



Nice Matters!

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EXCERPT – Town of Emerald Isle, 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan

Our Vision— Emerald Isle in the Future

The Vision Statement is a direct result of Emerald Isle’s citizen participation process. It is a word picture that describes what the residents and property owners want the town to be in the future. The vision statement is a consensus of those involved in the planning process. It provides a basis for setting priorities, defining goals, and developing policies to achieve them.

The following is Emerald Isle’s Planning Vision:

“People recognize Emerald Isle as a great place to live and visit. The community is renowned for its natural beauty and the quality of its development. Emerald Isle’s natural beauty is characterized by the Atlantic Ocean, which is bordered by beautiful broad, accessible beaches, and the clean waters and islands in Bogue Sound. The community maintains a balance between development and the environment. The maritime forests and other native vegetation are protected and enhanced. Native vegetation and magnificent dunes not buildings dominate the skyline. The Cameron Langston Bridge across Bogue Sound, with dramatic vistas of the sound islands in their natural state, and the Emerald Drive Gateway, bordered by preserved maritime forest, announce arrival at an exceptional place.

Emerald Isle retains its small town character and charm and protects its family atmosphere. Use of the land continues with the patterns set by the beauty and vision of the original development. There are few tall buildings. The town has traditional streets, some with trees and sidewalks. The town keeps lighting levels low to support the small town, family atmosphere. The addition of sidewalks and bike paths that connect to important destinations gives residents and visitors a choice of how they get around. New uses in older developed areas are compatible with surrounding land uses and natural features.

Businesses are located in a compact “downtown” area and along the Emerald Drive business corridor, where frontage roads reduce the impacts of traffic. The older downtown area remains vibrant with new and renovated buildings, flourishing businesses, and safe and easy access from surrounding residential areas.

Native trees and shrubs dominate Emerald Isle’s landscape. Owners preserve native vegetation on private property; developers preserve and maintain vegetation where possible; and parking lots have no more hard surface than necessary and are softened with many trees and shrubs.

Retail and commercial services support the Emerald Isle’s tourism economy, but they have also developed to serve the growing number of year-round residents.

The community is careful to avoid over commercialization in order to maintain our image as a family beach. Mostly local people own businesses.

Low density is still the predominant quality of the town's overall development design. Most buildings are no more than 2 or 3 stories; most residences are single-family. Still, there is a variety of housing types to meet the needs of a range of people – permanent residents, visitors, seasonal residents, retirees, and working families.

Retirement and tourism are the center of the local economy. The retail and service sectors are the major employers, and they are diversified to meet the needs of the town's growing permanent population and its visitors. Emerald Isle is home to many families that work in the military, manufacturing, public utilities, and medical services, but these residents travel off the island to their jobs.

The town's ocean beach, Bogue Inlet, the soundfront, and the Outstanding Resource Waters of Bogue Sound provide high quality recreational and aesthetic values to residents and visitors and they are underpinnings for the local economy. The quality of these resources is the result of long-term efforts by the town and its property owners.

Emerald Isle community protects its coastal lifestyle by giving preservation of natural resources and protection of water quality the highest priority. The Town cooperates with state and federal agencies to protect coastal wetlands from harmful development. Important freshwater wetlands are intact and they continue to store, clean water, and provide a rich habitat for a rich diversity of plants and animals. The Town protects surface waters from degradation by storm water and polluting discharges and they remain clean. Shellfish are plentiful in the sound and they taste great.

Active and passive recreation opportunities are plentiful – for children, teens, adults, and seniors. The Recreation Center is the focal point for the recreation program. Community and neighborhood parks, as well as facilities provided by private developments, provide for an abundance of outdoor activities. Residents and visitors have easy access to the beaches and sound.

Excellent community services support the quality of life offered by Emerald Isle to both year-round and seasonal residents. The Bogue Banks Water Corporation provides quality drinking water to all properties. The Town helps ensure that all private wastewater treatment systems protect the environment and public health. The Town provides high quality solid waste management services that keep unsightly containers from public view.

Emerald Isle is a safe place to live and visit. The Town provides an adequate number of trained police officers to respond quickly to any need. The Fire Department has trained staff and proper equipment to protect the community. EMS personnel are able to provide state-of-the-art advanced life support services.

Emerald Isle values its cooperative spirit. It works with its citizens, property owners, and businesses, and with other local governments in the region to implement programs and to address issues that affect the quality of life. The Town values the opinions of its residents, property owners, and business owners and involves them in decisions regarding the Town and its future. The Town is also mindful that to create the future that it envisions it must protect the interests of its property owners.”