



## LAND USE ELEMENT

### *Element Goal*

*Maintain and enhance the existing residential and commercial character of the Town, and provide for compatible, appropriate, and high quality development and redevelopment.*

### 9.1: OVERVIEW

A Land Use Element considers existing and future land use by categories, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, mining, public and quasi-public, recreation, parks, open space, and vacant or undeveloped. Since Seabrook Island residents share a commitment to the natural environment and wildlife, land use in the Town is oriented toward residential, parks, open space, recreation, and limited commercial development to service residents and visitors. The incorporated boundaries of the Town of Seabrook Island also include a considerable amount of marsh and water features.

### 9.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Existing Land Use

Most of the land within the Town of Seabrook Island has been developed. The Housing Element notes that while remains a limited number of undeveloped residential lots behind the entry gate, some of these have been identified as conservation lots that will never be built on, while others were purchased with the intent of leaving the property undeveloped. Outside of the entry gates and within Town limits there is a large undeveloped parcel currently identified on the Town’s Zoning Map as multifamily residential, and there are a few undeveloped parcels within the unincorporated area of Charleston

County that could possibly be annexed into the Town and developed in the future.

Development Standards. Development within the Town has been characterized by large projects within Planned Development Districts (PDDs), pursuant to detailed Master Plans. In the Town’s Development Standards Ordinance (DSO) the Town acknowledges that this development pattern has successfully “produced a community of diverse types and densities of development, while maintaining natural resources, recreation opportunities and the high aesthetic quality of the Town”. The DSO further notes that it is the intent of Town Council that further development of the Town shall occur within Planned Development Districts, pursuant to approved Master Plans meeting the standards set forth in the DSO. Development standards for PDDs are established during the PDD application process, and this process is further detailed in the Future Land Use section later in this element.

Where specific development standards for these land uses are not specifically identified in approved PDDs (referenced in Article 6 of the DSO), the development standards are provided explicitly in other articles of the DSO, including:

- Article 7 - Lot and Building Requirements;
- Article 8 – General Development Requirements;
- Article 9 – Environmental Performance Standards;
- Article 10 - Buffers, Landscaping, and Tree Protection;
- Article 11 – Parking; and
- Article 12 – Signs.

Zoning Map and Land Uses. The Town’s official “Zoning Map” is included at the end of this Land Use Element. With only few exceptions, *this map reflects the existing land uses within the Town’s incorporated area, as opposed to these seven zoning districts identified in Article 5 of the DSO:*

- AGC – Agricultural - Conservation District;
- AG – Agricultural – General District;



- SR – Single-Family Residential District;
- PDD – Planned Development District;
- CRO – Commercial-Retail/Office District;
- LI – Light Industrial-Service & Maintenance District; and
- Government (Municipal Property District).

