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Atlantic Beach Land Development Plan

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Atlantic Beach

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Atlantic Beach has prepared this Land Development Plan in compliance with the Coastal Area Management Act of 1974. The planning process and contents of the plan were set forth in the Guidelines for Local Planning as adopted by the Coastal Resources Commission. Technical assistance throughout the planning process was provided by the Carteret County Planning Department, but it must be emphasized that input of elected and appointed officials, as well as citizens of Atlantic Beach is responsible for the ideas and the direction it is hoped this plan will offer to Atlantic Beach. It is also hoped this plan will fit in and become an integral part of an overall county plan.

The formulation of this plan has taken place over a period of several months. During the planning process the Coastal Resources Commission has stressed the desire that each local government involved in the Coastal Area Management Act obtain as much public input in the development of local plans as possible. This desire to obtain public input was shared by the elected and appointed officials of Atlantic Beach. Basically, input was obtained through a series of public meetings, the extensive use of questionnaires, and personal interviews with many leaders in the community. Current land use maps were made available to as many people as possible and seemed to stimulate ideas and constructive criticisms of present and future land use.

The primary objective of the Coastal Area Management Act of 1974 is to form a basis for a "comprehensive plan for the protection, preservation, orderly development, and management of the coastal area of North Carolina". It is hoped this objective will be achieved by the development of plans such as the

one herein presented for Atlantic Beach.

The citizens of Atlantic Beach, along with its elected and appointed officials, realize Atlantic Beach is located within a region that contains many Potential Areas of Environmental Concern (as defined within the plan), and at the same time is subject to a period of rapid growth. This is why the planning process, as required by the Coastal Area Management Act, is important to Atlantic Beach and, for the most part, is well accepted. Without good planning, areas such as Atlantic Beach will slowly deteriorate, and so too will the coastal area of North Carolina. The Coastal Area Management Act of 1974 has taken into account that the coastal area of North Carolina is a "limited commodity," and has set out to speed up the planning process so as to preserve this "commodity."

At first glance one can tell this plan is somewhat different from any other land use plan now in existence. For instance, Potential Areas of Environmental Concern are defined and will be designated by the Coastal Resources Commission at a later date. Also, a new system of land classification is included along with other ideas that are particularly applicable to modern land use planning, as applied to the coastal areas of North Carolina.

This plan contains nine sections. Following this introduction, the plan deals with the present conditions of Atlantic Beach including discussion on population, economy, and existing land use. Next, the plan deals with the development of objectives for local planning, the constraints on land development, and subsequently the demand the projected growth will have on the land. All of this information is finally brought together by the State Land Classification system. The final sections summarize the entire planning process and explain how this plan relates to the overall comprehensive county plan.

To understand this somewhat different land use plan it seems there must first of all be an understanding of the legislative goals as stated in G.S. 113A-112 (b).

1. To provide a management system capable of preserving and managing the natural ecological conditions of the estuarine system, the barrier dune system, and the beaches, so as to safeguard and perpetuate their natural productivity and their biological, economical and aesthetic values.
2. To insure that the development or preservation of the land and water resources of the coastal area proceeds in a manner consistent with the capability of the land and water for development, use, or preservation based on ecological considerations.
3. To insure the orderly and balanced use and preservation of our coastal resources on behalf of the people of North Carolina and the nation.
4. To establish policies, guidelines and standards for the conservation of resources; the economic development of the coastal area; the use of recreational lands and tourist facilities; the wide development of transportation and enhancement of historical, cultural and scientific aspects of the region; and the protection of common law and public rights in the lands and waters of the coastal area.

In order for these goals to be realized there must be a conscious effort to follow this plan. This can only be made possible by following up the plan with good land use implementation methods that are enforceable and supported by the citizens of Atlantic Beach. The citizens must continue to participate in order to achieve the objectives of the overall planning process.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Atlantic Beach is a vacation resort area on the barrier island system of North Carolina. Located within Carteret County and being on the eastern end of Bogue Banks, Atlantic Beach is a very scenic area. It is bordered on the north by Bogue Sound, on the south by the Atlantic Ocean. This gives it the unique characteristic of having a beach area that faces South instead of the normal eastwardly direction. It is bordered on the east by the Fort Macon State Park, the site of an old Civil War Fort and by Beaufort Inlet. On the west there is a portion of county area followed by the city of Pine Knoll Shores which is two (2) miles from the Atlantic Beach City Limits.

Atlantic Beach is separated entirely from the mainland by water, and access to this strip of the barrier island is provided by two bridges. One bridge connects Morehead City, the largest city in Carteret County, to the Atlantic Beach main resort area. The other bridge is located some 25 miles away and connects the Town of Emerald Isle to the mainland near Cape Carteret and Swansboro. Access to the remainder of the county is provided basically by N. C. Highway 70, N. C. Highway 24, and N. C. Highway 58.

During the summer months, Atlantic Beach becomes the hub of the resort activities in the county. The presence of the Atlantic Beach Public Beach, and the numerous entertainment establishments attract people to the county in great numbers. The county in general enhances the appeal of Atlantic Beach by providing many hotels, restaurants, fishing, and general retail business that vacationers are looking for. Additionally, Atlantic Beach is complemented by the Fort Macon State Park, numerous fishing piers along the "banks area", and other tourist areas along the outer banks.

The Town of Atlantic Beach and its one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction has grown around a beautiful public beach extending approximately 2500 feet and the business area associated with the beach strand. The most rapid development of Atlantic Beach occurred during the late sixties and early seventies. Most of this development has been in the form of residential growth accompanied by tourist related businesses. The year around population in 1970 was 300, but the population section will explore current year around seasonal populations as well and future population projections and desires.

The climate of Atlantic Beach can be basically described as having warm summers and mild winters. Rainfall in this area ranges between 45 and 65 inches per year.

The land area of Atlantic Beach is typical of the Outer Banks in that it is sandy with moderate amounts of vegetation on the dunes and as one get further from the frontal dune line more vegetation appears. The north side of the town has marsh and other areas typical of sound areas. The major changes to the natural habitat of this area is that many of the frontal dunes have been destroyed and "much" of the marsh area has been filled in order to accommodate residential structures. Still, Atlantic Beach remains a beautified and viable part of the barrier island of North Carolina.

II, Present Conditions

A. Population

In any land development plan a careful study of the current population of an area, along with an analysis of past trends and future population desires is absolutely essential. Only after the population is analyzed and future population desires are determined can the planning process continue in a constructive manner. Not only should the actual numbers be considered, but also characteristics of the population should be considered.

Since the 1960 Census count of 76 persons, the year around population of Atlantic Beach (city limits) has grown very rapidly. Between 1960 and 1970 the Bureau of Census indicated there was approximately a 400% increase for a new total population of 300. During the 1960's Bogue Banks in general began to grow and develop into a major vacation resort area. Development ranged from small cottages and mobile homes to large hotel and condominium complexes. A considerable investment has been made in this area by many developers and many citizens looking for a place to spend their vacations and free time. This investment, in many cases, has made Atlantic Beach more attractive to vacationers, and has been the major factor in the increased population. In addition to increased investment, annexation has added to the Atlantic Beach population.

Table #1 Atlantic Beach Planning Area Population Estimate

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1975
Year Around	-	49	76	300	500
Summer	-	-	-	4131	*7360

*Includes the one-mile extra-territorial area

The year around population projections in the preceeding chart have been provided by the Bureau of Census, except for the 1975 figure of 500 which

was estimated by the Atlantic Beach Planning Board. The summer population is much more difficult to determine, and much more important in the planning process for Atlantic Beach. The summer projection included in the preceeding chart for 1975 has been determined by the Atlantic Beach Planning Board. The total number of accommodations was considered and an average acceptance rate of four people per unit during peak periods was used to determine peak population. This takes into consideration that many more than four people stay in some living units, and some living units are unoccupied. The older areas of Atlantic Beach provide accommodations that are designed for large groups, while the newer development is designed for family accommodations.

