2012-2017 Sustainable Practices Action Plan

Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina

Table of Contents

Introduction	**3**
Purpose of the Town's Sustainable Practices Plan	**3**
What is Sustainability?	**4**
Brief History of Sustainability in Hilton Head Island	**5**
Town Adopted Plans and Codes supporting Sustainability	**7**
Performance Indicators	**8**
Sustainable Goals and Strategies • Economic • Environmental • Social	**24**
Future Actions: • Actions for 2012 • Actions for 2013-2017 • Long Term Actions to be done on an annual basis	**27**
Incentives to Attract New Residents, Visitors, and Businesses	**29**
Awards	**30**

Introduction

Many sustainability plans focus on a particular type of business or organization, and describe the sustainability goals, activities, performance indicators and trends of that particular business or organization. The *Town of Hilton Head Island Sustainable Practices Action Plan* seeks to go beyond just those of Town Government to include areas that would be of interest to someone who wishes to live, work or invest in the community. By doing this, the Plan lends transparency to given performance indicators that would be of interest to a diverse range of stakeholders including business, labor, non-governmental organizations, investors, academia, and others so they can better make decisions. Specifically, the Plan focuses on the economic, environmental, and social performance indicators of several different private, public or non-profit organizations that would be of interest to this target audience.

Purpose of the Town's Sustainable Practices Plan

This Plan describes the Town of Hilton Head Island's Sustainable Practices Program. 'Sustainability' is defined, and a brief history of sustainability practices in the Town is given. Goals and Strategies are summarized from the adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan and appendices, with particular short-term and long-term actions to take place to further implement the goals. Incentives and achievements of sustainable practice efforts and programs are also included. This plan will be updated annually to reflect accomplishments of the previous year and changes in goals or strategies.

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability can be defined as *the practice of meeting the needs of the current generation without degrading or destroying the natural resources and natural services that future generations will also need.* To be truly sustainable, this ethic needs to be addressed at the economic, environmental and society levels.

The 2020 Guiding Principles adopted by Town Council are geared toward this practice.

- Living in harmony with nature, protecting the natural beauty, and creating a unique sense of place
- Sustaining community prosperity through a diversified, strong local economy based upon resort, retirement, and non-hospitality businesses
- Providing meaningful experiences that cherish our history, the arts, cultural diversity and enrich the lives of our residents and guests
- Striving for excellence in everything we plan, build, do and maintain
- Providing a serene, safe, and healthy living environment for residents, guests and visitors
- Working together and volunteering for the greater good of the community

Brief History of Sustainability in Hilton Head Island

The Town of Hilton Head Island incorporated in 1983, largely as a result of unchecked development being permitted by Beaufort County that was negatively impacting the fragile barrier island environment. Much of the early philosophy of the government defined goals and actions that were 'sustainable' long before it became fashionable to call it that. The prime goal was the preservation and/or construction of a good environment, conducive to a better life for all members of the community. Stated more fully, the objectives of the first 1985 Comprehensive Plan are that Hilton Head Island become a Town:

- that is a convenient, inviting, and desirable place to live and work and that maintains the balance between quality development and the natural beauty that were its origins.
- that is economically sound and well-planned with schools, parks, places of employment, and shopping facilities properly located, as well as a unique national and international destination resort.
- where necessary public utilities and services such as water, gas, sewer, and other utilities, police and fire protection, and other services are provided in a coordinated manner to all, at a reasonable cost, in the most efficient mode possible, without environmental degradation.
- where those activities essential to the profitable functioning of commerce and industry can be effectively carried on with specific emphasis on the functioning of tourist and retiree markets.
- that has fine streets and thoroughfares properly developed so that congestion, hazards, and delays are kept at a minimum and where the aesthetic quality of those thoroughfares is a major focus of the public and private sectors
- where there are good and variable housing facilities available to all, accommodating the diversity of the tourist industry, the existing residents, Island employees, and native Islanders.
- that contains residential neighborhoods which are attractive, stable, and conducive to continuing growth and where appropriate rejuvenation can occur.
- where children can grow up to become good citizens and stay to establish their own households.
- where the heritage of the community is not forgotten, but is integrated to the fullest extent with future growth.

Similarly, much of the early actions of a few developers such as Charles Fraser defined standards that were also 'sustainable.' For example, Mr. Fraser laid out the 5,000 acre Planned Unit Development (PUD) called Sea Pines in the 1970's with the following basic principles:

- Do not impose development on the environment
- Create green space for privacy
- Keep density as low as profitably possible
- Create roads for beauty and efficiency not just transit
- Build no structure higher than the tallest tree
- Cut only those trees that are absolutely necessary
- Think always of enhancing the quality of life for those who would be residents of the Island.

Other PUDs were developed on the Island mirroring similar philosophy. Of the ten PUDs, only two were approved after the Town's incorporation and Land Management Ordinance (LMO) adoption.

The original 1987 Land Management Ordinance contained the Town's land development and zoning regulations and reflected the principles described above. It has been amended continuously every year. A major rewrite of the LMO is occurring in 2012 to incorporate more flexible regulations to encourage and guide redevelopment efforts as the Island reaches build-out. This re-write will also include sustainable practice regulations where possible.

"The architectural design and construction philosophy… is that buildings should be unobtrusive in form and color in order to complement their natural setting. The main concern is that the total community be homogeneous in feeling in a park-like setting and free from the discordant architectural shapes and colors which vie for attention and attempt to create greater visual impact than a neighbor's."

- Charles Fraser

Town Adopted Plans and Codes supporting Sustainability

- Comprehensive Plan, updated approximately every five years. The 2010 plan includes many sustainable goals and implementation strategies
- Natural Hazard Plan, updated every five years, that encompasses mitigating disaster consequences to re-establish a sustainable community
- Beach Management Plan, updated every ten years, that identifies goals and objectives to protect, preserve and sustain our beach and dune system
- Disaster Recovery Plan that identifies goals and objectives to rebuild after a disaster
- Storm Water Management Program that identifies goals and objectives to manage our drainage ways to minimize flooding
- Broad Creek Management Plan that sets goals and objectives for water quality, wildlife protection, land use and recreation
- Ten Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), updated annually that identifies projects and funding sources for roads, facilities, drainage, parks, and other infrastructure
- Varied funding sources for Town Operations and CIP program including real estate transfer fee, beach preservation fee, hospitality fee, traffic impact fees, and Sunday liquor fees
- Municipal Code which includes floodplain regulations, dune protection, and beach regulations to restrict lighting on the beach for sea turtle protection, in addition to:
    - International Building Code
    - International Mechanical Code
    - International Plumbing Code
    - International Fire Code
    - International Fuel Gas Code
    - International Residential Code
    - International Energy Efficiency Code
    - National Electrical Code

