied by the average household size as established by the 2000 Census. The total number of residential units issued COs on Tybee Island during that timeframe was 95. In order to account for those new residential units that would primarily be used for vacation rentals (and would therefore not add to the additional year-round population count), this number was reduced by 27% (in accordance with the current percentage of residential units used for vacation rentals) to 69 new residential units. This number was multiplied by the average household size (2.07) to determine the population growth between 2001 and 2005. Based on this methodology, the City's population increase between 2001 and 2005 was 144 people or 4.25%.

To estimate the population growth between 2005 and 2010, a similar methodology was utilized. The number of residential units issued COs in 2006 was 96. Based on the average number of new residential units issued COs between 2001 and 2006, it was further assumed that approximately 100 additional residential units would be constructed between 2007 and 2010. Assuming that the same percentage of units is inhabited by year-round residents and

that the average household size would remain the same, this would equate to a population growth of 296 from 2005 to 2010.

To estimate the population growth from 2010 through 2030, it was assumed that the growth rate would decrease due to the limited amount of developable land remaining on Tybee Island. The rate of decrease in the population growth percentage was estimated to be approximately equal to the rate of decrease observed in population growth between 1980 and 2000.

The table below compares a number of different methods for projecting future population to the population projection included in Table 1. Included in this table is the DCA projection, which assumes that the historic growth patterns established during the 1980, 1990 and 2000 Censuses continue in the future. In addition, a population projection from a study performed by Georgia Tech is included, which looks more closely at local population trends and land use patterns. As is evidenced by the table below, the DCA projection anticipates that the same number of new residents will be added to Tybee every five years. This constant growth rate is unlikely to continue in the future due the limited amount of developable land. On the other hand, the Georgia Tech study anticipates that the rate of growth will decrease at an even greater rate than anticipated by the City of Tybee Island’s population figures.

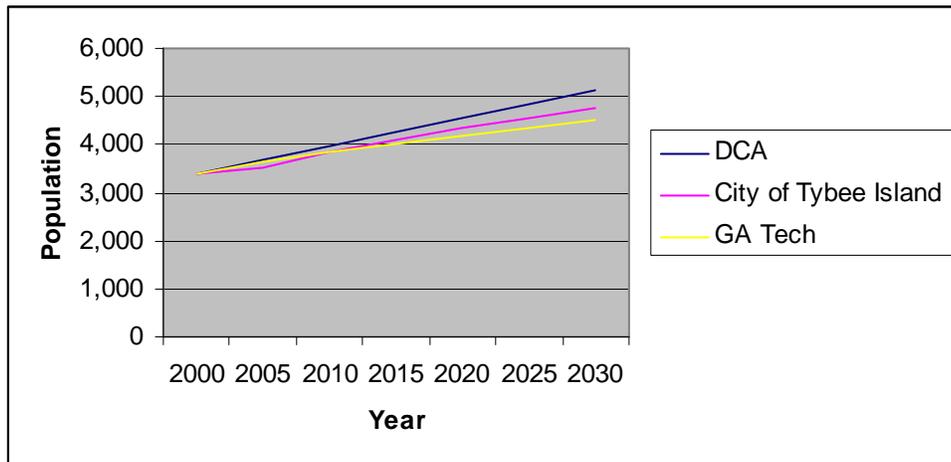
Table 2. Population Projections

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
DCA Projections	3,392	3,680	3,968	4,256	4,544	4,832	5,120
City of Tybee Island (COs)	3,392	3,536	3,832	4,100	4,346	4,564	4,746
GA Tech Study	3,392	3,626	3,832	4,021	4,193	4,347	4,495

Source: DCA, City of Tybee Island, Georgia Tech

The chart below graphically displayed the different projection methods with existing population estimates developed by the DCA and the regional Georgia Tech population study.