It should be noted that the 1975 figures take into consideration the one mile area.

Most of the recent residential growth in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area has occurred on the north side of Fort Macon Boulevard in Atlantic Beach Isles Subdivision and Sound View Isles Subdivision. There has also been some significant residential development in the one mile area to the East. It should be noted that most of the new development is designed for family use, whereas the older development is composed for multi-family or group use. A detailed land use analysis will be presented in the next section of this plan.

The population figures in this section did not consider day visitors. The purpose of this section was to determine the number of people that are accommodated by the living units in Atlantic Beach. The Economy Section and Facilities Demand Section will place more emphasis on day visitors.

B. Economy

The Atlantic Beach Planning Area is a Vacation Resort Area and the economy of the area is based on this premise. The permanent residents of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area are basically made up of individuals who operate or work for tourist related businesses, and those individuals who are retired.

Tourism in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area is promoted by the presence of 83 businesses, including 17 motels, all designed to supply tourist with a diversity of entertainment and services. The growth that has occurred in the sixties has also added to the total economic picture of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area. It seems that population and economic growth occur simultaniously in most areas of Bogue Banks.

The Atlantic Beach Planning Area is separated from the mainland by Bogue Sound, but seems to be the hub of summer resort activities in Carteret County. Many businesses and other economic factors in other parts of the county are affected by the ability of Atlantic Beach to attract summer vacationers. The presence of public access beach area in the center of Atlantic Beach is probably the single most important factor in attracting vacationers. This area along with the beach area at the Fort Macon State Park are the only two public access areas to the Atlantic Ocean along Bogue Banks. Both areas attract people to Atlantic Beach, and in turn, promote the overall tourist industry in the county.

In the past, the economy of Atlantic Beach was basically geared toward day time activities for all ages, but night time activities were geared to the

very young in the form of the amusement center; and geared toward teenagers in the form of dancing areas. It seems the current trend is to continue providing night time entertainment for the young people, but also to include night time entertainment for the adult population. This is a part of the overall attempt to provide services and recreation for an entire family.

As previously discussed, the economy of Atlantic Beach is almost entirely geared to providing services or entertainment to summer time vistors. Examples of the service and entertainment that are provided include: motels, restaurants, night clubs, fishing piers, tackle shops, boat sales, service stations, amusement centers, boat storage, beach ware sales, and convenience stores.

The location of the existing business community begins along both sides of the causeway between the bridge and Fort Macon Boulevard. From there it extends around the "entertainment circle" and along Fort Macon Boulevard to the east and west. The existing businesses along Fort Macon Boulevard do not extend to the city limits at the present time. Business composes approximately 12% of the developed area in Atlantic Beach (refer to the Land Use Section of this Land Development Plan for more details on current land use.)

The economy of the entire county is more diverse than the concentration on tourism of the Atlantic Beach community. Factors such as the Fishing Industry, Retail Trade, Cherry Point Marine Base, Agriculture, Manufacturing and Tourism affect the county as a whole. A discussion of these factors should provide a basis for understanding the economy of the county as a whole and how the economy of Atlantic Beach relates to the remainder of the county.

The following table reflects the Work Force Changes in Carteret County between 1962 and 1972.

WORK FORCE CHANGES . Table #

Year	Civilian Work Force	Manufacturing	Non-manufacturing	Agriculture
1962	7,410	1,100	3,430	610
1963	7,620	1,160	3,580	620
1964	7,830	1,140	3,860	500
1965	8,540	1,200	4,050	440
1966	9,080	1,340	4,410	420
1967	9,070	1,430	4,460	390
1968	9,450	1,440	4,830	350
1969	9,600	1,500	5,050	340
1970	10,200	1,610	5,410	330
1971	10,190	1,430	5,510	330
1972	10,660	1,580	5,780	310
Average	9,059	1,357	4,579	421

As the county becomes more diversified, certainly the Town of Atlantic Beach will profit in terms of investment and economic stability. The preceeding chart indicates Carteret County is becoming diversified.

Although the economy of the county is becoming diverse, there is still a growing reliance on the tourist industry. It is very difficult to gauge the effect of the tourist industry because of the many supportative businesses that are connected with tourism. In order to get an idea of tourist expenditures in Carteret County refer to the following tables.

CARTERET COUNTY TRAVEL INCOME Table #

Year	Total Travel Expenditures	Total Sales
1963		$ 4,329,000.00
1964		7,159,000.00
1965		8,014,000.00
1966		8,575,000.00
1967		9,270,000.00
1968	$5,815,000.00	10,482.000.00
1969	6,317,000.00	13,410,000.00
1970	7,020,000.00	Not Available

1971	7,390,000.00	Not Available
1972	8,050,000.00	17,182,000.00

Source: Dr. Lewis Copeland - University of Tennessee

The preceeding table demonstrates that the Total Travel Income is a very significant element of the Carteret County economy. As has been mentioned, Atlantic Beach is responsible for a very large portion of these expenditures in the county.

Chart # 4 , indicates the number of visitors at Fort Macon State Park. Since all visitors to Fort Macon have to go through Atlantic Beach, this will give an idea of the magnitude of the day vistors on Atlantic Beach. This chart is not intended to estimate the day vistors on Atlantic Beach.

Number Visitors Fort Macon State Park

Year	Visitors
1940	18,000
1950	193,364
1960	443,624
1965	578,961
1966	599,149
1967	580,867
1968	642,595
1969	712,361
1970	756,653
1971	785,249
1972	862,711

Source: North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of State Parks

This section concerning the economy of Atlantic Beach is intended to indicate the importance of the tourist industry. Also, the reference to the economy of Carteret County in general is intended to indicate a greater stability of the economic situation for Atlantic Beach and all other areas of the county.

Land Use Map

C. Existing Land Use

For the purposes of this land development plan the existing land use will be analyzed according to six major categories. These categories include urban and built-up, undeveloped land, water, wetland, and barren. In general, a review of the current land use map #1 indicates Atlantic Beach and its one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction is predominantly residential or undeveloped. The following chart is an analysis of the existing land use within Atlantic Beach and the one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction.

Existing Land Use
Atlantic Beach Planning Area

	Number of Acres	Total Percent Of Development
Urban and Built-Up		
1. Residential	265	66%
2. Commercial	48	12%
3. Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	75	18%
4. Government and Institutional	5	1%
5. Cultural, Entertainment, and Recreation	18	4%
Total Developed Land	411	
*Undeveloped Land	275	

*This refers to undeveloped land that could potentially be developed.

Residential Land Use

Within the broad category of urban and built-up, residential is by far the most predominant use. The following is a breakdown of the type of residential uses within Atlantic Beach

*Housing Units	749
Mobile Homes	629
17 Motels with a total of	462 units
	1840 total living units

*Within Atlantic Beach it is difficult to tell exactly how many units are within one structure. For that reason the total housing units may be low.

An analysis of this chart indicates that Atlantic Beach is a vacation resort area. This conclusion can be drawn from the presence of numberous motel and mobile home units. It has been estimated that the peak seasonal population of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area is 7360.

Commercial Land Use

The general category of urban and built-up land also includes commercial land use.

	Acres	Percent of Total Development
Commercial Usage	48	12%

Within the 48 acres of commercial development, almost all are tourist related businesses. There are a total of 83 businesses including motels which are considered commercial, but they supply a large portion of residential lodging. The most common business uses are those that supply entertainment and minimum services for tourists. The land use chart indicates that the commercial community is built around the expectation of summer vacationers.

It seems that recent trends in housing and commercial development have been geared toward the development of a vacation resort area for family use. The significance of this statement is that up until recently the beach commercial and housing style was geared toward the interest of younger poeple. This

was evidenced by the lack of entertainment for the adult population. Also, entertainment for the very young had lost some interest, and therefore, the family attraction of the beach was not present. Refer to the section of this plan on objectives for future direction of local planning efforts. Also refer to the section on Future Land Needs for information concerning the type of land uses and the amounts of land that will be needed during the Planning period.

