

We can do hard things.

-Sister Susan W. Tanner

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THANK YOU:

Resource team members wish to express our sincere thanks for welcoming us into your community. The enthusiasm, talent, skills and resourcefulness that went into this unique approach to community “vitalization” will serve the community well as it moves ahead to implement the recommendations and projects in this plan.



Staircase, Hatteras Light (photo NPS)

INTRODUCTION

The Goal

The purpose of the resource team visit was to assess the assets of the villages of Buxton, Frisco, and Hatteras, with particular focus on job retention, supplemental income generation, and small business support within the fishing industry and eco- and cultural heritage tourism. The goal of this report is to begin the process of developing a holistic plan to maintain and enhance a vibrant local economy that retains the heritage, character and quality of life on Hatteras Island.

The Team

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The Approach

Saltwater Connections is a program of community development work enabled through an Innovative Economic Development Grant from the NC Rural Center. The focus area of the grant is the unincorporated communities along the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway, which originates at Whalebone Junction (Nags Head) and stretches south to the North River in the village of Bettie in Carteret County. The Saltwater Connections resource team approach to growing sustainable communities is modeled after Handmade in America's Small Town Revitalization Program, an asset-based economic development project in western North Carolina. The Handmade model is an adaptation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Four-Point Approach®. The points of focus for the Main Street program are: organization, design, promotion and economic revitalization. The goal for this community vitalization process is to leverage assets, whether cultural, architectural or human, in order to build a complete community vitalization plan.

Organization focuses on the social structure, functions and responsibilities of a community's leadership. The idea is that community organizations, such as civic associations and Chambers of Commerce, local leaders, and elected officials all work together in concert, with shared goals in mind, to add value to each others' efforts and to limit or eliminate duplication of effort and competition for services and resources. An organized community, focused on shared goals and striving for the same outcome, is generally a successful one.

Design shapes human interaction with the physical environment. The envisioning, three dimensional layout, and engineering of transportation, buildings, and other infrastructure determine which places are most and least accessible, to whom, and for what purposes. It shapes how we interact with the natural environment, and how we interact with one another as a society. It can make places more or less safe for human use. Design is partly about visual appearance. Effective design can create an inviting environment for visitors and residents. Streetscapes, signage, building facades and traffic patterns are examples of design aspects that help to create an inviting place. Appropriate design can help a community recognize and retain its sense of place, or its identity. Having a recognizable place-based identity can unify a community, making it stronger economically, and improving the quality of life for residents. The team tried to think deeply about what kind of place the people we heard from wanted to live and work in, and how to mobilize local resources to establish priorities and make any changes.

Promotion of a community's strengths attracts visitors and investment to an area, as well as reinforcing community pride and strengthening local participation. A concerted effort allowing local residents to map out their community's assets, including natural, historical and cultural, will help pinpoint what attractions to highlight to draw in visitors and new residents, as well as to identify sectors where there is room for growth for new business investment.

Economic Revitalization begins with an assessment of the current and potential economic drivers in a community recognizing both strengths and challenges. The goal of this segment is to strengthen existing businesses and the current economic base, while diversifying and expanding the economy for a sustainable future for these Outer Banks villages.

Over the past thirty years, the Main Street movement has transformed the way community members think about the vitalization and management of their neighborhoods and commercial districts. It is the desire of this initiative to adapt those principles and proven successes to the villages along the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway.

The Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center received an Innovative Economic Development Grant from the NC Rural Center in June of 2011. Referred to as the Saltwater Connections community development project, the local grassroots Hatteras Connection began the process of vitalization by organizing an interdisciplinary resource team site visit on May 2-4, 2011 to the villages of Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo and Avon. It was decided that the 21 byway communities would be organized into four separate geographical areas with the understanding that these geographical locations all have individual needs, ideas and available resources, but also these communities share a common culture and history, similar geography, and shared issues,

challenges and strengths. This report focuses on the villages of Buxton, Frisco, and Hatteras. The remaining villages of Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, and Avon, Ocracoke Island, and Down East Carteret County are addressed in separate reports.

These reports began with resource team members listening to community members talk about challenges and opportunities. The team toured the villages and interviewed local people, collecting data and information to understand local needs and conditions, reflect these back to the community, and develop recommendations for action. This draft plan merely lays the foundation for local initiatives by noting ways that action might leverage existing local assets, and integrate local values. The goal is to build long-term partnerships through which residents revitalize their economies, and preserve the unique character and sense of place that defines their communities. Local leaders already have completed some projects in each area and are working toward completion of others. This document is a first step, serving as a road map for the future. Like any map, it will evolve as the community implements projects and programs, and as changing times require changes in priorities.