Figure 4. Population Projection Comparison



4.1.2 Year-Round Population vs. Seasonal Population

The City of Tybee Island has a unique set of circumstances in that a significant percentage of the population is seasonal. An inventory of seasonal rental properties was conducted as part of the Community Assessment element of the Comprehensive Plan. As shown in the table below, the City of Tybee Island contains 3,091 residential properties. This includes single-family homes, multi-family homes, condos, etc. It has been determined that a total of 852 of these properties are seasonal rentals. This accounts for nearly 27% of the total amount of residential property on the island. As a result, the population on the island varies greatly throughout the year.

Table 3. City of Tybee Island Rental Properties

Total Residential Properties	3,091
Total Rental Properties	852
Percentage of Rental Properties	27.6%

Source: City of Tybee Island

During the summer months, when seasonal rental units, hotels and motels are filled to or near capacity, there is a significant increase in population. Table 4 indicates that a seasonal population increase of approximately 2,702 tourists/visitors is possible (assuming all rentals are at full capacity with an average of two visitors per rental unit.) This represents a population increase of approximately 76% for a total population of 6,238 during high volume summer months.

Conversely, during off-season months, the population on the island is much lower (3,536). This trend makes it difficult for many small businesses because they become dependant on revenue generated from the seasonal population, and have trouble surviving the off-seasons months. This trend also creates an issue for year-round residents as many of the services and businesses on Tybee Island are tailored more toward the seasonal tourist market. Lastly, the City must understand the seasonal influx of residents in order to adequately plan for future facilities and services including wastewater capacity, water supply, and public safety. All of these services must be able to accommodate the additional population during the summer months.

Table 4. Seasonal Population Increase

Type of Seasonal Rental	Number of Units
Residential Seasonal Rental Units	852
Atlantis Hotel	11
DeSoto Hotel	37
Dunes Inn	53
Howard Johnson's Admirals Inn	41
Ocean Plaza Beach Resort	200
Royal Palm Motel	22
Sandcastle Inn	60
Sea Breeze Inn	60
Tybee Beachside Inn	15
Total Units	1,351
Seasonal Population (2 people per unit)	2,702
Population Increase	76.41%

Source: City of Tybee Island

The City is highly dependant on the tourism industry, and it will be the responsibility of the City to work with the business community to find a way to provide services for both permanent and seasonal residents, and to retain and attract small businesses.

4.1.3 Population by Age Projection

The population by age projection (Table below) shows increases in the following age groups: 35-44, 45-54, and 55-64 (highlighted below.) Over all, the increase in the population combined with the increase in the percent of population that is 45 years old or over (62% of the population by 2030) will result in an even more dramatic increase in the number of older adults. It is important to be aware of this shift in demographics when planning for the future facilities and services.

Table 5. Population by Age Projections (percentage)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
0 – 4	5.6%	5.3%	5.0%	3.9%	3.0%	2.6%	2.3%	2.0%	1.7%	1.5%	1.3%
5 – 13	10.8%	10.3%	9.9%	8.9%	8.0%	7.6%	7.2%	6.9%	6.6%	6.4%	6.2%
14 – 17	5.0%	4.1%	3.4%	3.1%	2.8%	2.5%	2.2%	2.0%	1.7%	1.6%	1.4%
18 – 20	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%	2.7%	2.2%	2.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%
21 – 24	6.9%	5.4%	4.2%	3.7%	3.2%	2.7%	2.2%	1.8%	1.4%	1.1%	0.8%
25 – 34	17.0%	15.9%	15.0%	12.5%	10.4%	9.4%	8.5%	7.8%	7.2%	6.6%	6.1%
35 – 44	9.9%	14.4%	17.8%	17.1%	16.4%	17.4%	18.3%	19.0%	19.6%	20.2%	20.7%
45 – 54	10.2%	11.3%	12.2%	16.7%	20.5%	22.1%	23.4%	24.6%	25.6%	26.5%	27.3%
55 – 64	11.8%	11.1%	10.4%	12.9%	14.9%	15.4%	15.8%	16.2%	16.5%	16.8%	17.0%
65+	19.2%	18.9%	18.7%	18.6%	18.5%	18.4%	18.3%	18.2%	18.1%	18.1%	18.0%

Source: DCA

4.2. Economic Development

4.2.1 Place of Employment

Table 6 below shows the percentage of the total population in the City of Tybee Island that works within or outside of the City limits. These numbers are derived as a percentage of the total population on the island and are based on information from the 2000 Census Bureau.

