

# Town of Briarcliffe Acres



## Comprehensive Plan

**TOWN COUNCIL**

*Mayor: Ken Corbett*

Nancy Edelman

Gary Pell

Dennis Herron

Abby Stewart

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

*Chair: Dean DeMattio*

Jim Baldwin

Dot Herron

David Parry

Frank Pennisi

## Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Vision.....	1
Planning Process .....	1
Elements of this Plan .....	1
Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.....	2
POPULATION ELEMENT.....	3
Population Growth and Projections .....	3
Population Composition .....	3
Household Composition .....	5
Summary .....	6
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT .....	8
Summary .....	9
HOUSING ELEMENT .....	11
TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT.....	14
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT .....	21
Stormwater .....	21
Public Utilities.....	23
Educational Facilities .....	28
Parks and Recreation Facilities .....	29
Public Safety .....	29
Solid Waste .....	32
NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT.....	35
Description .....	35
The Beach .....	35
The Dune Field.....	36
Wooded Open Areas .....	36
Wooded Residential Lots .....	36
Freshwater Ponds .....	37
Summary .....	37
LAND USE ELEMENT.....	40
Location .....	40

Soils and Topography.....	40
Zoning .....	40
Current Land Use.....	41
PRIORITY INVESTMENT ELEMENT .....	44
Description of Priority Investment Element .....	44
Background and Existing Conditions .....	44
Determination of Needed Capital Improvements .....	44
Development of a Funding Strategy.....	45

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# INTRODUCTION

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The comprehensive plan is required under the South Carolina Local Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994. The Act requires that all local governments wishing to exercise authority to zone land uses and regulate subdivision of property to prepare a comprehensive plan.

The comprehensive plan depicts where a community has been, where it is presently, where it wants to go and how it plans to get there. An effective Comprehensive Plan requires regular reviews and updates to allow for additional input, remind us where we have been, and provide accountability to the process. The town planning commission is required by state law to reevaluate the Comprehensive Plan every five years and to update the complete document at least every ten years. The previous comprehensive plan was completed in 1999 and reevaluated in 2010.

The Comprehensive Plan is not the final product, but it is a living document which will help guide the town over the coming years.

## **Vision**

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres is an oasis among the sprawl of urban growth and development and should remain a residential community.

## **Planning Process**

The Planning Commission began the ten year review of the comprehensive plan in April of 2010. A timeline was adopted. The commission formed two subcommittees to review the transportation and community facilities elements. The general public and adjacent governmental agencies were notified that a draft of the plan was available. The draft was available either in paper format or electronically on the town website. Several comments were received and incorporated into the final document.

## **Elements of this Plan**

Population Element lists the historical trends of the populations of the town including education levels and income characteristics of its residents. The unique nature of the town provides for a very stable town. While many of the adjacent municipalities continue to experience population growth, the town through its vision and land use controls will be able to maintain its low density character. The ages and family characteristics however will continually evolve.

The Economic Development Element reviews the labor force, employment characteristics and community sustainability of the town. While there is very little economic activity occurring within the town this element evaluates the economic condition of the residents. It allows us to see what types of employment and what types of industries provide jobs to our residents.

The Housing element provides information in regards to the type of housing, occupancy (owner or renter) and also the values of the housing within the town. This information helps the town ensure that the town is retaining its status as a desirable place to live.

The Natural Resources Element evaluates the characteristics of the natural environment within town. This section examines the impact that the built environment has on the natural environment and proposes ways in which the two can continue to exist in harmony.

The Transportation Element is a new element required by the state of South Carolina. Previously this information was contained within the Community Facilities section of the document. This element reviews the transportation facilities within the town. This includes road, sidewalks, etc. within the town. It examines the conditions of these facilities and provides a proposed maintenance schedule for them.

The Priority Investment Element is one of the two new elements required by the State of South Carolina. This element analyzes the public infrastructure and capital needs of the town over the next ten years. It projects expenditures for those needs and identifies possible funding sources to pay for those needs.

The Land Use Element considers and examines the use of land within the town and proposes to continue the town's residential character.

Community Facilities and Cultural Resources element addresses all the day to day needs, such as water, sewer, schools and public safety. The plan evaluates and lists several ideas that will require the town to further evaluate the levels of service that the residents wish to receive from the town. This will help guide the future decisions and public investments made by the town.

The Cultural Resources portion of the element speaks to the community's character. The executive summary explains the context of the plan and provides a summary of the Plan's goals, major policies and a discussion regarding implementation.

### **Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan**

This plan is only the beginning of the process. The real work is the implementation of the goals laid out within the plan. This plan only lays out the additional studies, surveys and capital projects that will need to be completed by the town. The real job will involve the various councils, boards and committees conducting and implementing these tasks given the limited resources within the town.

# CHAPTER 1

## POPULATION ELEMENT

The population element examines the total population, projects future growth, and describes the composition of the Town of Briarcliffe Acres. The Town of Briarcliffe Acres population will continually evolve. It was historically a retired senior and military community. That began to change in the mid 1980s and over the last two decades the population has shifted to include more families with children. However since the mid 1990s the number of children has dropped and those parents have started to age.

The population of Briarcliffe Acres is composed mostly of individuals who have moved to South Carolina, with over 75% of the residents not from this state. The census shows that residents stay for an extended period of time. There has been little turn over in the resident ownership within the town. This may change as the current population begins to age. With families choosing to age in place the average household size has decreased from 2.5 down to 2.35.

As the community composition continues to evolve it will influence decisions concerning adequate public and community facilities, use and preservation of cultural resources as well as shape the need to conserve and protect natural resources.

### **Population Growth and Projections**

The surrounding towns and county population continue to grow at a rapid pace while the town has reached a build out in terms of population. The population makeup may change over that time but without any projected changes in allowed land uses or annexations the population has very little room for growth. There may be some redevelopment that will lead to small population increases, but any changes in population will be minimal.

### **Population Composition**

#### **Gender**

The gender distribution for Briarcliffe Acres is pretty evenly divided between males and females. In 2000, the male population comprised 47.2% of the population and the female population, the remaining 52.8%. This trend has been consistent and reflects that of the surrounding county.

#### **Race and Ethnicity**

There is currently very little diversity in racial makeup of the community.

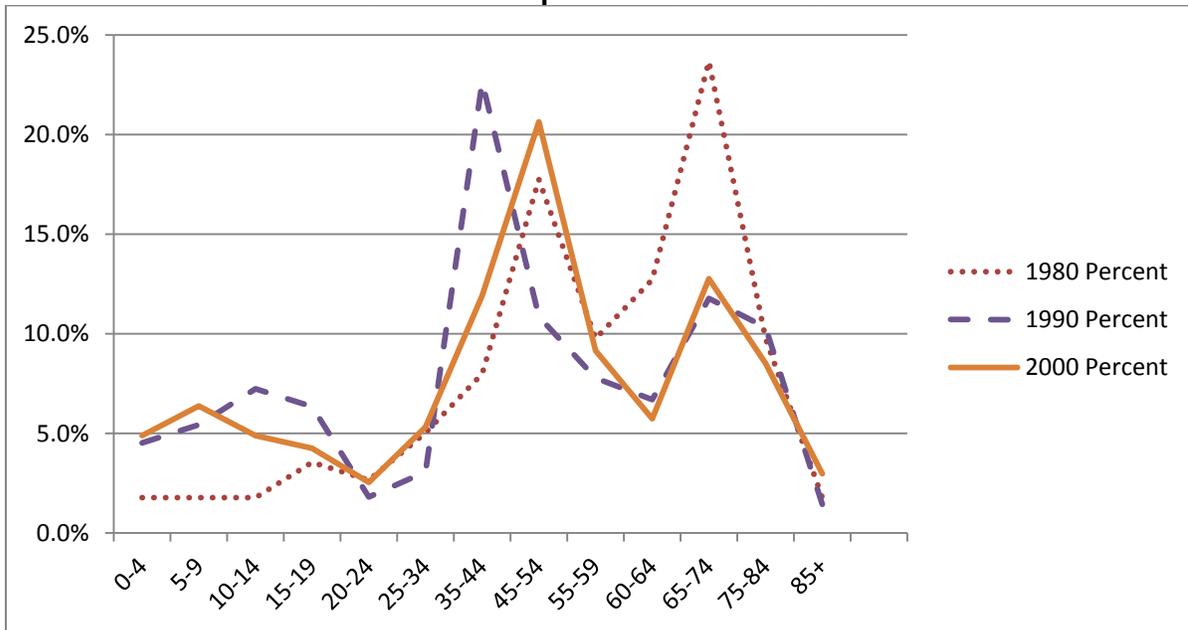
**Table1-1: Racial Composition 2000**

	<b>Horry County</b>	<b>Briarcliffe Acres</b>
<b>White</b>	81%	98.7%
<b>Black</b>	14.9%	1.0%
<b>Other</b>	4.1%	.3%

**Age**

The age of the town residents continues to evolve. In the 1990s there was a spike in the number of 35-44 year as well as their children. In 1990 approximately 23% of residents were aged 35-44 and 23% of the town residents were children under the age of 18. That number fell to 20% by 2000 but according to data from Horry County schools should be relatively stable when the 2010 census information is compiled.

**Chart 1-2: Population Cohorts 2000**



**Table: 1-3 Population Cohorts**

	1980		1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
85+	6	1.8%	8	1.4%	14	3.0%
75-84	33	9.8%	57	10.3%	40	8.5%
65-74	80	23.7%	65	11.8%	60	12.8%
60-64	43	12.6%	37	6.8%	27	5.7%
55-59	33	9.8%	43	7.8%	43	9.1%
45-54	60	17.7%	60	10.9%	97	20.6%
35-44	27	8.0%	125	22.7%	56	11.9%
25-34	17	5.0%	17	3.1%	25	5.3%
20-24	9	2.6%	10	1.8%	12	2.6%
15-19	12	3.6%	35	6.3%	20	4.3%
10-14	6	1.8%	40	7.2%	23	4.9%
5-9	6	1.8%	30	5.4%	30	6.4%
0-4	6	1.8%	25	4.5%	23	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>		<b>552</b>		<b>470</b>	

## Household Composition

The census defines a household as all people who occupy a housing unit. If the unit is vacant it is not considered as a household. The number of households within the town decreased from 220 in 1990 down to 200 in the 2000 census. Some of this decline may be due to lower census response rates.