- Land Management Ordinance, (known as one of the most progressive zoning, design, natural resource protection, and land development codes in the nation), including:
    - Critical Storm Protection and Dune Accretion Ordinance that limits construction in dune areas to preserve dunes as storm barriers
    - Tree ordinance that provides for tree protection, preservation and replacement to preserve the native species mix
    - Wetland ordinance with protections on wetland values and functions and avoidance of wetland alteration as a primary goal
    - Design and construction standards that blend with nature
    - Conservation Zone to protect sensitive blueways
    - Storm water ordinance that requires on-site retention and prohibits direct discharges of storm water onto the beach or into wetlands
    - Nature-blending sign standards
    - Encouraging environmentally friendly small scale development

Performance Indicators

Palmetto Electric Co-op's Green Power Program: This is a program established by Palmetto Electric whereby all revenue from Green Power premiums will be reinvested in future development of additional renewable resources or facilities. The Town participates in this program.

Community Rating System (CRS) rating of Class 5: This is a program initiated in 1990 by the Federal Insurance Administration to encourage and reward community mitigation activities that are beyond the basic requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. Its goals are to reduce future flood losses, avoid economic disruption and human suffering and promote awareness of the need for flood insurance. Hilton Head Island is one of only 52 CRS communities nationally to have achieved the distinction of Class 5 or better.

Insurance Services Organization (ISO) Rating Program: This is a program initiated in 1971 by the ISO to be a leading source of information about property/casualty insurance risk. It can be used by insurance companies to establish actuarial information and insurance rate reduction. The Town of Hilton Head Island has received a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Class 4 for 1 & 2 family residential property, a Class 4 for commercial & industrial property, and a Community Grading Class 3.

Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI): Since 1996, the Center for Public Safety Excellence has accredited fire departments. Hilton Head Island has been accredited since 2002, one of only143 Fire Service Agencies in the world.

Capital Improvement Program: Mandated by the State and updated annually, this program identifies various capital projects and funding sources for the next 10 years. Where possible, projects encourage sustainable construction practices. Major categories include:

- *Streetscape Program* includes installation of mast arms, landscaping, street signs, etc. for better aesthetics in the area.
- *Traffic and Transportation Program* including a Traffic Signal Timing System to create more efficient traffic movement, use of Energy Efficient LED Traffic and exit signs, and minimizing street and intersection lights to maintain a low energy, starlit environment.
- *Power Line Burial Program*. This is a 15 year joint effort with Palmetto Electric Co-op, this project has buried to date over 24 miles of main lines and 72 miles of non-feeder power lines serving over 850 consumers to mitigate damage from storms such as hurricanes and to increase the aesthetic appeal of an area.
- *Beach Renourishment Program* periodically renourishes sand on 12 miles of public beaches, protecting homes and businesses from erosion and sustaining our tourist economy.
- *Dunes Protection*: This program installs sand fencing and native dune plants to encourage natural dune building to protect buildings from erosion.
- *Litter pick up program* along all major roads. This is a contract renewed annually for daily litter pick up.
- *Wifi hotspot program* with spots for public use at Coligny Beach Park, Compass Rose Park, Shelter Cove Community Park and Honey Horn.
- *Land Acquisition Program* to preserve open space, natural resources & vistas, and to reduce density and traffic. The Town currently owns over 1200 acres.
- *Septic Tank Elimination Program*. This is a joint effort with Public Service Districts for conversion of residential service from septic tanks to sewer lines.

Sustainable Education Program, including the creation of the first public xeriscape garden in the state of South Carolina, and a Sustainable Practices Coordinator on staff.

Public Art Program encourages donation and purchase of art for public areas such as Compass Rose Park, Shelter Cove Park, and the most recent donation at Chaplin Linear Park.

Lowcountry Economic Alliance participant to market and recruit industry for the area.

Special Events are a series of programs supporting over 200 various festivals and shows throughout the year at various public locations on the Island. Accommodations tax supports many of these events which contribute to drawing in over 2 million visitors per year. The largest of these events is the Heritage Golf Tournament and the Concours d'Elegance Car Show.

Bi-annual Household Hazardous Waste Round-up and E-waste program is a bi-annual collection that has resulted in 504,648 total pounds collected since 2005; 92% (464,276 pounds) of this has been recycled and reclaimed rather than placed in a landfill.

Residential Recycling & Collection Program. From initiation in April through December 2011, over 1,356 tons have been recycled from 8,165 customers. Before initiation of this program, recycled materials were collected at a rate of 31 tons/month. To date, it averages 123 tons/month.

Reclaimed Water Program provides reclaimed water for irrigation on golf courses and some public landscaping areas. Data is currently being gathered for future inclusion in this report.

Water Quality Monitoring Program monitors storm water discharge sites (19 stations in 2011) for 5 physical characteristics and 6 pollutants, including fecal coliform bacteria, nitrate-nitrite, dissolved oxygen, temperature, total suspended solids and phosphates. The Town also tests quarterly for metals (copper, cadmium, iron, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel and zinc) at 4 locations. This is an ongoing program since 1999.

Protected Species Monitoring Program which includes annual sea turtle activity and piping plover surveys. The Town has worked in cooperation with the Coastal Discovery Museum on the sea turtle monitoring program since the 1990's. From 1999-2011, 2,180 nests have been deposited on the Island, with a record breaking 324 nests in 2011. Piping plover monitoring is being done in conjunction with the Port Royal Beach Renourishment and Groin Installation Project. The Town is in its third year of 6 years of monitoring. Piping Plovers are critically endangered; up to 16 birds have been found during these surveys wintering on the Island.

Potable Water Use Data is currently being gathered for future inclusion in this report.

Electricity Use Data is currently being gathered for future inclusion in this report.

Protected Green Spaces, both public and private, include Sea Pines Forest Preserve, Newhall Preserve, Whooping Crane Pond, Cypress Conservancy, Port Royal Plantation Arboretum, Northridge Tract, Ashmore Tract, Boggy Gut and the wetlands at McCracken Middle School. A total of about 1200 acres have been purchased by the Town for open space as well as public buildings and parks.

Community Service Organizations. The Island has many community service/volunteer organizations, such as Volunteers in Medicine, Deep Well, Hilton Head Humane Association, Lions Club, Rotary, Meals on Wheels, Boys and Girls Club, Memory Matters and various charitable resale stores.

The following charts are given to show trends that would be of interest to our target audience.

