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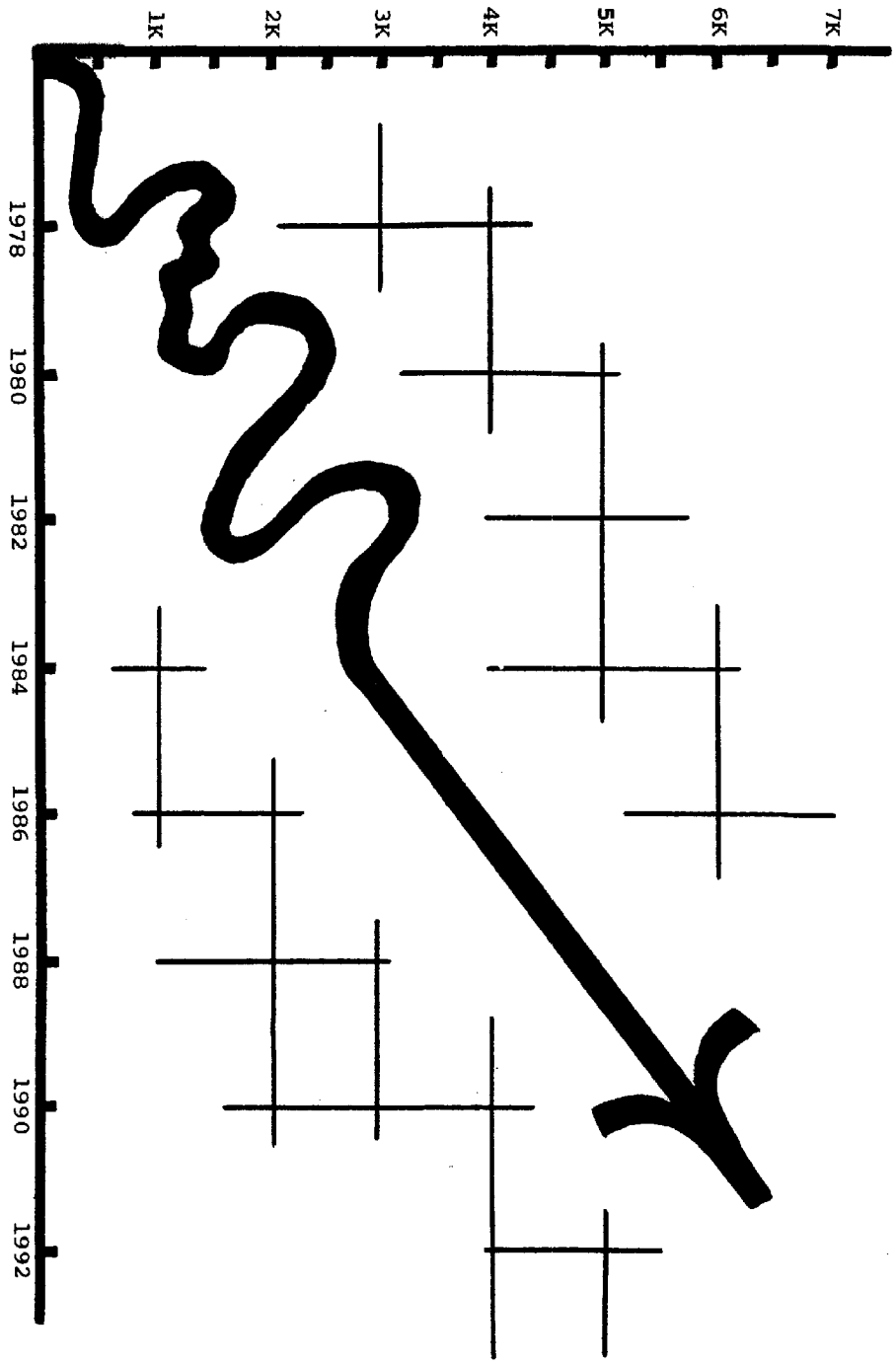

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

TOWN OF LONG BEACH

HT393.N8 G76 1984

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LONG BEACH

LONG BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA

June 1984

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planning south inc.

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INTRODUCTION

In late 1983, the Town of Long Beach embarked upon preparing a Growth Management Plan. This work included with it, the formulation of a Hurricane Mitigation Plan which is published under separate cover.

These two plans are supplemented by a companion study titled: Futurama: Brainstorming and Questionnaire Results and Joint Dreaming Session Results. This document describes what the People, Town Board, and Planning Board of Long Beach have to say about their future. Also, there are a series of graphs and maps which have been provided for the Town for display. These should be studied so that there can be a better understanding of the two Plans.

The Growth Management Plan was prepared by the Town Planning Board with the help of the Citizens of Long Beach and the Town Board of Commissioners. Technical assistance was provided by Planning South, Inc. of Raleigh.

PURPOSE

An assessment of needs and desires and the identification of a general sense of direction provide a community with the knowledge of alternative futures. This document offers policy statements on how to approach issues facing Long Beach. These statements are presented in the form of goals and objectives for 13 different areas that relate to the town's choices for the future.

The purpose of the Growth Management Plan, therefore, is to guide Long Beach into the future with: (1) its eyes focused on what the people need and desire, (2) its goals set on protecting and enhancing the quality of life and development, (3) its directions guided toward protection of its fragile environment (areas of environmental concern, the dunes, the Davis Creek and Canal, and fresh water lakes), and (4) its dedication given to economy in government providing for a high quality of life while carefully holding tax rates to a reasonable level.

ASSESSMENT OF TOWN GROWTH

Growth Dynamics and Constraints

Growth for Long Beach through expansion of town size is limited by physical and political barriers: (1) the Intracoastal Waterway on the north and west; (2) Lockwood's Folley Inlet on the west; (3) the Atlantic Ocean on the south; and (4) the Yaupon Beach town limits on the east. There are currently approximately 12,800 plotted lots in Long Beach, about 8,000 of which are vacant. These figures misrepresent the true picture, because much of the vacant land lies in residential sections where there are small lots - 6-7,000 square feet. Many homes are situated on two or more lots, and many have one, two, or more between them to serve as buffers making up for small lot sizes.

A serious constraint to contend with is the lack of sewerage. Since the town has been tied to the county's public water system, septic tank and drain field problems have been on the increase primarily because the water table has risen substantially. This has occurred because water is no longer being removed from underlying groundwater sources, but it is being piped in from another source on the mainland. Local residents cite the installation of septic tanks in holes dug for them that are already flooded. The delicate ground water balance is now out of kilter. Much is being added, but little or nothing is being tapped. In effect, water is being transferred from one basin system to another, oversupplying the receiving system and overwhelming it with effluent.

To the west of 48th Place West on the beach, land is very unstable. From this street, through the no longer existing 70th, through 73rd Places West to Lockwood's Folley Inlet, severe beach erosion is cutting into the island forcing relatively new homes to be moved to safer land back across West Beach Drive. Even as this process takes place, new homes are on order and being constructed for speculation in the same highly vulnerable area. The physical constraints here are being ignored by owners and developers. And the town's Administration has declared that it does not have the means to limit growth in this area that was plotted years ago because it cannot afford to compensate the owners for not being able to develop their properties.

The town's thoroughfare system also serves as a growth constraint. During the summer season, the streets and roads are unable to accommodate adequately the influx of traffic. Congestion is a prime issue, making the town unattractive for potential vacationers and new residents. Access to Caswell, Yaupon, and Long Beaches is gained by one two-lane bridge and causeway. This serves as an inconvenient and hazardous bottleneck. Easy access is being diminished as each season passes and congestion increases.