It must be noted that there has been a decrease in the number of married family households. In 2000 63.5% of the households were married families as compared to 61.3% in Horry County. This was a decrease from 77% in 1990. Nationwide family households have been decreasing by approximately 7% every ten years. Married couple households have also been declining at a parallel rate. In contrast, the percentage of non-family household has been increasing by about 7% every ten years for the last thirty years.

## Education

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres has one of the highest levels of academic attainment in the nation. In 1990 56.4% of residents had a bachelors degree or higher. This climbed to 70.3% in the year 2000. This is compared to 20.2% in Horry County, 20.4% in South Carolina and 24.4% in the United States.

## Income

This section analyzes income locally and on a county level. The median income for the Town of Briarcliffe Acres is well above Horry County, state and national averages. The per capita income is increasing slightly faster within the Town than in the region.

**Table 1-4: Household Income 2000**

	Briarcliffe Acres	Horry County	United States
Less than \$10,000	3.5%	9.8%	9.54%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	2%	7.2%	6.31%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	4%	13.7%	12.82%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	11%	14.5%	12.81%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9.5%	18.7%	16.53%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	12.5%	19.3%	19.46%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.5%	8.6%	10.23%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.5%	5.2%	7.72%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13.5%	1.3%	2.2%
\$200,000 or more	14%	1.9%	2.37%
<b>Median household income (dollars)</b>	<b>\$82,437</b>	<b>\$38,789</b>	<b>\$41,994</b>

**Table 1-5: Per Capita Income 2000**

	1990	2000	% Change
<b>Briarcliffe Acres</b>	\$32,627	\$52,781	38%
<b>Horry County</b>	\$13,122	\$19,949	34%
<b>South Carolina</b>	\$15,101	\$24,000	37%
<b>United States</b>	\$18,667	\$29,469	37%

**Table 1-6: Poverty Rates 2000**

	<b>2000</b>
<b>Briarcliffe Acres</b>	.01%
<b>Horry County</b>	14.5%
<b>South Carolina</b>	15.7%
<b>United States</b>	13.2%

### **Length of Residency**

Over 43% of the residents moved to the town prior to 1990. Another 22% moved into the town in the early 1990s.

### **Summary**

The Town of Briarcliffe has developed into a family friendly town. The townspeople are well educated and the income levels reflect that level of education. The population base is very stable and many of the residents tend to stay for a long period of time. The Town continues to suffer from low response and participation rates in the Census. The 2010 Census response rates for the town were 36% which continues to be much lower than any of the surrounding communities. This may lead to provision of inaccurate data for future application by the Town.

### **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

#### ***Need***

Understand the composition and implications of a population composition.

#### ***Goals***

- Continue to update and maintain the population element as new data becomes available.

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

Collaborate with the U.S. Census Bureau, the South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Office of Statistics and Research and other sources in receiving and analyzing the most up-to-date demographic data.

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## CHAPTER 2

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres was designed as a low density residential community. About 50% of the residents over the age of 16 are in the labor force. The majority of those in the labor force are employed in the surrounding metropolitan area. The economic development in the region provides a significant base of employment for the residents and helps support the high incomes as well as the property values in the town.

The majority of those employed are occupied in the management and professional occupations. The majority work in the high paying professional industries such as the finance, insurance, real estate, medical and legal. The residents have an income level over twice that of the United States and 2.5 times that of the rest of Horry County.

**Table 2-1: Household Income 2000**

<b><u>OCCUPATION</u></b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Management, professional, and related occupations	118	61.1
Service occupations	21	10.9
Sales and office occupations	45	23.3
Miscellaneous	9	4.7
<b>Total Employed</b>	193	
<b><u>INDUSTRY</u></b>		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2	1
Construction	10	5.2
Manufacturing	2	1
Wholesale trade	4	2.1
Retail trade	5	2.6
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2	1
Information	1	0.5
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	43	22.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	18	9.4
Educational, health and social services	47	24.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	52	26.9
Other services (except public administration)	2	1
Public administration	5	2.6

## **Summary**

The Town of Briarcliffe has two large reasons for its economic success. The first is the high education level of its residents. The second is the vibrant nature of the economy in the surrounding metropolitan area. The residents within the Town of Briarcliffe have access to many economic opportunities that would not normally be available to residents of a town with such a small population base. The high education levels allow the residents to earn much higher than average income levels within the metro economy.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Understand the composition and implications of the surrounding economic base.

### ***Goals***

- Continue to ensure that the residents have access to the surrounding metropolitan economy.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

#### **Education**

Continue to work with both public and private area schools to ensure that residents have access to the best educational opportunities.

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## CHAPTER 3

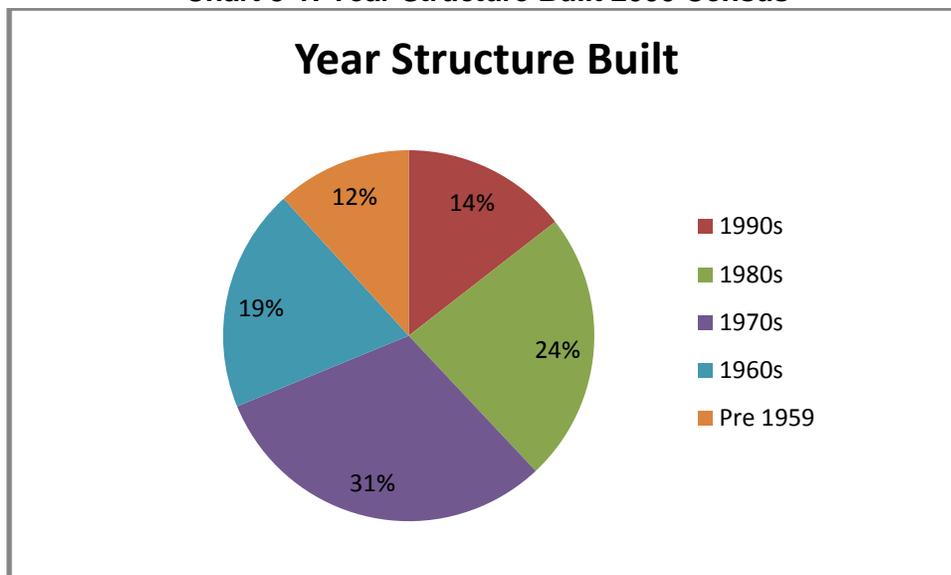
# HOUSING ELEMENT

Currently within the Town of Briarcliffe Acres there are a total of 256 residential lots. Fourteen (14) of those lots are currently vacant. In the 2000 census there were 21 vacant units and 14 that were used for seasonal or occasional use.

Ninety-five (95) percent of the housing continues to be owner occupied residences. The residences are mostly year round with only five (5) percent as seasonal residences.

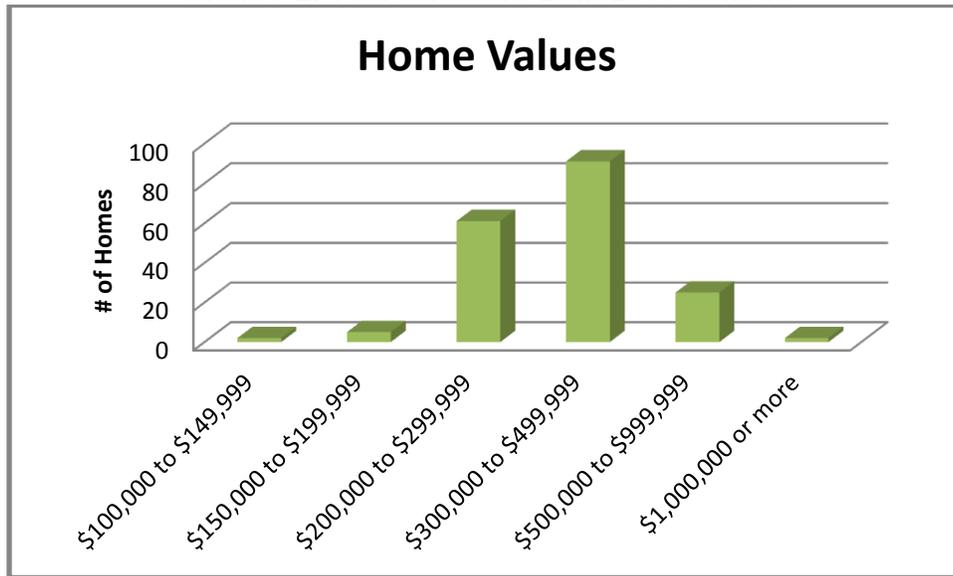
There are a very limited number of vacant lots available for new construction. Most structures are relatively new with approximately 40% of the structures having been built since 1980. Most building permits in the next 10 years will be from additions and renovations. Most new construction will most likely involve demolition of existing structures.

**Chart 3-1: Year Structure Built 2000 Census**



The homes that exist within the town have a relatively high home price as compared to the surrounding towns. In 2010 the mean home price was over \$610,000 dollars. There are currently no employment centers and no plans to construct any within the town, which require affordable workforce housing. The only development restrictions are zoning and state building code. The zoning restriction is in place for two major reasons. The first reason is to protect the residential character of the town. The second reason is the necessity for large lots due to the fact that most homes within the town are still serviced by onsite septic, which requires large drain fields.