Hilton Head Island Population by Age and Sex

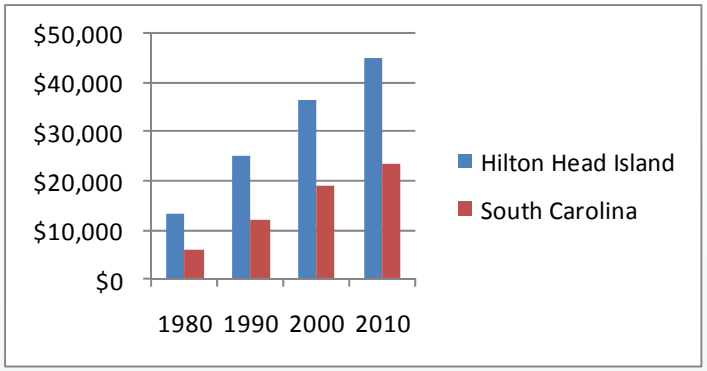
	TOTAL	MEDIAN AGE	TOTAL	MEDIAN AGE	TOTAL	MEDIAN AGE
	1975		1980		1985	
Male	3,260		5,431		8,532	
Female	3,251		5,913		9,090	
Total	**6,511**	29.6	11,344	36.2	**17,622**	36.1
	1990		1995		2000	
Male	11,325		14,052		16,947	
Female	12,369		14,748		16,915	
Total	**23,694**	40.07	**28,800**	44.5	**33,862**	46
	2010					
Male	18,206					
Female	18,893					
Total	**37,099**	50.9				

Hilton Head Island Education Attainment Trends

YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED	ALL RESIDENTS 25 OR OLDER							
	1980		1990		2000		2010	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
0-8	441	5.6	291	1.7	682	2.7	854	3
9-11	361	4.6	792	4.5	1,252	4.9	1,480	5.2
12	1,855	23.8	3,394	19.3	4,651	18.1	4,925	17.3
13-15	1,815	23.3	4,433	25.7	5,590	21.8	5,209	18.3
Associate's	n/a	n/a	1,108	6.3	1,686	6.6	1,566	5.5
Bachelor's	3,334	42.7	5,362	30.5	7,902	30.8	9,337	32.8
Graduate	n/a	n/a	2,123	12.1	3,876	15.1	5,067	17.8

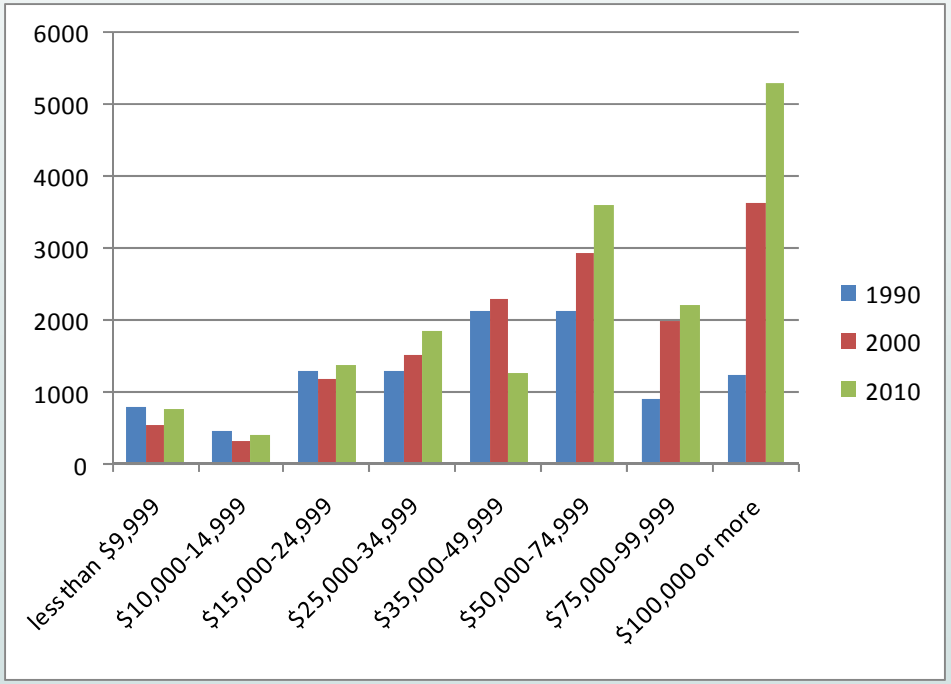
Per Capita Income Estimates & Comparisons

AREA	1980	1990	2000	2010
Hilton Head Island	$13,149	$25,171	$36,621	$45,195
South Carolina	$5,884	$11,897	$18,795	$23,443



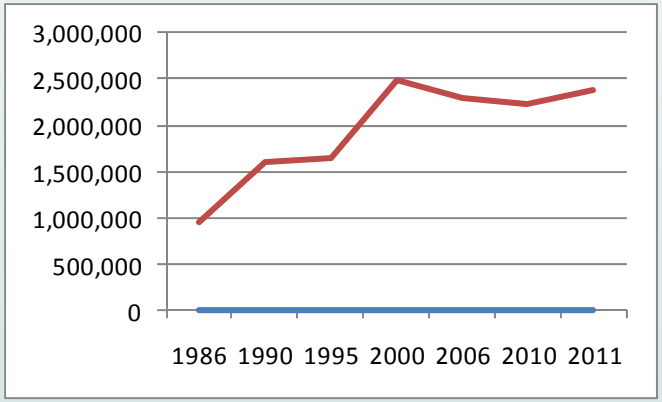
Hilton Head Island Income Distribution

	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS		
INCOME	1990	2000	2010
less than	809	534	755
$10,000-	461	321	401
$15,000-	1,303	1179	1385
$25,000-	1,310	1523	1863
$35,000-	2,136	2307	1279
$50,000-	2,125	2923	3598
$75,000-	900	1980	2222
$100,000 or	1,252	3642	5307

