



UPDATE ON TOWN PROJECTS & ISSUES

Presentation to Emerald Isle Real Estate Professionals
March 22, 2018

Nice Matters!

Frank A. Rush, Jr., Town Manager

Project / Issue

Brief Description

Status

Current Projects / Issues

- | Project / Issue | Brief Description | Status |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 Islander Drive Redevelopment | Town purchased abandoned go-kart track and bumper boat facility in June 2017 to clean up property, promote quality redevelopment in the Islander Drive area. Original plan contemplated a meeting and events center, however, ultimate goal is simply to promote quality redevelopment. | Town poised to sell 1.8 acre tract for \$800,000 in the coming weeks, and will realize \$100,000+ profit from sale. Developer intends to combine with adjacent 0.8 acre tract and construct ~30 mixed use residential / commercial units. Town plans to invest profits, grant funds, and more (~\$260,000) in streetscape and beach access improvements. |
| 2 McLean-Spell Park Acquisition | Acquisition of last remaining large vacant tract of land (30 acres) in Emerald Isle, directly adjacent (across Archers Creek) to Town government complex. \$3 million purchase price, funded primarily by grant funding. Town to develop passive / active recreation park on the property in the future. | Town secured \$2.545 million of Federal and State grant funding for acquisition, and will contribute balance necessary for land acquisition. Property conveyed to non-profit Conservation Fund of NC on behalf of Town in October 2017. Town to formally acquire land in coming weeks. Initial nature trail development underway, and total of 10 acres reserved for future active recreation facility development. |
| 3 Nies v. Town of Emerald Isle | Legal action alleged a "taking" of oceanfront property owner's land as a result of Town's ordinance requiring unobstructed lane on public trust beach strand for emergency vehicles and allowance of off-season beach driving. Case had significant bearing on public trust beach definition in entire State of NC, and could have resulted in dramatic change in public use of beach strand. | United States Supreme Court declined to consider case in October 2017, ending nearly 6 year legal battle. Thus, the November 2015 ruling of the NC Court of Appeals is the definitive law in North Carolina regarding public use of the full width of the beach between the base of the dunes and the water. |
| 4 NC 58 Roundabout | Construction of new roundabout at intersection of Mallard Drive and NC 58, funded by developer of new Publix grocery store. Roundabout constructed in lieu of new traffic signal to allow continuous flow of traffic, and also to enable Emerald Isle to become familiar with roundabouts for potential future replacement of existing traffic signals. | Construction complete, with minor pavement marking and signage adjustments ongoing. Appears to be functioning as intended, and includes attractive landscaping. |



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5 Reed Drive / Crew Drive Resurfacing	Resurfacing of entire length of Crew Drive, long segment of Reed Drive from Loon Drive to Coast Guard Road, and short segments of Islander Drive and Mallard Drive in order to create brand new street network in this area of Emerald Isle.	Resurfacing work complete, with only minor pavement marking work remaining. Funded by Powell Bill revenues received from State of NC and also the developer of Publix.
6 NC 58 "Downtown" Improvements	NCDOT currently evaluating significant NC 58 improvements between Welcome Center and US Post Office. Originally contemplated mini-roundabout and full-size roundabout, but now focused on lane improvements, new traffic signal, new streetscape, and potential median.	NCDOT meeting with Town officials and business owners to determine specific design. Construction scheduled for 2025, but likely to be expedited, and could occur within next 2 - 3 years if acceptable design is achieved.
7 Future NC 58 Intersection Improvements	NC 58 has recommended the replacement of existing traffic signals at Coast Guard Road, Emerald Plantation, and Mangrove Drive with new roundabouts to improve traffic flow. May also consider alternative traffic improvements for these 3 signalized intersections. Important to recognize that majority of Town's residents oppose widening of NC 58 and bridge to 4 or 5 lanes, thus NCDOT is pursuing incremental improvements.	The three intersections scored well in NCDOT planning efforts, but are not yet included in formal plans. May be added to formal plans in the next 1-2 years, with construction several years later. Future installation of roundabouts will depend on assessment of new Publix roundabout after experience gained in next 1-2 years.
8 New Town EMS Department	Transition of former non-profit EMS provider to a Town department, similar to Police, Fire, and others. Number of paid staff and amount of public funding gradually increased over the past 17 years, and EMS now operates with fully paid staff and approximately \$600,000 of public funding.	Transition completed, and EMS is now a Town department as of March 1, 2018. All former non-profit employees offered employment with the Town, and most have transitioned to Town employees. First Town EMS Chief hired in late February.
9 New Welcome to EI Sign / Lighting	Town plans to install new Welcome to EI sign to replace existing sign. New sign will include new Town logo, with "Nice Matters" tagline. Also planning uplighting of trees in area near the base of the bridge.	New sign ordered, and expected to be installed in the next few weeks. Uplighting work in progress, and should be in place prior to Memorial Day weekend.