Chart 3-2: Year Structure Built 2000 Census



**STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

***Need***

Understand the existing housing characteristics and the how that will be affected by future construction within the town.

***Goals***

- Continue to ensure that homes within the town continue to reflect the residential character of the town.

***Implementation Strategies***

Continue to ensure that all building codes are updated and enforced.

Continue to ensure that the large lot nature of the town is preserved.

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# CHAPTER 4

## TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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The transportation element of the Strategic Plan for the Town of Briarcliffe Acres relates mainly to the roadways which are used by cars, trucks, golf carts, bicycles and pedestrians. At this time, there are no plans for new roadways. The Town is basically built out with only fourteen undeveloped lots, all of which front on present roadways. Other aspects of transportation including bus service will be treated at the end of this section.

With the exception of the three main entrances to the Town all of the roads are internal and there are no connections to other roads or communities, with the exception of the Meher Baba Center. As there is no through traffic and traffic is light enough to accommodate pedestrians it does not appear that sidewalks are necessary within the Town.

The roadways originally consisted of unpaved coquina and were paved in the late 1980's with asphalt using the existing coquina as a base. A study completed for the Town in 1996 by DDC Engineers, stated that "the majority of the main arterial roads are in generally good condition." The report also noted that:

- "Cul-de-sacs were undersized, and do not meet minimum standards."
- "Several streets that support two way traffic do not meet County standards for lane width."
- "Pavement failures have occurred on several cul-de-dacs and South Gate Road due to tree roots and sub base failure."

A Road Maintenance Program was proposed and started at that time and has continued with few exceptions since then. Revisions were made in the original schedule for improvement as priorities changed to meet new circumstances. The biggest revision to the maintenance schedule was caused by the storm water sewer project on Cherry, Center and Middle Gate, in 2003, which reduced flooding from rain and hurricanes but prompted the repaving of those roadways that year.

Three (Cherry, Pine Tree, and Palmetto) of the thirteen cul-de-sac turnarounds have been reconstructed as they were repaved as part of the road maintenance program in past years. Today these turnarounds are in good to excellent condition with few places where the pavement has been broken or worn away.

For ease of investigating and classifying, the Towns roadways were divided into 28 road segments, each less than one-half mile in length. The segments were reviewed by each member of the committee and their evaluations were consolidated with the overall ratings and comments appearing herein, as Exhibit A. From this report on the current conditions of each segment, a suggested order of repair and maintenance was prepared shown as Exhibit B.

It should be noted that the turnaround portions of the cul-de-sacs will require some reconstruction as well as repaving as the paved areas need to be made larger as was done on the three turnaround portions of cul-de-sacs (Cherry, Palmetto, and Pine). Specifically, a solid base must be installed before the paving of asphaltic concrete is applied. This is addressed in more detail in the above referenced DDC Engineers report of 1996.

Exhibit B calls for the repair of all of the turnarounds during the same construction period since the repairs require additional equipment in addition to standard paving equipment. An alternative work schedule was also prepared where the turnarounds are repaired and paved at the same time as the roadways of the cul-de-sacs; not all in the same year. This would spread the reconstruction work (cost and inconvenience) over several years. The five turnarounds in the worst condition would be repaired in the first two years, the alternative schedule is shown as Exhibit C.

Roadways categorized as good and excellent are not shown in either exhibit B or C. It is the opinion of the sub-committee that it is not reasonable to project repair and maintenance schedules beyond five years. It is suggested that a subsequent appraisal and review of the roadway conditions be performed in 2015 to accommodate any changes in conditions at that time.

Bus transportation within Briarcliffe Acres has not been considered due to the residential nature of the community and the size of the population. Bus transportation on Route 17 from Briarcliffe to Myrtle Beach or North Myrtle Beach is not feasible nor readily available and would probably have a very limited use from Briarcliffe residents.

Pedestrian trails which were designed and used in the early years of the community are owned by the Briarcliffe Acres Association and are little used today with automobiles and golf carts replacing the popularity of walking. Sidewalks on the west side of Highway 17 were completed this past spring. The South Carolina Department of Transportation indicates that sidewalk construction on the east side of the highway is scheduled for the Fall of 2010. This will provide a safer means of transportation for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Understand the existing road conditions within the town and prepare a program to move forward.

### ***Goals***

- Continue to provide safe and adequate roads within the town.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

Implement an annual road maintenance program, including repaving and other needed maintenance.

Council and future Councils should increase the funds which are transferred to the Road Fund from \$10,000 to \$25,000 each year.

A committee should be appointed to reevaluate the condition of the roadways in 2015 and to update the maintenance schedule.

**Exhibit A**  
**Road Rating Worksheet**  
 Inspection made in June 2010

	Condition: General Visual*	Approx. Length (Miles)** One Direction	Last Paving (Year)	Condition: Surface and Types and Causes of Distress
<b>Main Roads</b>				
Cabana				
Beach Dr. to Lake Dr.	G	0.21		Diverter by lake need repair.
Lake Dr. to North Gate	G	0.31		Patches are sinking.
Middle Gate				
Hwy 17 to Center	E	0.26	2003	Good Shape
Center to Patterson	E	0.16	2003	Good Shape
Patterson to Beach	E	0.25	2003	Good Shape
North Gate				
Hwy 17 to Cabana	E	0.21	2001	Good Shape
Cabana to Beach	G	0.39	2001	Cave in across from Lot 134
Southgate				
Hwy 17 to Center	E	0.35	2004	Good Shape
Center to Patterson	F	0.18	2003	So-so
<b>Drives</b>				
Beach				
Ocean View to Cabana	F	0.36		#Surface asphalt decomposed - 2 Tree root cracks-Pot hole
Cabana to North Gate	F	0.23		Edges breaking up
Center				
South Gate to Middle Gate	G	0.30	2000	Patch sinking- 2 tree root cracks
Middle Gate to Cabana	P	0.41		Asphalt surface decomposed- Edge cracking-Patch sinking-Pot hole
Lake	F	0.31	2000	Sinking patch at lot 204 – edge cracking
Ocean View	E	0.29	2010	Missing Collar on roadway drain
Patterson	F	0.30		Asphalt surface decomposed – Edge cracking – Large crack at Middle Gate

<b>Exhibit A</b>				
<b>Road Rating Worksheet</b>				
Inspection made in June 2010				
	Condition: General Visual*	Approx. Length (Miles)** One Direction	Last Paving (Year)	Condition: Surface and Types and Causes of Distress
<b>Lanes</b>				
Bayberry	G	0.23	2000	7 Tree root cracks – turn around good
Birch	G	0.22	2000	Small root crack –Turn around good
Cedar	P	0.16		Extensive edge cracking – Turn around badly broken up
Cherry	E	0.19	2003	Turn around in good shape
Cypress	P	0.17		Edge cracking – Turn around badly broken up
Dogwood	F	0.14		Extensively patched – 2 root cracks- Turn around OK
Evergreen	G	0.10		Asphalt surface decomposed
Hickory	P	0.20		Ragged patches – Edge Cracking – Turn around broken up on inside
Holly	F	0.21		Side patch missing at North Gate – Turn around breaking on inside
Live Oak	F	0.14	2004	Edge cracking-Asphalt surface decomposed – Pot Hole
Myrtle	P	0.14		Edge cracking-Asphalt surface decomposed – Turn around breaking up on the inside
Palmetto	G	0.07	2008	Turn around is good
Pine Tree	E	0.11	2008	Turn around is good
<b>Total</b>		<b>6.59</b>		

\*Rate as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor

\*\* Within about 50ft. (done with GPS)

# Asphalt decomposition from heat (sun and wear) allows asphalt (cement) to evaporate leaving loose aggregate

Curb on Cabana Road creates a sharp bump

**Exhibit B**  
**Priorities for Repair and Maintenance**

Year 1:Reconstruct and repave the turnarounds in the following cul-de-sacs:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cedar Lane</li><li>• Cypress Lane</li><li>• Hickory Lane</li><li>• Live Oak Lane</li><li>• Myrtle Lane</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bayberry Lane</li><li>• Birch Lane</li><li>• Dogwood Lane</li><li>• Evergreen Lane</li><li>• Holly Lane</li></ul>
Year 2:Patch and Repave:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Center Drive (Middle Gate to Cabana Road)</li><li>• Cedar Lane</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cypress Lane</li><li>• Hickory Lane</li></ul>
Year 3:Patch and Repave:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Live Oak Lane</li><li>• Myrtle Lane</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dogwood Lane</li><li>• Evergreen Lane</li></ul>
Year 4:Patch and Repave:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beach Drive</li><li>• Bayberry Lane</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Birch Lane</li><li>• Holly Lane</li></ul>
Year 5: Patch and Repave:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• South Gate Road (Center to Patterson Road)</li><li>• Lake Drive</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Patterson Road</li></ul>

**Exhibit C**  
**Alternative Priorities for Repair and Maintenance**

Year 1:Reconstruct the turnarounds and repave the cul-de-sacs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cedar Lane</li><li>• Cypress Lane</li><li>• Hickory Lane</li></ul>
Year 2:Patch and repave: (reconstruct the turnarounds)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Center Drive (Middle Gate to Cabana Road)</li><li>• Live Oak Lane</li><li>• Myrtle Lane</li></ul>
Year 3:Reconstruct the turnarounds and repave the cul-de-sacs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dogwood Lane</li><li>• Holly Lane</li><li>• Evergreen Lane</li></ul>
Year 4:Patch and Repave: (Reconstruct the turnarounds)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beach Drive (both segments - Middle Gate to North Gate)</li><li>• Bayberry Lane</li><li>• Birch Lane</li></ul>
Year 5: Patch and Repave:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• South Gate Road (Center to Patterson Road)</li><li>• Lake Drive</li><li>• Patterson Road</li></ul>

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# CHAPTER 5

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

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Community facilities and services will be provided to meet the needs of the Town in an efficient and responsive manner, consistent with the other goals and objectives of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. Community Facilities contribute to the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. These facilities include educational institutions and libraries, civic buildings and operations, utilities, stormwater management, public safety, medical facilities, parks and recreations, as well as civic and religious organizations.