The following commentaries point up the factors related to growth in Long Beach. These are followed by a synopsis on the needs and desires of the citizenry and town elected and appointed leaders, as expressed in brainstorming exercises and in response to questionnaires. In turn, goals and objectives for guiding growth based upon these factors and responses are presented. An extensive assessment of citizen input has been published under separate cover. This piece should be studied concurrently with this document.

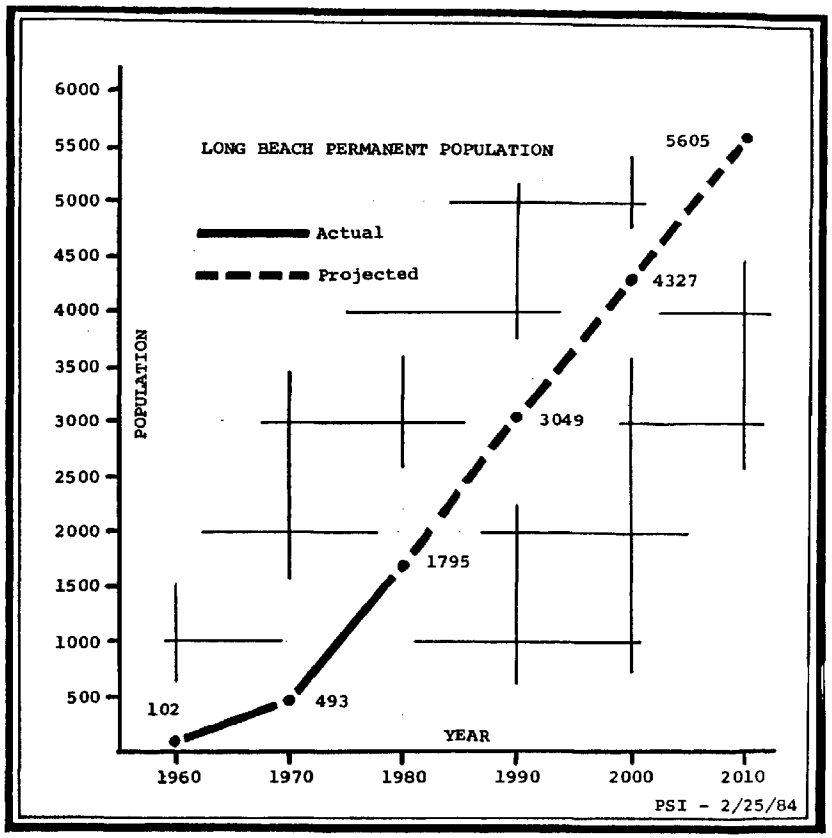
Provided with the Assessment on Growth which follows, in addition to the charts and graphs included herein, there are nine large, multi-colored illustrations which have been prepared for the Town for display purposes. These should be studied also when using this text. These illustrations include:

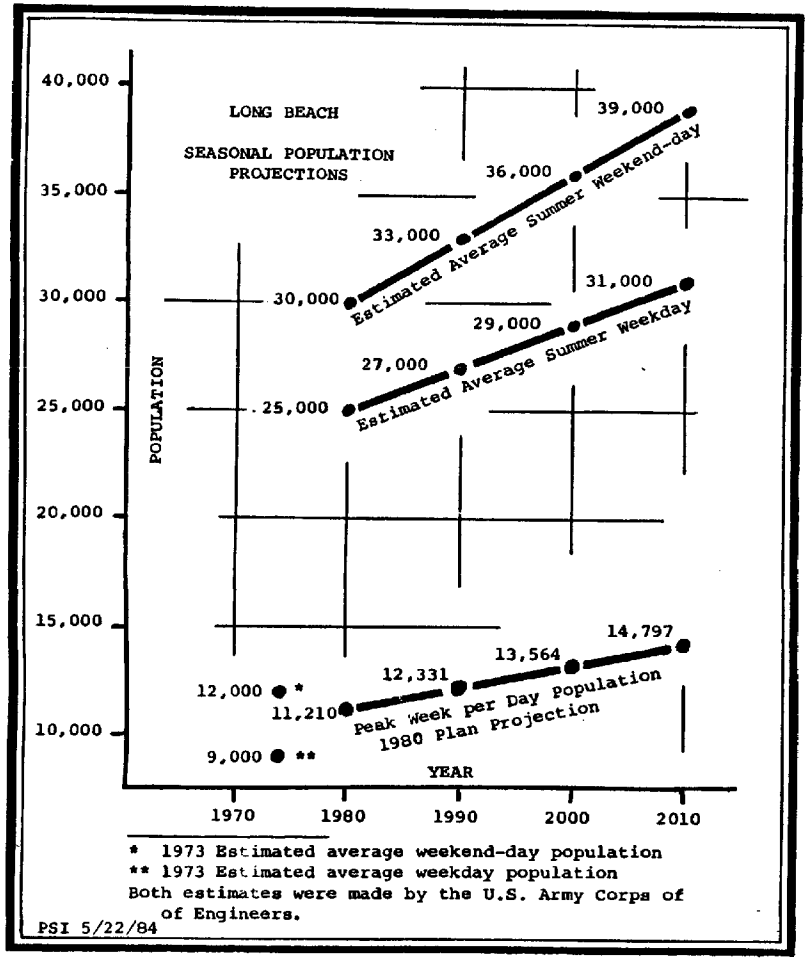
- Population Growth and Projections 1960-2010 (Chart)
- Water Usage 1979-1983 (Graph)
- Projected Water Usage 1979-1988 (Chart)
- Monthly 5-year Building Permit History 1979-1983 (Graph)
- New Construction Projections 1979-1990 (Chart)
- 5-year Successive Building Permit/Land Use History 1979-1983 (Map)
- Street Status (Map)
- Septic Tank Suitability (Map)
- Flood Hazard Areas (Map)

Population

Since being settled as a residential community in the late 1940's, Long Beach has grown to an estimated 1984 permanent population of over 2,150 people. But this does not tell the complete population story for the Town. In summer months, particularly on weekends and during holiday periods, the population surges to as high as 25-30,000 people. These surge estimates are made by Town Government and can be substantiated by measures such as water use, fire, police, and rescue calls, general congestion and traffic flow counts, and rental property occupancy.

Projections for Long Beach's future show a steady growth of the permanent population and growth at an increasing rate for the summer resort/vacation population for the next 25 years. The high summer projections show a 2 1/2 times increase over the current population for the year 2010. Please refer to the population graphs to the right.





Parks and Recreation

Park facilities are limited essentially to the municipal property next to Town Hall with improvements continually being made; tennis courts have just been added. Access to the fragile Davis Creek area, an environmental attraction of great interest, is provided by a sensitively designed wooden walkway and gazebo - one of the most attractive features of Long Beach.

A well done recreation center near mid-town is heavily used and excellently managed with high community participation. Many meetings of the town and various organization activities take place here. This facility very wisely was planned to be added on to. Because of the linear nature of the town, the park, the Davis Creek boardwalk, and some of the recreation center's facilities should be replicated in other locations of Long Beach to provide better access to these offerings of the Town.

Fire and Police Protection/Rescue Service

Both these functions along with a well-trained and equipped rescue service are of high quality for a town the size of Long Beach. Strong voluntary participation in these operations and community support form their mainstay of success. Construction of a public safety building at the town hall complex has just been completed for occupancy of fire and emergency equipment. A firestation is also located on Oak Island Drive in the western portion of the community.

Street lighting needs to be installed in the town's commercial districts. This is a necessity to improve security and to alleviate night time traffic congestion and to improve traffic safety.

Land Use

Development of land use patterns in the town over the years has taken place in two distinct areas: (1) Town Proper; and (2) The Beach.

Town Proper

The area can be delineated generally on the east by the City Limits at Yaupon Beach, on the north and west by the Intracoastal Waterway, and on the south by Davis Creek and E. Pelican Drive. For the purposes of this document, there are three specific sections identified in Town Proper. These are East Town, Mid and West Town, and the Commercial Area.