Transportation

Of the remaining land uses, the only significant use at this time is "Transportation." The chart indicates that the street right-of-ways in Atlantic Beach amount to approximately 75 acres. This is a rough estimate and should only be used to indicate that development requires a significant amount of land for street rights-of-way. This is important to remember in planning for future land development.

Problems Related to Past Development

Atlantic Beach is a vital part of the tourist industry of Carteret County and seems to be growing steadily. Some problems have resulted from unplanned development on Atlantic Beach. These problems include:

(1) Very dense development in some areas, which detract from the town's natural beauty.

(2) Development with little regard to the frontal dune system.

(3) Past development which has not protected the wetlands that border Atlantic Beach on Bogue Sound.

(4) Proper waste disposal systems have not been used in some areas. That is to say, some development that is too near the sound or on fill dirt may be causing pollution of the estuarine or ground waters.

(5) Commercial and residential development have not always been adequately separated.

(6) In many cases, building techniques have given little regard to the fact that Atlantic Beach is a Flood Prone Area.

(7) Roads have been poorly planned. The roads have not been built to accommodate the amount of traffic they have to handle.

These are some examples of the poor planning which has allowed this type of development to take place.

It is hoped that this plan will aid future development to avoid such mistakes. The areas of Atlantic Beach that are most likely to experience significant growth pressures in the planning period include the Sound View Isles and Atlantic Beach Isles Subdivisions and the one mile extra-territorial area to the east and west.

D. Current Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Currently the Town of Atlantic Beach and its one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction is deeply involved in land use planning and implementation of these plans. This concentration on planning has come as a result of the shortage of developable land in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area, as well as the extremely fragile nature of Bogue Island and its surrounding waters. In addition, the CAMA has helped to bring out the significance of local land use planning, and has helped to speed up the entire planning process tremendously. A list of local plans, policies, and regulations, and more methods of implementation, are included below.

(1) Atlantic Beach has an existing Land Use Survey and Analysis, and Land Development Plan prepared in 1972. This document is an integral part of the Planning Process and has acted as a good base for the development of this Land Use Planning Process. Current land use policies are based on this document. It is hoped the current planning process will update this document, as well as expand on some important areas this plan did not cover in detail.

(2) The Department of Transportation prepared a throughfare plan for Atlantic Beach, Morehead City, and Beaufort. This plan has not been approved by the local governments.

(3) The Town of Atlantic Beach is participating in the development of the Morehead City 201 Regional Sewer Plan. It is hoped that this plan will be approved shortly.

(4) The Town of Atlantic Beach provides recreation in the form of a Public Beach Area. It is the policy of the Town to maintain this area for the general public,

Regulations

(1) Zoning Ordinance - The Atlantic Beach Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1958 and now includes the one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction. The Building Inspector is the zoning enforcement officer for the Town of Atlantic Beach. All requests for zoning changes and amendments must be presented to the Planning Board for a recommendation and to the Town Board for final approval. All decisions concerning zoning changes or amendments require a public hearing.

(2) Subdivision Regulations were adopted by the Town of Atlantic Beach in 1975. The Planning Board has the responsibility of reviewing all subdivision requests, and the Town Board has the responsibility of giving the final decision.

(3) Group Housing Project Ordinance- This ordinance was adopted in 1975. The Planning Board reviews all proposed projects and the Town Board has the responsibility for final approval. The Building Inspector inspects these projects to insure compliance with the ordinance.

(4) Mobile Home Park Ordinance - This ordinance was adopted in 1975. The Planning Board reviews all proposed projects and the Town Board has the responsiblity for final approval. The Building Inspector inspects these projects to insure compliance with the ordinance.

(5) Recreational Vehicle Park Ordinance - This ordinance was adopted in 1975. The Planning Board reviews all proposed projects and the Town Board has the responsibility of final approval. The Building Inspector inspects these projects to insure compliance with the ordinance.

(6) Marina Ordinance - This ordinance was adopted in 1975. The Planning Board reviews all proposed projects and the Town Board has the responsibility of final approval. The Building Inspector inspects these projects to insure compliance with the ordinance.

(7) State Building Code - The state building code is enforced by the Atlantic Beach Building Inspector in all areas of the Planning Area.

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(8) Minimum Housing Code - This code was adopted in 1975 and is enforced by the Atlantic Beach Building Inspector.

(9) Carteret County Outer Banks Land Protection Ordinance - The Carteret County Outer Banks Protection Officer enforces this ordinance on all areas of Bogue Banks, including Atlantic Beach. This ordinance requires a permit from the Outer Banks Land Protection Officer for all work involving the destruction of any vegetation on Bogue Banks.

(10) Water and Sewer Regulations - The Carteret County Health Department regulates the installation of septic tanks withing the planning area of Atlantic Beach. The Atlantic Beach Water System is regulated by the State of North Carolina, but does not service all residents of the planning area. The placement of individual wells in this planning area is regulated by the Carteret County Health Department.

(11) There are many State and Federal regulations that affect development within Atlantic Beach. These regulations are not available at this time for inclusion in this document. All property owners are encouraged to become aware of the regulations before they begin any construction.

It is hoped this section will provide an adequate representation of the existing situations within Atlantic Beach. A careful analysis of this section will help explain some of the public input that is included in the following section. These two sections will be very valuable in the decision making process.

III. Public Participation Activities

In order for a Land Development Plan to be effective, it must reflect the desires of the local people. The Atlantic Beach Town Board and Planning Board have attempted to determine the desires of the local people through an extensive public participation program that has been carried out over the past year. The input received has helped determine the major land use issues that will have to be faced during the planning period, and to determine objectives, policies, and standards for future land development. The following discussion will summarize the public input and relate the objectives, policies, and standards to the public input.

Public Input Process - Public input was solicited by two basic methods during the past year.

(A) Questionnaires were sent out to all property owners in the Planning Area of Atlantic Beach. There was a total of 500 questionnaires mailed and one hundred and seventy-five (175) were returned for a total of 35 percent. The following questions from the questionnaires were easily summarized.

1. Would you like to see Atlantic Beach remain much the same as it is now? Yes 93 No 76

2. Do you think Atlantic Beach needs more commercial development? Yes 55 No 88

3. What type commercial development, if any, do you feel Atlantic Beach needs:
   - A. Motels 20
   - B. Dance Halls 7
   - C. Retail Stores 55
   - D. Amusement 30
   - E. Restaurants 61

4. Do you feel Atlantic Beach should encourage more residential growth within the city limits: Yes 95 No 66

5. How do you feel the one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction should be developed over the next ten (10) years?

   A. Single family 120
   B. Multi-family 39
   C. Commercial 18
   D. Mobile home parks 4
   E. Camper Trailer Parks 5
   F. Combination of the above 18

6. Do you feel Atlantic Beach should encourage the development of the proposed sewer system for East Bogue Banks?

   Yes 72 No 36

7. Do you feel beach access areas are adequate in Atlantic Beach? Yes 0 No all

8. If you feel beach access areas are not adequate, do you feel the Town of Atlantic Beach should attempt to provide access areas and parking for these areas? Yes 67 No 102

9. Do you feel Atlantic Beach should engage in an Urban Redevelopment program if the opportunity should arise? Yes 80 No 71

10. Do you feel the height of buildings, especially in the one mile area, should be an important factor in planning?

    Yes 119 No 41

The remaining questions of the questionnaire required a written response. Each individual response can be viewed at the Atlantic Beach Town Hall. The summary of the public input by the Planning Board included in this section attempts to incorporate these responses in the planning process.

(B) Public Meetings - Five public meetings were held in the Atlantic Beach Town Hall for the purpose of explaining the requirements and objectives of the Coastal Area Management Act, and to solict public input in

the planning process. These meetings were scheduled so as to allow both permanent and summer residents of Atlantic Beach to participate. Approximately 90 individuals participated in these public meetings. All Planning Board meetings during the past year have devoted time to discuss the land development plan and solicit public input.