Moving into the future, some resource team members and Saltwater Connections affiliates will provide on-going assistance to villagers as recommendations are prioritized and implemented. Annual review, analysis and adjustment of this road map will be necessary to keep it current and relevant to times and conditions. This report and the work plans that come out of it are living documents that can change and grow.

The Place

Hatteras Island has an abundance of assets that make the area a unique spot along the North Carolina coast. It has a deep, storied culture with strong ties to the region, the land and the water. Mapping of cultural, ecological and livelihood assets has been undertaken by local residents, and can be viewed at: <http://www.opengreenmap.org/greenmap/hatteras-island>.

Situated only miles from the Continental Shelf and at the confluence of the Labrador Current and Gulf Stream, Hatteras Island is subject to dynamic coastal processes unlike any other along the East Coast of the United States. Hurricanes and nor'easters have shaped the island and played a major role in lifestyles, occupations and settlement patterns. The geography of the island has made it a travel destination for fishermen, surfers, kiteboarders, naturalists, and outdoor enthusiasts from all over the world. The seven villages on the island are surrounded by the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, America's first national seashore.

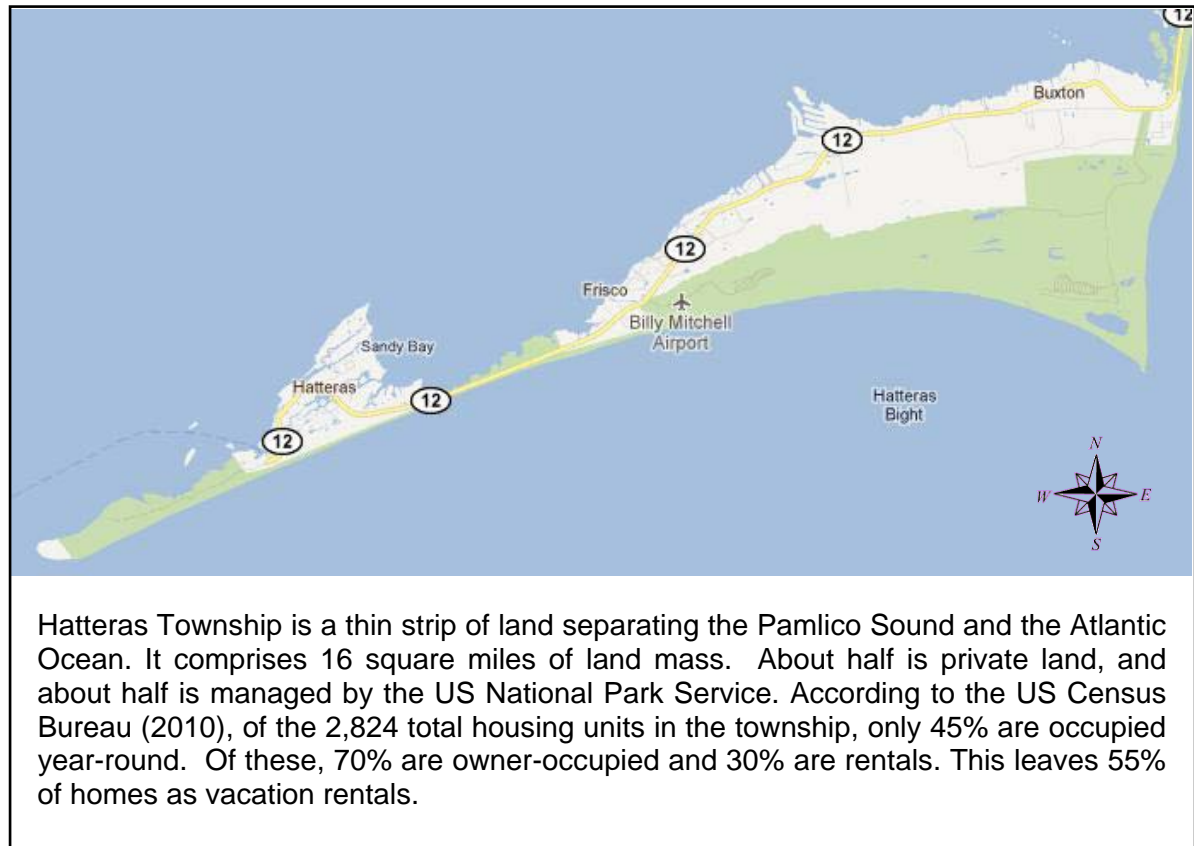


Hatteras Island contains two Dare County townships: Kinnakeet and Hatteras. Kinnakeet includes the northern villages of Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo and Avon. Hatteras contains the southern villages of Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras. All of these villages are unincorporated, with Dare County providing all local government services. The villages supplement these governmental services with a range of support from community-based organizations, from tax-levying civic associations (Hatteras) to those having no formal local organizational entity (Buxton and Frisco). The existing entities are important organizational assets on the island and will play an important role in the implementation of the vitalization plan.