The percentage of people that work in the City has remained constant between 1990 and 2000. The employment options within the City are primarily related to the service industry that caters to the many tourists that visit the island annually. As a result, this percentage of people that work in the City has remained the same despite the increase in population. Conversely, the percentage of people that work outside the City is rising. This is related to the fact that the island does not offer a great deal of other employment options for residents. As the population continues to increase, the amount of people working outside of the island will likely also increase.

Table 6. Tybee Island’s Employment Information

Category	Tybee Island		Chatham County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total Population	2,842	3,392	216,935	232,048
Worked in City Limits	13.0%	13.0%	42.5%	42.4%
Worked outside of City Limits	30.0%	38.2%	1.2%	1.6%

Source: DCA

The City of Tybee Island keeps records of job numbers by major employer for several business and public entities within the City. These numbers, presented in the table below, show that employment opportunities in Tybee Island are highly seasonal. While this is not a complete listing of all employers in the City, it provides clear evidence of the City’s dependence on the tourism industry.

Table 7. Tybee Island’s Major Employers

Major Employers	In Season	Off Season
Savannah Beach/Oceanside Nursing Home	135	135
Ocean Plaza	125	55
City of Tybee	85	105
Beachside Colony	40	23
Tybee Market	15	15
Chu’s Convenience	18	18
Tybee Historical Society	15	15
Oceanfront Rentals	13	13
Total	446	379

Source: City of Tybee Island

4.2.2 Commuting Patterns

According to the 2000 Census Bureau, the majority of residents either drive alone or carpool to work. Not even half a percent of residents rely on public transportation as a mean of traveling to work. This can be related to the fact that convenient public transportation does not exist on the island. The downtown Savannah area is very pedestrian friendly and traffic congestion is not an issue to the same degree as it is in many other cities. As part of the comprehensive planning process, the City of Tybee will evaluate alternative transit options to transport residents and service workers to and from the downtown Savannah area.

Table 8. Commuting Patterns

	Tybee Island	Chatham County
Car, truck, or van - - drove alone	83.7%	76.4%
Car, truck, or van - - carpooled	8.3%	13.4%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	0.2%	3.2%
Walked	1.7%	2.9%
Other means	2.0%	1.6%
Worked at home	4.0%	2.5%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	26.6	22.3

Source: DCA

4.3. Household Income & Cost of Housing

Household income is the total income generated by all wage earners within one dwelling unit. Average household income is the annual income, in dollar amount, averaged between all households in Tybee Island. Average household incomes in Tybee are slightly higher than those in Chatham County as a whole and lower than the statewide average. In the year 1990, average household income for Tybee Island was less than that of the County and State. The City experienced an increase in average income of nearly 130% between the year 1990 and 2000, which put the City above the County’s average income level. It is likely that this trend will continue for the City as property values in the beach community continues to rise.

Table 9. Average Household Income

Average Household Income (in dollars)			
Jurisdiction	1990	2000	% Increase
Tybee Island	\$30,300	\$69,159	128.2%
Chatham County	\$34,078	\$53,742	57.7%
Georgia	\$36,810	\$80,077	117.5%

Housing costs and average rental costs throughout Georgia are on the rise as evidenced in the table below. However, the City of Tybee Island has experienced a tremendous increase in average property values (150%), while the State of Georgia and Chatham County had an increase in average property values of 57% and 52% respectively.