A summary of the public input received during the past year has indicated to the Atlantic Beach Planning Board that the following land development ideas are shared by a majority of those participating in the public input system.

Most property owners indicated they would like to see Atlantic Beach remain basically a residential resort area. Many expressed concern about current high density levels, and indicated they would like to see future density sonewhat lower. Consistent response indicated a need to separate entertainment activities from other commercial activities. There was a strong indication of a need to encourage entertainment activities for all residents and property owners as well as basic commercial development. Most participants indicated a need to protect and preserve the "public beach" as well as the natural resources of the beach area. Municipal services such as water, sewer, police, fire, rescue, and solid waste disposal were mentioned repeatedly. Finally, emphasis was placed upon private property rights and governmental coordination.

Public Input Analysis

During the public input process, the Planning Board and Town Board analyzed the results of the questionnaires and the public meetings. Once certain

consistent trends began to be evident, the planning consultant was asked to develop these trends in a written form in accordance with the Guidelines for Land Planning as adopted by the Coastal Resources Commission. After several drafts, the two Boards felt that the desires of those participating in the input system were reflected in the plan. The following discussion of issues, objectives, policies, and standards are the result of the public input process.

Land Use Issues

An integral part of any planning process is the identification of the land development issues that will have to be faced during the planning period. Through careful analysis of public input as well as an analysis of the present and past land use conditions, land use issues for the Atlantic Beach Planning Areas were determined. These issues are the basis for the land development objectives, policies, and standards that will determine the decision making process during the planning period. Without facing up to these issues, planning will not be effective. The following issues have been identified by the participants in the planning process.

1. The impact of population trends will certainly be of great importance in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area. The built-in growth of four hundred eighty-seven (487) vacant lots in the planning area and the approximately two hundred seventy-five (275) additional vacant acres indicate the magnitude of this issue. It should be noted that due to the small nature of many of these lots it is estimated by the Planning Board that three hundred twenty-four (324) dwelling units could be built on these lots.

If this population growth occurs, there will be many impacts on the area. There will be additional demands for water and sewer services as well as all other municipal services. Also, there will be additional pressure placed on the existence of the natural resources within the planning area so that

the nature of the entire resort area will be affected. Land development decisions must be made as to what type and what level of development is desired. Without these decisions and their implementation, the planning process will not be effective.

Economic trends are equally important. The amount and type of commercial development in Atlantic Beach has a great deal of influence on the overall development pattern. It influences the number and type of people that visit the area. Decisions have to be made as to where and what type of commercial development should occur. The needs of the year around residents as well as the summer residents must be considered. Planning efforts should always consider the economic needs of the town, and the needs generated by population growth during the planning period.

2. The protection of natural enviroments, and the preservation of productive natural resources is an important land use issue in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area. Atlantic Beach is located on the fragile Outer Banks of North Carolina. The frontal dunes and beaches of Atlantic Beach are not only beautiful, but also add to the stability of the entire area. The wetlands and estuarine waters of Bogue Sound are productive natural resources. Planning efforts must recognize the potential effect development will have on these and other resources of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area. If this is not done, development will be a liability instead of an asset.

3. The need for municipal services is also a very important issue for Atlantic Beach. This area of the Outer Banks is growing rapidly and the residents and property owners are demanding more and more from the local government. The most important service needed at this time is a central water and sewer system. The existing development, as well as future development, demands

this service for without it, future development will be severely restricted. In addition, the need for expanded fire, police, rescue and solid waste disposal services will be present as development occurs.

If Atlantic Beach is going to continue to develop, the type and level of services provided by the town must be addressed in the planning process.

Alternatives

After reviewing the issues that must be faced during the planning period, one can see that the citizens of Atlantic Beach have many alternatives. They can encourage the development of water and sewer services and a great deal of additional development. On the other hand, they could elect to remain much the same as they are now. The citizens must decide those things that Atlantic Beach needs, and those things Atlantic Beach does not need. The Town of Atlantic Beach is like almost any other town in eastern North Carolina, in that it could choose to develop in many different ways. The input received during the planning process has indicated to the Town Board and Planning Board the desires of those who participated. The following objectives, policies, and standards indicate that alternatives have been considered, and decisions have been made.

Land Use Objectives Policies and Standards

Once the major land use issues have been identified, a method of handling these issues must be formulated. This has been done in the Atlantic Beach land development plan by the identification of land use objectives, policies, and standards. These objectives for local planning have been developed by the participants in the public input system. It is believed they reflect the wishes and desires of the majority of the residents and property owners of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area. It is important to remember that all land use objectives are not equally attainable. With this in mind, "trade-offs" must be made in order to arrive at decisions that are consistent with the overall desires of the residents and property owners of the Atlantic Beach Planning Area.

A. Encourage the development of a family oriented residential vacation resort area through:

1. Land use regulations that encourage basically low density single family residential development, and some well planned multi-family development.
2. Encourage commercial development that will provide services and entertainment for all residents of Atlantic Beach as well as day visitors.
3. Encourage development that will be compatible with existing development.
   (a) Emphasize the separation of residential and commercial uses.
   (b) Emphasize the separation of commercial uses and entertainment uses that may not be compatible.

B. Encourage and strive for the preservation of the barrier island system that Atlantic Beach is a part of through:

1. Seeking assistance in preventing erosion of the "Public Beach" provided by the Town of Atlantic Beach.
2. Protection of vegetation in the undeveloped areas.
3. Protection of all remaining frontal dunes.
4. Protection of wetland and estuarine waters by establishing land use regulations that will minimize fresh water runoff and the likelihood of septic tank seepage into the estuarine waters.

C. Preserving the natural beauty of the barrier island system through:

(a) Land development that conforms to the topography of the Outer Banks.
(b) Land development that conforms to existing development.

D. Encourage commercial development that will address the needs of the residential development that is projected for the Town of Atlantic Beach by:

1. Encouraging commercial development that will address the needs and desires of all age groups visiting or residing in Atlantic Beach.
2. Encouraging full enjoyment of private property rights.
   (a) Providing adequate facilities, such as parking, so visitors will not be encouraged to infringe on private property rights.
   (b) Encouraging land development that is compatible with existing development so as to protect private property rights.
   (c) Encouraging the development of better access to Bogue Banks, and easier access along Bogue Banks in accordance with the Department of Transportation's plan to improve the two land road along Bogue Banks.
   (d) Emphasizing and protecting the public beach area provided by Atlantic Beach, through:
      1. Promoting programs to prevent littering.
      2. Promoting programs to emphasize proper maintenance of the public beach area.
      3. Encouraging the development of additional parking areas near the beach area.
      4. Encouraging the coordination of all local governments on Bogue Banks so as to maximize the economic potential of the area while protecting the aesthetic and environmental integrity of the area.

E. Provide those services that will be necessary to serve the existing population and projected population by:
1. Encouraging the development of regional water and sewer services.
2. Emphasizing police, fire, and rescue protection that will accommodate the projected population demands. (Year-around population is

becoming more significant and should be considered as well as summer peak population.)

3. Continue to provide solid waste disposal services in accordance with projected growth.
4. Coordinating transportation efforts with the Department of Transportation and the development patterns of Atlantic Beach.
5. Evaluating all taxes, permits, and fees to assure that all citizens using city services are assessed equally for these services.

IV. CONSTRAINTS

In the coastal area of North Carolina there are many constraints on development to be expensive or in fact, not appropriate. Most of these constraints stem from the potential of the land and the capability of the community facilities to support development.

A. - Physical Limitations

1. Hazard Areas - These conditions constitute physical limitations that are extremely expensive, and, in some cases, impossible to overcome. The inability to overcome these limitations may result in severe damage to construction. Hazard areas in Atlantic Beach include:

   Excessive Erosion Areas - In the Planning Area of Atlantic Beach exeessive erosion areas include Sound Erodible Areas along Bogue Sound, and Ocean Erodiable Areas along the Atlantic Ocean. Those areas subject to a high probability of excessive erosion are considered constraints on development. In these areas, a 25 year recession line will be used to identify the extent of the erosion areas. These areas will also be included in the Potential Area of Enviromental Concern section. Refer to that section for a more detailed discussion of these areas.