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10 Homeowners Insurance Premiums	Continuing efforts to opposed requested premium increases, along with efforts to reform homeowners insurance in coastal North Carolina. Premiums increased by 91% from 2005 to 2015.	Current premium increase requests are pending before the NC Commissioner of Insurance. A 25% increase for homeowners insurance was initially rejected, but will be subject of public hearing this summer. A 39.6% increase in dwelling policies has also been requested, but has not yet been considered by Commissioner. Town continues to work with other interested parties to oppose increases and promote a fairer rate structure in NC.
10 Dog Park Development Committee	New Board-appointed committee will begin work in late March to identify suitable location and conduct fundraising activities for the construction of a new dog park in Emerald Isle.	First meeting is scheduled for March 28. Town will likely utilize historical funding model whereby Town will match all fundraising efforts, and will construct new dog park on Town-owned property. Potential sites include new McLean-Spell Park, Emerald Isle Woods Park, Town Government complex, or Senator Jean Preston Park site.
11 Olde Cove Road Golf Cart Path	New golf cart path to enable residents in Olde Cove subdivision to legally cross NC 58 and access public streets on the ocean side for travel to other destinations.	New path completed in early March and open for use. The Olde Cove Road path is the first specifically designated golf cart path constructed by the Town, and was funded 50% by the property owners in the Olde Cove subdivision. Town will consider future golf cart paths to expand access.



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12 Additional Golf Cart Access, Golf Cart Advisory Committee	Golf carts allowed to operate on all Town streets except for NC 58 and Coast Guard Road. Must secure Town permit. Golf carts not permitted on bicycle path. Must meet certain equipment requirements - seatbelts, lights, blinkers, etc. Must be 18 years of age to operate. Can cross over NC 58 and Coast Guard Road. Does not apply to "street-legal" golf carts with NC license plate, or to golf carts operated exclusively in private subdivisions.	Program has been well-received thus far. More than 800 permitted carts. Town has created several "golf-cart only" parking spaces, and will gradually add more in the future as demand rises and funds permit. Some areas geographically prohibited from using golf carts, and Town considering strategies to open additional areas while maintaining adequate public safety. New Board-appointed Golf Cart Advisory Committee begins work on March 26, and will focus on expanding access.
13 New Publix Grocery Store	New 31,000 sq. ft. grocery store constructed on large tract west of Emerald Plantation. Property was zoned for business use for many years, and this site was chosen after grocery stores also considered two other nearby sites in Emerald Isle.	New store scheduled to open on March 28. All associated improvements to Crew Drive and Mallard Drive are complete, and these streets remain public.
14 Beach Access Walkway Replacements	Some beach walkways deteriorating from age. Town is working to replace at least 3 walkways per year as funds permit.	New walkway recently constructed at W. Landing, with Fairfax, Beachview, and Whitewater currently being replaced. All walkways should be open to the public by May 1.
15 Eastern EI Beach Nourishment Project	Based on detailed beach profile survey data, Town has identified area from Indian Beach town line to Eastern Ocean Regional Access for the next beach nourishment project. Approximately 471,000 cy of sand to be placed along approximately 3 miles of beach.	Detailed design work is currently underway, and construction will occur either in winter 18-19 or winter 19-20, depending on availability of State funding. Town has requested \$4.6 million from new NC Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund. If State funding approved, construction during winter 18-19. If State funding not approved, Town will request again for winter 19-20. Total project cost is estimated at \$9.2 million.



