



MEMORANDUM

Town of Nags Head

Planning & Development Department

To: Planning Board
From: Holly White, Principal Planner
Date: October 9, 2020
Subject: Presentation and discussion of 2017 Comprehensive Plan

OVERVIEW

FOCUS Nags Head was a two-part project that was initiated in the Summer of 2015. The first portion of the project, the Comprehensive Plan, was focused on update of the Land Use Plan and incorporation of other long-range planning documents into a single comprehensive document. The second portion of the FOCUS Nags Head project was an update to Town land development codes that began in 2017.

There were two citizen committees appointed to guide these processes: the Advisory Committee and the Technical Committee. The Advisory Committee was appointed to provide guidance to staff on policy issues related to the vision and strategic direction of the plan. This committee was instrumental in providing feedback on the vision, future desires, and direction for specific character areas of the Town. During the two-year period, there were approximately twenty (20) Advisory Committee meetings, five (5) Community Meetings, and over 75 stakeholder interviews to gather public input. The Technical Committee was appointed to provide guidance and feedback to staff and the consultant on technical issues related to development of code language and further implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

PLAN PURPOSE

[The Nags Head Comprehensive Plan](#) is the official policy document adopted by the Board of Commissioners to strategically plan for and enhance the quality of life and physical character of the community. The plan, while not regulatory in nature, builds upon other adopted plans and policies to provide a foundation for decision making, future regulations, and project development. The vision, goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan form the policy basis of the Town's recently adopted Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Comprehensive Plan is broken down into 4 basic sections.

- **Section 1: Context and Setting**
Context and Setting describes current conditions in the Town, including demographics and population, and outlines the vision.

– **Section 2: Character Areas**

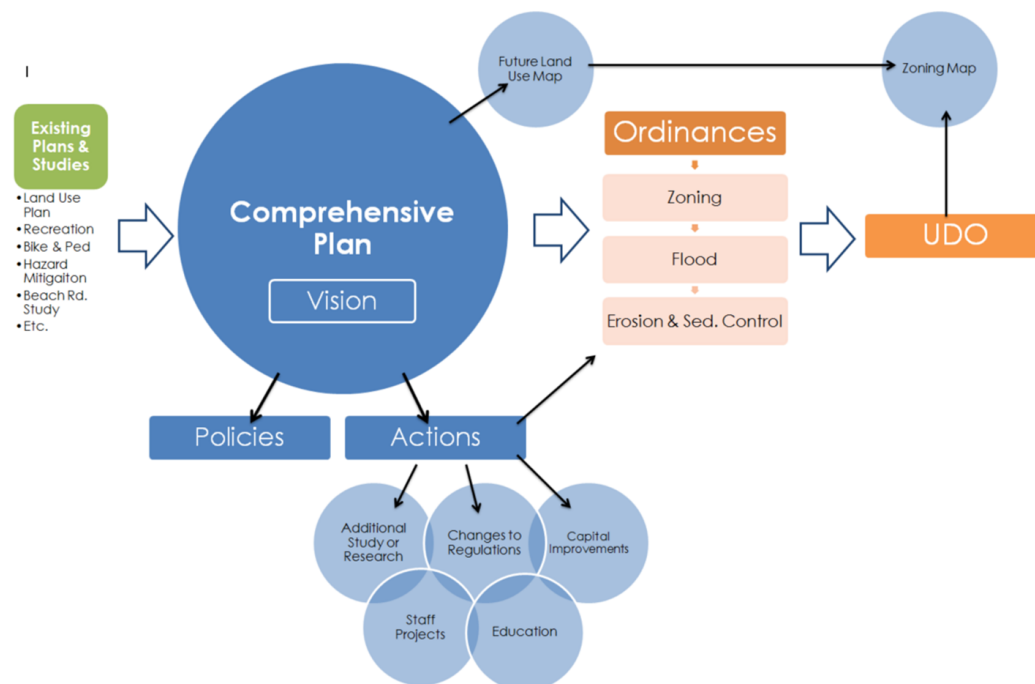
Character Areas describes the eight distinct areas of Nags Head that require special planning to maintain or enhance their unique characteristics. Each character area contains a brief description of the existing conditions, develop plan outlining appropriate land uses, density, and design characteristics, and essentials actions and considerations to achieve the vision of this area. The policies that support the vision and development plan of each character area are discussed in detail in Section 3, Elements.

– **Section 3: Elements and Policies**

Elements and Policies is broken into seven elements: Land Use, Natural Resources and Resiliency, Economic Development and Tourism, Cultural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, and Municipal Services. The policies in this portion of the plan are broad in nature and apply generally town wide. Under each main element are sub-elements that explain the primary concerns of the community. In addition to a discussion of key issues, each element includes a table of policies and actions to guide future decision making. The seven elements are identified by a primary two letter code. Policies under each element are numbered and actions are lettered, creating a simple four-letter code that makes each policy and its actions uniquely identifiable. The actions for each policy can best be described as the steps the Town will take to achieve the policy.

– **Section 4: Implementation**

Implementation moves the policy discussion one step further by providing a detailed policy and action matrix that outlines how each action will work to be accomplished, the potential costs, and who is responsible. The matrix is an extension of the policy and action tables from Section 3, but with greater detail including financial resources, time frame, and priority levels of each policy action. This section also relates each policy to the five goals and vision described at the beginning of the plan.



USING THE COMPREHNSIVE PLAN

Staff uses the Comprehensive Plan to determine if development applications are consistent with the vision and policies of the plan. This, along with other relevant information, is generally the basis for staff's recommendation to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners for development applications.

UDO [Sections 3.5.3](#). Action by the Planning Board and [3.5.4](#). Action by the Board of Commissioners describes how the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners must find consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for text and zoning map amendments. This UDO requirement is based in [North Carolina General Statue 160A-383 Purposes in view](#). This portion of the statue requires that zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan.

Staff intends to make a detailed presentation at the Planning Board meeting and will be available for further discussion. An electronic version of the plan is available online- [The Town of Nags Head Comprehensive Plan](#). Please let staff know if you would like a paper copy of the plan.