   Flood Hazard Areas - These are areas that are adjacent to Bogue Sound and the Atlantic Ocean and are within the 100 year flood line. Improper development in these areas may unreasonably endanger life and property. The Flood hazard area map prepared by the Department of Housing and Urban Development is on file in the Atlantic Beach Town Hall.

2. Areas With Soil Limitations - The Atlantic Beach Planning Area does have limitations imposed by the type of soil. Map #_____ is a portion of the detailed soil survey that is being prepared for Carteret County. This map indicates that the soils within Atlantic Beach are very sandy, and therefore pose potential problems to waste disposal. Sand permits an extremely high rate of perculation, but is a very poor filtering agent. Since Atlantic Beach does not have a central sewage treatment facility the sand can be considered a limitation on development. Without central sewage disposal services, some areas should not be developed, and some areas should be limited as to density.

3. Source of Water Supply - The existing privately owned water system within the town limits does not supply an adequate amount of water for both domestic and fire protection purposes in the planning area of Atlantic Beach. The supply of water in Atlantic Beach is adequate, but the water system is the limitation. At present the Atlantic Beach system is used by 585 customers and is supplied by 6 deep wells.

It should be noted that the ground water table on the Outer Banks is extremely sensitive to development without sewage treatment facilities. The inability of the soil to purify effluent properly will endanger the ground water table.

4. Steep Slopes - The sand dunes within Atlantic Beach have created some "steep slope" conditions that may cause development to be hazardous. Special attention to the topography of these areas is required in order to develop in these areas. It should be noted that most of the steep slopes are also fragile areas. This means that development should also consider the effect on the stability of the sand dunes.

B. Fragile Areas - These are areas that may be damaged or destroyed by inappropriate or poorly planned development. In Atlantic Beach these areas include:

(1) Coastal Wetlands - Coastal wetlands are defined as "any salt marsh or other marsh subject to regular or occasional flooding to tides, including wind tides (whether or not the tide waters reach the marshland or artificial watercourses), provided this shall not include hurricane or tropical storm tides.

(2) Estuarine Waters - Estuarine waters are defined as "all the waters of the Atlantic Ocean within the boundary of North Carolina and all the waters of the bays, sounds, rivers, and tributaries, thereto seaward of the dividing line between coastal fishing waters and inland fishing waters as set forth by the Wildlife Resources Commission and the Department of Conservation and Development.

(3) Areas Subject to Public Rights - Areas such as waterways and lands under or flowed by tidal waters or navigable waters, to which the public may have rights of access or public trust rights.

(4) Sand Dunes along the Outer Banks - These areas are defined as ridges or mounds of loose wind-blown material, usually sand. Dunes comprise a major portion of the Outer Banks and the barrier islands and represent a protective barrier for the sounds, estuaries, and mainland.

(5) Ocean Beaches and Shorelines (on the Outer Banks) - These are defined as land areas without vegetation covering, consisting of unconsolidated solid material that extends landward from the mean low tide to a point where any one or combination of the following occur: (1) vegetation, or (2) a distinct change in predominant soil particle size, or (3) a change in slope or elevation which alters the physiographic land form.

C. Capacity of the Community Facilities

An analysis of existing community facilities and the scope of their services is an essential part of an overall comprehensive planning process. By analyzing current facilities, a local government can program expansion of services to coincide with land use needs and desires. Without adequate community facilities, development may be constrained. It should be noted that Atlantic Beach is a small town with a limited financial base. The large summer population does not provide sufficient revenue to allow the City of Atlantic Beach to supply a full range of municipal services.

1. Water and Sewer Services

The water system in Atlantic Beach is owned and operated by a private enterprise. Currently, the water company serves 585 users, most of which are in the city limits. Most businesses do not use the water system because it is inadequate for commercial use. Currently, this system is supplied by six deep wells. It is estimated that the system is operating near capacity at present. Without the development of improved water facilities, development will be constrained.

One of the major constraints on development for Atlantic Beach is the lack of a central sewer system. Without a sewage system, the density of development will be much lower than the public had indicated as desirable.

2. Roads

The access to and from Bogue Banks is a constraint on development, not only to Atlantic Beach, but to all of the Banks. In particular, the narrow bridge linking Atlantic Beach with Morehead City is inadequate to handle the volume of traffic is generated by the seasonal population of Bogue Banks.

State Roads 1201 and 1190 which extend along Bogue Banks are inadequate to handle current volumes of traffic. Plans are underway to improve these roads, but without better access to the mainland the major problem will not be solved.

3. Schools

The Carteret County School System seems to be able to accommodate the existing demands on the school facilities. Some schools in the county are near capacity, but plans have been made to develop new facilities. (Contact the Carteret County Board of Education for specific information concerning future plans).

The capacity of the community facilities that have been mentioned is important to the development of Atlantic Beach. Unless these facilities are adequately provided, development will be a liability instead of an asset.

The Town of Atlantic Beach offers many other important services to its residents. These include fire, police, rescue, sanitation and street maintenance, and general administrative services. These services need to be adequately provided in order to facilitate development. An analysis of these services has been made and is included in this plan.

Fire Protection

The Atlantic Beach Fire Department is a volunteer fire department made of approximately 28 active members. The location of the fire department building is adjacent to the Town Hall on Fort Macon Boulevard West. The structure that houses the fire department is a new two story brick and frame building containing approximately 4,000 square feet. It is estimated that the average response time for all volunteer fire departments in the county is three minutes.

The normal jurisdiction of the Atlantic Beach Volunteer Fire Department includes an area beginning at the Fort Macon State Park and extending to and including Pine Knoll Shores.

Major equipment available to the Atlantic Beach Volunteer Fire Department is as follows:

ATLANTIC BEACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Vehicle	Year	Water Tank Capacity	Pumping Capacity
International P/T	68	1,000 gal.	750 gpm
Chevrolet (T)	62	1,500 gal.	145 gpm
Ford(P)	74	750 gal.	750 gpm

Police

The Atlantic Beach Police are located in the newly renovated city hall building. At the present time they employ eight regular deputies and three auxillary policemen and three radio operators. During the summer months they normally add two extra policemen. Major equipment includes:

1. Three Police cars
2. One 4 wheel drive scout
3. One motor cycle
4. Communication equipment

Their area of service is within the city limits. Major problems include narcotics traffic associated with the summer tourist explosion, and a lack of continuing training opportunities for all police officers.

Street and Sanitation Department

The Atlantic Beach Street and Sanitation Department is based at the Town Hall. This department is responsible for garbage collection, some street maintenance, and general clean up requirements.

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*The Atlantic Beach Fire Department is connected to the county communication center.

At the present time there are four full time employees and two employees from emergency employment program offered through Carteret County. During the summer months the personnel is approximately doubled.

Rescue Squad

The Atlantic Beach Rescue Squad is also a volunteer organization and is made up of approximately 22 active members. Current regulations require rescue squad members to successfully complete the EMT (Emergency Medical Training) course before they can administer emergency medical aid as a rescue squad member. For this reason, all members of the Atlantic Beach Rescue Squad are highly trained.

The Atlantic Beach Rescue Squad is located in the approximately 4,000 square foot building that also houses the fire department.

Major Rescue Squad Equipment

1. 1974 Dodge Ambulance- fully equipped including a heart and lung resuscitator
2. 1964 Ford Ambulance

General Administration

In general, the remaining major services are provided by the Town Board of Aldermen, two part-time building inspectors, one town clerk, one tax collector, and the Mayor. Currently, these department are handled adequately but as the land use in the area increases they must be increased accordingly.

Summary

This section has brought out some of the characteristics of Atlantic Beach that may constrain development. Without a proper understanding of these factors, development in Atlantic Beach may be costly or may cause undesirable consequences. If these factors are understood and included in the decision making process, the development of Atlantic Beach will be facilitated.