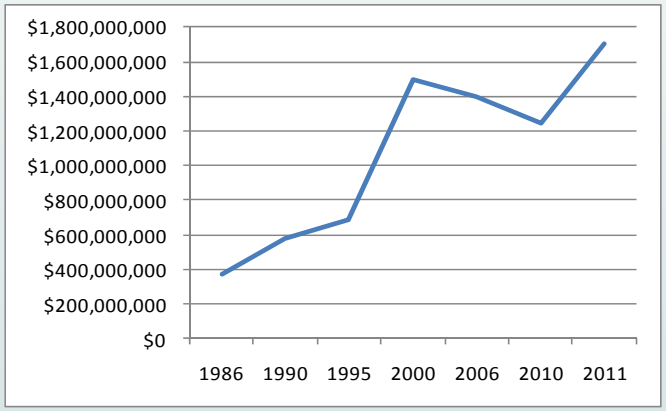


Hilton Head Island Annual Report
Estimated Annual Visitors & Expenditures

YEAR	VISITORS	EXPENDITURES
1986	950,000	$372,000,000
1990	1,594,000	$577,000,000
1995	1,640,000	$684,000,000
2000	2,486,000	$1,500,000,000
2006	2,300,000	$1,400,000,000
2010	2,228,000	$1,240,000,000
2011	2,373,000	$1,700,000,000



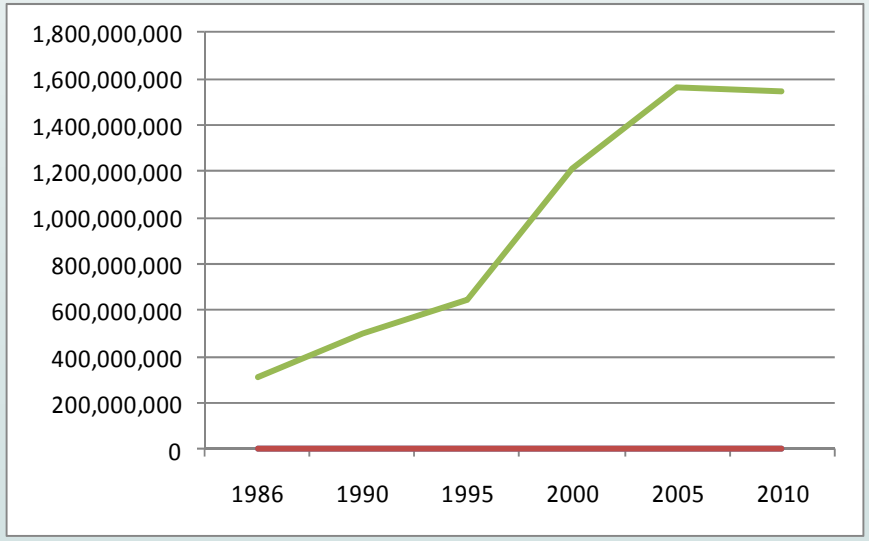
Number of Visitors



Estimated Expenditures

Hilton Head Banking Activity

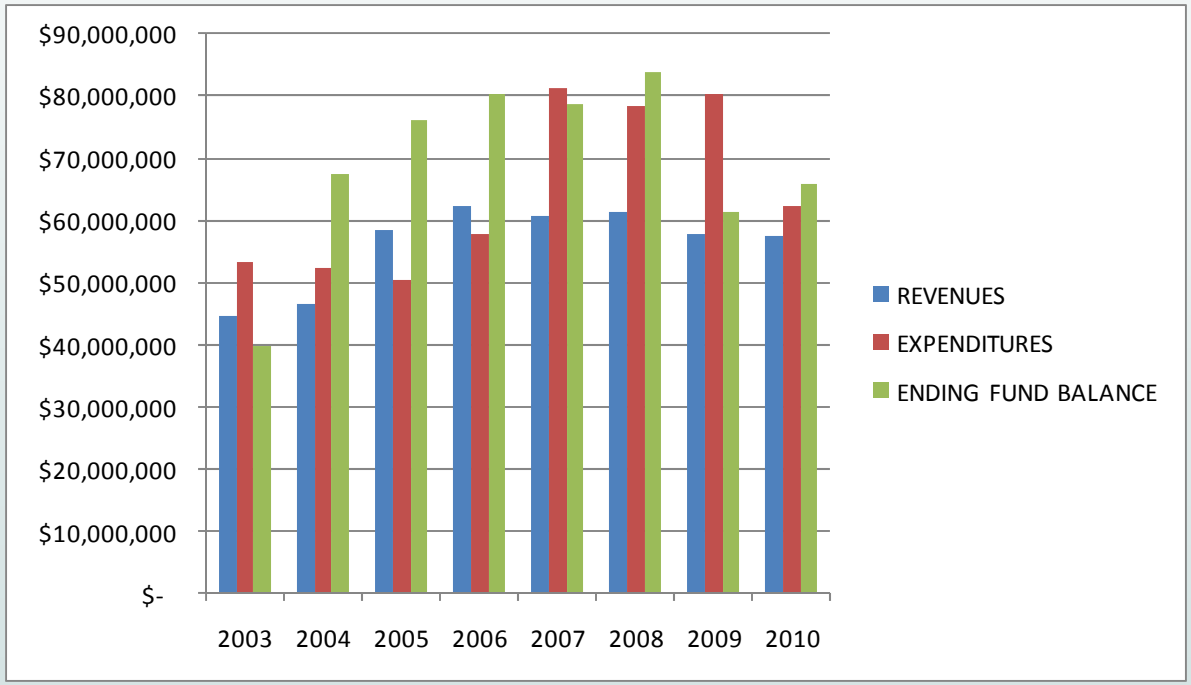
YEAR	BANKS and SAVINGS & LOANS	TOTAL DEPOSITS
1986	14	$309,124,000
1990	21	$503,306,000
1995	18	$648,126,000
2000	20	$1,208,147,000
2005	23	$1,561,980,000
2010	29	$1,543,351,000



Town of Hilton Head Island Government
Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balances

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
REVENUES	$ 44,490,622	$ 46,675,966	$ 58,473,192	$ 62,144,599	$ 60,785,688	$ 61,459,879	$ 57,932,880	$ 57,458,214
EXPENDITURES	$ 53,160,973	$ 52,285,918	$ 50,323,547	$ 57,927,869	$ 81,113,177	$ 78,387,568	$ 80,314,461	$ 62,238,410
ENDING FUND	$ 39,917,490	$ 67,432,898	$ 76,045,281	$ 80,262,011	$ 78,829,660	$ 83,667,230	$ 61,235,649	$ 65,868,751