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16 Bogue Inlet Navigation Dredging	No Federal funding available for navigation maintenance dredging in Bogue Inlet connecting channel, ocean bar. Approximately \$300,000 of State-local funding remaining.	Dredging planned for late April prior to warm weather season. Should have sufficient funds on hand to complete this work and one more dredging event as needed. New navigation channel location in center of Bogue Inlet complex appears to be holding up relatively well, with a few shoaling locations. Town will assemble new State-local funding partnership as necessary in the future, and may consider different dredging strategies in future.
17 Bicycle Path Maintenance	Town now has more than 11 miles of dedicated dedicated bicycle paths along NC 58, Coast Guard Road, and Bogue Inlet Drive. Extremely popular, and perhaps most important recreational asset after beach and sound. Oldest segment now 14 years old.	Town staff working to place more emphasis on maintenance of bicycle path to maintain function, promote longevity, and maintain aesthetics. Some issues with asphalt edges cracking, grass encroaching.
18 Improved Pedestrian Crossings on NC 58	Town working to have NCDOT install flashing beacons at key pedestrian crossing locations along NC 58. Submitted State funding request for 5 locations in 2017. Representative McElraft seeking State funding for these locations.	At Representative McElraft's request, NCDOT currently developing plans for new pedestrian crossings at Water's Edge Mobile Home Park, Town Government complex, and Islander Drive. Town also interested in adding future crossings at Lee Avenue and Cedar Street, and likely others. If funding released, the 3 new locations could be installed this summer.



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<i>Potential Upcoming Projects / Issues</i>		
1 Small-Area Storm Water Issues	Town staff have identified 13 different locations with small-area storm water issues. In all cases, water ponds for short duration before dissipating quickly.	Town has worked hard over past decade+ to resolve most significant storm water issues, and continues to gradually address small-area problems via small infiltration systems, small pump systems, or open infiltration basins. New systems recently installed on Bogue Court, Doe Drive, and several Ocean Drive locations. Currently focused on Wyndward Ct and Sunset Ln.
2 Fire Station 1 Renovation	Existing Fire Station 1 is metal building constructed in early 1990s, with interior constructed by firefighters. EIFD in need of additional space and upgraded facilities, ideally with exterior appearance similar to EMS station and Town Admin Building.	Town considering options, will likely retain professional design services sometime later in 2018 or 2019. Goal is to construct improvements after existing debt is fully retired in FY 18-19 in order to stabilize tax rate.
3 Fire Ladder Truck Replacement	Town owns 4 large pieces of Fire apparatus, including 3 pumper trucks and 1 ladder truck. Town seeks 20 year life from each truck, and attempts to replace 1 truck every 5 years to stabilize annual expenditures. 1998 ladder truck is next up for replacement.	Ladder truck originally scheduled for replacement in FY 18-19, but likely to be delayed due to current good condition of truck and significant cost. New truck expected to cost in excess of \$1 million.
4 Broadband / Technology Access	Town seeking to improve broadband access, provide better internet connectivity to serve residents and meet peak season demands, promote remote work opportunities from Emerald Isle, and attract technology-dependent industry.	Town continues to learn more, promote initiatives with NC League of Municipalities, Carteret County Chamber of Commerce, and others. If someone can work from anywhere and live where they want to live, they probably would like to live at the beach!
5 Future Lee Avenue Bicycle Path	Many permanent residents live in the Archers Creek / Sound Drive area, and Lee Avenue is a significant route to the beach and other areas of Town. Improved pedestrian and bicycle access is desired on the sound side portion of Lee Avenue.	Town hopes to construct new dedicated bicycle path in this area within the next few years. To be funded by combination of Town funds and fundraising proceeds.



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6 NC 58 "Downtown" Lighting and Banners	New decorative lighting in place along bicycle path and sidewalks in "downtown" area, and also along NC 58 bicycle path between Welcome Center and Coast Guard Road. Town seeking to convert "yellow" lights to "white" lights in "downtown" area, and also add decorative banners in "downtown" area.	Town seeking to convert "yellow" lights to "white" lights in fall 2018 to create more consistent line of lights and better illuminate "downtown". Town will also be developing a program to display banners in the "downtown" area, and also solicit sponsorships.
7 Archers Creek Culvert Replacement	Existing corrugated metal culvert is approximately 40 years old, and is in need of replacement. Town may seek to replace existing 60" pipe with larger box culvert to enable kayak access under Lee Avenue.	Town hopes to include funding in FY 18-19 budget and install new culvert during winter 18-19.
8 NC 58 ROW Landscaping	Town continues to place high priority on attractive appearance along NC 58. Significant staff resources to maintain landscaping and keep clean, and continued efforts to gradually improve. Very important to present the desired image of the Town to residents and visitors.	New Welcome to EI sign and lighting to be installed in coming weeks. Town working to gradually convert existing landscaped areas from pine straw to river rock.