V. ESTIMATED DEMANDS

In order to plan properly for the future, the estimated demands on the land must be considered and analyzed. This section will consider the demand for land that will stem from the year around population, the seasonal population, and the economic trend. From this analysis, the future land needs and the future demand on the services offered by Atlantic Beach will be estimated.

A. Population

The population demands within the planning jurisdiction of Atlantic Beach will be a function of local objectives, the built in growth factor, seasonal population, social and economic changes, and whether or not water and sewer services are provided. The previous section indicates there are many constraints on land development that occur within the planning jurisdiction of Atlantic Beach.

This section will analyze the demands steming from the desired population growth, and the capability of the land and water to sustain this growth. Particular attention will be given to the 10 year population projection.

After careful consideration of the land use objectives, policies, and standards, as well as past and present land use conditions and trends, the following projected population conditions and trends are expected to occur in the Atlantic Beach Planning Area.

POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE ATLANTIC BEACH AREA

	1975	1980	1985	2000	2025
Winter	500	600	700	1000	1500
Summer	7,360	7,848	8,317	9,764	11,189

It should be noted that the following discussions consider only the seasonal population. The year around population in itself is not

expected to cause significant land development in the planning period.

The preparation of these population projections have taken into account the following factors:

Relationship of the Projections to the Desires of the People

The public input received during the planning process has indicated definite trends in public opinion that have been incorporated in the objectives for local planning. These include the development with some commercial development, and the desirability of basic multi-family and single family development in the one mile area. These factors indicate a desire to continue well planned residential development.

Built-In-Growth

In order to project population desires, the Town Board and Planning Board analyzed the Built-In-Growth-Factor of the Planning area. The results of this analysis indicated there were 487 vacant lots in the city limits. Due to the small nature of many of the lots it was estimated that only 324 of the lots could be developed for residential purposes. By adding the lots together it is estimated there are 50 acres of residential property in the Town limits.

Within the one mile area of Atlantic Beach there are approximately 225 developable acres. It should be noted that low lands, marshes, frontal dune areas, and rights-of-way have not been included in this total. Refering to the objectives for local planning it can be determined that low density single family and well planned multi-family are desirable for this area. With this in mind an average density of 3.5 dwellings per acre was assigned for the purpose of determining potential density. This considers that the multi-family will probably be more dense and the single family will be less dense. The following chart will indicate the Potential Development that could occur in the planning area. (This is not the desired projections for the planning period).

Vacant Residential Acres

	Vacant Acres	*Potential Living Units
City Limits	50	324
One Mile	225	700
Total	275	1,024

*Potential living units have been based on the development of central water and sewer services.

Trends

Past trends have indicated that Atlantic Beach has developed in spurts. Growth is expected to occur in the same manner in the future.

The large property owners in the one mile area have mentioned a desire to develop in the near future indicating a possible spurt in the next 10 years. This desire is contingent upon the development of adequate water and sewer services.

Desired Population and the Demand for Land

The determination of a desired population is a difficult task. After careful consideration of all the facts in this section, the Atlantic Beach Planning Board and Town Board have determined that in 50 years approximately 95% of the potential development will occur. This means that approximately 973 living units will be added by the year 2025. Assuming the average dwelling density is 4 on Atlantic Beach this would account for an additional 3,829 people during peak periods. The total Planning Area Population during peak periods in 50 years will be approximately 11,189.

The 10 year estimated population is more difficult to determine. The Planning Board and Town Board have estimated that 25% of development will occur in the next 10 years accounting for an additional 957 people and a total peak population of 8,317. This is directly related to public input from the large property owners in the one mile area that have indicated a desire to begin development in the near future. The 25% growth figure is

is only an estimate, but is intended to indicate significant growth figure in the next 10 years. The public input throughout the planning process has indicated well planned growth is desirable.

The 10 year estimate indicates that between 65 and 75 acres of potential residential property could be developed. This would include single family and multi-family.

The Relationship of the Capability of the Land and Water to Support Projected Growth

In order to preserve the beauty, the stability, and the natural environment of the planning area of Atlantic Beach this projected growth must be well-planned. Without proper planning many adverse effects may occur.

The planning process must consider the design of lots, separation from and preservation of fragile areas, open space, preservation of vegetation, and the method of disposing of sewage. Most of these elements of planning are now being implemented within the Planning Area. The disposal of sewage is expected to be the most difficult problem to overcome.

The Town of Atlantic Beach is involved in regional sewer planning and is anticipating the development of a sewer system within the next 10 years. The desire to develop this system has been evident throughout the planning process. The Town Board has passed a resolution indicating the intent of forming a regional organization that will be able to operate such a system.

Without the development of a sewage system the population potential of the planning area should be reconsidered. The density of this area is subject to the installation of a progressive sewage system. Unless the the developers can finance proper sewage treatment then the projected density will have to be lowered considerably.

These considerations have been made because of the many valuable resources that surround Atlantic Beach. The estuarine waters, the wetlands, the ocean and beaches could be adversely affected by improper development. Constant

effort must be made to assure that the land and water can accommodate the growth that is projected.

B. Economy

The demand for land in Atlantic Beach will certainly be affected by the economic trends. Unless the tourist business prospers, the projected population growth of Atlantic Beach may not occur. It should be noted that anticipated multi-family development has been considered residential development, but in fact is a business. These type businesses are directly related to the well being of the tourist industry. Almost all of the development that occurs within Atlantic Beach will be affected by the economy.

In addition to the anticipated demand for land use, as described in the preceeding analysis, there will also be a demand for commercial property. Currently, approximately 12 percent of development is commercial. The objectives for local planning have indicated additional commercial development is desirable provided it is planned for properly. The public input seemed to indicate that approximately the same percent of development should be commercial. Therefore, there could be potentially an additional six to ten acres in the next ten years developed for commercial purposes. (Not including multi-family development).

C. Community Facilities Demand

The ten year seasonal population estimate of 8,317 will certainly make increased demands on the community facilities of Atlantic Beach.

(1) Water and Sewer - The ten year seasonal population estimate of 8,317 will certainly require central water and sewer services. Currently, Atlantic Beach is participating in the Morehead Area 201 Sewer Plan. It is hoped this regional sewer plan will enable the desired population projections to be attained. The Morehead 201 Plan is being revised and should be completed in the near future. This plan will consider the population projections in this plan.

Central water services should also be expanded to facilitate the anticipated ten year projections. The existing water system serves 585 users, most of which are in the city limits. Without improvements it cannot supply the domestic uses that will be required in the future, nor will it be able to provide adequate fire protection. Specific plans for the future of the water system are not available at the present time. The Town Board feels an adequate water system is of upmost importance, and are attempting to evaluate their needs at the present time.

(2) Fire Protection, Rescue, Police, Street Maintenance, and Sanitation.

These services have been emphasized during the planning process as important. As the population increases, the demand for these services will also increase. The Town of Atlantic Beach will analyze the need for these services in light of the ten year population projection. Within the next year, it is hoped that needed equipment and manpower can be planned for, using the population projections in this plan.

(3) Recreation - Currently, Atlantic Beach supplies a public beach access area. It is anticipated that this will be the only public recreation area that will be provided by the city. Certainly much planning must go into its maintenance and protection as an integral part of the planning process.

(4) Transportation - The increase population projections for Atlantic Beach as well as the remainder of Bogue Banks will certainly need to be analyzed. The access to and from Atlantic Beach is inadequate at the present time. The improved two lane road that is proposed from Atlantic Beach to Emerald Isle will certainly be a big help, but will not alleviate the transportation problem. Future planning efforts should be coordinated with the Department of Transportation so as to develop a plan that will

allow additional access to and from Bogue Banks.

(5) Schools - The additional population for Atlantic Beach will not have a significant affect on the Carteret County School System because most of the population is expected to be seasonal. The projections in this plan has been conveyed to the Board of Education for their review.