Within each section, the element presents an inventory of the current facilities and evaluates desired levels of service and anticipated demand. The results of this section include developing an action plan for upcoming projects. This action plan will identify needs and goals as well as an implementation strategy.

### **Stormwater**

Stormwater is what happens to the rain that can no longer soak into ground because of development of roads and houses.

The goals of stormwater management within the town is to protect, maintain, and enhance the environment of the Town and the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of the Town and to prevent and/or minimize the pollution of our natural coastal waters: the Briarcliffe Lakes, White Point Swash, and the Briarcliffe Cabana marsh and beach waters. It is in the public interest that the quality of our waters be maintained and preserved for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

The town in the past has done four very specific things that help with stormwater management. The first is the town created zoning restrictions that limit the density of the homes. This protects much of the pervious area within the town from development. Pervious area allows much of the rain that falls within the town to naturally drain into the sandy soil and be filtered before entering the groundwater, ponds or the ocean. More pervious soils mean less manmade stormwater management facilities will have to be constructed and maintained.

The second thing the town did was working with a local engineering firm to develop a stormwater management plan. This plan involved developing goals and strategies for stormwater management. Many of the strategies involved the construction of new drainage pipe, new catch basins and the construction of multiple retention areas.

More recently the town has partnered with Horry County Stormwater Management. Horry County acts as the regional leader in stormwater management. They provide stormwater management services and conduct educational programs for the town.

The fourth was to approve a stormwater management ordinance for the town. The stormwater ordinance sets a community-wide standard for managing stormwater, and complements

education programs and incentives for maintaining Phase II NPDES standards. It also gives the Town the ability to prohibit illicit connections to the Town's stormwater system including septic tanks, washing machines discharging to roadside ditches, animal waste, garbage, litter, or intentional vehicle oil, anti-freeze, paint, and other household chemical dumping.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Provide for the management of stormwater that maintains adequate drainage throughout the Town, minimize flood damage to property, and protects the water quality standards.

### ***Goals***

- Preserve and enhance the quality of the waters of the Town.
- Reduce possibility of flooding and enhance the capabilities to manage stormwater runoff
- Foster public support for the importance of stormwater management.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

Continue partnership with Horry County Stormwater Management.

Maintain low density development standards for the town.

Develop and implement programs focused around public education & participation, pollution management and post construction site run-off based on the Horry County NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Plan.

Develop a stormwater maintenance management plan and prioritize capital improvement project list which includes dredging of the freshwater ponds.

Enforce the stormwater ordinance.

Identify, protect & conserve the natural functions of wetlands & water bodies through pollutant reduction.

Implement a freshwater and beach water quality monitoring program, including comprehensive testing.

Strengthen ordinances that promote the conservation of natural resources and mature trees.

Educate landowners about their cumulative effects on ponds, marshes and the ocean.

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## **Public Utilities**

### **Public Water**

The Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA) is the major supplier of potable water for Horry County. It services an area of approximately 800 square miles. GSWSA sells water to the City of Myrtle Beach which installs and maintains water lines within the Town of Briarcliffe Acres.

Most of the water lines currently end at the cul de sacs. This can lead to issues with water quality and pressure. In the past the City of Myrtle Beach used to flush the hydrants, this project is not being conducted on regular basis. Myrtle Beach started a program to connect the cul de sac lines to form loops in the system, however they are no longer working on this project due to a lack of funding.

### **Public Wastewater**

Currently the town does not have a town wide public sewer system. Most residences within the Town are serviced by individual septic systems. In past comprehensive plans and effort was made to determine the need for a public sewer system. It was determined at that time that most septic's within the town were working properly. It was also determined that most systems would work better if the town were to develop a well-functioning stormwater drainage system. Past estimates indicates a cost of \$4.7 million to install a public sewer system in addition to any required monthly costs to the residents for usage fees. It was determined at that time that the Town should focus its efforts on creating an effective and efficient stormwater drainage system with a routine maintenance plan.

Since the last comprehensive plan was completed two major changes have occurred within the Town. The first is several residents developed issues with their individual septic systems. The second is the town adopted a new stormwater ordinance.

The residents who developed septic issues created an association which negotiated with surrounding properties and the City of Myrtle Beach to install a sewer line into the town. This line is connected to the City of Myrtle Beaches trunk line that extends to the City of North Myrtle Beach. This trunk line connects to the wastewater treatment facility in Myrtle Beach that is operated by Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority (GSWSA). There are two separate lines that currently run within the town. One line provides service to the floodplain areas along Ocean View, Palmetto and Beach Drives. The second line enters the town on Middle Gate Rd and runs down the median of Bayberry Ln and is sized to accommodate all residents on Bayberry Ln.

Also, since the last comprehensive plan, the Town has adopted a stormwater ordinance. This ordinance affects public wastewater in several ways. The first is that the ordinance requires that all private septic and sewer systems must be maintained or repaired so as to meet commonly understood standards of performance to prevent contamination of soil and water. The second is that it requires all residences on a flood plain (Ocean View, Palmetto and Beach Drive) to connect to the available sewer system operated by the City of Myrtle Beach within five (5) years of the date of this ordinance, or sooner if their septic system is faulty or fails. This means that those houses will have to be connected by the end of 2013.

## **Natural Gas**

Currently there is natural gas service available to the town residents. The individual residents interested in connecting to the service would have to agree to pay for the extension of service lines to their residences. There are a few individuals within town who have taken advantage of this service. There are several other residents who take use propane delivery services.

## **Electric, Phone and Cable**

The Town is currently service by multiple providers. Electric service is provided by Santee Cooper. Cable is provided by Time Warner Cable. Phone is provided by Frontier Communications; however at the time of writing those lines are being transferred to Frontier Communications. All of these utilities use overhead transmission lines. As part of the last comprehensive plan the Planning Commission was asked to study the feasibility of relocating these line to and underground environment. In 2003 and 2005 Santee Cooper presented to the Town a proposal to relocate the lines underground. The proposal cost was approximately \$5 million at the time. This did not include relocation of the phone and cable lines, obtaining necessary easements, or relocation of any landscaping. If the town wishes to accomplish the relocation of the lines in the future it should be done in phases. The town may want to tie any relocation to road improvement projects. The town should also look at the possibility of obtaining grants for these improvements.

## **Wireless**

Briarcliffe Acres is known for its natural pristine environment and thick tree canopy. As a result, wireless internet and cellular service is compromised in some areas. The Town may want to examine the creation of a Wi-Fi network throughout the town and the expansion of cellular service to the Town. Together, these improved services will provide enhance service to the residents of the town. A feasibility study should be conducted to identify the technology, hardware and capital resources required to develop a town wide Wi-Fi network and cellular service.

## **Street Lighting**

Street lights can play an important role in the safety and well-being of the Town residents. Proper street lighting can help reduce accidents, provide a feeling of safety to pedestrian and cyclists, decrease public safety response times and reduce criminal activity. Street lighting can also serve an aesthetic purpose and can affect how visitors and residents view the town. However it is important to balance the need to provide adequate lighting with the towns' desire to protect it natural wooded appearance.

Currently there are some residents within the town that have their own private street lights. Those residents bear the burden for cost of those lights. It has been discussed in prior comprehensive plans that the town should evaluate the desire for installing a planned system of street lights throughout the town with a unified design. During the 1999 Comprehensive Plan the Town was divided on the issue.

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**STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

**Public Water**

***Need***

Provide a safe and adequate public supply of drinking water and water flow sufficient for various purposes throughout the Town

***Goals***

- Continue to work with the City of Myrtle Beach to maintain water pressure and quality.

***Implementation Strategies***

Stay abreast of emerging health concerns that impact drinking water quality.

Work with the City of Myrtle Beach to develop a flushing schedule until the looping project can be completed.

**Public Wastewater**

***Need***

Provide for the collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater discharge in a manner, which protects & preserves the Town's natural environment.

***Goals***

- Ensure that individual septic systems are maintained and working properly.
- Provide the ability to connect to a municipal sewer to residents within the town.

***Implementation Strategies***

Identify and evaluate areas where environmental conditions are in danger due to septic tank failure and explore possible funding opportunities to provide public sewer in environmentally sensitive areas.

Examine any reports related to waste water and water quality and develop a strategic plan for long-term expansion of facilities, if necessary.

**Natural Gas**

***Need***

Provide access to natural gas services lines if the citizens desire.

### **Goals**

- Determine the feasibility of installing natural gas in the Town
- Determine the level of interest among the members of our Community in having such a service provided.

### **Implementation Strategies**

The town should begin a dialogue with representatives of South Carolina Electric and Gas to discuss all funding and installation possibilities for providing service, including phased installation and alternative funding plans.

The town should also prepare a survey of the residents once the proposals are examined to determine residents' interest in installing and funding the street light proposals.

### **Wireless**

#### **Need**

Provide quality access to wireless internet and cellular service.

#### **Goals**

- Determine the level of interest among the members of our Community in having such a service provided.
- A feasibility study should be conducted to identify the technology, hardware and capital resources required to develop a town wide Wi-Fi network and cellular service.

### **Implementation Strategies**

The town should begin a dialogue with representatives of Wireless Industry to discuss all funding and installation possibilities for providing improved service.

### **Street Lighting**

#### **Need**

Provide citizens with the desired level of street lighting.