History and Character

Native Americans known as Croatans, and speaking an Algonquian language, inhabited Hatteras Island prior to European settlement. Spanish explorers landed on Hatteras in 1524, and English explorers arrived in 1585. European settlers began arriving on Hatteras from mainland colonies in the 1700s. The Native population was decimated by infectious diseases carried by English colonists and war, and had disappeared by 1788. Fishing has always been a primary island livelihood. Early commercial fish houses were built two or three hundred yards out in the sound. Foot bridges connected some to the village shore, and eventually sturdier ramps or piers were built. Buy-boats transported the harvest to larger ports.

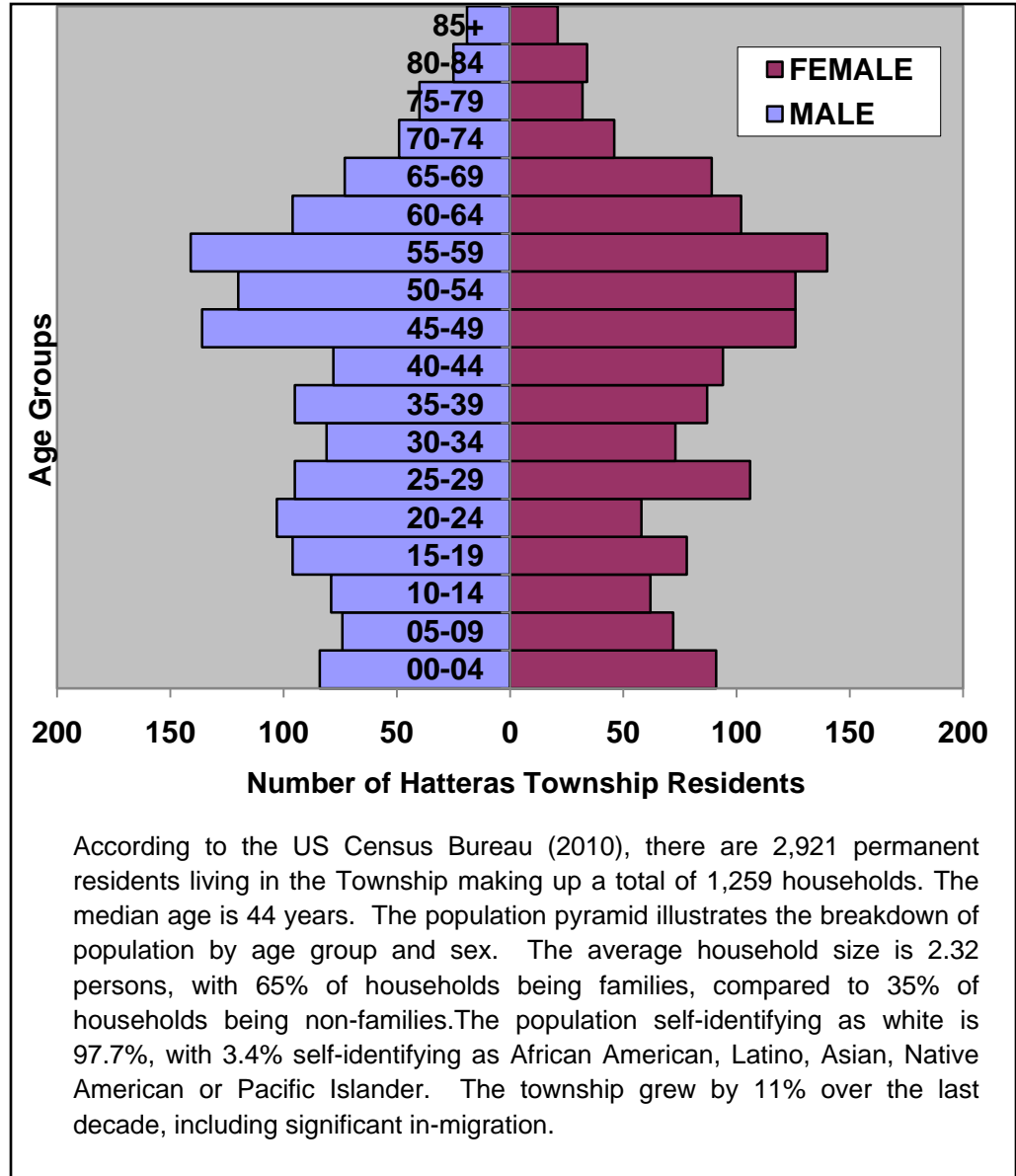
Buxton, six miles south of Avon and just north of Frisco, was listed as Cape Hatteras Indian Town on early maps. The first post office served a community called The Cape in 1873. The name Buxton was chosen in 1882 after Judge Ralph P. Buxton. Because the village is sheltered in the woods of Cape Hatteras and is ten feet above sea level, it has long been a desirable place to live. Along the shore, the waters of the warm Gulf Stream meet the cold Labrador current waters, shaping regional weather