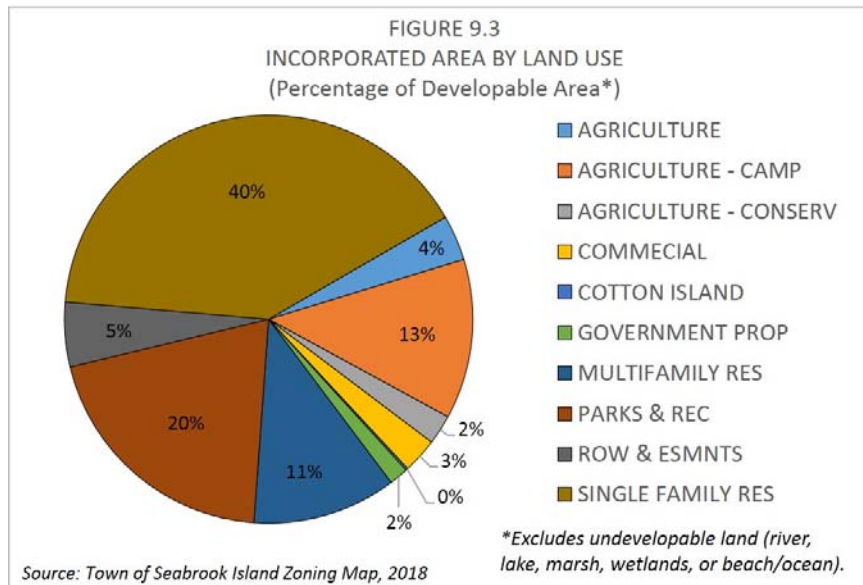
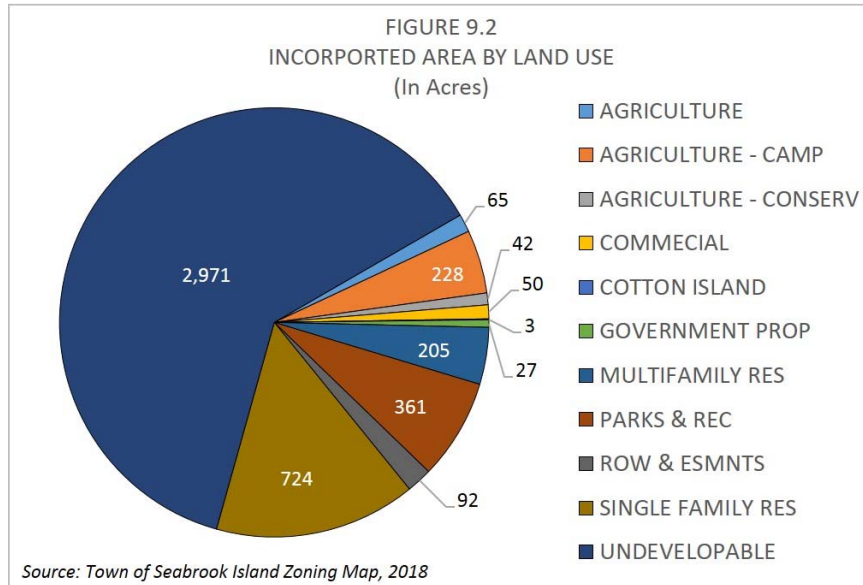
There is not a distinct correlation between the land uses identified on the zoning map and the zoning districts identified in Article 5 of the DSO. In some instances, the land use identified on the zoning map is generalized, for example, the map identifies the land containing the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Facility as “Government Property”, a designation also shared by Town Hall. In other instances, the land use may correlate with a zoning district, however the use is governed by development standards set forth in an approved planned development. A total of fifteen (15) land uses are shown on the zoning map:

- Agriculture;
- Agriculture – Camp (St Christopher);
- Agriculture – Conservation;
- Commercial;
- Cotton Island;
- Easements;
- Government Property;
- Multifamily Residential;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Pump Stations;
- Rights-of-Way;
- Single Family Residential; and
- 3 Water Features; River, Lake, Marsh/Wetlands/Beach.

The land uses identified in Figures 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 differ slightly from the zoning map in that easements, pump stations and right-of-way have been combined into the ROW & Easements land use category, and the three water features have been combined into the “Undevelopable” land use category.

The entire Town of Seabrook Island totals approximately 4,766 acres (7.44 square miles) based on the Town’s Zoning Map. Figure 9.1 identifies the Town’s land use distribution as a percentage of the entire Town and as a percentage of developable land only. Figures 9.2 and 9.3 present the same data in a pie chart format. It should be noted that about 2,971 acres are identified as undevelopable. This means that 62% of the current Town Limits likely will never be developed as they are areas containing river, lake, marsh, wetlands, or beach/ocean land and water features. Also worth noting is that the land use identified as Cotton Island refers to a 3-acre island located just east of Horse Island in the extreme northwest quadrant of the Town. There are special conditions, allowable uses and permanent restrictions placed on Cotton Island by Town Ordinance 2003-09, dated November 18, 2003.

<b>FIGURE 9.1 LAND DISTRIBUTION BY USE (%)</b>			
<b>LAND USE</b>	<b>ACRES</b>	<b>% OF TOWN</b>	<b>% OF DEVELOPABLE LAND</b>
AGRICULTURE	64.6	1%	4%
AGRICULTURE - CAMP	227.6	5%	13%
AGRICULTURE - CONSERV	42.3	1%	2%
COMMERCIAL	50.0	1%	3%
COTTON ISLAND	3.1	0%	0%
GOVERNMENT PROP	27.1	1%	2%
MULTIFAMILY RES	204.6	4%	11%
PARKS & REC	360.8	8%	20%
ROW & ESMNTS	91.9	2%	5%
SINGLE FAMILY RES	723.9	15%	40%
UNDEVELOPABLE	2970.6	62%	
<b>TOWN</b>	<b>4766.5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Future Land Use (within Town Limits)**

The DSO requires as a mandatory procedure that *any development of any site or area larger than five (5) acres must follow the PDD application process*. This stipulation makes it likely that any future undeveloped land, including land that may be annexed into the Town, would be required to follow the PDD process. The DSO identifies that the intent of the PDD process is to provide a development procedure that has the following advantages:

- a) Allows creative approaches to the development of residential land;
- b) Accomplishes a more desirable environment than would otherwise be possible, by providing for a variety of housing types, designs and arrangements;
- c) Provides for an efficient use of land;
- d) Enhances the appearance of neighborhoods through the preservation of natural features and the provision of recreational and open space areas; and
- e) Provides an environment of stable character compatible with surrounding residential areas.