#### **Goals**

- Work with Santee Cooper to review previous plans for street lighting and determine if there are new or alternate plans that could be made available to the town.
- Determine the level of interest among the members of our Community in having such a service provided.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

The town should begin a dialogue with representatives of Santee Cooper to discuss all funding and installation possibilities for providing service, including phased installation and alternative funding plans.

The Town could then survey the town residents' preferences between the proposals or maintaining the existing system of private street lights.

### **General Government**

#### **Town Hall**

Briarcliffe Acres does not have a Town Hall or Municipal Building. Records are stored in the private homes of Town officials, in the Town's office at the Lutheran Church and in a rental storage unit. The Town also holds its public meetings at the church facility. The current facility may become too small for the town in the near future. In the past it has been recommended to build a new municipal building to provide the Town with office, a reception area, a conference room with seating for up to 50 people and restroom facilities. It has been discussed several times where the office should be located. Some residents favor a location on the east side of Hwy 17 in order to provide easier access for the residents of the town during the summer peak traffic months. Some residents wish to keep the office area of the town separate from the residential in order to protect the character of the town.

#### **Records Archival, Storage and Retention**

The Town currently stores the agendas, minutes, balances of our accounts, and projected cash flow reports on CD from 2001 to current. All financial files from 1977 to 2008 are maintained in a storage unit. The minutes and town ordinances are stored in fire-proof file cabinets in the office.

#### **Town Administration**

The Town currently has one part time clerk and have budgeted another part-time position to help with the daily town administration and more importantly act as the clerk of court.

#### **Communication**

The Town currently has a website and has developed a quarterly newsletter and an email list.

#### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres will continue establish cooperative arrangements with the County and other municipalities in the region.

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## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Provide for administrative facilities of sufficient space and functionality to maintain the efficient delivery of government operations and promote the aesthetic character of the Town.

### ***Goals***

- Improve and expand government offices to accommodate the growing service demand of the Town.
- Continue to monitor facilities capacities and locations based on population growth and residential need in order to maintain service levels.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

Continue to focus on maintain the town offices in its current church building location. If this facility is no longer feasible then the town should look for meeting and office space in the nearby area.

Provide comprehensive information on the website.

Work with surrounding cities and county to use existing technologies to reduce the need for physical storage space.

## **Educational Facilities**

### **Higher Education**

Higher education is provided by Coastal Carolina University, Webster University and two technical colleges, Horry Georgetown Technical College and Miller-Motte Technical College. CCU is a four year institution located in Conway with several campuses spread around Horry and Georgetown County. Webster University is a national college which maintains a campus in Myrtle Beach. The two technical colleges offer Certificates, Diplomas, and/or Degrees in over 60 programs.

### **Education Pre K-12**

Education is vital to overall community well-being. The public schools that serve the Town of Briarcliffe residents are provided as part of the Horry County School District. Briarcliffe is included within the Myrtle Beach Attendance Zone. There are also several private schools that serve the Town, including one that is located within the Town. Risen Christ Lutheran School offers grades Pre K through 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Library Facilities**

The Horry County Library System provides library services on a countywide basis. The Library System consists of nine locations including the closest facility to the town in North Myrtle Beach.

The City of Myrtle Beach also has a municipal library, the Chapin Memorial Library, which is the only municipally owned and operated public library in South Carolina.

The Bookmobile (mobile library) from the County System is available to any resident who is unable to drive and considered to be home bound. The County Library System plans to resume this service on September 1, 2010. Arrangements for a scheduled stop can be made by calling 843-248-1544. This is a free service of the Horry County Library System.

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

The Parks & Recreation for the citizens of Briarcliffe is provided two ways. The first is through the common areas, green spaces, paths and community parks. These areas include the lakes, marsh and beach. The second way is the provision of recreational programming and facility provision by the surrounding jurisdictions; North Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach, and Horry County.

### **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

#### ***Need***

Provide a balanced system of developed park properties for both active and passive uses including specialized recreational facilities.

#### ***Goals***

- Protect, maintain and enhance the natural environment by developing parks, trails and adequate outdoor recreational facilities in an environmentally sensitive manner.

#### ***Implementation Strategies***

Continue to coordinate with the adjacent jurisdictions to ensure that all town residents have access to adequate recreational opportunities and review expansion options periodically

Coordinate with the Homeowners Association to maintain trails & minimize impacts on environmentally sensitive areas.

Preserve wildlife corridors and areas of high quality natural vegetation.

Establish maintenance standards, design development standards and vegetation standards and management plans for various types of parks and recreation facilities.

### **Public Safety**

#### **Emergency 9-1-1 Center**

Horry County 911 Communications is a consolidated center that answers all 911 calls in the county and dispatches police, fire and ambulance calls for all county public safety agencies, as well as Atlantic Beach Police, Aynor Police, Briarcliffe Acres Police, Conway Fire Rescue, Surfside Fire Rescue and the volunteer rescue squads.

All 9-1-1 calls made in Horry County are answered by the Horry County 9-1-1 Center. In Fiscal Year 2009 (July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009) they dispatched a total of 190,962 police, fire and ambulance incidents. 534,712 incoming telephone calls were received and 221,693 of those were 9-1-1 calls. Wireless calls accounted for 61% of 9-1-1 calls.

## **Police Protection**

Currently the town is served by one full time officer. This officer is assisted by Horry County Police, City of North Myrtle Beach and South Carolina State Police.

### *Records, Archival, and Storage:*

Currently the Briarcliffe Acres Police Department using the incident reporting system hosted and provided by the Horry County Police Department. This system allows for computerized electronic storage of incident reports on servers hosted and maintained by the county with data submission that is SLED compliant. Paper forms and documents can be scanned and attached electronically to incident reports. Digital photographs and other small files can also be submitted for electronic storage.

This system does not allow for the electronic management of traffic collision reports. Traffic collision report volume is low. It is unknown whether or when the state may mandate the use of electronic reporting for collisions in the future or what the cost would be to the town if mandated.

The storage of physical evidence is a challenge to the police department. Part of a single closet and the trunk of the police carts are the practical physical limits of evidence storage. Drug evidence may be submitted to the county lab or SLED for testing, but after testing may be returned to the town for storage prior to the disposition of the case in court. This is a physical security concern.

### *Information Services and Communication:*

The North Myrtle Beach Department of Public Safety is presently using the free Nixle information distribution system. Residents of Briarcliffe Acres have been invited to register their cell phones and email addresses with [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) under NMBDPS. Briarcliffe Acres has the option of using this system. The Briarcliffe Acres Police Department does maintain an email distribution list/

### *Police staffing and equipment:*

Any staffing increase would have a significant cost budgetary impact. Equipment costs are a significant concern. Any mandated technology change, such as switching to digital radios with the county 800 MHz system or use of E ticket technology would be an unfunded burden on the town. The police department would benefit from an experienced grant writer seeking funds to stay current with changing police technology.

## **Fire Protection**

Investigate all possibilities for maintaining and improving fire suppression services for the Town. In this regard, the Town will periodically consult with representatives of local municipalities and local fire insurance agents in an effort to ensure the Town maintains the best fire code rating available given its resources. The Town currently has a fire protection agreement with the City of North Myrtle Beach. Recently the town became a Firewise community. As part of this

program the town has begun a two pronged approach. It has implemented an open yard burning ban and is working with the state to develop a program for removing yard waste and other underbrush/fuel.

### **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

Horry County provides direct emergency medical service response. The closest stations are located in Kings Road approximately 1.2 miles south of town. There is also one located 1.3 miles north of town in Barefoot. Each facility is staffed with a least one advanced life support ambulance, an Emergency Medical Technician, and Paramedic.

### **Beach Services**

Currently the town does not provide lifeguard services for the beach.

### **Emergency Management Plan**

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres coordinates with North Myrtle Beach, Myrtle Beach and Horry County Emergency Management in developing plans and coordinating resources. Traffic evacuation is coordinated by the SC Highway Patrol. The Briarcliffe Acres Police phone number has been registered with SCHP management personnel to coordinate and assist in an evacuation, most likely a weather related situation. The Briarcliffe Acres Police phone has been registered with Nixle for emergency public broadcasts from the NMBDPS. There is currently no similar notification system in place for events originating in the Horry County jurisdiction.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors through the provision of responsive, highly trained staff that are adequately equipped to provide public safety services.

### ***Goals***

- Identify and prioritize technology needs.
- Continually assess response times.
- Provide adequate facilities to accommodate Public Safety, including increased physical evidence storage.
- Reduce the vulnerability and exposure of the public from losses due to emergency or disaster thorough emergency preparedness & management.
- Ensure that the town is prepared to recoup any possible funding in case of a disaster
- Adequately provide funds for required upgrades to public safety equipment.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

The town should re-implement the security committee

Town should review possibilities for creating additional evidence storage.

Town will continue to review available grants for public safety expenses and if necessary contract the services of a grant writer to develop application.

The town should review and adopt an emergency management plan that coordinates with the surrounding governments.

Monitor, maintain and investigate the need for more police protection to ensure 24 hr. coverage.

Evaluate current technical systems for usability

Standardize information within County and State datasets

Continue to provide adequate staffing of law enforcement officers

Provide public education explaining preparedness in the event of emergencies and/or natural disasters

Periodically evaluate emergency management plans for efficiency and effectiveness

Continue communication with other public safety divisions to provide the best quality emergency management services

### **Solid Waste**

The Horry County Solid Waste Authority, Inc. provides solid waste recovery, recycling, and disposal services to the unincorporated parts of the County, as well as municipal areas. The Solid Waste Authority operates a Subtitle D Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) landfill and a Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill on a 734-acre parcel on Highway 90 outside of Conway. The 2001 Solid Waste Management Plan envisions continuing MSW and C&D disposal operations at the current site through 2020 and beyond.