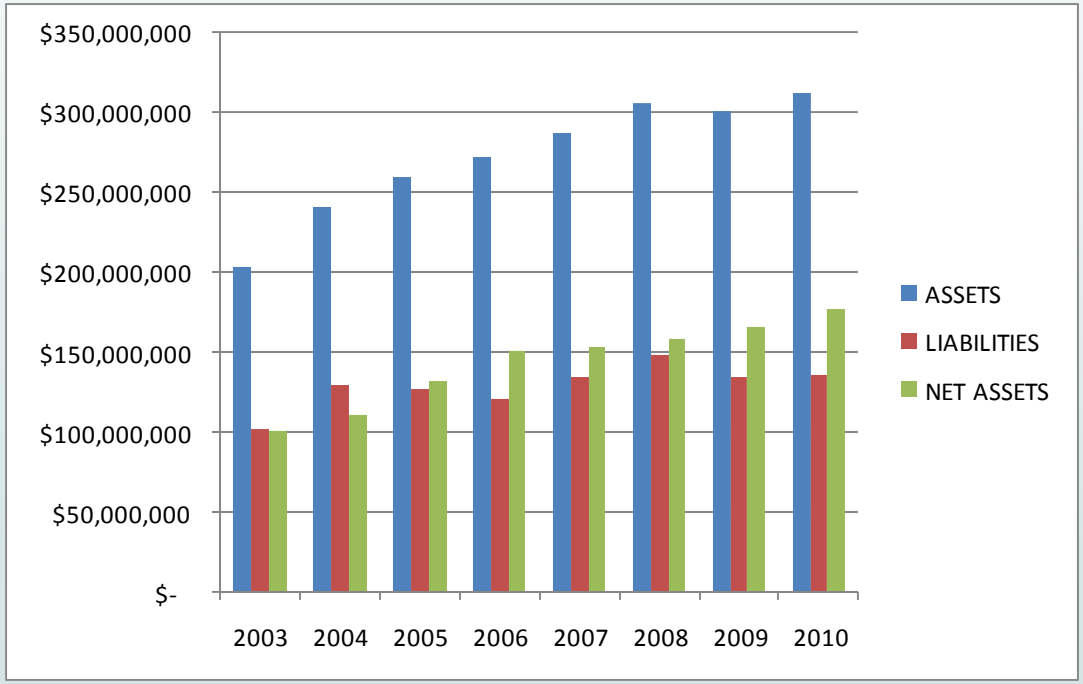
NOTE: Ending Fund Balance is adjusted to include other financing sources, debt service and revenue recognition.



Town of Hilton Head Island Government
Net Assets

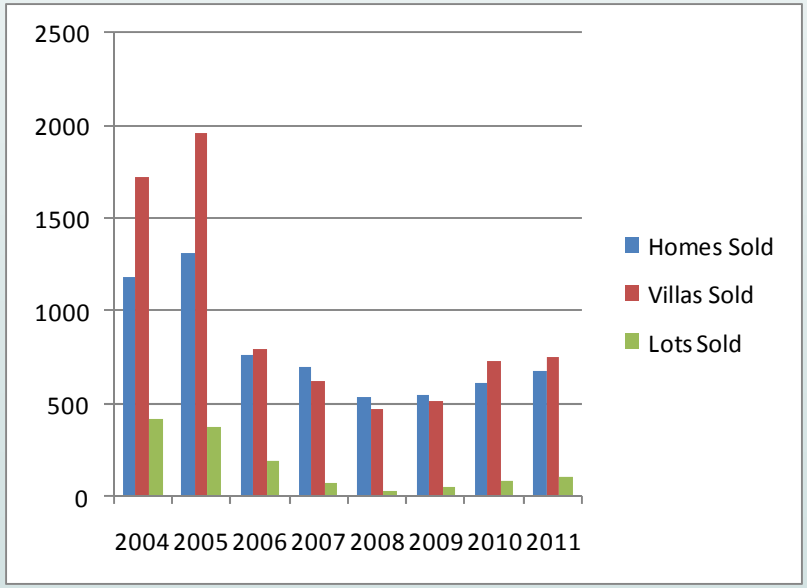
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
ASSETS	$ 202,907,981	$ 241,174,262	$ 259,654,188	$ 272,592,216	$ 287,586,459	$ 306,218,712	$ 300,556,556	$ 312,760,739
LIABILITIES	$ 102,246,285	$ 129,641,766	$ 127,567,218	$ 121,069,926	$ 134,204,966	$ 147,955,861	$ 135,207,460	$ 135,646,690
NET ASSETS	$ 100,661,696	$ 111,532,496	$ 132,086,970	$ 151,522,290	$ 153,381,493	$ 158,262,851	$ 165,349,096	$ 177,114,049

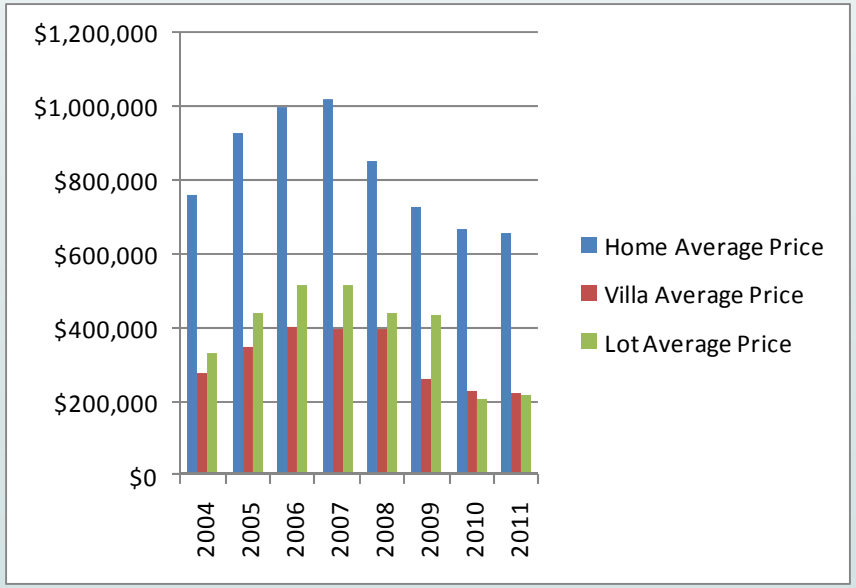
NOTE: Net assets has been adjusted for debt and restrictions.



