

# Emerald Isle Paid Parking 101

**February 19, 2021**

The Town of Emerald Isle is comprised of 3,800 fulltime residents. During the summer season, approximately 30,000 – 50,000 persons per day enjoy the amenities located within the Town’s municipal boundaries. We sincerely appreciate all residents, second home owners, businesses, and guests that visit Emerald Isle each year.

In order to maintain our public amenities and continue to provide exceptional service, the Town of Emerald Isle is considering two changes for the 2021 Summer Season:

1. Subcontracting of the Emerald Isle parking collection process with NC Parking Inc.
2. Adjusting paid parking fees and days of collection for the year ahead



## **Proposed Fees and Schedule**

Instead of charging each guest a flat rate of \$10.00 per car, the automated parking system will allow Emerald Isle to charge \$2.00 per hour in the early spring and late fall season. During the peak season and on holiday weekends, rates will be capped at \$4.00 per hour or a maximum of \$16.00 per vehicle.

- **Paid parking goes into effect April 1 and will conclude September 30.**
- Collections will occur 7-days per week during this period.

Every dollar collected from paid parking is used to offset costs generated to maintain the parks and beach strand. On average, the \$151,000 collected in parking revenue only offsets 11.4 % of actual services provided.



**The proposed changes to paid parking will only affect two public parking lots:**

Western Ocean Regional Access located at 9304 Louise Ave

- Beach Access
- Bike Rack
- Handicapped Accessible Observation area with ramp
- Parking for 157 Cars and 28 golf carts
- Picnic Pavilion
- Restrooms & onsite attendant
- Grills
- Showers
- 2 Volleyball Courts
- Seasonal Lifeguard Station

Eastern Ocean Regional Access located at 2701 Emerald Drive

- Beach Access
- Handicapped Accessible Observation area with ramp
- Parking for 165 cars
- Picnic Pavilion
- Restrooms
- Showers
- Grills
- Seasonal Lifeguard Station

**Following is an overview of the costs associated with Beach amenities, services and maintenance:**

<b>Description of the Service, Program or Process</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
Fulltime Ocean Rescue Coordinator and 20 USLA Certified Lifeguards	\$315,104
Beach Patrol Police Officers and Vehicles	\$158,374
Cleaning, maintenance and supplies for the WORA and EORA	\$69,000
Utilities at the WORA and EORA	\$36,000
Parks maintenance (mowing, spraying, etc.)	\$18,000
Parks Department administrative costs including fees and personnel time	\$10,000
Removal of Beach trash/ Recycling- Over 300,000 pounds of trash and recycled materials are removed from the beach strand each year.	\$15,000
Local Emerald Isle property tax contribution to Beach Nourishment	\$698,000
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL INVESTMENT</b>	<b>\$1,319,478</b>

### **Offsetting Revenues for Beach Services**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Paid Parking</b>	<b>Beach Driving Permits</b>
2019	\$136,150	\$108,600
2018	\$167,897	\$138,200
2017	\$151,590	\$134,150

### **Do Emerald Isle tax payers pay to park?**

Emerald Isle taxpayers are eligible to receive 2 annual free parking permits for the Eastern Ocean Regional Access and Western Ocean Regional Access. The parking permits will be granted only for vehicles registered in the name of the taxpayer and are not transferable. The permit decal must be for the current year and be permanently affixed to the driver's side windshield. Improper placement of decals may result in paying the parking fee, confiscation or possible citation. Lost or confiscated permits will not be reissued.

The sticker cannot be obtained at the regional beach access facilities, and must be obtained prior to visiting the regional beach access facilities. To obtain your parking permit, please visit the Emerald Isle Police Department (7500 Emerald Drive) or call (252-354-2021) Please note: You will need to bring a current vehicle registration(s) and Driver's License with you when applying for your permit.



### **Who Pays for Beach Nourishment?**

The Town of Emerald Isle tax rate is \$0.155 per hundred, the third lowest tax rate of North Carolina beach communities. In general, 1.5 cents of the Emerald Isle tax rate is dedicated to beach nourishment. Additionally, there is a Special Use District comprised of oceanfront and inlet front homes. Properties located in Emerald Isle's special district pay an additional \$0.04 per hundred (in addition to the \$0.155 base tax rate). Combined, nearly \$700,000 each year is collected from local taxes and dedicated to the nourishment of Emerald Isle beaches.

Across Carteret County, non-Bogue Banks tax payers do not contribute to beach nourishment. Only occupancy taxes (aka Bed Taxes), paid for by visitors, are collected by Carteret County and used to help fund beach nourishment activities.

Simply put, \$0.00 from County general fund taxes are used to fund Bogue Banks beach nourishment. In fact, we all benefit from Occupancy Taxes and the reinvestment into the beaches of Carteret County.



### **Why Isn't Emerald Isle Offering Seasonal Parking Passes?**

On the surface, an annual season parking pass is a good idea. The Town of Emerald Isle seriously considered selling such parking passes.

Currently, there are 322 total paid parking spaces available in Emerald Isle. This combined total includes the Western and Eastern Ocean Regional Access lots.

If the Town were to sell season passes, we cannot guarantee anyone access. All spaces are first come, first served. We certainly want to avoid accepting a guest's money (*for a seasonal parking pass*) and being unable to provide them a parking space upon arrival.

The potential risk for disappointing a guest is high. That is why we elected to set the parking rates as low as \$2.00 during the week and a maximum rate of \$4.00 on the weekends.

### **Why is the town contracting with an outside agency?**

Working with NCParking will help Emerald Isle address staffing issues, encountered in previous seasons, by hiring and maintaining staffing levels necessary to collect parking funds. NCParking is a leader in the parking industry with the means necessary to maximize revenue while providing greater service levels.

### **How will parking customers be able to pay at the WORA and EORA?**

A smartphone app will be utilized to accept credit or debit card payments. There will also be solar-powered kiosks and NCParking ambassadors on site to help you pay if you are unable to use the app.

### **Can I still pay in cash at the parking lot?**

Per NCParking, as a matter of safety, cash payments will no longer be accepted at the parking lots. Although this may cause a burden for some consumers, it is safer for the parking staff and allows for 100% accountability between the vendor and the Town.