The Horry County Solid Waste Authority is responsible for managing the permanent removal, temporary storage, burning, grinding and disposal of all debris generated from a disaster-related event. Citizens are responsible for placing disaster-related debris along the curb of the public right-of-way to be eligible for pickup and disposal by the Solid Waste Authority. To expedite debris removal and disposal efforts, the following properties have been designated and approved by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) as Temporary Debris Management Sites:

### **Waste Reduction/Reuse/Recycling**

Horry County maintains programs to encourage the recycling of waste, including recycling convenience centers in the unincorporated areas, educational activities, and a central Material Recycling Facility (MRF). Waste reduction efforts include backyard composting. The SWA operates a yard waste/composting facility.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Minimize the amount of solid waste generated within the town and dispose of all solid waste in a manner that maintains public health, reduce management costs, and protect the natural environment.

**Goals**

- Educate the citizens of town about ways to properly dispose of waste and ways to reduce material versus disposal.
- Assess population growth to meet solid waste management needs for the town.

**Implementation Strategies**

The town will continue to examine the funding issues related to service pickup.

The town will evaluate the need for yard debris removal.

The town will continue to review issues related to Horry County Solid Waste Authority and how it impacts the town.

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# CHAPTER 6

## NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

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The Town's natural environment will serve as a basic characteristic in guiding future plans by recognizing that a sensitive balance must be maintained in order to avoid damage to or the destruction of sensitive natural resources and to manage valuable ones to achieve and maintain a high quality of life.

Briarcliffe Acres supports a variety of wildlife and vegetation, which adds to the natural beauty of the environment. Wildlife within the Town Limits include white-tailed deer, raccoon, opossum, wood duck, mallard, great blue heron, rails sparrows and finches, water snakes and cottonmouth moccasin. The coastal environment provides both forage and habitat. Various forms of vegetation surrounding the freshwater lakes include wax myrtle, sweet gum, red maple and black willow. Other vegetation found within the Town Limits includes live oak, holly, southern red cedar, loblolly pine and cinnamon fern.

Many residents decision to live in Briarcliffe Acres was likely affected by the abundant and unique natural resources provided within the Town. Protecting and conserving those natural resources should be a top priority for the Town so that future generations can benefit from the many rewards that a healthy ecosystem can provide.

Conserving natural resources and maintaining a healthy environment is not just about water quality or tree preservation; it is about understanding the interconnectedness of our ecosystem and ensuring that future building respects the characteristics that make the Town so unique.

In essence, the build out of the remaining 14 lots, or some portion thereof; in Briarcliffe Acres and any other construction on any property located within the jurisdiction of the Town, as well as the Town's routine maintenance and general operations must always respect and rehabilitate the natural environment and foster its enjoyment by our Community and the public at large

### **Description**

Natural areas within the Town include wooded upland open space, vacant and developed single family lots, Fresh water ponds and a natural Dune field. Habitats within the town's 400 acres include coastal beaches and dunes, salt marsh, maritime shrub thickets and forests, mixed pine-hardwood forests, and freshwater ponds. These habitats support a diverse assemblage of wildlife species such as waterfowl and other various water birds, songbirds, furbearers, reptiles and amphibians.

### **The Beach**

The beachfront cabana provides recreation and a viewing area for the residents of Briarcliffe Acres. This cabana is located landward of the OCRM beachfront setback line and may be rebuilt in the same location or other location landward of the OCRM setback line without a permit from OCRM.

## **The Dune Field**

This natural buffer area has a large expanse of dune fields, a tidal creek and salt marsh ponds, which are very valuable and rare commodities for any beachfront community. The Dune fields have a variety of vegetation including sea oats, American beach grass and bitter panicum. These plants stabilize the dunes. The roots of plant material tend to bind sand to dunes, while plant foliage serves to trap windblown sand. New seawalls are not allowed, thus these dunes are your only protection from wind, flooding rains and storm surge due to hurricanes and northeasters. The salt marsh ponds, which are connected to White Point Swash, also serve as a buffer zone for storms. Marsh vegetation absorbs and dissipates wave energy and establishes a root system which stabilizes the soils. This allows tidelands to act as sponges, absorbing and releasing waters during storm events, including the assimilation of pollutants and the ability to recycle nutrients. These areas also provide habitat and nesting areas for wildlife, some of which are threatened or endangered such as the loggerhead sea turtle.

## **Wooded Open Areas**

Natural areas are essential for two very important reasons. One is that it helps absorb and treat stormwater before it reaches the water bodies within and adjacent to the Town. It is recommended that these open spaces are left with as much pervious area as possible. The second reason is to maintain current wildlife communities.

## **Wooded Residential Lots**

There are two types of residential lots within the town. The first is undeveloped of which there are only 14 remaining. The second and more prevalent are developed lots. Most of the developed lots have retained much of their original wooded vegetation. The undeveloped lots also help with provide wildlife habitat and absorb stormwater. All of the lots within town can assist in providing habitat and movement corridors for wildlife. Corridors between houses should be at least 25' wide and all areas should be maintained in native vegetation. Native vegetation that provides forage and cover for wildlife includes shrubs such as wax myrtle and yaupon. Canopy trees such as pine, oak, and hickory should be encouraged as well as understory natives such as holly, dogwood, cedar, and redbud. A variety of native vines, wildflowers, and grasses are available that offer both aesthetic appeal and wildlife value. Any exotic or invasive plants such as Chinese tallow, kudzu, or wisteria should be controlled or eliminated.

Minimize the cutting of significant areas of large trees. This leaves those on adjacent areas more susceptible to wind damage. Many of your pine trees are over 50 years old. Some are probably approaching 100 years old. They have survived many storms and will most likely survive many more if they are not left to stand alone. The trees also take up large volumes of water, break the impact of raindrops on the soil surface and block the wind.

Owners should ensure that their properties do not become overgrown with weeds and that conceals or invites rodents, pests or vermin or deposits of refuse; gives off noxious odors; constitutes a fire or traffic safety hazard; Owners should also have damaged or diseased limbs of trees or trees that pose an unreasonable risk of injury to persons and/or damage to property because of their damaged or diseased condition trimmed.

## **Freshwater Ponds**

There are two freshwater ponds within the town which are total about 10.3 acres and are home to several species of fish and birds. These ponds provide three very important roles in the town. The first is they provide a very aesthetic view shed for many residents who live along their shores. The second is it provides recreational opportunity for residents to fish and canoe. They also act as important stormwater detention facilities for the town.

### **Summary**

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres provides a haven for wildlife in an otherwise urbanized environment. Establishing and/or protecting open spaces, vegetated buffers, and water resources will be essential for maintaining habitat quality. Loggerhead sea turtle and native vegetation programs should be designed to encourage participation and stewardship from the Briarcliffe residents.

Vegetated buffers adjacent to these areas be established and/or maintained to improve water quality. Riparian areas and upland buffers provide pervious surfaces that allow for stormwater filtration and absorption. They also serve for groundwater recharge and suspended sediment trapping. Further development of these areas will increase impervious surface areas and lead to increased water quality degradation.

In addition to vegetated buffers, other enhancement efforts may also improve the quality of the ponds. Planting trees such as cypress and willows would provide additional shade that can moderate water temperature during the summer months. They would also provide wildlife forage and nesting sites and would increase detrital matter available to invertebrates which in turn would fuel the ponds' food web. During the summer months dissolved oxygen within the ponds may reach dangerously low levels due to poor water circulation. Installing an appropriate aerator to increase oxygen levels would ameliorate these conditions.

Aquatic weed control can be done with chemicals and/or with grass eating or algae eating fish such as the sterile grass carp. Pesticides applied in yards that drain into a pond can kill fish, so encourage homeowners to read the labels and not apply when a storm is imminent. Over fertilization of lawns that drain into ponds can also be a problem for aquatic weed growth and quick algae blooms that can radically change pH and kill fish.

The ponds have also become shallow due to sedimentation that occurred over the years when the Towns' roads were not paved and through erosion from the lots while the homes were being constructed. These ponds will need to be dredged now and approximately every 20 years to remove silt and increase the depth of the water. This will also help with reducing weeds from taking over the pond.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Town waters so that they can support the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and recreation in and on the water.

Protect and conserve its forests, plant and animal habitat.

**Goals**

- Maintain and improve water quality in the ocean and ponds within the town.
- Conserve the essential flood reduction, groundwater recharge, pollution filtering, and recreation functions of ponds and marshes within the town.
- Protect, promote, and enhance, the forestlands of the town in a manner consistent with achieving the greatest good for its citizens.
- Sponsor programs to educate private landowners on the benefits of maintaining existing vegetation.
- Promote the preservation of trees.
- Promote the use of native species whenever possible.

**Implementation Strategies**

Develop a program to educate residents and visitor on the unique and fragile coastal ecosystem.

Coordinate with SCDHEC to develop digital maps of permitted septic systems, detention ponds, and related system best management practices.

Establish riparian buffers around all ponds, marshes, and wetlands within the town.

Establish an annual awards program highlighting projects that have successfully implemented creative development techniques that conserve natural resources.

Cooperate with public education providers by sponsoring workshops, publications and other outreach efforts that could assist landowners in implementing natural resources conservation practices on the small scale

Improve stormwater management and create a stormwater facility management plan.

Work with the Master Gardeners and other area interested organizations to educate landowners and developers on the benefits of native species and the hazards of invasive species.

Educate and encourage residents to maintain the proper function of their septic systems by providing DHEC procedures upon request.

Work property owners adjacent to the town to ensure water quality.

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# CHAPTER 7

## LAND USE ELEMENT

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The land use element for the Town is unique in that the Town, with the exception of the church, is exclusively residential in nature. The predominant land use is detached single-family residential units. The future development of the Town will include some development of the fourteen vacant lots and redevelopment of several existing houses. This element is designed to support the protection of the Town of Briarcliffe's "residential nature".

### **Location**

The Town is bordered on west by US Hwy 17, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, the south by the Meher Baba Center and on the north by the Ocean Creek Resort Development.