East Town. This section of the community is bounded by the City Limits, E. Oak Island Drive and a line running between N.E. 64th and 65th Streets. Zoned to accommodate mobile homes and single-family dwellings, the area is approaching development saturation with approximately 85 percent lot coverage.

The dominant uses in the area are vacation/retirement-type mobile homes. Many are over ten years old and not built to state and Underwriter Laboratory Standards. Most would be unable to meet Town Building Code standards. All are served by the Town water system and septic tanks. Because of ground saturation problems, some sections of East Long Beach are experiencing sewage smells and seepage in drainage ditches. This area runs the gamut in appearance from attractive to unkempt, giving a sense of overcrowding in some sections.

Mid and West Town. Ranging from the eastern town limit to the south of E. Oak Island Drive and East Town, and running the length and breadth of the community north of E. Pelican Drive and Davis Creek, this part of Long Beach is dominated by single-family dwellings and much vacant land. Located on larger lots with larger minimum square footage requirements than East Long Beach, this section of the community generally houses more permament residents. The homes, in the main, are situated on overly long residential streets which promote undesirable through traffic in neighborhoods, discourage east-west mobility, and require high expense for street and road maintenance.

This section of town is over 50 percent vacant, still allowing for the possibility of making street modifications without greatly disrupting its neighborhoods. This area of town appears to be attractive and better kept than other sections. The most valuable lot locations can be found on the Intracoastal Waterway and along Davis Canal (the west end of Davis Creek).

Oak Island Drive Commercial Area. This section serves as the "central business district" for Long Beach. It generally is no more than one lot deep along E. Oak Island Drive except at 58th Street where an arm of the district extends toward the beach. Office uses can be found on both ends of this commercial strip which runs from E. 46th Street on the west to E. 64th Street on the east.

The Commercial Area gives the town a poor image. The section is not well designed, parking is very inadequate and unorganized, and traffic congestion is common during the summer. The area is generally unkempt. Containment of commercial uses is needed for this area to promote continuity, convenience, and better appearance. Curb and gutter and access control are needed, and town sewer needs to be installed so that commercial use compaction can occur. Septic tanks are unable to accommodate the higher densities required for contained and efficient commercial development.

The Beach

Much of the land on the east end of the beach from E. 58th Street to E. 74th Street is undeveloped because of the AEC designation for the fresh water lakes located here. To the west, however, from E. 58th Street, there is moderate to heavy development running for an equivalent of some 124 blocks. This development can be seen on the "5-year Residential/Commercial Building Permit History: 1979-1983" map which has been presented to the Town for public display. The map shows new land uses in increments over this six-year period. Most of the land in this section of Long Beach is used for vacation/resort-type homes for rent. Vacant land on the ocean front is fast being built upon, while the less expensive sites to the north of Beach Drive are more available for second home and rental residences.

To the far west towards Lockwood's Folley Inlet, homes are being built in precarious locations. Even while some newly built homes are being moved from the ocean front because of severe erosion, more are being built in the vicinity. The town has been unable to find ways to curtail this continuing development because it does not have the ability to compensate landowners for being prohibited to develop their properties.

Many of these homes are being built for speculative purposes. The problem of potential buyers' not being fully aware of the dangers of purchasing homes here is omnipresent. On the other hand, the gambling process of building here, in the main, has paid off for owners economically because many homes have been amortized since the last of the very worst storms - Hurricane Hazel in 1954 when some 352 of the town's 357 homes were destroyed.

Traffic congestion in the beach area is moderate to constricting during the summer months. State maintained, two-laned Beach Drive, approximately seven miles long, is the only linear thoroughfare along the beach. The road serves both as a highway and residential street. It is unable, however, to meet the traffic demands of the beach area.

Zoning

The current zoning ordinance adopted in the mid-1970's has not been amended or modified to keep pace with the Town's growth. In 1983, the Planning Board recommended to the Town Board of Commissioners a rewritten ordinance, strongly reflecting local needs and desires as interpreted by the Planning Board. The new ordinance was developed over a year's time. After a series of hearings, however, the Commissioners have not taken action. It can be surmised that the increased building activity in Long Beach could be attributed partially to the anticipation of the Commissioners' adopting a new, more comprehensive zoning ordinance.

Subdivisions

The town was plotted on a grid system of streets when it was laid out by its founders. Recent subdivisions, with a few exceptions, have continued to follow the pattern first developed in the 1940's. The exceptions to the pattern are generally limited to the subdivisions situated to the north of Big Davis Canal and Davis Creek including: East and West Island Drives, 15th Street West, and Paula Circle in the town proper; and between 36th and 39th Places West and beyond 63rd Place West on the beach.

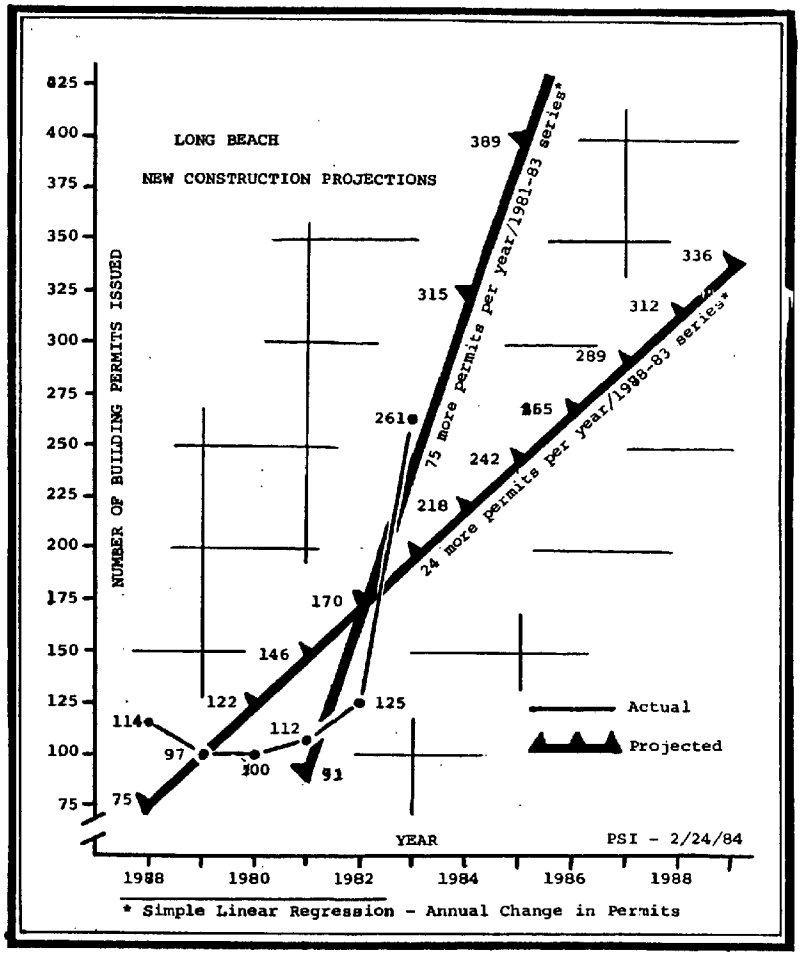
Almost all of the land in the Town has been subdivided, leaving little opportunity for designing new streets and lots. Those areas that remain lie where there would be restraints such as flooding, washovers, and disturbance of sensitive environmental conditions such as waterbodies, spawning beds, rookeries, wildlife habitats, dunes, and important vegetation. One major area has been designated as an Area of Environmental Concern (AEC) by the State of North Carolina.