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<i>2018 Summer Season</i>		
1 Regional Beach Access Parking Fee	\$10 per day per vehicle parking fee at Western Ocean Regional Access and Eastern Ocean Regional Access only on weekends and holidays from April - Sept. Free parking permits available for EI taxpayers and residents.	100% of parking fee revenues used to fund personnel and operating costs associated with the two access facilities. Goal is to insure high quality, clean, family-friendly beach visit experience. 2018 fees begin April 14. Town will also be contemplating weekday fees (perhaps \$5?) in the future.
2 EmeraldFest Summer Concert Series	Summer outdoor concerts at the Western Ocean Regional Access.	Every Thursday evening from mid-June to mid-August. 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm.
3 Lifeguards / Beach Patrol	Town utilizes 4 roving "mobile lifeguards" as Beach Patrol, and also has 1 fixed lifeguard at each of the two regional beach access facilities.	Services begin in late May, and will continue through early September. Town added additional daily lifeguard in 2017, and will continue in 2018. Also promoting "Host Family Housing" program in effort to improve lifeguard recruitment.
4 Police Presence on the Beach	Town maintains enhanced Police presence on the beach strand. Fixed officers during summer months at Bogue Inlet Pier and Western Ocean Regional Access, and greater presence at Eastern Ocean Regional Access. Also roving officer on ATV and other periodic patrols on beach strand.	Goal is to maintain "family beach" atmosphere. 2018 strategy is similar to recent years.
5 Unattended Beach Equipment	Ordinance implemented in 2010 that requires unattended beach equipment to be removed daily, or subject to confiscation by Town personnel. Exception stickers for oceanfront owners only.	Will continue again in 2018.



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<i>Beach Nourishment / The Point</i>		
1 Next Bogue Inlet Realignment	13 years since the Town relocated the main channel in Bogue Inlet approximately 3,500 feet west of The Point to relieve erosion pressures.	New channel has remained in stable location away from EI. New channel is now approximately 1,300 - 1,500 linear ft. from homes and infrastructure, but is not a major concern. The Point has experienced significant accretion and continues to look very good. Town will continue to monitor closely. Town in early stages of planning for next inlet channel realignment, and has tentatively scheduled project for winter 21-22.
2 Long-Term Beach Nourishment Program	Town continues to work with County and other Bogue Banks towns on long-term EIS and permits for future beach nourishment . Would provide regulatory approvals for next 50 years of beach nourishment. Town would complete beach nourishment on as needed, where needed basis in the future. Should also include periodic realignment of Bogue Inlet channel, with use of sand for beach nourishment.	Final EIS has been released for public comment, and Town expects this 8-year process to finally be complete this summer, in time for use of new permit for planned eastern EI beach nourishment project in winter 18-19 or winter 19-20. Overall, beach remains in generally decent condition, but flat berm is narrower than desired in some locations due to gradual erosion and also seaward dune migration.
3 Beach Nourishment Revenues	Town levies 4 cent rate on all oceanfront and inlet-front properties, and earmarks additional \$400,000 annually in General Fund. Generates nearly \$700,000 per year to be reserved for future beach nourishment projects. Carteret County levies 6% room occupancy tax on all rentals, etc., with 3% statutorily earmarked for beach nourishment on Bogue Banks. Generates approximately \$3.5 million+ annually for entire island.	Combination of two revenues should enable the Town to meet its future beach nourishment needs without issuing new debt in the future. On average, should result in \$2.2 million or more reserved annually for Emerald Isle's future needs. State has also created new Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund, and Town hopes to secure State funding for future nourishment efforts.