VI. Plan Description

The Coastal Area Management Act requires that all of the land within the twenty coastal counties be classified one of five land classifications. This classification is an attempt to identify areas that are expected to experience similar growth patterns, and demand similar services from the local government. The five land classes include:

1. Developed

Purpose: The developed class identifies developed lands which are presently provided with essential public services. Consequently, it is distinguished from areas where significant growth and/or new service requirements will occur. Continued development and redevelopment should be encouraged to provide for the orderly growth in the area.

Description: Developed land are areas with a minimum gross population density of 2,000 people per square mile. At a minimum, these lands contain existing public services including water and sewer systems, educational systems, and road systems — all of which are able to support the present population and its accompanying land uses including commercial, industrial, and institutional.

2. Transition

Purpose: The Transition class identifies lands where moderate to high density growth is to be encouraged and where any such growth that is to be encouraged and where any such growth that is permitted by local regulation will be provided with the necessary public services.

Description: The area to be designated as Transition must be no greater than that required to accommodate the estimated county population growth at a minimum gross density of 2,000 people per square mile. In addition, the minimum services which will be required are the necessary water ans sewer facilities, educational services, and roads. Consideration must be given to the cost of public services in the Transition area. Each local government is encouraged to estimate the approximate cost of providing public services where they do not already exist.

3. Community

Purpose: The Community class identifies existing and new clusters of low density development not requiring major public services.

Description:

1) The community class includes existing clusters of one or more land uses such as a rural residential subdivision or a church, school, general store, industry, etc. (Cluster is defined as a number of structures grouped together in association or in physical proximity - Webster's Dictionary).

2) This class will provide for all new rural growth when the lot size is ten acres or less. Such clusters of growth may occur in new areas, or withing existing community lands.

3) New development in the Community class areas will be subject to subdivision regulations under the Enabling Subdivision Act (G.S. 153A-330 et. seq.)

4) In every case, the lot size must be large enough to safely accommodate on-site sewage disposal and where necessary water supply so that no public sewer services will be required now or in the future.

5) Limited public services should be provided in the Community class such as public road access and electric power.

6) As a guide for calculating the amount of land necessary to accommodate new rural community growth, a gross population density of 640 people per square mile or one person per acre should be used.

4. Rural

Purpose: The Rural class identifies lands for long-term management for productive resource utilization, and where limited public services will be provided. Development in such areas should be compatible with resource production.

Description: The Rural Class includes all lands not in the developed, Transition, Community and Conservation classes.

5. Conservation:

Purpose: The Conservation class identifies land which should be maintained essentially in its natural state and where very limited or no public services are provided.

Description: Lands to be placed in the Conservation class are the least desirable for development because:

1) They are too fragile to withstand development without losing their natural value; and/or

2) They have severe or hazardous limitation to development; and/or

3) Though they are not highly fragile or hazardous, the natural resources they represent are too valuable to endanger by development.

All of the local governments in Carteret County have worked together in classifying the land within their jurisdiction.

The Coastal Area Management Act requires that the classification of the land within the municipalities take in consideration the needs of the overall county. The Classification of land throughout the county has attempted to identify adequate amounts of all land classifications in order to accommodate the anticipated demand on the land for the next ten years. This will add to the coordination of growth patterns throughout the entire county, and insure that all growth is planned, and provided the necessary services. The Town of Atlantic Beach has coordinated their classification efforts with the county and has considered the needs of the county as well as the Town of Atlantic Beach.

The classification of land in Carteret County will also help coordinate and encourage consistency between all local land use policies and those of the state. The classification of land in the municipalities or any other area of the county may need to be changed from time to time. If this occurs, the needs of the entire county, as well as the local area, must be considered with particular attention to the services that will be demanded.

Atlantic Beach Land Classification

Atlantic Beach is an integral part of the overall county land classification system, The classification of land within Atlantic Beach has been based on the desires of the citizens, and will be analyzed in the following discussion.

Due to the overall character of the development of Atlantic Beach, and its one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction, the developable land area has been classified transitional. The wetlands, estuarine waters, beaches, frontal dunes, ocean and sand erodible areas, and flood hazard areas have been classified conservation. (It should be noted that the flood hazard areas overlap with some transitional areas).

Transitional - The transitional classification is intended to identify land where moderate to high density growth is to be encouraged, and where any such growth that is encouraged will be provided with the

necessary public services. (In particular, water and sewer services). Transitional areas should have a minimum gross density of 2,000 per square mile.

The decision by the Atlantic Beach Town Board to classify all of the developable land in Atlantic Beach and its one mile extra-territorial jurisdiction transitional was based on the following information.

1. Based on the ten year seasonal population estimate, the Atlantic Beach Planning Area will have a population of 8,317 people occupying approximately two square miles.
2. Water and sewer services are being planned, and should be implemented within ten years.
3. To further support the transitional classification, one should refer to the objectives for local planning which indicates a desire to continue residential growth with a combination of single-family and multi-family development.

It is felt this transitional classification is necessary to plan for the anticipated seasonal population of Carteret County. The Carteret County Plan has indicated that significant seasonal development is anticipated on Bogue Banks, and that the transitional classification of Atlantic Beach fits into the overall Carteret County Land Development Plan.

Conservation - There are many areas of Atlantic Beach that have been classified conservation. This has been done in an attempt to identify lands which should be maintained essentially in their natural state and where very limited public services are provided.

Within Atlantic Beach these areas include beaches, frontal dunes, wetlands, ocean erodible, sand erodible, and flood hazard areas. These

Land Class Map

areas are defined in the "Constraints" section of this plan beginning on page 29.

For the most part, development is not desirable in these areas. One major exception is the flood hazard area. Techniques in building will allow significant development in some of these areas. During the implementation efforts of this planning process, a more detailed determination of land use policy for these areas will be made.

The determination of conservation areas are consistent with the overall Carteret County Plan. During the next year, land use criteria will be developed for all of these areas.

VII. Potential Areas of Environmental Concern

The Coastal Area Management Act has charged the Coastal Resources Commission with the responsibility of identifying Areas of Environmental Concern in the twenty coastal counties affected by the Act. The Coastal Resources Commission has also been instructed to determine what type of uses or development are appropriate within such areas.

Due to the importance of this responsibility, the local governments preparing land development plans in compliance with the Coastal Area Management Act have been requested to give special attention to those areas within their jurisdiction that may become Areas of Environmental Concern. The Town of Atlantic Beach has identified the following areas as Potential Areas of Environmental Concern. These areas were defined and discussed in the State Guidelines For Local Planning in Coastal Areas hnder the Coastal Area Management Act of 1974.

Coastal Wetlands - General

Coastal wetlands are defined as any salt marsh or other marsh subject to regular or occasional flooding by tides, including wind tides (whether or not the tide waters reach the marshland areas through natural or artificial watercourses), provided this shall not include hurricane or tropical storm tides.

Coastal Wetlands - Low Tidal Marshland

a. Description - Defined as marshland usually subject to inundation by the normal rise and fall of lunar tides.

b. Significance - Low tidal marshland serves as a critical component in the coastal ecosystem. The marsh is the basis for the high net yield system of the estuary through the production of partially decomposed plant material which is the primary input source for the food chain of the entire estuarine system.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to give the highest priority to the perservation of low tidal marshland.

Coastal Wetlands - Other Coastal Marshland

a. Description - All other marshland which is not low tidal marshland.

b. Significance - This marshalnd type contributes to the production of partially decomposed plant material. The higher marsh types offer quality wildlife and waterfowl habitat depending on the biological and physical conditions of the marsh.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to give a high priority to the preservation and management of the marsh so as to safeguard and perpetuate their biological, economic and aesthetic values.

Estuarine Waters

a. Description - Estuarine waters are defined as all the waters of the Atlantic Ocean within the boundary of North Carolina and all the waters of the bays, sounds, rivers, and tributaries thereto seaward of the dividing line between coastal fishing waters, as set forth in an agreement adopted by the Wildlife Commission and the Department of Conservation and Development.

b. Significance - Estuaries are among the most productive natural environments in North Carolina. They not only support valuable commercial and sports fisheries, but are also utilized for commercial navigation, recreation, and aesthetic purposes.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate uses shall be to preserve and manage estuarine waters as to safeguard and perpetuate their biological, economic, and aesthetic values.