Table 10. Housing & Rental Costs

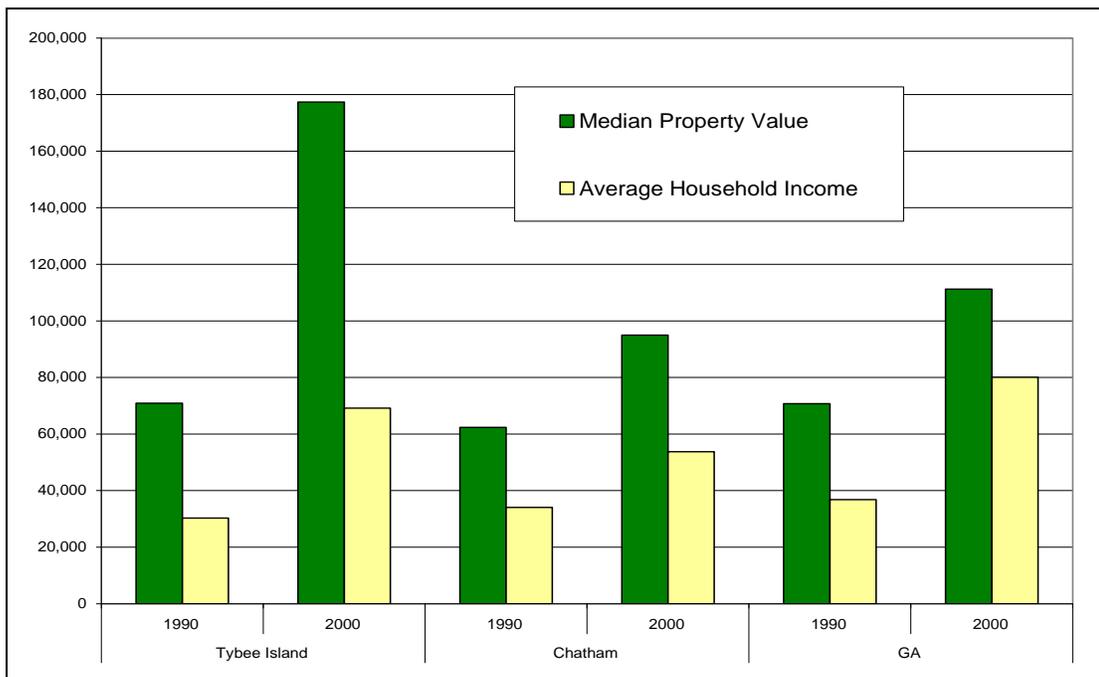
Category	Tybee Island			Chatham			Georgia		
	1990	2000	% Growth	1990	2000	% Growth	1990	2000	% Growth
Median property value	70,900	177,400	150.2%	62,400	95,000	52.2%	70,700	111,200	57.3%
Median rent	511	663	29.7%	406	589	45.1%	433	613	41.6%

Housing cost (in dollars)

The average household income is approximately \$70,000/per year according to the 2000 Census. Typically, it is most favorable when the average housing cost is less than twice the average household income. However, the trend evident in the data above indicates that property on Tybee Island is becoming less affordable when compared to the average household income, since the average household income increased by 128% and the median property value increased by 150% between 1990 and 2000. This indicates that homes were less affordable on Tybee Island in 2000 than they were in 1990. In 2004, Chatham County Tax Digest calculated the average sale price of homes on Tybee Island at \$455,851. This number more accurately represents the increasing value of property on the island and better supports the notion that property is becoming less affordable.

The figure below compares the average household income with median property value for the City of Tybee Island, Chatham County, and the State of Georgia.

Figure 5. Comparison of Average Household Income with Median Property Value



4.4. Public Facilities

4.4.1 Water System

There are 2,880 metered residential and 103 metered commercial customers served by the City of Tybee Island's water system. In 2006, 19.5% of total water consumption was by commercial users. The primary source of raw water supply consists of three wells, which are drilled into the Upper Floridan Aquifer. The City's current water withdrawal permit is 0.96 MGD for the daily average and 1.6 MGD for a monthly average.