Property Sold Through Real Estate Agents

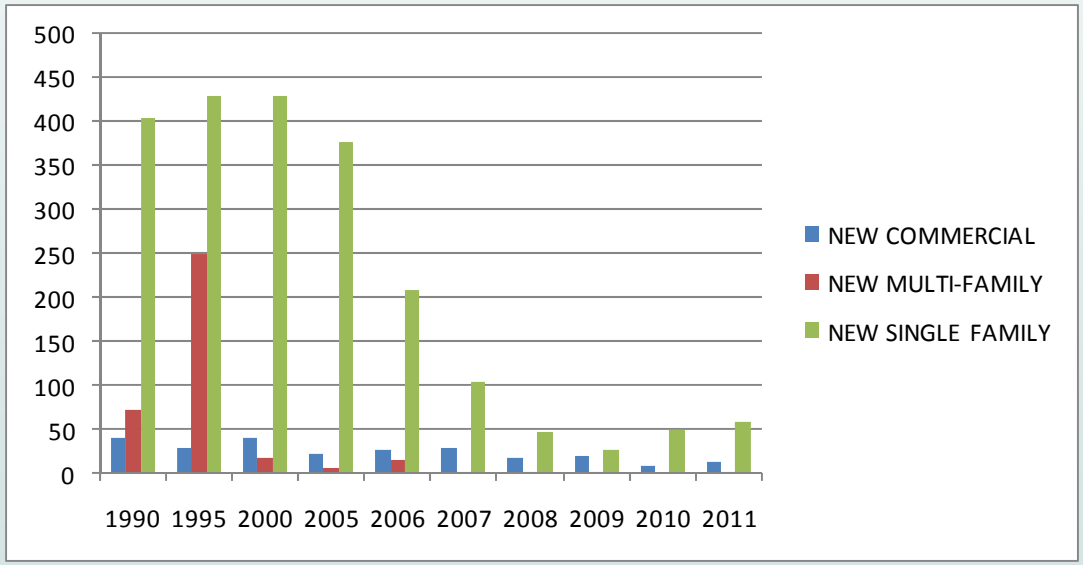
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Homes Sold	1186	1314	758	694	538	550	611	673
Home Average Price	$760,714	$927,752	$999,051	$1,018,686	$852,501	$725,504	$669,689	$654,018
Villas Sold	1726	1954	791	627	476	510	725	747
Villa Average Price	$278,711	$349,583	$398,854	$395,179	$393,936	$261,202	$230,090	$220,030
Lots Sold	422	370	196	73	34	47	83	103
Lot Average Price	$331,234	$439,756	$515,836	$515,938	$438,244	$434,755	$204,834	$216,698





Hilton Head Island New Permits

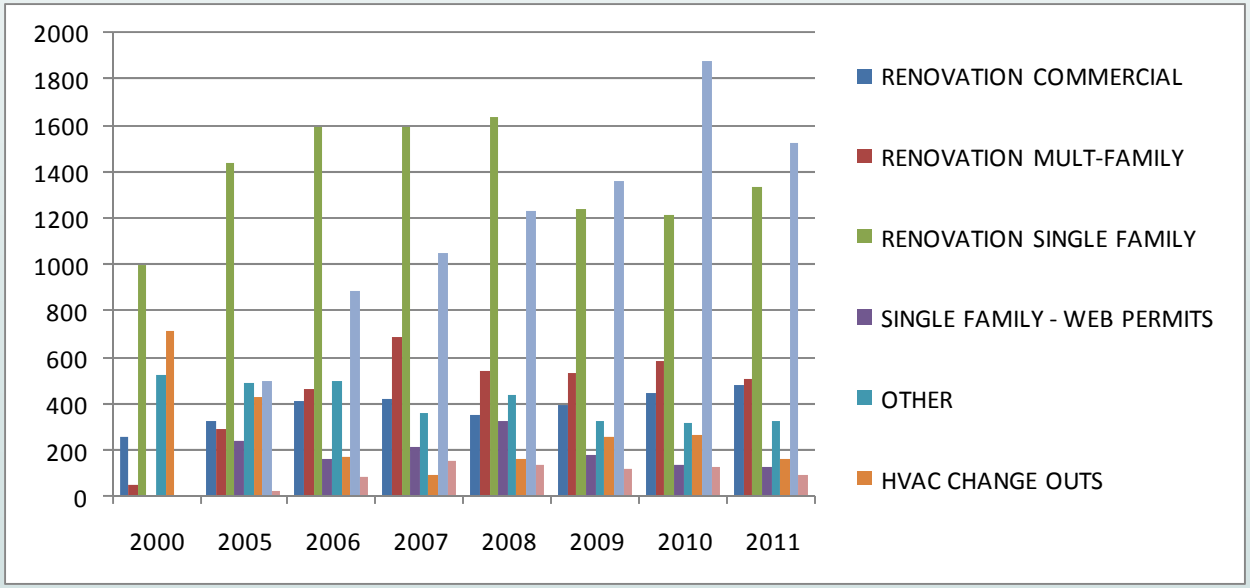
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
NEW COMMERCIAL	40	28	40	22	26	28	18	19	9	14
NEW MULTI-FAMILY	71	250	18	5	16	2	2	1	0	1
NEW SINGLE FAMILY	404	429	430	377	208	103	46	27	49	58



Hilton Head Island Renovation Permits

	2000	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
RENOVATION COMMERCIAL	257	324	409	416	353	398	442	484
RENOVATION MULTi-FAMILY	45	291	460	690	541	528	586	506
RENOVATION SINGLE FAMILY	994	1,440	1,589	1,592	1,632	1,243	1,216	1,334
SINGLE FAMILY - WEB PERMITS	0	243	164	217	327	179	135	128
OTHER	526	487	497	356	436	326	320	328
HVAC CHANGE OUTS	712	428	174	96	160	260	268	158
HVAC CHANGE OUTS- WEB PERMIT	0	495	883	1048	1234	1358	1880	1527
ELECTRICAL CONVERSIONS	0	24	86	154	137	121	127	91

NOTE: Other indicates permits that are not clearly identified as to type.



SCHOOLS			
Private Schools: Hilton Head Christian Academy Hilton Head Preparatory School Heritage Academy Sea Pines Montessori Academy Christian Heritage Montessori School Junior Players Golf Academy of HHI Van der Meer Tennis Academy	**Preschools & Day Care:** All Saints Pre-school Christ Lutheran Church Pre-school First Presbyterian Day School Hilton Head Early Childhood Center Island Lutheran Preschool Little Steps Daycare and Preschool Mary's Christian Day School Providence Children's Center Toddler University Learning Center St. Luke's Preschool	**Colleges and Universities (located on mainland):** Technical College of the Low-country University of South Carolina-Beaufort	**Public Schools:** Hilton Head Island High School Hilton Head Island Middle School Hilton Head Island Elementary School Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts

PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE RATE	
General Fund (Operating) 12.57 Voter Approved Debt 6.01 Capital Projects Fund (CIP) .75 Total Millage Rate 19.33	Bond Ratings: Moody's Investor Service Aaa Standard and Poor's AA+ Fitch AA+