Areas Subject to Public Rights - Certain Public Trust Areas

a. Description - All waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the lands thereunder from the mean high water mark to the seaward limit of State jurisdiction; all natural bodies of water subject to measurable lunar tides and lands thereunder to the mean high water mark; all navigable natural bodies of water and lands thereunder to the mean high water mark or ordinary high water mark as the case may be, except privately owned lakes to which the public has no right of access; all waters in artificially created bodies of water in which exists significant public fishing resources or other public resources, which are accessible to the public by navigation from bodies of water in which the public has rights of navigation; all waters in artificially created bodies of water in which the public has acquired rights by prescription, custom, usage, dedication or any other means.

b. Significance - The public has rights in these waters including navigation and recreation. In addition, these waters support valuable commercial and sports fisheries, have aesthetic value, and are important potential resources for economic development.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to protect public rights for navigation and recreation and to preserve and manage the public trust waters so as to safeguard and perpetuate their biological, economic and aesthetic value.

Natural Hazard Areas - Sand Dunes along the Outer Banks

a. Description - Dunes are defined as ridges or mounds of loose wind-blown material, usually sand.

b. Significance - Dunes comprise a major portion of the outer banks and barrier islands and represent a protective barrier for the sounds, estuaries, and mainland.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to insure that development which is undertaken utilizes sound engineering practices to minimize the erosive effects of wind and water.

Natural Hazard Areas-Ocean Beaches and Shorelines (on the Outer Banks)

a. Description - These are defined as land areas without vegetation covering, consisting of unconsolidated soil material that extends landward from the mean low tide to a point where any one or combination of the following occur: (1) vegetation, or (2) a distinct change in predominant soil particle size, or (3) a change in slope or elevation which alters the physiographic land form.

b. Significance - Sand deposits of ocean beaches and shorelines represent a dynamic zone which does not afford long term protection for development. The nature of tidal action and the force of storms is such that they cause the beach areas to constantly shift.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to preserve to the greatest extent feasible the opportunity to enjoy the physical, aesthetic, cultura and recreational qualities of the natural shorelines of the State and to allow that type development which will withstand the prevalent natural forces and not unreasonably interfere with the rightful use and enjoyment of the beach area.

Natural Hazard Areas-Coastal Floodplains

a. Description - Coastal floodplain is defined as the land areas adjacent to coastal sounds, estuaries or the ocean which are prone to flooding from storms with an annual probability of one percent or greater (100 year storm). These areas are analogous to the 100 year floodplain on a river. Information necessary to identify these areas will be supplied by the State Geologist.

b. Significance - Coastal floodplains are those lands subject to flooding or wave action during severe storms or hurricanes. They are lands where uncontrolled, incompatible, or improperly designed building, structures, facilities, and developments can unreasonably endanger life and property.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to insure that all buildings, structures, facilities and developments are properly designed and built to maintain their stability, integrity, and safety in the event of flood surge from a 100 year storm.

Natural Hazard Areas - Excessive Erosion Areas - Ocean Erodible Areas

a. Description - Defined as the area above mean high water where excessive erosion has a high probability of occurring. In delineating the landward extent of this area a reasonable 25 year recession line shall be determined using the best scientific data available. The information necessary to identify these areas will be supplied by the State Geologist.

b. Significance - Ocean erodible areas are extremely dynamic lands highly susceptible to becoming completely displaced by water.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to limit unnecessary hazards to life or property or unreasonable requirements for public expenditures to protect property or maintain safe conditions.

Natural Hazard Areas - Excessive Erosion Areas - Estuarine and River Erodible Areas

a. Description - Defined as the area above ordinary high water where excessive erosion has a high probability of occurring. In delineating the landward extent of this area a reasonable 25 year recession line shall be determined using the best available information. The information necessary to identify these areas will be supplied by the Stat Geologist.

b. Significance - The estuarine and sound and river erodible areas are natural hazard areas especially vulnerable to erosion.

c. Appropriate Land Uses - Appropriate land uses shall be to insure that development occurring within these areas is compatible with the dynamic nature of the erodible lands thus minimizing the likelihood of significant loss of property.

Development Standards Applicable to all Areas of Environmental Concern

a. No development should be allowed in any Area of Environmental Concern which would result in a contravention or violation of any rules, regulations, or laws of the State of North Carolina or of local governemnt in which the development takes place.

b. No development should be allowed in any Area of Environmental Concern which would have a substantial likelihood of causing pollution of the waters of the State to the extent that such waters would be closed to the taking of shellfish under standards set by the Commission for Health Services pursuant to G.S. 130-169.01.

It is important that the final designation of Areas of Environmental Concern and the determination of appropriate uses within these areas, receives as much local input as possible. Proper coordination between the Coastal Resources Commission and the local governments is the key to proper management of these areas.

Once these areas are adopted as final Areas of Environmental Concern, a permit will be required before development can occur from the Coastal Resources Commission or the local government. Minor projects, defined as projects less than 20 acres or which involve construction of one or more structures having an area less than 60,000 square feet, will be processed by the local government. Major projects, defined as projects currently needing state permits, those of greater than 20 acres in size, those that involve drilling or excavating natural resources on land or underwater, and those involving construction of one or more structures having an area in excess of 60,000 feet will require a permit from the Coastal Resources Commission.

VIII. Summary

The development of this plan has taken approximately one year. During that year as much information as possible concerning the current land use, the population, and economy was collected. At the same time, questionnaires were being distributed and public meetings were being held. The data collection and results of the questionnaires were used at public meetings to help participants become aware of the feelings of other citizens. Finally, the Atlantic Beach Planning Board and Town Board began to detect consistent trends in the input that was being received. They instructed the planning consultant to incorporate the trends they had detected in a written form. After a great deal of discussion and debate this plan was adopted by the Town Board.

In general, this plan indicates the citizens of Atlantic Beach desire a family oriented, residential resort town. Like most other eastern North Carolina areas, Atlantic Beach will certainly be subject to many growth pressures during the planning period. It is hoped this plan will aid the Planning Board and Town Board in making decisions that will allow the Town of Atlantic Beach maintain those characteristics that are important to the citizens and residents.

It is important that this plan is implemented properly. The decision making process must be based on the desires of the citizens that are expressed in this plan. Land development tools such as the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations should be reviewed to assure they are based on the objectives for local planning.

The implementation of the Land Classification System will be an important element of the planning process. Atlantic Beach is an integral part of the overall county classification system and must continue efforts to coordinate the

planning of Atlantic Beach with the overall planning of Carteret County.

Finally, Atlantic Beach must coordinate efforts with the Coastal Resources Commission to properly protect the areas that will be determined Areas of Environmental Concern. This will be a difficult task, but will be vitally important to the future of Atlantic Beach and the Coastal Area of North Carolina.

IX. City-County Plan Relationship

The Coastal Area Management Act requires that all municipal plans are an integral part of the county plans. -This is very important to the success of the act. The Town of Atlantic Beach has attemped to insure the consistency of this plan with the Carteret County Plan throughout the planning process. The fact that the Carteret County Planning Department added technical assistance during the planning process was very helpful in insuring consistency with the county plan. All of the county township public meetings for Bogue Banks and the municipal public meetings for Atlantic Beach were conducted by the Carteret County Planning Department. These meetings were attended by many of the same people and issues concerning the county and the town were discussed at both the county and town meetings. The final assurance that this plan for the Town of Atlantic Beach was consistent with the county plan was made when the Carteret County Commissioners held a public hearing to review all of the municipal plans in the county for consistency. The results of this hearing indicated that in the opinion of the Carteret County Commissioners and the Atlantic Beach Board of Commissioners, the county plan and the Atlantic Beach Plan are consistent.

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