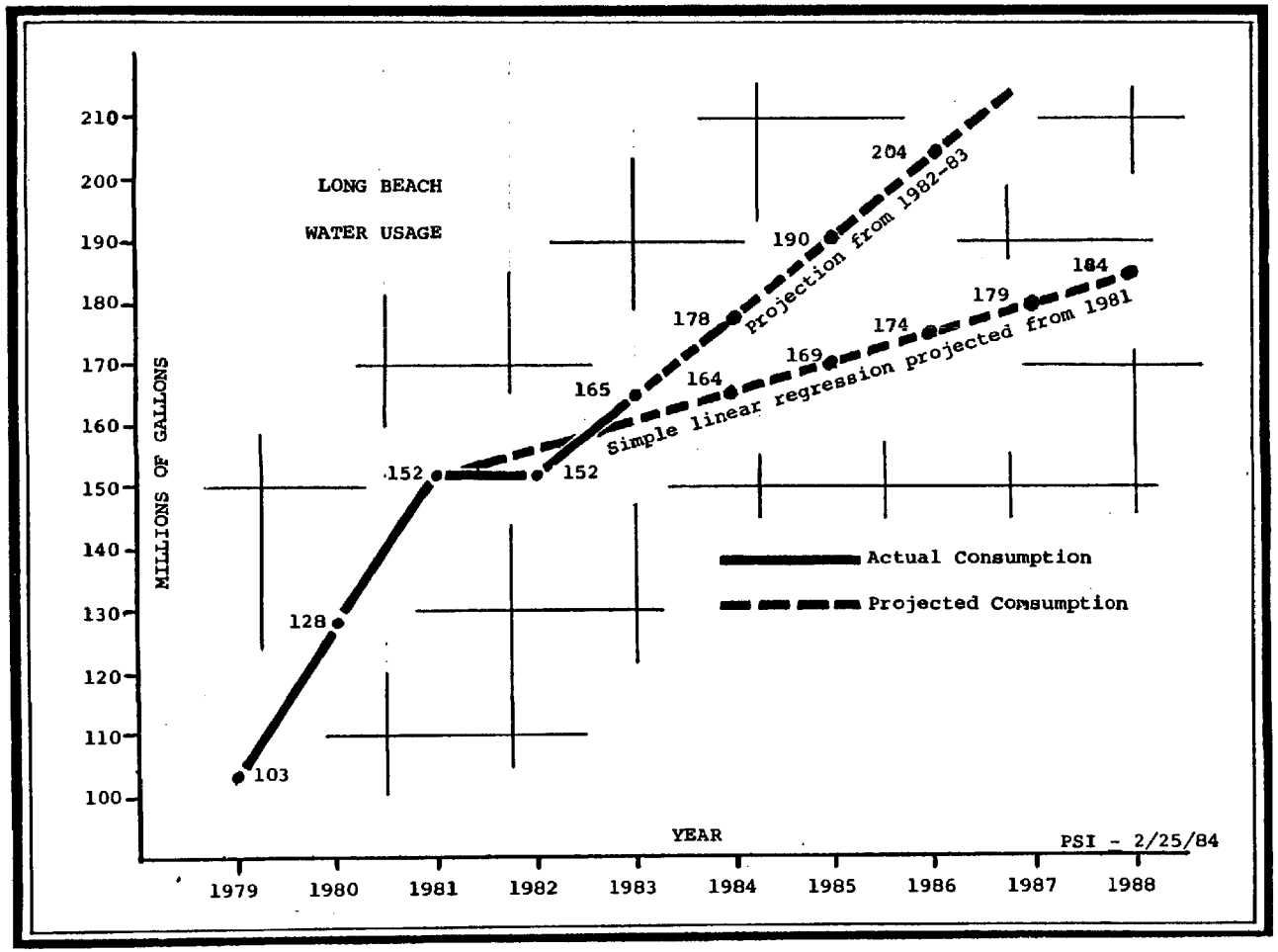
The grid street system does lend itself well, however, to modification which would discourage through traffic in residential neighborhoods, promote safety and higher security for property owners, and abate encroaching flood waters in neighborhoods. These modifications could be made after circulation and access planning with relatively low expense over a ten-year period.

Building Activity

Although there were only slight increases in the numbers of building permits allowed each year by the Town between 1979 and 1982, there was an over 100 percent surge in 1983. The jump was from 125 to 261 permits issued. The first five months of 1984 have continued to show dramatic increases over their corresponding months of 1983. This continued growth in permits reflects lower interest rates and an improving economy which are fostering construction to occur more rapidly.

The phenomenon of increased development activity in Long Beach is directly related to the increase in population of North Carolina associated with Sunbelt growth, the growing popularity of North Carolina's beaches for vacationing and retirement purposes, the town's relatively lower land prices, and the growing affluence of society in general. Please note the graph to the right.





Water Consumption

Dramatic increases in water use have been seen almost yearly for Long Beach ranging from the consumption of 103 million gallons in 1979 to 165 million gallons for 1983. This phenomenal increase can be attributed to construction and development in the community, population growth, and higher visitorship each succeeding summer season. By 1986 it is estimated that water consumption will range between 174-204 million gallons. The graph to the left from 1981 and 1983 shows projections to 1988.

As described earlier, water supply from the mainland has upset the balance of the watertable in Long Beach. It is rising because little or no water is being taken out of the ground, but much is being added through the use of septic tanks and normal storm water runoff. Septic tank use appears to be less and less a viable method of treating sanitary sewage as growth continues to occur.

Municipal Physical Plant

Town government outgrew its administrative office facilities some 2-3 years ago. Staff is crowded into cramped quarters with little privacy. The undesirable atmosphere for productivity and efficiency in town government places employees at a disadvantage in carrying out their responsibilities. Ultimately, the citizenry is served at less than an adequate level, and the infrastructure of the Town is not maintained with a high degree of care. Consequently, property owners are unable to receive their "money's worth" for the taxes they invest in the Town.

General Comparisons between Fiscal Years 1980-81 and 1983-84

	1980-81*	1983-84
Town Budget	$1.4 million	$1.9 million
General Fund	820 thousand	1.1 million
Powell Bill Funds	121 thousand	98 thousand
Revenue Sharing	79 thousand	54 thousand
Water Fund	367 thousand	650 thousand
Town Valuation	112 million	130 million
Tax Rate	$.38/$100 valuation	$.41/$100 valuation
Ad Volarum Tax Income	435 thousand	543 thousand
Number of residences	2752	3345
Commercial structures	62	73

*1980 Land Use Plan for the Town of Long Beach, North Carolina.

EXPRESSED FEELINGS OF THE PEOPLE ON TOWN GROWTH

The Town Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board held a Joint Dreaming Session on October 27, 1983, which led to a town-wide brainstorming adventure titled Futurama. Some 166 citizens participated in Futurama held at the Recreation Center on February 25, 1984. Futurama consisted of seven introductory sessions, 15 brainstorming gatherings, and a barbeque lunch. The Saturday event also solicited the thoughts of the people through the use of a questionnaire developed from the results of the Town Commissioners/Planning Board Dreaming Session.

Because of their volume, the outcomes, conclusions, and analyses of these adventures in public participation are published in a more lengthy companion document titled Futurama: Brainstorming and Questionnaire Results and Joint Dreaming Session Results.

Synopsis of Futurama, Questionnaire, and Dreaming Results

There is no better way of satisfying a constituency than to have them participate in planning for their future and to show them that their representative government can follow through with that planning. Seeing happen what one has planned for can be a most gratifying experience. The people have always wanted to see "open" government--a government that meets their needs efficiently and one that responds to their desires promptly.

The people of Long Beach have had a rare opportunity to express themselves in a relatively uninhibiting setting. They have expressed themselves in providing some clear messages for the future. They have participated in deciding for the future by letting their desires and needs be known.