### **Soils and Topography**

The topography of the Town is relatively flat with soils that slope generally less than four percent. The USDA, Soil Conservation Service identified the soil types located throughout the Town in the Soil Survey of Horry County published in 1983. The soils include: Lakeland, Leon, Meggett, Newhan, and Bohicket.

### **Zoning**

Land use can be defined as the occupation or utilization of land for any human activity or purpose. As an extension of land use, zoning determines the intensity of any given use. Zoning is a government regulation developed to protect lower impact uses and the people who engage in those uses (for instance housing), from higher impact uses, such as industry and commerce. Zoning is a legislative land-based tool, which has derived from the general police functions as defined by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution.

The current zoning districts located within the town are:

- Single Family Residential (R-1) District Low Density
- Conservation Preservation (CP) District Conservation Area
- Church, School, Community Uses (CSC) District

The boundaries of these districts are established on the map entitled, "Zoning Map of the Town of Briarcliffe Acres, South Carolina," attached herein as a portion of Exhibit "F," in the References portion of this document.

The Planning Commission anticipates no changes in the Zoning Map over the term of this planning period.

## **Current Land Use**

Single family residential constitutes the predominate land use. More precisely, single family residential constitutes 60 percent of all developed land. As Briarcliffe Acres has no plans for future annexation or any other land use development, single family residential will remain the predominant land use in the Town.

The Current Land Use Map included in this section, is a graphic representation of how the land is currently used and also includes road right-of-ways and major water features.

The existing land use classifications are:

- *Single-Family Residential* - This category consists of all single-family detached units on individual lots. (developed-vacant)
- *Public or Semi-public* - This category consists of all cultural, recreational, educational, governmental offices, religious and private or public clubs.
- *Common Areas and Open Space*- This category consists of all areas managed and controlled by the Briarcliffe Acres Association for the enjoyment and use of Briarcliffe Acre residents. This category also includes open space areas that are owned by the Town or cannot be developed.
- *Streets* -This category consists of all streets and right-of-ways.
- *Vacant Land* - This category includes all undeveloped and unused land, and areas under construction at the time of the survey.

The roadway system constitutes seventeen percent of the total land. The roads in Briarcliffe Acres are residential roads with right of ways varying in width from 30 to 50 feet. The Town has a number of residential roads; however three main roads (South Gate, Middle Gate, and North Gate Road) serve as access points to Highway 17. All three of the roads serve as collector streets, collecting traffic from various cul-de-sacs in the Town.

The public land uses in Briarcliffe Acres represent less than one percent of the total land area, and one percent of the developed land in the Town. The public and semi-public area includes only The Church of the Risen Christ. The common area land uses represent seven percent of the total land area and nine percent of the developed land in the Town. Vacant land constitutes the remaining 62 acres of Briarcliffe Acres' existing land uses. There are 14 vacant lots that could be developed as residential in the future.

**Table 7-1: Land Use Acreage**

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>1999 Acreage</b>	<b>2009 Acreage</b>	<b>Current % of Land Use</b>
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	236	245	61%
<b>Church and Community</b>	0	3	.7%
<b>Roads</b>	69	69	17%
<b>Public and Semi-Public</b>	3	10.5	2.5%
<b>Common Areas</b>	29	21.5	5.3%
<b>Vacant</b>	62	53	13.5%
<b>Total Acreage</b>	399	402	100%

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**STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

***Need***

Protect the character of the Town.

***Goals***

- Maintain the residential nature of the Town.

***Implementation Strategies***

Maintain the existing zoning boundaries.

Maintain the existing zoning district requirements for large lots.

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# CHAPTER 8

## PRIORITY INVESTMENT ELEMENT

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### **Description of Priority Investment Element**

The priority investment element provides a method for the town to evaluate the need for public infrastructure, estimate the cost of improvements for which the local government has fiscal responsibility, analyze the fiscal capability of the local government to finance these improvements, adopt policies to guide the funding of improvements, and schedule the funding and construction of improvements when required based on available funding and needs identified in the other comprehensive plan elements. The element includes recommendations for expenditure of funds for public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, drainage and other public utilities.

### **Background and Existing Conditions**

In May of 2007 the Governor signed into law the Priority Investment Act (PIA) S.C Code §6-29-510(D)(9). The Act amended the 1994 Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act and created the requirement for the Priority Investment Element. The Act reads as follows concerning the Priority Investment Element:

“A priority investment element that analyzes the likely federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years, and recommends the projects for expenditure of those funds during the next ten years for needed public infrastructure and facilities such as water, sewer, roads, and schools.

The recommendation of those projects for public expenditure must be done through coordination with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies. For the purposes of this item, 'adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies' means those counties, municipalities, public service districts, school districts, public and private utilities, transportation agencies, and other public entities that are affected by or have planning authority over the public project. For the purposes of this item, 'coordination' means written notification by the local planning commission or its staff to adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies of the proposed projects and the opportunity for adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies to provide comment to the planning commission or its staff concerning the proposed projects."

### **Determination of Needed Capital Improvements**

The capital investment needs identified in this element are based on the summary of all the goals and objectives as identified throughout this comprehensive planning process. The capital requests includes land improvements, building improvements, roads and drainage, heavy equipment, office furniture and equipment, computer equipment, motor vehicles, and other equipment.

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres does not currently have a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). A Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a five-year budget summary to include personnel requests and capital requests. Benefits of a CIP include:

- Facilitates coordination between capital needs and the operating budgets.
- Enhances the community's ability to obtain a credit rating in the future, control its tax rate, and avoid sudden changes in any potential future debt service requirements.
- Identifies the most economical means of financing capital projects.
- Increases opportunities for obtaining federal and state aid.
- Relates public facilities to other public and private development and redevelopment policies and plans.
- Focuses attention on community objectives and fiscal capacity.
- Keeps the public informed about future needs and projects.
- Allow local government to reduce duplication.
- Encourages careful project planning and design to avoid costly mistakes and help a community reach desired goals.

It is understood that the Priority Investment Element (PIE) is a long range planning tool which creates a ten year planning horizon as required by the Priority Investment Act. The PIE will be evaluated every five years as required by state law. The CIP will be a more specific budget tool with a five year planning window. The CIP project list and budget would be evaluated and approved annually. The development of a CIP by the town will allow it to more reliably refine the list of projects, available funding sources and current costs.

### **Development of a Funding Strategy**

The Town should develop a comprehensive funding strategy to finance needed capital improvements. The funding needs identified in this plan indicate that the needs of the Town may exceed the current anticipated revenues to fund those needs. As part of this element and any future Capital Improvements Plan the town should develop and/or identify additional sources of revenue to fund any gaps between anticipated revenue and the expenses in the plan. These could include grants, revolving loan funds, general obligations bonds, state aid to subdivisions and continued updating of fees for town services.

### **Town Revenue Funds**

The Town has several possible revenue sources for funding operational and capital costs.

*General Fund Revenues* – The Town’s General Fund comes from tax revenues that are not designated for any particular purpose. Principle sources of revenue are property taxes, licenses and permits and intergovernmental revenues. Most of the general fund pays for personnel and operations, but a percentage of General Funds may be used for capital improvements.

*Special Revenue Funds* –Special Revenue Fund includes proceeds from specific revenue sources (other than funding for major capital projects) that are legally restricted to expenditures for specific purposes. The Special Revenue Fund primarily serves as a pass-through for federal grants.

*Capital Projects Fund* – A Capital Projects Fund accounts for financial resources, including bond proceeds and intergovernmental grants, used for the acquisition, construction, or improvement of major general government facilities.

*Enterprise Funds* – Enterprise Funds are used to account for the business-type activities. Those activities which are financed and operated in a manner where the intent of the Town is that the

costs (expenses, including depreciation) of providing goods and services to the general public on a continuing basis would be financed or recovered primarily through user charges. Funds typically used for Electric, Water, Wastewater, Stormwater, and Impact Fee funds.

### **Alternative Town Revenues**

*Bonds* – Bonds can be issued by the town to fund expensive capital projects over a long period of time.

*Municipal Improvement Districts* -- Per state law, Briarcliffe Acres can establish districts within which a special assessment is applied to properties for the purpose of raising revenues to pay for public improvements that will benefit the owners in the defined area.

### **External Town Funding Sources**

*Transportation Enhancement Funds* – Transportation Enhancement Funds are available for environmentally related activities that improve the transportation experience, including landscaping, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, historic preservation, and other visual amenities related to the transportation system.

*South Carolina Parks and Recreation Development Fund (PARD)*– The PARD grant program is a state funded non-competitive reimbursable grant program for eligible local governments which provide recreational opportunities to their citizens. This program funds development of new public recreation facilities and enhancement/renovations to existing facilities and requires an 80-20 state-local match.

*GSATS Guideshare* – Funds for road improvements are allocated by the South Carolina Department of Transportation through the Guideshare Program. The South Carolina Transportation Commission allocates Guideshare Program funding from FHWA and SCDOT funds each year and distributes the money among the state’s ten MPOs and Councils of Governments based on population and vehicle miles of travel in each region. Road improvements may include constructing new roads, adding traffic lanes to existing roads, constructing paved shoulders, installing traffic signals, constructing sidewalks or bike lanes, or making safety improvements. Major maintenance improvements may also be included, such as road resurfacing.

*“C Funds”* - are received from the State of South Carolina and are derived from gasoline tax. Funds are used for local road improvements. The C Program is a partnership between SCDOT and the forty-six counties of South Carolina to fund the improvements of state roads, county roads, city streets, and other local transportation projects. The C funds are derived from 2.66 cents per gallon of the state gasoline tax. These funds are distributed to each of the 46 counties based on a three part formula. Last Year Horry County CTC committee was apportioned \$2.6million.