CULTURAL FACILITIES	
Arts Center of Coastal Carolina Main Street Youth Theater Hilton Head Island Symphony Orchestra Hilton Head Island Choral Society Heritage Library Beaufort County Library Waddell Mariculture Center	Boys & Girls Club Coastal Discovery Museum Creation Station SHARE Senior Center 25 Golf Courses 8 Marinas 3 Nature Preserves 7 Public Tennis Clubs 300 Tennis Courts

PUBLIC PARKS & FACILITIES

Special Purpose Parks:

- Green's Shell Enclosure
  - Historic Shell Ring
  - Restrooms
- Fish Haul
  - Historic Site
  - Boardwalk
  - Picnic facilities & Pavilion
  - Restrooms
- Marshland Road Boat Landing
- Xeriscape Garden
- Old House Creek Fishing Pier
- Ford's Shell Ring
- Cross Island Boat Landing

Beach Parks:

- Alder Lane
  - Restrooms
- Coligny
  - Restrooms
  - Changing Rooms/Showers
  - Splash Fountain
  - Telescope
- Driessen
  - Restrooms
  - Playground/Picnic facilities
- Islander's
  - Restrooms
  - Playground/Picnic facilities
- Chaplin
  - Restrooms
- Folly Field
  - Restrooms
- Mitchelville
  - Restrooms
  - Telescope
  - Boardwalk

Community Parks:

- Barker Field
  - Recreation fields
  - Restrooms & Playground
  - Boardwalk
  - Historic tabby chimneys
- Chaplin
  - Recreation fields
  - Restrooms & Playground
  - Basketball Courts
  - Tennis Courts
  - Dog Park
- Jarvis Creek
  - Playground
  - Picnic facilities & Restrooms
  - Exercise Trail
  - Fishing lagoon
  - Open fields
- Honey Horn
  - Historic House Museum & Restrooms
  - Special Events areas
  - Pavilion
  - Open fields & Boardwalks
  - Exercise Trail
  - Educational facilities
- Shelter Cove
  - Special events areas
  - Restrooms
  - Veteran's Memorial
  - Exercise Trail
- Crossings
  - Recreation fields
  - Open fields
  - Playground & Restrooms
  - Basketball courts
  - Exercise trails
  - Roller hockey rink (outdoor)
  - Skateboard park

Neighborhood Parks:

- Taylor Memorial Park
- Compass Rose
  - Storyboards
  - Statues
  - Swings
  - Fountains
  - Pavilions
- Cordillo Road Tennis Courts
- Old Schoolhouse Tennis Courts

Facilities:

- 13 miles of beach
- 55 miles of Bike Trail
- Island Recreation Center:
  - Gymnasium
  - Playground
  - Pool
  - Basketball Courts
  - Tennis Courts

Sustainable Goals and Strategies

> ***"We need to make growth greener, to make our economic and environmental policies more compatible and even mutually-reinforcing. This is not just a matter of new technologies or new sources of renewable, safe energy. It is about how we all behave every day of our lives, what we eat, what we drink, what we recycle, re-use, repair, how we produce and how we consume."***
>
> **—Angel Gurria, OECD Secretary-General**

Economic: Enhance the economic environment that sustains Hilton Head Island's unique way of life.

Strategies:

- Promote the Island world-wide as a quiet, well-maintained, coastal resort community with hi-speed telecommunication capability, and road, sea and air access.
- Promote off season arts, education, cultural, culinary and sports festivals such as the RBC Heritage golf tournament, the Concours d'Elegance, and other festivals.
- Encourage private revitalization efforts to attract residential and commercial stabilization and growth.
- Focus the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and public priority investment on sustainable development, growth management, economic development, and natural resource protection.
- Promote and facilitate entrepreneurial housing initiatives that will result in the development of diverse housing types for all income levels.
- Encourage alternative transportation methods to address labor force availability.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the island as a sustainable destination and provide opportunities for tourists to participate in environmental projects that will offset their fossil fuel use for travel.
- Provide facilities for residents and visitors which are maintained at the highest levels of service and efficiency.
- Participate in regional economic development efforts and other economic initiatives.
- Develop alternative means for economic diversification related to the changing demographics of the community.
- Continue to encourage and educate property owners as to code requirements such as floodplain regulations and land development and building codes which protect our resources; address health, safety and welfare issues; and create a desirable place to live and work.

Environmental: Protect our diverse natural resources, which are pivotal to our economic well being and high quality of life on the Island.

Strategies:

Water:

- Encourage storm water and sewer best management practices to preserve all blueways and to protect water quality.
- Encourage water conservation measures in cooperation with the public service districts.

Air:

- Improve air quality by reducing the urban heat island effect and by exploring opportunities for alternative transportation to limit traffic congestion and pollution.

Beach:

- Reduce and mitigate negative impacts of sea level rise and global warming effects through beach renourishment and development regulations.
- Encourage the revegetation of dune systems with salt-tolerant native plants to prevent erosion, provide storm protection and provide wildlife greenways and habitat.

Land Development and Building:

- Create incentives for low impact development (both site and structure design). Preserve and enhance open space, greenways and blueways.
- Create green standards for all capital improvement projects and establish a green maintenance standard for Town properties.
- Coordinate with other organizations to encourage green building and site design techniques that minimize impact on the environment.

Wildlife:

- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat on all town properties, the beach, and private habitats.
- Provide open access ways to all waterways for wildlife during the development process.

Energy:

- Work with Palmetto Electric to track island energy usage and promote conservation of energy.

Education:

- Initiate and maintain partnerships with other local, county, state and federal agencies and organizations for environmental education purposes.

Social: Provide stewardship of the Town's unique cultural resources and distinctive character where art, music, performances and the stories of its people enhance and enrich the experience for all residents and visitors.

Strategies:

- Provide education, access, preservation and maintenance of cultural heritage and historical resources.
- Promote and support fine arts as an integral part of the cultural resources.
- Foster events, organizations and infrastructure that encourage involvement from the Island's entire population and guests.
- Continue to implement the Capital Improvement Program to acquire land and construct parks that contribute to the social needs of the community.
- Promote and educate the public on traditional fishing harvest (oystering, clamming).