The Planning Board, Town Board of Commissioners, and Town Administration, in turn, have had a broad array of information provided to them by a representative percentage of the total population. This also is a rare opportunity for decision-makers. Other than for the few who come to meetings with problems and complaints, the Commissioners normally receive very little input from the citizenry except for the message given at election time.

What The People Have Said

The residents of Long Beach have spoken through two vehicles--one subjective, through expression in brainstorming, and one objective, through response in answering the questionnaire. Both processes have brought forth comparable results showing the citizenry's most pressing concerns for the future.

The top six issues in both the brainstorming (B) and questionnaire (Q) results are given here.

ISSUE	RANK B	RANK Q
Clean-up and Litter Control	2	1
Growth Management and Planning	1	3
Better Traffic Control and Parking	5	4
A Second Bridge	4	5
Drainage and Erosion Control	-	2
Water/Sewer/Septic Tanks/Storm Drainage	6	-

The message from the participants is clear. The Town needs to pay much more attention to cleanliness and appearance. And the people are quite obviously concerned about the future of their home, Long Beach. They see growth coming. From what they have seen in recent months and years, they have been frightened by the prospects of being overwhelmed by uncontrolled and unattractive growth and development. Their feelings are well founded. Current planning studies and analysis support and verify their concerns. Refer to the section titled Assessment of Town Growth and the display Maps and Graphs presented to the Town.

Better traffic circulation and control are linked directly to the desire for a second bridge and to providing a public transportation conveyance. The Planning Board and Town Board of Commissioners need to look at traffic circulation seriously and at ways to alleviate the need to use only automobiles to move about the town, particularly during summer months. The residents are really concerned about this issue; it ranked very high in both brainstorming and in the questionnaire.

Drainage and erosion have been a problem for years in Long Beach. As development increases at an increasing rate, the threat of damage resulting from poor drainage increases and the potential for increased erosion rises. Connected in a very real way are the factors of public water supply, the dependence upon septic tanks to handle sewage, and the need for sewerage and treatment facilities. As the water table rises, stemming from public water system use, where little water is taken out of the soils but much water is brought in from elsewhere and deposited into the soils through septic tank use, drainage problems increase. The inevitability for the need of a sewage system is clear. For every action there is a reaction, e.g., a public water system/septic tank-use combination raises the water table and creates effluent drainage problems.

In the next seven issues, the people have expressed their wanting a higher quality of life in Long Beach showing their desire for improvements beyond their more basic needs. The second seven issues in both brainstorming (B) and questionnaire (Q) results are given here.

ISSUE	RANK B	RANK Q
Trails and Bikeways	5	8
Street Paving/Maintenance/Lighting	5	10
Recreation Facilities	3	13
Commercial Development	8	9
Better Development Controls	9	-
Efficiency in Government/Holding the Tax Line	8	-
Educational and Cultural Programs and Facilities	7	-

Trails and Bikeways, Recreation Facilities, and Education and Culture listings were high in the overall rankings. Also Commercial Development which included items such as a movie theatre, a major national chain supermarket, and a mall ranked high. These all indicate the people's desire for a higher quality of life in Long Beach.

Street paving, maintenance and lighting, efficiency in government--keeping taxes down, and better development controls relate to quality of life. These rank high in the participants' minds.

What The Town Leaders Have Said

The needs for new town government facilities and street improvements tied for first in importance. These were the most frequently mentioned general categories of the Commissioners and Planning Board. Interestingly, by contrast, new town offices received the least attention from the people in brainstorming and questionnaire results, showing the need for communications between town leaders and the people. The crowded conditions are not obvious to the citizenry. Street improvements, on the other hand, received high attention from both town officials and the people. The citizenry experience the need for street paving and maintenance daily.

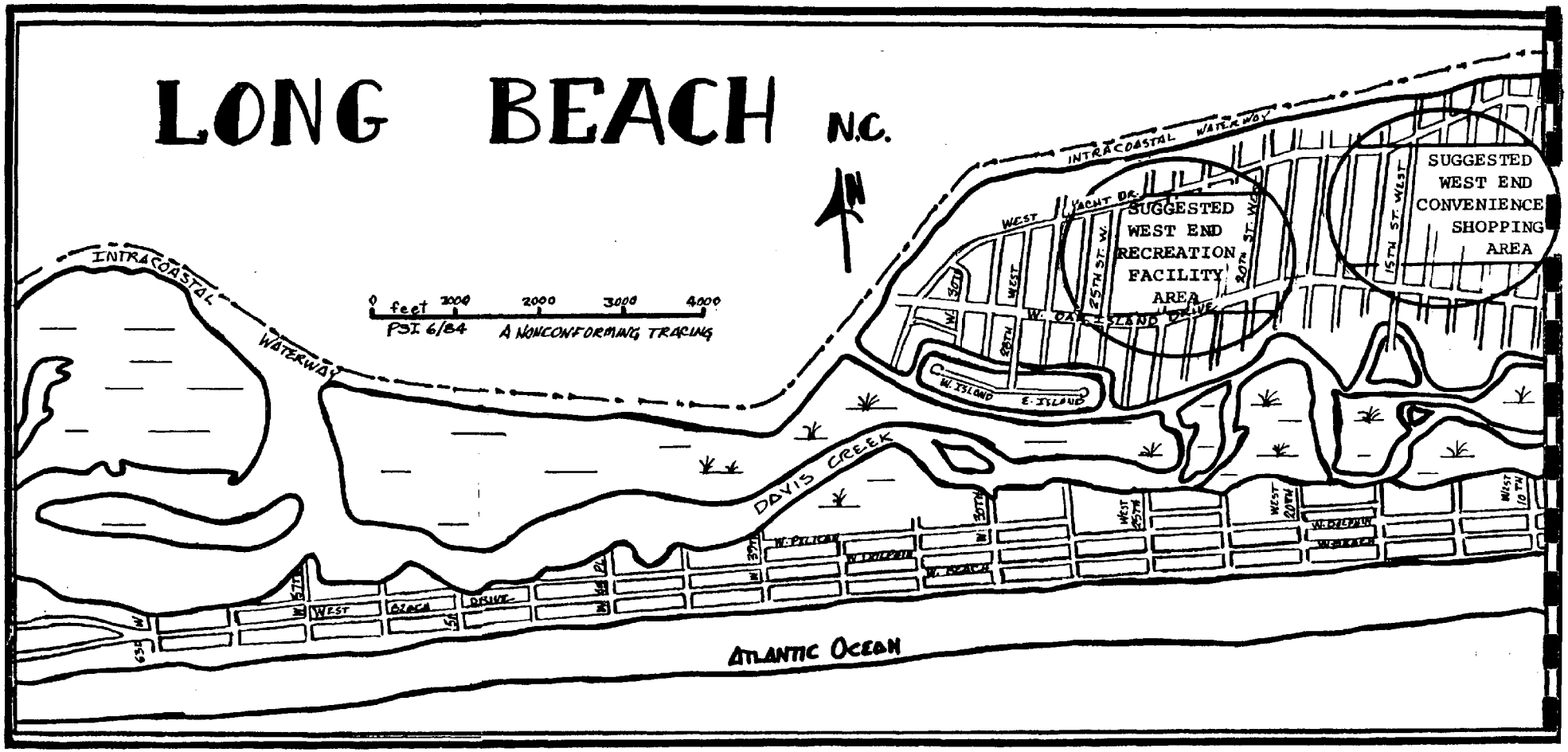
The completion of the Recreation Center and provision of other facilities ranked second among the most frequently mentioned issues. In addition, there were requests for bikeways, boat ramps and docks, plus an auditorium, stage facilities, and a children's theatre. Access to the beaches and Intracoastal Water was called for also.

Sewerage and Storm Drainage received high support, too. The need for a sewerage system in the town received little or no support from the people, however, indicating another area where communications need improving. The town leaders and administration are aware of this need, but citizens who know little about the dynamics of septic tank problems as they relate to water distribution, storm drainage, and health are not cognizant of the issues in this area.