The City of Tybee Island participated in the 2005 update of the Chatham County Water Supply Management Plan. The average annual usage in 2004, as reported in this Plan, was 0.887 MGD. Based on the average annual usage and the number of customers, the average per capita usage in the City of Tybee Island was calculated to be 216.7 GPD, although this number is deceptively high since the total water usage includes commercial, as well as residential customers and also reflects to seasonal influx of tourists. The City of Tybee Island is actively engaged in a Water Conservation Program, and has been awarded a Water First Certification for their water resources protection efforts. The City's water conservation program includes compliance with the State's outdoor water schedule, distribution of low flow plumbing kits, and shallow wells for irrigation.

The Water Supply Plan Update reported that the average daily per capital usage in Chatham County as a whole was approximately 136 GPD, which was reduced by 5 GPD since the Plan was last updated in 2000. This decrease was realized despite a countywide population increase, which provides that the water conservation measures set forth in the Water Supply Plan have effectively reduced water usage in Chatham County.

Assuming that the City's average daily water usage is 0.887 MGD, but the City is permitted for 0.96 MGD, there is approximately 73,000 GPD of capacity remaining under the existing water withdrawal permit. If the average per capital usage is 216 GPD, the system has existing capacity to serve an additional 338 residents. To put this in perspective, the City of Tybee Island anticipates adding an additional 564 in the next 10 years. This does not account for the additional capacity necessary to serve an increased number of summer residents.

In light of these water use projections, the City must continue to improve system efficiency and promote water conservation. These measures will allow the City to "create" additional capacity within the existing system. However, based on the limited amount of additional capacity remaining, it would be prudent for the City to begin investigating alternative water supply sources and planning for future water supply. Such planning becomes even more pertinent, when considered in light of the threat of saltwater intrusion in the Upper Floridan Aquifer. Current projections based on current level of pumping within the aquifer, estimate that the City of Tybee Island's well may become salty within 100 years.

4.4.2 Sanitary Sewer

Approximately 2,862 residences are served by the City of Tybee Island sanitary sewer system, which is composed of 13 wastewater lift stations that lift the water to elevations required for flow by gravity to the City's 1.15 MGD wastewater treatment facility. The treated wastewater is discharged to the Atlantic Ocean. The City is constantly upgrading the sanitary sewer transfer facilities to meet the growing needs of Tybee Island.

When planning for the sanitary sewer system, engineers typically estimate that approximately 80% of water supply used per capita will be returned to the wastewater system. In the City of Tybee Island, this would equate to approximately 173 GPD of wastewater generated per capita. Again, this number must be considered in light of the per capita water supply estimate that incorporates commercial and domestic usage and also accounts for the seasonal increase in population. Based on a per capita usage of 173 GPD, the existing wastewater treatment facility has the capacity to serve 6647 residents. While this number may seem significantly larger than existing and future population numbers, it is important to remember that the summer influx of tourist increases the population by as much as 76%. The city does have a seasonal discharge permit that allows for higher flows during summer months to accommodate the tourist population.

4.4.3 Storm Sewer System

The stormwater drainage system on Tybee Island is comprised of a series of pipes, swales, and ditches that convey the runoff from the public right-of-ways to the Back River, dunes, and marshes. There are currently 13 new projects on the Capital Improvement List and the City is pursuing a GIS inventory of the municipal separate storm sewer system to better address current and future needs.

The City of Tybee Island has a Phase I NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit to operate their drainage system. This permit was most recently renewed in 2005, and the City's SWMP was updated in association with the reissuance of the permit. The revised SWMP includes programs that address public education, MS4 operations & maintenance, development regulation, water quality monitoring, inspections, and municipal good housekeeping.