The PDD application process requires a detailed Master or Concept Development Plan that includes land uses and development standards. The specifications for each designated use area will be enumerated when the master plan is approved in accordance with DSO Article 20 – Amendments to the Ordinance and Map. Article 5.40.40 – PDD Permitted Uses, identifies the permitted uses within the PDD as:

- a) Single-Family Residential;
- b) Multi-Family Residential in those zoning districts that are shown as PD Districts on the Town's Official District Map as of the effective date of this Ordinance. Multi-Family Residential use shall not be permitted upon property that may come to be shown as being within a PD District after the effective date of this Ordinance;
- c) Retail Trade/Professional Services;
- d) General Offices;

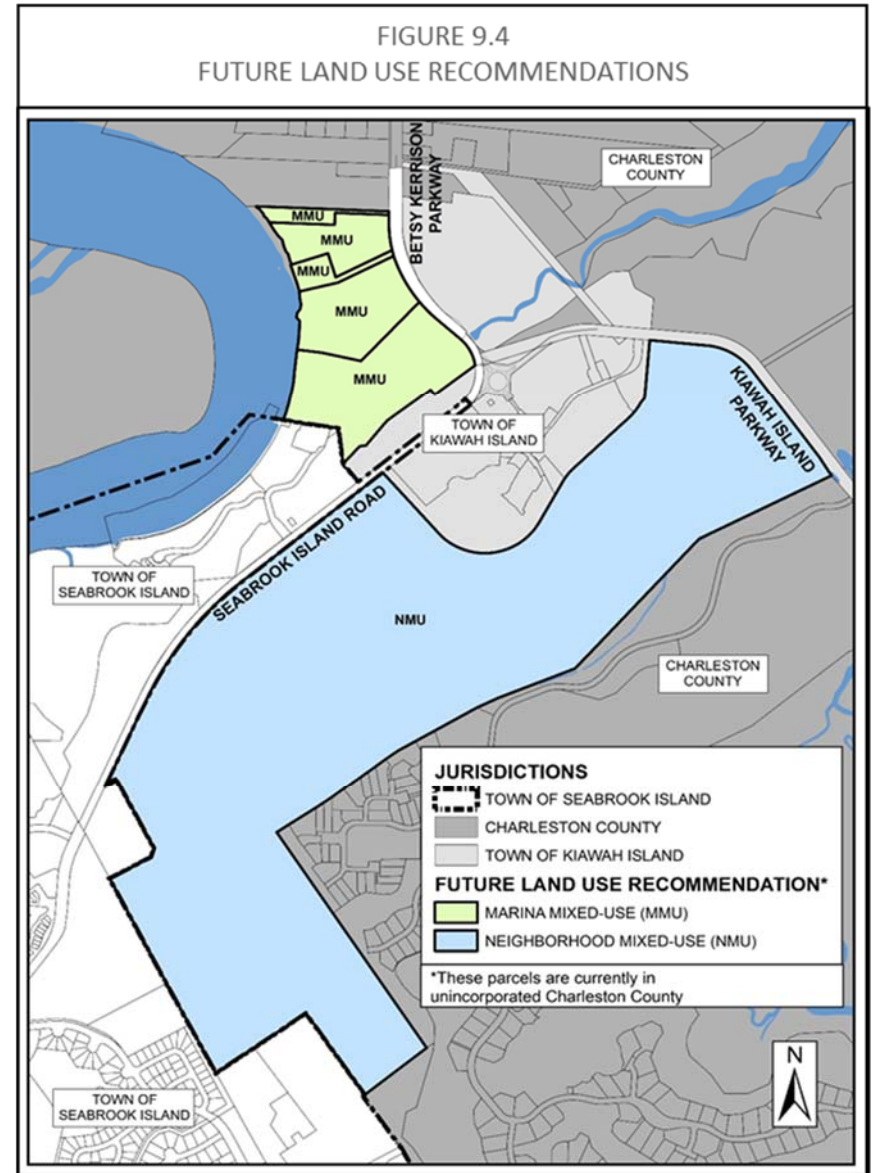


- e) Recreational Facilities (Golf, Tennis, Swimming, Equestrian);
- f) Park;
- g) Municipal Services (Churches, Town Facilities, EMS, Heliport); and
- h) Utility Services.