The people ranked Growth Management and Planning as first and third in the brainstorming and questionnaire, respectively. Town leaders gave these important needs a listing in fourth place along with traffic circulation, boat ramps and marinas, shopping improvements, and an annual festival or fair.

Value of Long Beach Citizen Participation

The expressed ideas and suggestions of the people and town leaders have been invaluable in the preparation of the goals, policies, and updated plans for growth management. Much worthy input from concerned people, who have lived elsewhere and who have seen how unplanned growth can hurt a community, has been received. Their input has been given prime importance and weight in preparation of the growth management policies that follow.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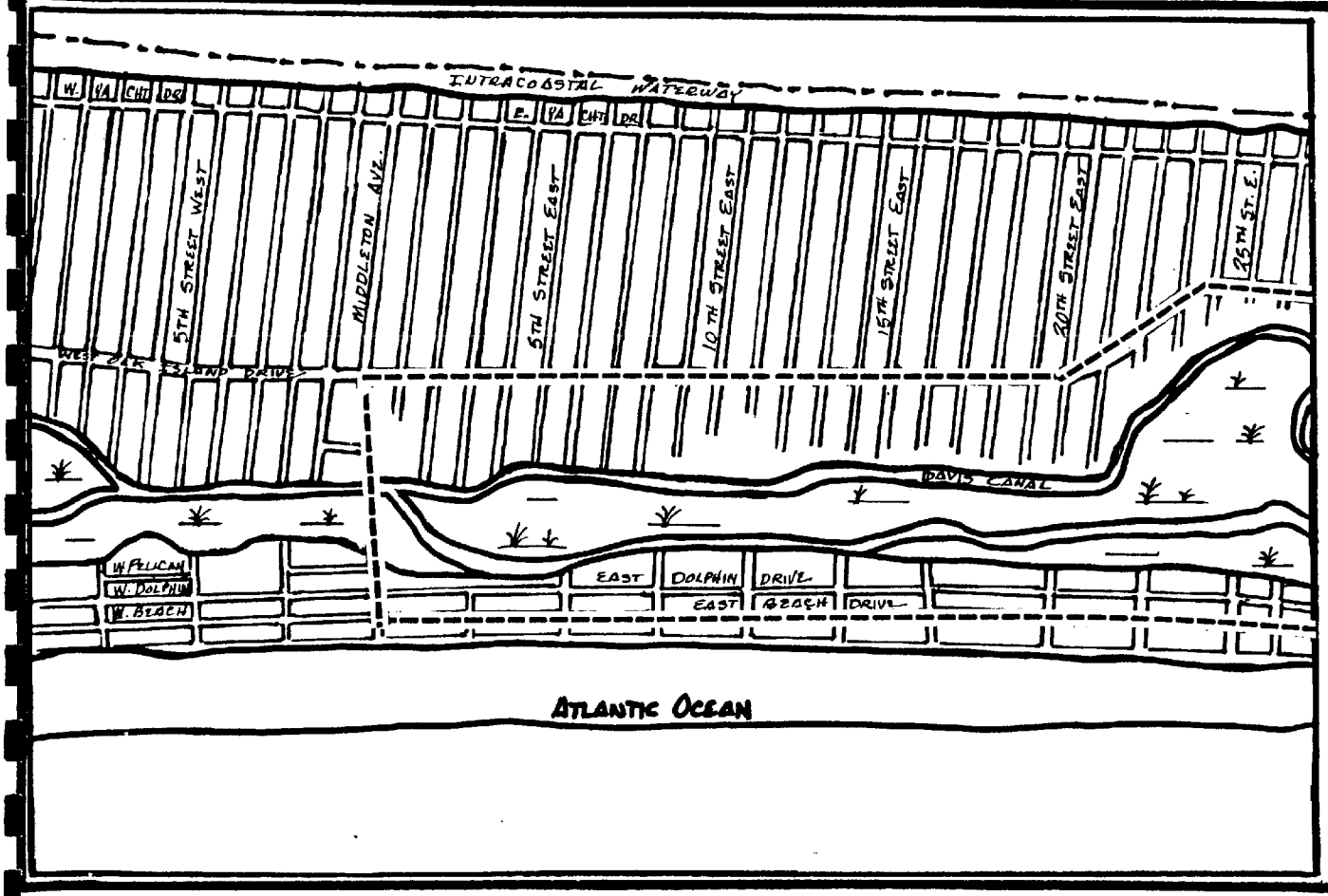
DAVIS CREEK
W. PELICAN
W. DOLPHIN
W. BEACH
WEST BEACH DRIVE
ATLANTIC OCEAN



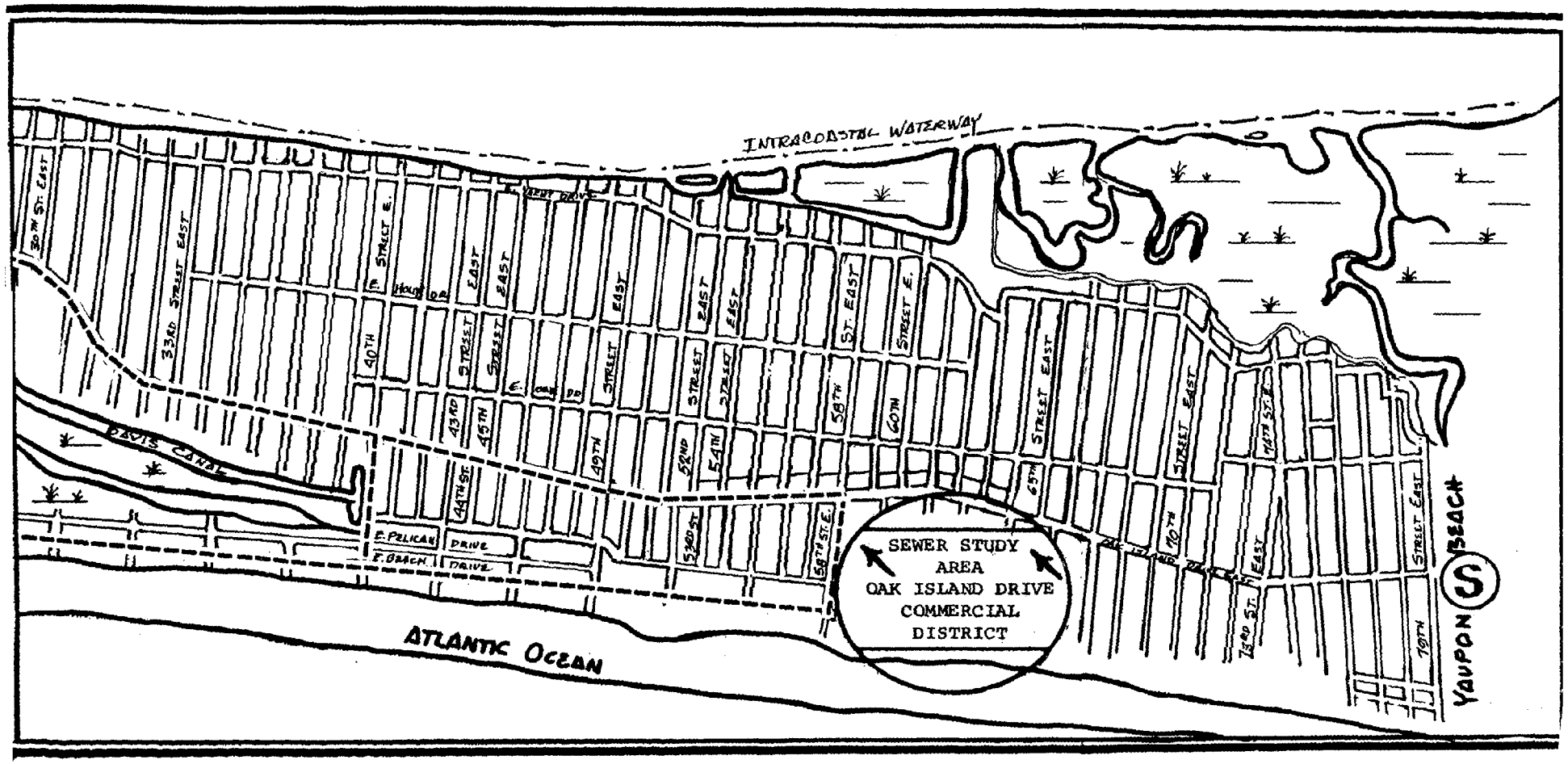
- - LEGEND - -

Suggested Tram Route

Suggested Location of Town Welcome Sign

- - NOTE - -

Because of the linear configuration of the Town of Long Beach, it is difficult to provide readable maps in this publication. Therefore, eleven maps and graphs have been prepared for the Town for display at the Municipal Building and Recreation Center. Please refer to these display maps and graphs when studying this Growth Management Plan by visiting these Town Facilities.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70TH STREET EAST
73RD ST. EAST
74TH ST. E.
79TH STREET EAST
DAVIS CANAL
E. PELICAN DRIVE
E. BEACH DRIVE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SEWER STUDY AREA
OAK ISLAND DRIVE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
YAUPON BEACH

POLICY STATEMENTS ON GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Based on the Assessment of Town Growth in the areas of water consumption, building permit issuance, population, land use, and development; based heavily upon the input of the Citizenry at Futurama in brainstorming and the Town Questionnaire; and based on the joint dreaming sessions of the Town Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board; the following Policy Statements on Goals and Objectives have been prepared by the Planning Board.

Growth Goals and Policies Statement

The Town of Long Beach will manage and direct its growth. The general goal is to match the development and provision of municipal services to residential, business, and recreation growth. The Town will take an active role in the preservation and protection of areas of environmental concern, the identification and isolation of storm hazard areas, and the provision for openspace for the future consistent with the Coastal Area Management Act.

Objectives

- To base population and growth guidance on the following criteria: (1) suitability of the land to accommodate use; (2) capacity of the environment; (3) compatibility with the purpose and objectives of the Town; (4) density; (5) location of use; and (6) availability of facilities and services.

- To prepare for a population growth that will continue at a steady rate with a permanent residency of 4,327, a summer average weekday residency of 13,564, and a summer peak weekday population of 29,000 by the year 2000.

- To institute continuous land use planning with effectively enforced zoning and building codes, developed and adopted in accordance with that planning, as the key tools for managing population and economic growth in Long Beach.

- To guide new development away from areas of environmental concern (AECs), providing protection for unique natural features, sensitive vegetative areas, rookeries, special habitats, and unstable physical forms such as dunes, inlets, and shorelines.

- To guide new development away from hazardous areas where there is a tendency toward septic tank problems, flooding, washover, and inlet cutting.

- To approve development only when and where adequate facilities and services to support it are available.

- To formally adopt the Long Beach Hurricane Mitigation Plan and its Policies for guiding growth and new development.

Housing Goals and Policies Statement

The Town of Long Beach will continue to encourage the development of a variety of housing types to meet the needs and desires of the citizenry and future permanent and seasonal residents.

Objectives

- To maintain an area exclusively for single-family dwellings primarily for the growing permanent and seasonal population.
- To provide an area for mobile homes to accommodate both permanent and seasonal occupancy.
- To establish an area for condominiums and apartments, maintained to accommodate vacationing, resort, retired and other permanent populations.
- To provide areas in the beach section of town for motels and hotels and their attendant facilities.
- To retain the thirty-five (35) foot height limitation for residential, commercial, and institutional structures in accordance with goals and objectives for maintaining town character and appearance.

Health Services Goals and Policies Statement

The access of each individual to adequate health services and care is to the well-being of the entire citizenry. A sound health care system available to all permanent and seasonal residents and vacationing visitors will be brought to Long Beach. Health care facilities and services are directly related to the growth of the community.

Objectives

- To increase regularly the quantity and to improve constantly the quality of rescue squad and emergency ambulance services and equipment as the permanent and seasonal populations increase.
- To establish a medical clinic and emergency treatment center with overnight observation capacity in Long Beach operated full-time during summer months and operated on a limited-time basis during fall, winter and spring months.

Culture and Recreation Goals and Policies Statement

There is a direct relationship between the availability of cultural, recreational and leisure outlets and activities and local growth and economy. The Town of Long Beach will create an environment where cultural and recreational activities can flourish for the benefit of the permanent residents, the seasonal population, and vacationing visitors.

Objectives

- To expand and complete the Recreation Center.
- To situate park facilities in the West End area to provide passive and leisure facilities in this section of the Town.
- To construct a year-round swimming pool at the Recreation Center.
- To encourage art shows, antique sales, flea markets, fish fries, barbeques, clam bakes, festivals, and concerts during the spring, summer, and fall months.
- To hold an annual town arts and crafts festival based on a local theme, e.g., conch, Scotch Bonnet, dogwood, shad, azalea, etc.

Transportation Goals and Policies Statement

Accessibility and the lack of traffic congestion are the hallmarks of a well-planned, attractive vacation and resort community. The Town of Long Beach will meet the increasing need to move people and goods from place to place more conveniently, safely, quickly, and efficiently, particularly during the summer months when traffic congestion is at its highest.

Objectives

- To install curb and gutter along Oak Island Drive, first in commercial areas, to control access to businesses, to separate on-site parking from traffic, to facilitate smoother traffic flow, and to improve the appearance of Long Beach.
- To facilitate offstreet parking areas in close proximity to commercial establishments.
- To modify the circulation patterns in the Town to enhance flow by incorporating one-way loop streets into the system.
- To purchase and operate two 30-passenger capacity, covered tractor-trailer trams between the commercial district on Oak Island Drive and Middleton Avenue and the Beach areas.
- To improve public beach access and parking.
- To install street lighting along Oak Island Drive.
- To pave more residential streets as demand is presented.
- To modify the grid system of streets in residential sections of the Town for the purposes of curtailing through traffic, discouraging high speed driving, promoting safety for children, stemming tidal and flooding overwash, increasing neighborhood atmosphere, improving property values, and decreasing maintenance costs.
- To mount a concerted campaign with Caswell and Yaupon Beaches to acquire a second bridge for the Town and the island.

Public Safety and Security Goals and Policies Statement

All citizens, seasonal residents, and visitors to Long Beach should be able to feel safe and secure on the streets, at public and private places, and in their homes and lodgings, and they should not have to worry about their property and possessions.

Objectives

- To establish and operate a beach patrol during the peak summer months.
- To explore alternative means of patroling the Town and beach during daylight hours, including mounted and walking police possibilities.
- To encourage the establishment of additional Community Crime Watch Programs.
- To expand the officer force during seasonal fluctuations.
- To expand the force as population growth occurs in accordance with public safety standards.

Citizen Participation Goals and Policies Statement

The Town of Long Beach will continue to promote its tradition of responsible citizen participation in order that the Town's decision-makers can meet more effectively present and future challenges posed by rapid change and growth.

Objective

- To hold Futurama once a year, possibly in association with a festival oriented function to inform the citizens directly about the state of the Town - new developments and programs, growth, and problems - and to receive their continuing input and support.

Town Character Goals and Policies Statement

Preservation of the "family" oriented, retirement-resort atmosphere and reputation will receive high priority in the minds of the Town leaders of Long Beach.

Objectives

- To limit the amount of activities that would detract from the Town's present character and distinction through effective land use plan implementation, and conscientious building permit, CAMA permit and zoning ordinance administration.
- To advertise the Town as a quiet, family beach and to uphold that tradition.

Public Works and Services Goals and Policies Statement

The Town of Long Beach will improve its capacity to provide public works facilities and services proportionately to increasing permament and seasonal populations and to existing and developing residential and commercial areas.

Objectives

- To increase the Town's capabilities to keep the beach and town proper free of litter and trash particularly during the summer months so as to improve the image of the community.
- To supply more signs and receptacles in problem areas to encourage cleanliness in the Town.
- To conduct a sewer system study, first in the commercial district on Oak Island Drive and then for other critical areas, to determine where and when sewerage can be installed incrementally with accompanying treatment facilities.
- To explore privatization of public works equipment, facilities, and services as a means of providing an improved quality of service with the highest economy of doing so in mind.

Commercial Development Goals and Policies Statement

The permanent and seasonal residents of Long Beach should have access to basic shopping and service facilities.

Objectives

- To seek out a national chain super market to locate in the Town.
- To bring a movie theatre to Long Beach.
- To cluster community oriented business in the existing commercial district on Oak Island Drive.
- To locate recreation and tourist businesses generally in the beach area.
- To provide for a convenience shopping facility in West End.

Community Appearance Goals and Policies Statement

The Appearance of the Town of Long Beach will be improved to enhance its quality of life and attractiveness, both of which are directly related to economic viability and growth.

Objectives

- To celebrate Long Beach Spruce-Up Week in the spring of every year in preparation for the vacation season.
- To strengthen and enforce Town ordinances relating to residential and commercial property clean-up with provisions for the Town to do the job at the owner's expense, if not carried out after proper notification.
- To erect a "Welcome to Long Beach" sign with the Town's new logo at the Entrance on Oak Island Drive with "Please come back again soon!" on the other side.
- To build a new Town Hall to improve service and the Town's image, with accommodations for a Welcome Center and display area.
- To design and locate attractive signage throughout the Town in coordination with the "Welcome" sign, using the Town logo and common design standards throughout to provide direction to beaches, commercial and public recreation, shopping areas, town hall/police/rescue and other attractions and services.

Fiscal Implementation Goals and Policies Statement

The goals and objectives to maintain and improve the quality of life and the efficiency of delivery of the services and operation of the facilities for the people of Long Beach are important enough, that if sufficient town, state and federal funds are not available, it is advocated that there be a creation or increase of one or more of the following taxes, or of income from other sources, keeping in mind that special consideration should be given to those with low or fixed income.

Objectives

- To explore the institution of a motel room tax for guests of all short-term rental facilities.
- To explore an increase of the local sales tax by one-half cent.
- To build a more attractive ABC Store to enhance potential income from this source.
- To explore the increasing of Town property taxes.

Town Administration Goals and Policies Statement

The Town Administration and the Board of Commissioners will monitor growth and development in the community very carefully so that the problems and high expense that accompany the dynamics of expansion do not become overwhelming.

Objectives

- To increase the staff in the planning, engineering, and inspections areas so that quality of development can be maintained and improved as growth increases in speed and quantity.
- To acquire better and more spacious accommodations for the Town staff so that they can continue to supply high quality services and maintain efficiency in government.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Required Studies

In accordance with the policy statements on goals and objectives for growth management developed for Long Beach, a sequence of events needs to take place. These events follow in the order of the planning process. In several areas where the citizenry, town leaders, and planning analysis have called for activities and improvements analytical studies are required. These are given in the following paragraphs.

Sewerage

The town leadership recognizes the need for both sanitary and storm sewerage in Long Beach. This is required for a number of reasons, most important among which are: (1) the rectification of the rising water table and attendant septic tank problems; and (2) the allowance for compacting business uses in the Oak Island Drive commercial district. Engineering studies should be conducted to assess the need and value for sanitary and storm sewerage in Long Beach.

Appearance

Both the citizenry and town leadership have shown great concern for community appearance and rightfully so. There are some unattractive aspects about Long Beach which are offensive to the permanent residents, unattractive to visitors, and injurious to the town's economy. A community appearance plan should be prepared for Long Beach which will lead to improvement in attractiveness through responsive programs, actions and effective ordinances.

Street Grid Modification

The grid system of the town's streets lends itself to high maintenance costs, unattractive neighborhoods, traffic safety problems, flooding, and property security questions. Planning and design assistance should be sought to modify the unwieldy grid system to become more like a curvilinear residential street system.

Traffic Circulation

Traffic flow and access are being hindered at an increasing rate in direct relation to growth and development and to increased seasonal visitorship. Changes in the traffic system are required for several important reasons among which are: (1) the improvement of traffic flow in the town proper and in the beach area to alleviate congestion; (2) the access of public safety and emergency personnel and equipment; (3) the improvement of general accessibility and attractiveness of the town; and (4) the effective evacuation of the community in case of storms and other emergencies.

Traffic planning studies should be conducted to determine how congestion can be alleviated and flow can be enhanced. The studies should also entail parking and access for businesses in Oak Island Drive and Beach Drive areas. Additionally, a bridge feasibility, location, and design study should be conducted in cooperation with Yaupon and Caswell Beaches.

Privatization of Public Works Operations

One of the most expensive items in the town budget is public works. The capital outlay for equipment is high, and the maintenance program increases as growth takes place. As in other municipalities, equipment acquisition, maintenance and storage tend to be major headaches for the town administration. The outlay of funds is always full of unexpected and surprising expenses. Privatization of providing public works services has proven to be successfully cost effective with improved services in other sections of the nation.

Exploratory studies into this area should be conducted to determine whether privatization of public works and other related services provided by the town can be provided more efficiently and effectively and at the same time capital and maintenance outlay can be cut to the bone.

Health Services

An analysis of need and feasibility should be conducted to determine the level, location and cost for a full-time summer facility and limited-time fall, winter and spring operation, to provide basic emergency and observation medical care for residents and visitors. Consideration should be given to discussing this issue with Caswell and Yaupon Beaches to determine if this responsibility could be shared.

Physical Plant Needs Study

The Town Hall has been cited as being no longer adequate to meet the growing administrative needs of Long Beach. A physical plant needs study and space plan should be conducted to determine the current and projected long-term needs for administrative governmental operations of Long Beach to be followed by a site search and feasibility study, leading to site design, architectural renderings, and construction.

Revenue Generation

With the inevitable growth occurring in Long Beach come consequential higher operating expenses. Revenue generation studies should be conducted to explore how income for the town can continue to increase to accommodate growth generated primarily by outsiders. A strong sense of protection should be perpetuated for the year-round residents of the community, maintaining the burden of expense so that it is equitably distributed.

Immediate Capital Improvements Opportunities

Based on analyses and input from the citizenry and town leadership, the following capital improvement investments have been identified. These can be made with little or no further study and should be given high priority in 1984-85 Capital Improvements Budgeting by the Town Board of Commissioners.

1. Construct a community welcome sign.
2. Install standardized directional signage at strategic locations.
3. Post cleanup/pitch-in type signs where there are littering problems.
4. Locate trash receptacles in critical areas.
5. Purchase two 30-person capacity tractor/trailer trams to alleviate traffic congestion.
6. Seek-out and acquire land on West Oak Island Drive for a Westend neighborhood park (2-5 acres).
7. Equip the Westend park with facilities and services needed and desired by the neighborhood, typically a playfield, play equipment, a covered picnic area, drinking fountain, horseshoe beds.
8. Establish a display area and visitor center either at Town Hall or at the Recreation Center for exhibitions and information for residents and visitors.
9. Install streetlighting in critical areas such as commercial districts and major intersections along Oak Island Drive, Beach Drive, Middleton Avenue, 40th Street East and 58th Street East.

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