4.4.4 Parks & Recreation

The City contains two significant parks that account for a total of 13 acres of land. Memorial Park is a 4.5-acre space located near City Hall along Butler Avenue. This park offers a number of activities such as tennis courts, sand volleyball, and basketball courts. The park also contains a playground for children, a lighted pavilion, a dog park, and public restroom facilities.

Jaycee Park is approximately nine acres and is located in the North Beach area. The park contains a soccer field, softball field, and a concession stand with public restroom facilities. Jaycee Park also has a jogging trail, gazebo, basketball court, children's playground, and a scenic meandering waterway.

The City of Tybee Island operates the Rivers End Campground and RV Park located in the North Beach area of the island. The park was acquired by the City in 2006 in an effort to ensure the preservation of the area. The park contains approximately 100 campsites that include full hook-ups with sewer, free cable, water and electric only, and primitive tent sites. The park is open year-round and offers a swimming pool and screened pavilion.

4.4.5 Other Facilities

The following list identifies some other facilities that are available to residents and tourists on Tybee Island:

- The Youmans-Solomon Complex (the gym). The gym was built in 2004 next to the old school in Memorial Park. The building is 10,534 square feet with offices, restrooms and showers, and a concession stand.
- Post Theater. The theater was originally built in 1930 and is owned currently by the Friends of the Tybee Theater. It is located on Van Horne and the group intends to operate the building as a theater when the renovations are complete.
- The Teen Center. The Teen Center was originally built in 1910, and sits adjacent to Jaycee Park. It is 2,900 square feet and has ping-pong and pool tables for the teens.
- The Guard House. The Tybee Island Community Center was built in 1905. The facility contains a great room, large meeting room, full working kitchen, and a large outside area with picnic tables. The building is 3,200 square feet, 2,320 square feet are heated and 680 are porches. The City uses the building as a meeting house, a polling place, and for various citizen groups such as the Tybee Island Bridge Club and the Tybee Island Beautification Committee. It is currently being remodeled.
- Tybee Island Pier/Pavilion. The Pier and Pavilion are located at the end of Tybrisa Street. These features are an island focal point and offer a variety of uses to both residents and tourists. On the premises are picnic tables, a snack bar, and public restrooms. Aside from offering fantastic views, the area also functions as a meeting place and plays host to a number of special events. The pavilion can be rented for weddings, family reunions, and other social events. The original Tybrisa Pavilion was built in 1891 by the Central Georgia Railroad and was a well known destination for both day-trippers and seasonal visitors. However, the original Pavilion was destroyed by fire in 1967. Construction of the existing Pavilion was completed in 1996.

4.5. *Natural Resources*

The City of Tybee Island is approximately 3.2 square miles or 2,061 acres and like many coastal communities, the City contains a unique array of natural resources. The entire City of Tybee Island falls within the boundaries of the FEMA 100-year flood zone. Coastal marshlands and beaches account for a significant percentage of the total area on the island. Collectively, these resources represent 35% of the City area with coastal marshlands totaling roughly 450 acres and beaches 260 acres. There are roughly 30 miles of streams and waterways in the City. These features add to the diverse habitat present in the community.

The beach, dune and marsh ecosystems are complex, intricately interconnected, and provide important habitat for many species of birds and animals. The coastal marshlands are home to many species of wading birds including herons, egrets, ibis, and storks as well as small mammals and reptiles, such as the Diamond Back Terrapin. The beaches provide habitat and/or a migration rest stop for shorebirds and seabirds including the black skimmer, oyster catcher, sandpipers and plovers. The beaches are also an important nesting ground for several species of threatened and endangered sea turtles such as Loggerheads and Leatherbacks.

Thanks to the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act, marshes cannot be filled or destroyed. Coastal estuaries provide important habitat for oysters and other shellfish, shrimp, crab, and act as nurseries for many species of fish. Populations of wading birds and small mammals depend on these species for food. Unfortunately, development adjacent to the marsh can have negative impacts. Non-point source pollution from stormwater runoff can impair water quality in the coastal estuaries, which in turn can adversely affect commercial and recreational fisheries that depend on the species listed above. Through public education and regulatory ordinances, the City of Tybee Island will continue to work to monitor and control erosion and sedimentation, stormwater system discharges, and other forms of non point source pollution that can negatively impact the coastal marshland ecosystem.