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4 New Coastal Barrier Resources System ("COBRA") Designation	US Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed expansion of area and change of designation in Bogue Inlet that would place everything west of existing homes on Bogue Court in a CBRS zone. Restricts Federal funding and may significantly impact permits for planned future Bogue Inlet channel dredging and sand placement.	New designation must be approved by US Congress, and proposal seems to be counter to goals of Congress and Trump Administration. Town and County working to insure that changes are not approved, and they appear to be in a "holding" pattern for now.



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<i>Development Issues</i>		
1 Complementary Residential Uses Now Permitted in Business District	Recent Town ordinance amendment now allows complementary residential uses in commercial buildings in the Business zoning district.	Commercial use is required on ground floor, but residential use allowed on second and third stories. Town encourages buildings closer to street, side and rear parking to create more "downtown" feel along NC 58 corridor.
2 UDO Simplification	Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) includes all development regulations --- zoning, subdivisions, signs, storm water, flood damage prevention, dunes and vegetation, etc., and is in need of simplification.	Town Manager's goal is to reduce total UDO to 25 pages or less. Goal is to present new document to Planning Board and Board of Commissioners later in 2018. Seeking to preserve residential character in R-2 district, and be flexible in commercial and mixed-use districts while maintaining "core" ordinances regarding building heights, vegetation, aesthetics, etc.
3 New Flood Insurance Rate Maps	New FIRMs for Emerald Isle released in summer 2016.	New maps are mostly favorable for Emerald Isle, with many properties removed from flood zones, moved from VE to AE, etc. Much controversy over new maps in other areas, and implementation date not likely until sometime in 2019. Likely significant savings and reduced burden for many EI property owners.
4 New Construction Activity	New construction activity continues to be strong, and is approaching long-term historical averages. More than 900 vacant lots, in addition to redevelopment opportunities to support local construction industry for several decades.	Peak years for new construction were FY 03-04, with 127 new residential units and \$37 million of construction, and FY 04-05 with 114 new units and \$38 million of construction. FY 08-09 had 13 new residential units, \$11.5 million of construction. Gradual improvement since FY 08-09, with a total of 44 new residential units, \$27 million of construction in FY 16-17. FY 17-18 on pace for more than 50 new residential units and nearly \$40 million of new construction.



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5 Village East / Village West	Mixed use development regulations in vicinity of Bogue Inlet Pier and Islander Drive areas. Flexible regulations, higher densities in order to encourage redevelopment in these areas. Most lucrative development opportunities available in Emerald Isle, by design.	Please contact Town Manager or Town Planner for assistance if prospective project emerges. Town willing to work hard to accommodate developer / individual plans to foster quality redevelopment - a top priority.
6 Limited Centralized Wastewater Treatment Systems for Village East and Village West Areas	2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan includes new policy that promotes limited systems in Village East and Village West areas to promote quality redevelopment.	Very challenging goal, but new plan aims to make it possible for private sector or public / private partnership to pursue in future. Town has had preliminary conversations about the use of treated wastewater for NC 58 irrigation, as part of efforts to improve NC 58 landscaping features.



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<i>Other Projects / Issues</i>		
1 St. Patrick's Festival	Festival continues to be Emerald Isle's signature event. 27 years running, and better than ever!	2018 event was perhaps biggest ever! The traditional start of the annual tourism season, and the key shoulder season event for EI.
2 EI Marathon, Half-Marathon, and 5K Races	Annual running races designed to raise funds for future bicycle path improvements, charity, and bring additional visitors to Emerald Isle in offseason.	2018 event held on March 10 due to conflicts with Easter weekend, St. Patrick's Festival, and other NC / SC marathons. Approximately 800 runners in 2018, but still hope to raise \$30,000 - \$40,000 for bike path and breast cancer charity. Races are now key part of EI lineup of shoulder season events.
3 Emerald Isle Beach Music Festival	Reboot of popular festival from 1980s and 1990s aimed at creating fall festival / event in Emerald Isle to book-end the summer season. Specifically held on the beach strand. Part of Town's deliberate efforts to lure more visitors in the spring and fall.	First two new events held in August 2016 and September 2017, and were well-received. Estimated crowd of approximately 8,000 each year, and no significant problems. The 2018 event is scheduled for Saturday, September 29. Funded by TDA, sponsorships, and event fees.
4 Overall Aesthetic Appearance	Town places highest priority on overall aesthetic appearance to create desirable tourism destination, attract retirees and second homeowners, and provide high quality of life for permanent residents.	Significant Town staff efforts and resources devoted to NC 58 corridor (landscaping, bike paths and sidewalks, litter removal, sign enforcement, etc.). Many other features also important - proper maintenance, yard debris collection, appearance of Town facilities, etc.
5 Hurricane Re-Entry Permits	Town uses permit system to allow property owners and residents to return to Emerald Isle before general public in event of significant damages that require prolonged closure of Emerald Isle.	All property owners previously issued free permanent re-entry permit. Permits should be transferred to new owner when property sold. Replacement or additional permits are available for \$25. Real estate agents should include this item on closing checklist.
6 Rip Current Education	Refrigerator magnets and brochures available free of charge to improve public education.	Please contact Town Administration to secure free magnets and brochures.