Actions for 2012:

Actions for this year will focus on:

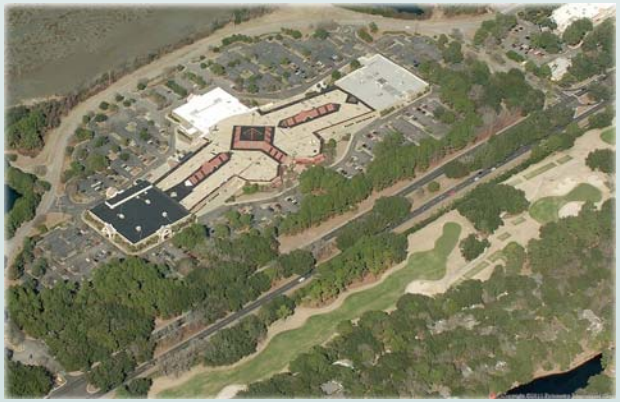
- *Education and Outreach*:
  - Produce a Town web page with information for residents, tourists and businesses on being sustainable.
  - Increase education and promote participation on residential recycling via public service announcements in the local media and educational articles in POA newsletters.
  - Coordinate with outside organizations to organize and present educational seminars promoting sustainability.
  - Coordinate with staff to distribute educational information that will help residents and businesses understand various code requirements.
  - Research, write, design and implement various methods to promote sustainable programs on internet, social media, printed material, etc.
  - Work with island businesses to educate them on the importance of being sustainable.
  - Coordinate with Codes Enforcement and Business License to design and distribute educational information to help minimize violations.
  - Coordinate with Facilities Management to increase residential recycling education.
- *Natural Resources*: Manage, monitor and promote the Town's biological monitoring program including storm water quality data collection for outfalls, sea turtle nesting locations and mapping, and piping plover activity.
- *Codes*: Complete the Land Management Ordinance re-write to encourage redevelopment and revitalization.
- *Environment:* Research the possibility of establishing a commercial recycling program.
- *Economic Development:* Assess the proper organization type and creation of an Economic Development Corporation, define and establish a program, identify role of Town staff, and establish partnerships in economic development projects to support redevelopment and economic development.
- *Redevelopment Priority Areas*: Finalize plans and approvals for Coligny Redevelopment and Shelter Cove Redevelopment.

Actions for 2013-2017:

- *Green Building and Site Design/Construction*: Coordinate with other organizations to identify and encourage green building and green site design programs .
- *Arts:* Coordinate with various arts organizations to develop one vision for the arts and cultural organizations of the island.
- *Transportation*: Identify island-wide needs for public transportation and research alternative ways to provide the needed services.
- *Historic Sites:* Participate in the creation of a business plan for the Mitchelville Project to promote education on the first Freedman's Village established after the Civil War.
- *Economic:* Encourage redevelopment and revitalization of businesses and multi-family areas by supporting the Economic Development Corporation and other similar activities.

Long Term Actions To Be Done on Annual Basis:

- *CIP:* Continue funding, designing and constructing sustainable actions within the Town's Capital Improvement Program.
- *Land Acquisition*: Continue to monitor and take advantage of opportunities for land acquisition to promote natural and cultural resource protection and redevelopment.
- *Environmental mitigation projects*: Promote various sustainable projects around the island such as building oyster reefs in Broad Creek, erecting sand fencing to build dunes, cleaning up Broad Creek, etc.
- *Monitoring and Data Collection*: Monitor and record data on the Town's green infrastructure, its protected wildlife, and its natural resources.
- *Public Education:* Continue to explore methods to reach as wide an audience about Town initiatives and goals as possible.
- *Recreation*: Continue to expand opportunities by providing adequate facilities while maintaining sensitivity to natural and cultural resources.
- *Codes:*
  - Monitor and amend the Land Management Ordinance to encourage redevelopment in green site design and building construction.
  - Monitor the state and federal changes that would affect the Town's economy, society, or cultural values and encourage sustainability at those governmental levels.



Incentives to Attract New Residents, Tourists and Businesses

Many tools and other advantages are already in place, giving incentives to developers or companies to settle on Hilton Head Island.

- The Town incorporated with Sustainable Practice Philosophy long before it was the latest buzzword, combining well planned communities, nature, open space and recreation. Many of our ordinances have been used as models nationwide.
- With the Town's creative financial funding program, property taxes are low compared to many places in the United States.
- The climate of the Island is temperate, due to our geographic location and urban forest canopy, allowing energy bills to be low.
- The Hilton Head Island Airport has both general aviation and passenger transportation, with the larger Savannah International Airport 30 miles away.
- Interstate-95 lies 20 miles away with a mostly 4 lane road (US 278) connecting the Island with the Interstate.
- A branch of the University of South Carolina and the Technical College of the Lowcountry are within a short drive.
- The Town has been highly recognized in many different magazines as one of the top tourist destinations in the nation, with over 2.0 million visitors per year.
- The RBC Heritage golf tournament is a major draw for golfing enthusiasts each spring.
- The community has a high sense of volunteerism with many non-profit groups such as Rotary, Volunteers in Medicine, Humane Society, etc.
- The Town regularly hosts conferences that provide education and networking opportunities to island residents and businesses, such as the International Ecotourism Society Conference in 2011.
- Opportunities for recreation are legion, including 56 miles of public bike paths, 8 beach parks, 8 passive and 6 active parks, tennis, golf, water sports, nature photography and observation, etc.
- The Town has some of the lowest development and building permit fees in the region and state.
- The Town has an expedited development review process and a quick turn-around time for building plan reviews, and some select over-the-counter permitting.
- Top Employers: Hilton Head Medical Center & Clinic, Beaufort County School District, Cypress Retirement Village, Tidepoint, Westin, Publix, Sonesta Resort, Palmetto Dunes, Hargray, Wal-Mart, Hilton Resort, Marriott Golf & Beach Resort, Marriott Vacation Club, Sea Pines Resort, Town of Hilton Head Island, Palmetto Electric.

Awards:

- 2012 Heart Safe Community Award
- 2011 Bicycle Friendly Community Award (Silver)
- 2011 Audubon Green Community designation
- 2011 14th Circuit Solicitors Office in Recognition for Career Criminal Prosecution Team
- 2005-2010 GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award
- 2003 American Shore & Beach Association Award for Best Restored Beach
- 2002– Present Tree City USA
- 2002 Silver Palmetto Award for Supporting People with Disabilities & Special Needs
- 2000 SC Department of Natural Resources Stewardship Development Award for Jarvis Creek Project
- 2000 SC Department of Archives & History Award of Achievement for Archives & Records Management
- 2000 Municipal Achievement Award for Superior Performance & Innovative Programs for Jarvis Park
- 2000 Association of State Floodplain Managers Award for Jarvis Park
- 1995 American Society of Landscape Architects Honor Award for Xeriscape Garden
- 1995 American Society of Landscape Architects Merit Award for Crossings Park
- 1994 Outstanding Transportation Achievement Award from Institute of Transportation Engineers
- 1986-2010 Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

AUDUBON INTERNATIONAL

BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY
HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC
SILVER

"In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."

—Baba Dioum, Senegalese activist

TREE CITY USA®