The beaches, dunes, and coastal marshes are protected by state laws but the maritime forests and brushlands above the intertidal line (mean high sea level or 5.6 ft.) are not. Maritime forests can be found on Tybee Island and nearby barrier islands and back barrier island (*coll. Hammocks*.) These habitats contain evergreen forests of pine, palms, live and laurel oaks, magnolias, and a dense understory of ever green shrubs and palmettos. Brushlands are located between the maritime forests and the coastal marshlands. These habitats can be identified by the presence of wax-myrtle and southern red cedar. This ecosystem provides essential habitat for many species of birds, small and large mammals, and reptiles.

Tybee Island is extensively developed and much of the original natural habitat is gone. While canopy trees have been preserved in many locations, the understory that is part of the complete ecosystem has been removed. Fortunately, some of the original maritime forest remains on Tybee. The city has established several public nature preserves or parks to preserve the remaining maritime forests, including the Sally Pearce Nature Trail, Blue Heron Park, and the Rivers End Campground. The Rosewood Painted Bunting Preserve is a mixed habitat of pine and wax myrtle adjacent to the dune system. This preserve is a breeding

location for the Painted Bunting, considered to be an “at-risk” species. This colorful bird is indigenous to the southeast, and is a major attraction for bird watchers. The North Beach area of Tybee Island and Fort Pulaski are included on the State of Georgia’s Colonial Coast Birding Trail.

The City will continue to identify and inventory important habitat remaining on Tybee Island. Identified properties will be prioritized for acquisition by the City through grants, SPLOST, and other funding sources. The City will also continue to provide education to the public on these ecosystems and the importance of preserving these habitats through the developed of public preserves and parks, backyard riparian buffer preservation, and conservation easements.

Preserving natural habitats along with providing sound public access (parks, walking trails, boardwalks, etc.) to these sites enhances the quality of life for the residents of Tybee Island. In addition, habitat preservations also provides a destination or draw for eco-tourists including bird watchers, hikers, and kayakers. Ecotourism is an important component of the City’s economy and providing support for the growth of ecotourism will help to bolster the off-season economy that has previously been so devastating to local restaurants, inns, and hotels.

In an effort to address the unique environmental conditions on the island, the City of Tybee Island established the Environmental Ethics Resolution and Policy. The Resolution highlights the importance of natural resource management and works to create and maintain a healthy natural environment on the island.

4.6. Transportation

4.6.1 Roads and Highways

The City of Tybee Island contains approximately 12 miles of streets and roadways. The only access to the island is provided via US Highway 80, which enters the island on the northwest corner. Upon crossing Lazaretto Creek onto the island, the land north of Highway 80 is predominately undeveloped and the area south consists of mostly coastal marshland and some residential hammocks (located in the unincorporated county). There is a diversity of land uses along Highway 80 that includes shops, restaurants, hotels, gas stations, offices, grocery stores, etc. This is the main transportation corridor on the island and provides services to residents and tourists visiting the island.

Traffic congestion can be a major issue on the island. During the height of the summer season, a combination of people vacationing on the island and day visitors to the island cause a tremendous increase in the amount of traffic. Since Highway 80 is the only means of vehicular access to the island, implementation of congestion mitigation and traffic calming measures are issues the City will need to examine as the year-round population and the tourism industry continue to rise.

In an effort to alleviate some of the traffic heading to Tybee Island, the Chatham County Long Range Transportation Plan has proposed the widening of US Highway 80 between Bull River and Lazaretto Creek from two lanes to four. This has been identified with a “1B” priority. Priority 1 projects are those that have already received at least partial funding commitments. The letter then further breaks the project down based on the level of commitment received. A “1B” priority means that the project is programmed for preliminary engineering and right-of-way only. This project, if implemented, will be funded through a combination of Federal, State, and Local funds when money is available.