*Grants* – There are many grants that are offered by many public and nonprofit groups and agencies. Grants are available to fund items from additional operational costs to one time capital expenses. The Town should continue evaluating all possible grants and if necessary should employ the services of a professional grant writer. Grant writers not only apply for grants, but also continually examine available grants to see if they match with the needs of their clients.

## **Coordination with Adjacent and Relevant Agencies and Jurisdictions**

The PIA requires coordination between local governments and agencies, in addition to relevant jurisdictions such as public and private utilities, school districts, transportation agencies and other public entities affected by or that have planning authority over the public projects. The Town of Briarcliffe Acres Planning Commission will provide written notification of projects included in the CIP to those agencies and jurisdictions that are affected by or have planning authority. To meet the intent and purpose of this requirement those capital projects for which notification will be given shall be for roads/bridges projects, buildings and major structures.

## **Priority Investments**

The purpose of this section of the Town's Comprehensive Plan is to focus investment on the priorities identified as critical to the Town. The goal is to coordinate prioritization, planning, and budgeting for these priorities over a ten year period.

The Town of Briarcliffe Acres has identified the following areas as priorities for the community: Road Maintenance Program, Stormwater Maintenance and Management Plan, Public Safety and Security, Public Utilities.

Each of the priority investments listed in this element includes a timeframe and a possible funding strategy. Timeframes are organized by the following intervals:

- Ongoing – Ongoing strategies do not have a defined timeline for completion and should be carried out on an ongoing basis over the short and long-term
- Short-term – Short-term strategies should be completed within 1 to 5 years
- Long-term– Long-term strategies should be completed between 5 and 10 years

This is only a possible list of projects. The capital needs of the town should be evaluated annually through the development of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

## **Road Maintenance Program**

*Time Frame:* Ongoing

*Funding Sources:* Road Maintenance Capital Projects Fund (Prime), "C" Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* Currently the town has approximately \$70 thousand in a Road Fund. The town is placing \$25 thousand in the funding during the 2011 budget year. It is recommended that the fund should be incrementally increased \$5 thousand annually over the next five years. The need to either increase or decrease this funding can be evaluated annually during the CIP process.

## **Stormwater Maintenance Program**

*Time Frame:* Ongoing

*Funding Sources:* General Fund (Prime), Grant Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* Currently the town has no specific revenue source identified for maintaining stormwater facilities and all funding must come from the general fund. The town should set up a

capital fund to pay for the expenses involved in stormwater facility maintenance. The town is Develop a stormwater maintenance management plan and prioritize capital improvement project list which includes dredging of the freshwater ponds. There are grants that are made available to improve water quality which may be able to assist in funding the needed maintenance.

### **Security Cameras Program**

*Time Frame:* Short-Term

*Funding Sources:* General Fund (Prime), Grant Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* Currently the town has budgeted some money to install security cameras as the gate entrances. The planning commission believes that this is a high priority and the town should fund any reasonable expense to obtain the correct camera system to ensure the security of the residents and visitors in the town. The town can either fund this from the general fund or examine the possibility of any available grant funds.

### **Public Sewer**

*Time Frame:* Long Term

*Funding Sources:* User Fees (Prime), Bond, Grant Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* Currently the town is not involved in operation or funding of public sewer. Public Sewer service is available to several homes within the town, with service being provided by the City of Myrtle Beach. Over the next few years it is expected that the town will evaluate the need for expanding this service to other parts of the town. If the town chooses to expand this service it is recommended that the funding come primarily from user fees. If additional one time funding is needed then the town could issue bonds and/or obtain grants. The bonds would be paid back over time using fees collected from the users of the sewer system.

### **Wired Utilities**

*Time Frame:* Long Term

*Funding Sources:* User Fees (Prime), Bond, Grant Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* The town has evaluated the costs of placing utilities underground in the past. The expense was too large for the town to incur. It is expected that over the next several years the town will survey the residents desire to place the utilities underground. If the town chooses to move forward with placing these utilities underground then the primary funding source would come from user fees. If additional one time funding is needed then the town could issue bonds and/or obtain grants. Bonds would be paid back from the general fund.

### **Street Lights**

*Time Frame:* Short to Long Term

*Funding Sources:* User Fees (Prime), Grant Funds (alternate)

*Discussion:* Streetlights can add to the appearance and security of the town. The town will be evaluating the desire of the residents to install town wide streetlights. If the interest is expressed by the residents then the town will put together multiple options for installing the lights. Primary funding for the lights will be paid as an addition fee added on to utility customers monthly bills. The town can also examine available grants for streetscape or security improvements that can be used for streetlights.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout this comprehensive plan there are many mentions of projects planned for or recommended to address the community's future needs. Specific projects mentioned in this plan that are nearing implementation or completion are tied to existing or planned funding strategies. Projects that are only in the planning stage are prioritized in relation to strategies recommended in this plan. A formalized CIP process should be used to ensure funding needs are addressed accurately through coordination with all entities involved.

## **STATEMENT OF NEEDS, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

### ***Need***

Develop a comprehensive funding strategy to finance needed capital improvements and meet the requirements of the Priority Investment Element.

### ***Goals***

- Complete a 5-year capital improvement plan
- Explore and develop funding opportunities for future capital improvements that are needed in order to expand the funds available for major city projects
- Identify and pursue state and federal grants and other funding for capital improvements.

### ***Implementation Strategies***

Continue to monitor the capital needs of the town.

Identify and develop priorities to complete capital projects and achieve and maintain desired levels of services.

Consider cost of maintenance and operation of all capital projects.

Track the cost of maintenance of facilities to assure funds are being spent in an appropriate manner.

Develop a timely and appropriate notification schedule for relevant jurisdictions and agencies.

Identify projects within the CIP that would require notification.

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# Appendices

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*Appendix A – Aerial Map*

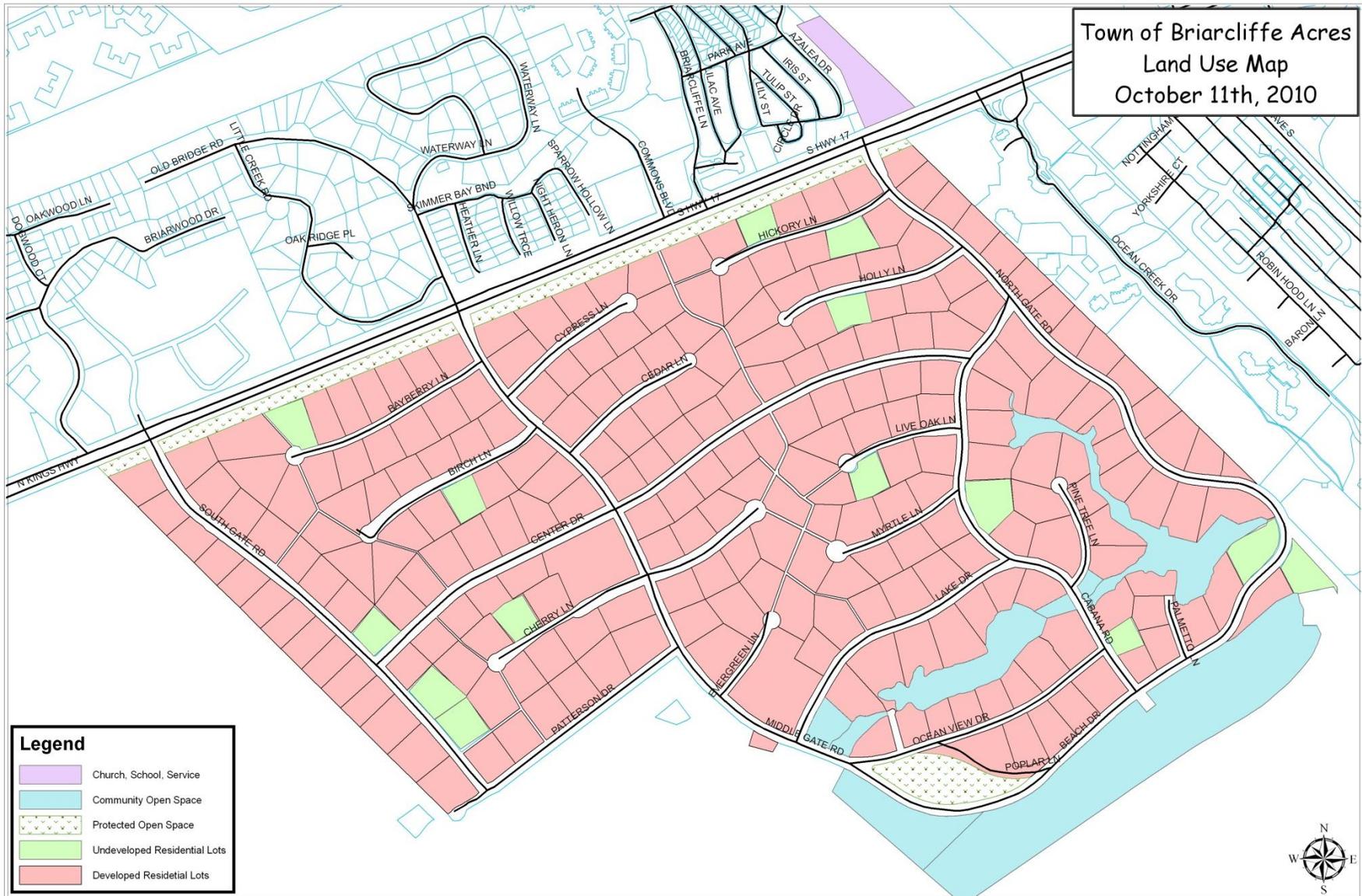
*Appendix B – Land Use Map*

*Appendix C – Zoning Map*

Appendix A – Aerial Map



Appendix B – Land Use Map



Appendix C – Zoning Map