**Future Land Use Recommendations (Outside Town Limits)**

Several parcels of land adjacent, or in close proximity, to the Town could be annexed sometime in the future. It is in the Town’s best interest to consider what type of development would best serve the needs of the community in the event that these properties were to be annexed. Two future land use recommendations for the extraterritorial parcels identified in Figure 9.4 provide guidance for future development in the event any or all of these properties are annexed:

Marina Mixed-Use (MMU) – The Marina Mixed Use designation is intended to accommodate mixed use development which is primarily commercial in nature. The primary uses envisioned for this designation include commercial activities which are geared primarily toward the support and promotion of tourism, including hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, entertainment, cultural and recreational uses. Light retail uses, including retail and office, will also be permitted. Though the primary use is intended to be commercial in nature, a limited number of multi-family residential units may also be permitted, and the mixture of residential and commercial uses may be horizontal and/or vertical. Given the proximity to sensitive environmental and ecological areas, development of land within the Marina Mixed Use designation will require great care to minimize adverse impacts to the surrounding marine environment.





Neighborhood Mixed-Use – The Neighborhood Mixed Use designation is intended to accommodate mixed use development which is primarily residential in nature. Residential densities of up to four units per acre will be permitted. Future development is envisioned to be buffered from Seabrook Island Road; however, a limited amount of walkable, neighborhood-scale commercial development, including light retail, professional offices, restaurants and personal services, will be permitted in targeted locations. Given its size and location, this property will provide significant opportunities for greenspace preservation through cluster development. Future development of this property may significantly impact the town’s existing transportation network; therefore, future access to/from Seabrook Island Road will require careful coordination between the Towns of Seabrook Island and Kiawah Island, the property owner and/or developer and the owner(s) of neighboring properties.

planned development process. Future redevelopment and new development will be required to adhere to the same quality threshold, since redevelopment must conform to, or amend, previously approved planned developments, and new development (in excess of five acres) will be required to follow the well-defined planned development process.

**Land Use Summary**

Many municipalities provide a Future Land Use Map and descriptive development standards in their comprehensive plan to regulate and guide future development and redevelopment in their jurisdiction. The Town of Seabrook Island, however, has had the opportunity to guide future development in a more orderly and controlled manner through the application of planned developments. *Nearly all of the land uses and development standards guiding both the Town’s built and natural environment are subject to approved planned developments.*

Article 6 of the Town’s DSO describes the currently approved planned developments, and includes the Governing Master Plan and associated zoning and development standards by reference. The Town’s quality of development, unique balance of natural and built environments, and reputation as both a great place to visit and live, are the result of a well-planned community guided by the



### 9.3: LAND USE ELEMENT GOAL

#### *Element Goal*

*Maintain and enhance the existing residential and commercial character of the Town, and provide for compatible, appropriate, and high quality development and redevelopment.*

#### Land Use Element Needs

- To maintain the Town's residential character and natural environment;
- Develop criteria and standards that encourage future development and redevelopment consistent with the Town's Vision Statement;
- Assure that continued development is accompanied or preceded by available services and community facilities;
- Zoning and development standards are enforced in a fair and consistent manner;
- Ensure the protection of sensitive and wildlife areas into the future; and
- Balance the Town's tax base.

### 9.4: LAND USE ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIMEFRAMES

The Town should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Vision and Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. Provide for high quality, orderly, controlled development and redevelopment.

2. Encourage expansion of conservation areas, parks, recreation, and open space.
3. Thoroughly evaluate any annexation proposals.
4. Examine options available to the Town for phasing out Planned Development Districts (PDDs) and replacing with the underlying zoning district.
5. Prepare and adopt a Town of Seabrook Island Future Land Use Map that designates future land use recommendations for properties within Town Limits. As an example, the future land use designation of recreation or open space for current golf course parcels prevents such parcels from being redeveloped as a residential use in the future.
6. Apply future land use designations to extraterritorial properties eligible for annexation.
7. Work with the Seabrook Island Utility Commission to require that all extraterritorial customers agree to be annexed or agree to sign an annexation covenant.
8. In order to ensure that such actions are not construed as "spot zoning", acknowledge and potentially codify *the Town's land preservation and conservation policy of approving rezoning requests of certain properties to the Agriculture-Conservation (AGC) District*. This strategy may require a revision to the current definition of the AGC District.
9. Explore the feasibility of targeted rezoning and annexation opportunities in locations that are conducive to economic development.