4.6.2 Alternative Modes of Transportation

The City has a need to identify alternative modes of transportation for the following reasons:

- Traffic and congestion created by seasonal visitors.
- The influx of service industry workers who cannot afford to live on the island.
- The need for year-round residents to have attractive alternative transportation routes, so that all trips do not necessitate car travel.

The City contains a series of unopened road right-of-ways (maintained by the City) dispersed throughout the island. These roads total approximately five miles and provide the opportunity to create a safe flow of non-automobile traffic around the island through the creation of multi-use trails. The City wishes to enhance pedestrian mobility by creating bike routes, trails, and improving existing sidewalks.

The McQueen’s Island Trail is a 6-mile greenway trail that runs adjacent to the Savannah River from Bull River to Fort Pulaski. This trail was formerly used as a railroad corridor that provided connection between Tybee Island and Savannah. Included along the trail are picnic areas, workout stations, and interpretive signage discussing local vegetation and wildlife. It is also proposed that the McQueen’s Island Trail be extended to the west to provide connection to River Street in downtown Savannah. The proposed 17-mile extension would cross rivers, pass historical landmarks, and would provide an excellent recreational opportunity for both residents and tourists visiting the County. The Island Trail would take bicyclists past Fort Jackson and Fort Pulaski, cross a number of waterways (including the Intercostals Waterway), and expose riders to the unique coastal ecosystem of the area. This railway system is part of the interstate East Coast Greenway.

The City is working to acquire property and easements to create a Tybee Island greenway/multi-use trail that would run from the Lazaretto Creek Bridge to the Tybee Island Pier & Pavilion. This trail would have the potential to connect to the McQueen’s Trail, which would provide an alternative transportation corridor stretching from downtown Savannah to the City of Tybee Island.

Also proposed is the Tybee Island Corridor, which is a 15-mile paved bike lane along Highway 80 from the Wilmington Island Bridge in Thunderbolt to 19th Street on Tybee

Island. A 5.1-mile stretch of the Tybee Island Corridor between Bull River and Lazaretto Creek includes a paved shoulder and bike lane that is planned in conjunction with the proposed widening of Highway 80.

4.6.3 Parking

The City of Tybee Island contains lots for public parking and parking meters dispersed around the island. One of the main lots available for public parking is located in the North Beach area and provides access to the beach, lighthouse and Fort Screven museum. The other public parking venues are located on the southern part of the island near the pavilion, and public beach access points, and are in close proximity to the beach, shopping, and restaurants. Parking meters are dispersed throughout the island and typically in close proximity to public beach access points. Also implemented is a “pay and display” parking system in a number of places throughout the City. This system will continue to be utilized and expanded to include more locations on the island.

4.7. *Part V Environmental Planning Criteria*

The City is in the process of adopting the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for Wetlands which is the only criterion that is applicable to the City. None of the City’s land area falls within the jurisdictional boundaries of groundwater recharge zones, protected river corridors, or water supply watersheds as identified in Chapter 391-3-16 of the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria of Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division. Additionally, as the City of Tybee Island is on the coast of Georgia, the criterion for Mountain Protection is not applicable.

4.8. *Service Delivery Strategy*

The City of Tybee Island has recently updated its Service Delivery Strategy with Chatham County by electing to continue the existing Service Delivery Strategy until October 2008. Tybee Island signed the updated Service Delivery Strategy on August 24, 2006 and it was accepted by the Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) on August 28, 2006. The City will continue to work with the MPC, Chatham County, and other local governments to update this Service Delivery Strategy prior to its expiration in October 2008.

APPENDIX A

Map of Existing Land Use

APPENDIX B

Map of Community Character Areas

APPENDIX C

Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA)