



Executive Summary

The challenges facing the transportation system in North Myrtle Beach and eastern Horry County are the collective result of sustained growth, continued reliance on the automobile for even short trips, and competing agendas for scarce transportation funds. As the recent high rate of growth quickens and more commuters rely on single-occupancy vehicles, the few projects with committed funding will do little to address deficiencies in the transportation network.

The *Northeast Area Transportation Plan* provides a multimodal approach to the congestion and safety problems that plague the transportation system, now and in the future. The planning process was guided by the efforts of an Advisory Committee and included a series of public workshops, stakeholder interviews, and a public survey. Public outreach combined with an analysis of existing conditions formed the baseline from which recommendations were developed. Recommendations include corridor, spot, collector street, bicycle and pedestrian, and transit solutions that collectively will ensure the future transportation network operates safely and efficiently.

As we evaluate the transportation network over the next 20 years, it is evident that increasing demands will be placed on the existing road network. With limitations to new construction including natural and man-made barriers, it will become even more important to protect the integrity of the existing system. The list of proposed improvements includes projects that emerged during discussions with area stakeholders, local officials, the Transportation Plan Advisory Group (TPAG), and the general public.

Corridor Recommendations

Corridor recommendations are based on information from a variety of channels, including modeling scenarios, corridor operations, traffic safety, and field data. These improvements include widening existing roadways, paving and widening dirt roads, improving two-lane roadways, and constructing roadways on new alignments. Overall, 34.74 miles of roadway is recommended for improvement. The recommendations include:

- Widen approximately 17 miles of 2-lane roadways to a 4-lane divided cross-section in order to increase the capacity of the overall roadway system and alleviate congestion
- Widen and pave Water Tower Road and Long Bay Road (approximately 9.5 miles). Long-term both roadways will be 4-lane divided, though Long Bay Road will initially be constructed as a 2-lane divided roadway on 4-lane divided right-of-way.
- Improve Mount Zion Road, SC 9, and Sea Mountain Highway by modifying the existing roadway with turn-lane pockets, medians, and/or bike lanes to control access, increase safety, and improve mobility without widening.
- Construct the Intracoastal Parkway as a 4-lane divided roadway to connect new development south of SC 31 and provide east-west mobility.

In addition to these corridor recommendations, potential solutions that ease congestion, increase safety, and reflect the vision and goals identified by the community are identified for strategic corridors in the study area. These strategic corridors include SC 90 from SC 22 to SC 57, SC 90 from Main Street Connector to US 17, and SC 9 from SC 57 to US 17.

The cross-sections recommended for all corridors in this document are consistent with the "Complete Street Concept". A complete street is a community oriented street that safely and conveniently accommodates all modes of travel. This concept is explained in **Chapter 3** and corresponding complete street cross-sections are recommended for roadways in **Chapter 4**.

Spot Recommendations

Spot recommendations target critical congestion choke points and safety hazards in the study area and include intersection redesigns, interchange reconfiguration, and countermeasures.

Two intersections were identified for redesign. SC 90 and SC 57 currently intersect at a skewed angle and have conflicting free-flow turns. The redesigned intersection will include a more 90 degree approach by SC 57, the removal of the free flow right turn from SC 57, and signalization. The second intersection redesigned occurs where Little River Neck Road, Hill Street, 27th Avenue North, and Seaside Drive intersect at multiple angles. This second intersection is recommended to be redesigned as a five-leg roundabout.



The public identified the interchanges of SC 9 at US 17 and Sea Mountain Highway at US 17 as confusing and dangerous. Reconfiguration of SC 9 at US 17 will include the addition of two movements through the construction of new ramps. At the interchange of Sea Mountain Highway and US 17, the dangerous and confusing weave section was eliminated by realigning minor movements to Sea Mountain Highway.

Six priority crash locations were identified based on an analysis of traffic safety and crash history. These intersections included: SC 31 at SC 9, SC 90 at Sea Mountain Highway, SC 90 at Bombing Range Road, SC 90 at St. Josephs Road, SC 9 at Sea Mountain Highway, and SC 90 at Mt. Zion Highway. Field investigations at each intersection site were also performed. **Chapter 4** includes potential countermeasures for each location.

Collector Street Recommendations

Increasing the number of collector streets will enhance travel between local streets and arterials. The recommended collector street network (shown in the Official Thoroughfare Plan) includes 21 miles of collector streets on new location and 25 miles of existing roadways upgraded to collector street standards. These streets are expected to be constructed by developers during the land development process and should reduce reliance on the area's network of arterials.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Recommendations

Bicycle and pedestrian recommendations aims to fill gaps in the network, improve unsafe conditions, and provide new opportunities for recreational and utilitarian travel. The corridor, spot, and collector street recommendations include provisions for bicyclists and pedestrians. These improvements are supplemented by a series of bicycle routes that build upon the proposed East Coast Greenway.

Transit Recommendations

While some transit riders choose to leave their vehicles at home to board buses, others use transit because they lack access to a personal automobile. The transit recommendations of the *Northeast Area Transportation Plan* intend to meet the demand of both choice and captive riders. Recommendations include a coordinated system of shuttle circulator routes that connect existing and emerging activity centers.

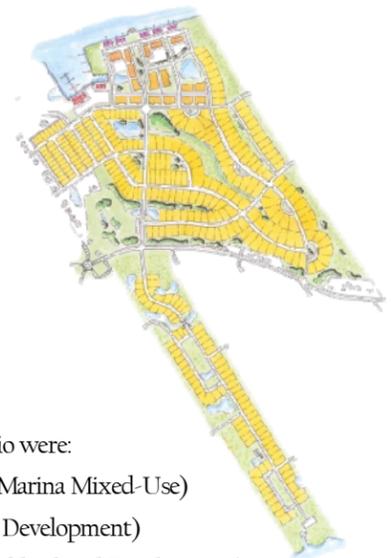
Land Use Considerations

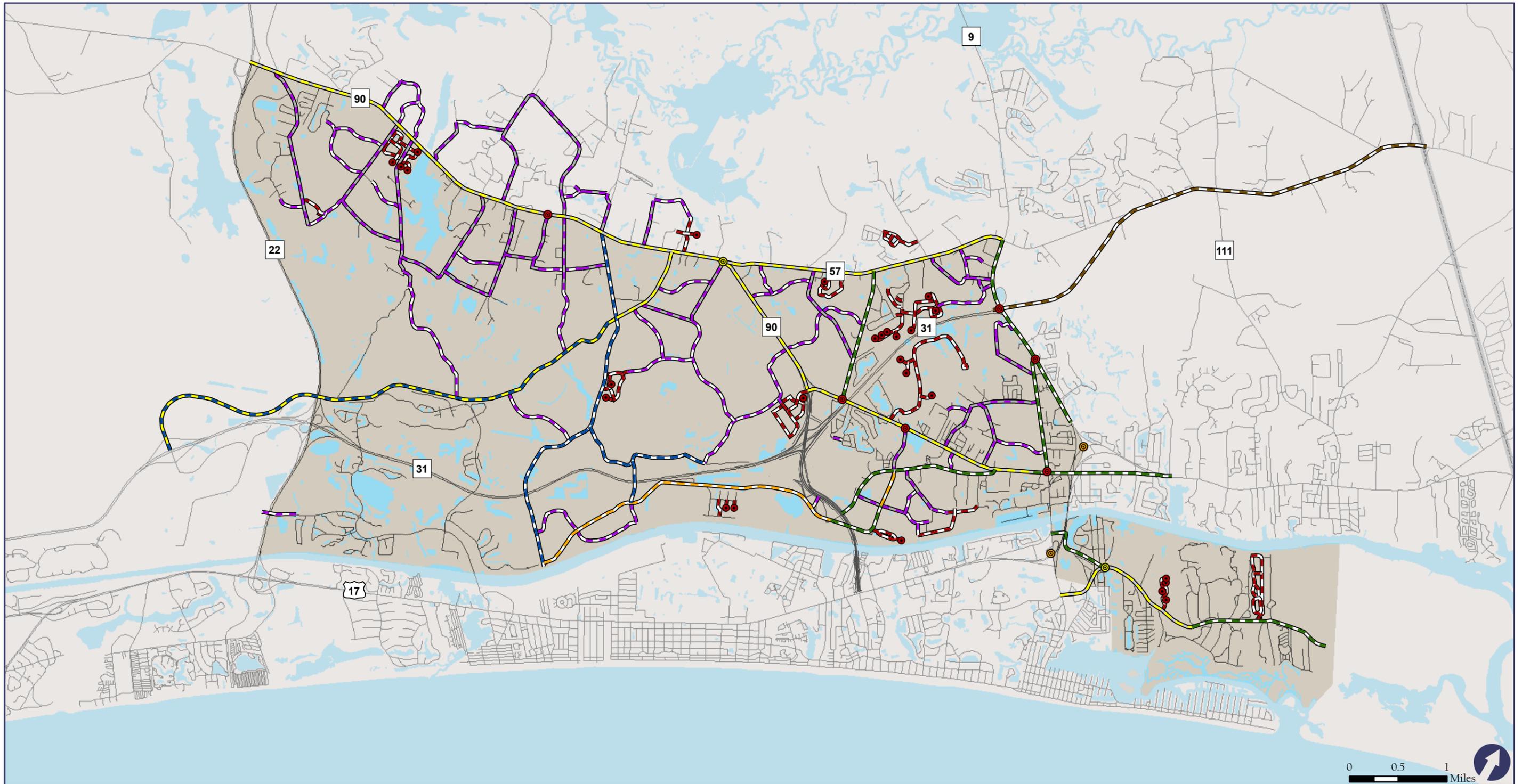
Land use and urban form considerations focus on the inherent relationship between land use (demand), urban form (design), and transportation (supply) in order to improve the efficiency of the regional transportation system while promoting livability. These relationships were analyzed in detail for three focus areas according to a four-step planning process: inventory of existing conditions, evaluation of existing development controls, formulation of development scenarios, and identification of development scenario trade-offs. This four-step process allowed the planning staff to examine the causal relationships between land use, urban form and travel behavior in each focus area.

Two development scenarios were prepared for each focus area. The first development scenario represented continuation of existing plans, programs, and policies administered by the local government under the current zoning designation (i.e., business-as-usual). The second development scenario represented a shift in planning philosophy toward planning initiatives that better link land use, urban form, and transportation planning — conservation community, Traditional Neighborhood Development, or marina mixed-use. The trade-offs of both scenarios were compared for each focus area. Recommendations and best development practices then can be applied to other areas within North Myrtle Beach and Horry County.

The three focus areas and their respective enhanced scenario were:

- Little River Neck Road (Conservation Development/Marina Mixed-Use)
- Intracoastal Residential (Traditional Neighborhood Development)
- Main Street Connector (Mixed Use/Traditional Neighborhood Development)





Transportation Recommendations for Improvement

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Area Boundary Bodies of Water State Line Local | <p>Corridor Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pave and Widen Existing Dirt Road Upgrade Existing Alignment (Turn Lanes, Ped/Bike, median, etc.) Widen Existing Alignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pave Existing Dirt Road Proposed New Location Proposed Location Upgrade Existing Cross Section | <p>Spot Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intersection Interchange Safety | <p>Proposed Development Street Network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets Cul de sac |
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