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7 Public Information Efforts - Website, Email Newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, Emerald Isle App, Text Message Alerts	Town strives to make sure our residents, property owners, and visitors are well-informed about the Town's activities, issues, and events.	Comprehensive Town website. Town email newsletter now has approximately 7700 subscribers. Town Facebook page has approximately 18,500 page "likes", and Town has nearly 3,200 Twitter followers. Emerald Isle App has approximately 8,700 downloads thus far, and more than 1,700 have subscribed to text message alerts.
8 Deer Management	Town efforts in recent years appear to be stabilizing the deer population in Emerald Isle. For 2017, NC WRC estimated a total population of 48 deer, the lowest total since the Town began keeping records in 2005.	No controlled deer hunt in 2018. Town will conduct new deer population count in fall 2018, and will conduct new controlled deer hunt in early 2019 if warranted.
9 Coyotes	Coyotes present in Emerald Isle, with known family units near The Point, boat ramp facility, Town govt complex, and other locations. Coyotes now prevalent all over North Carolina and the United States, including cities and towns.	EIPD again coordinated a voluntary trapping program in winter 17-18, which resulted in the removal of 12 coyotes from Emerald Isle. Traps were set on select private properties (upon request) and Town-owned properties. The winter 16-17 trapping effort resulted in the removal of 14 coyotes. The Town will continue to monitor coyote issues and consult with biologists on appropriate strategies.



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<i>Budget / Financial Issues</i>		
1 FY 18-19 Recommended Budget	Town Manager's recommendations presented to Board of Commissioners in May 2018.	Recommended budget's primary goals are to maintain current property tax rate, maintain high service quality, and achieve top Board priorities for new projects / improvements. Budget continues to be challenging, but hopefully manageable.
2 Recommended Property Tax Rates	<p>FY 18-19 budget will strive to maintain current General Fund tax rate of 15.5 cents (14 cents for general services and 1.5 cents for beach nourishment). Primary Benefit District rate (oceanfront and inlet-front properties only) expected to remain at 4 cents.</p> <p>The 14-cent rate for general services is 2nd lowest of all 21 NC beach towns. Other NC beach towns range from 12.75 cents to 51.1 cents.</p> <p>Town works hard to keep the cost of Town government as low as possible.</p>	Board's top priority is to keep the Town's tax rate as low as possible.
3 Total General Fund Budget	Town's annual budget is approximately \$9.87 million.	<p>Sales tax is the Town of Emerald Isle's most important revenue source, as most other Town revenues are relatively static. Town must continue to be careful and and creative to control expenditures. Town works hard to secure beneficial grant funding for new Town initiatives.</p>
4 Town Debt Levels	Town has total outstanding debt of ~ \$1.64 million. Very low debt ratios.	<p>Outstanding debt includes 2013 refinancing, 2013 community improvements package, and land. Town's annual debt service payments are approximately 5.8% of budget. Bulk of existing Town debt will be retired by FY 18-19, with new debt anticipated for McLean-Spell Park land and Fire Station 1 renovations.</p>



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5 5-Year Capital Replacement / Improvement Program	Town invests significant time and energy in long-range financial planning to insure that Town needs are met while maintaining a stable tax rate - future budget planning is a top priority	5-year plan is updated annually by the Board in conjunction with annual budget adoption.
6 Fund Balance	Town maintains total fund balance in the General Fund of approximately \$2.1 million - relatively healthy level - represents approximately 22% of annual operating budget - need to maintain and increase if possible.	Key priority for the Town is to maintain healthy fund balance levels.