patterns. Thus the location was chosen for the Cape Hatteras lighthouse, the Hatteras Weather Station, and a Navy base. After the highway was paved, fishermen tried to organize a cooperative, but were unable to remain organized long enough to buy trucks.

Frisco, originally called Trent or Trent Woods, was the site of Creeds Hill Lifesaving Station twenty years before the first post office was established in 1898. The community was a thriving satellite of Buxton until the Hatteras Inlet reopened in the mid 1800s and Hatteras Village became the economic center of the island. Frisco fishermen took part in the haul seine fishery in the Cape Point area, launching small dories up and down the beach. As the Cape itself presented a wide landmass to cross, fishermen would haul their catch over to the sound side via horse and cart at the thinnest part of Frisco where buy-boats waited in the sound. In the 1880s, Frisco had a porpoise rendering plant. The village population declined steadily throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Cultural geographer Gary Dunbar predicted in 1956 that Frisco’s population would begin to rise with tourism, a prediction that came true in 1963 when completion of the Bonner Bridge ushered in tourists and land prospectors.

According to early maps and reports, Hatteras village was intermittently connected to Ocracoke Island. The village began growing after the opening of Hatteras Inlet in 1846, and the village saw more shipping activity than Ocracoke until the 1890s when Ocracoke Inlet was dredged. Hatteras opened the region’s first post office in 1858, having the largest population at that time.



A porpoise rendering plant operated from the late 1800s until the 1920s. By 1878 the Hatteras Lifesaving Station, later changed to Durants, was in operation. By 1896 the village was a growing mercantile center with four stores, five boat builders, and a hotel. The first ice plant on the island was built in Hatteras Village in the late 1930s, exposing villagers to electricity a decade before the rest of the island. It used a Delco “light plant” or generator to make 300 pound blocks of ice for fish packing. A channel and basin were dredged after the ice plant opened so that vessels could load ice at the plant, creating opportunities for more shore-based fish houses. By 1948 Hatteras had a fleet of forty fishing boats and came to be a center for charter and commercial fishing.

Economy

The most common industries in which township residents worked from 2003-2007 (city-data.com) were: construction, fishing, accommodation, food services, real estate, and education. Historically during the winter, the island’s main employers are construction, (which has suffered severe downturns since 2008), the NC Department of Transportation (particularly the Ferry Division), and the businesses that support the small population. Commercial fishing, once the main economic engine, has declined in recent decades, but is still a significant source of income for both part and full time fishermen. Fish houses, the critical infrastructure of the seafood industry, are losing ground to waterfront development. According to the NC Division of Marine Fisheries, 182 residents of the township were licensed commercial fishermen in 2010: 68 in Hatteras Village, 61 in Frisco, and 53 in Buxton. They benefit from convenient access to both the ocean and the sound. Many commercially fish full time. Some fish part time, and some also own or work on charter boats. Today, three fish house operate in Hatteras, and none in Frisco or Buxton.

Resource Team Recommendations

The following recommendations are ideas derived from, and built-upon, challenges and opportunities described by the public to the resource team during their visit in October 2011. During the site visit, the team asked individuals to describe project efforts that have been implemented in their communities focusing on the usefulness of these activities. The team’s recommendations below are ranked according to themes and do not represent a priority ranking. The team will ask the communities to rank their priorities for future development activities in their community, and to form and volunteer on standing working groups, or working groups. These recommendations represent a starting point, designed to provide the communities with several achievable goals. As the community groups begin to work towards the completion of these suggested projects, those tasked with the completion of these goals should closely review this list and adapt the list as appropriate. Suggested projects can be added or removed as the standing working groups deem appropriate. This is a local effort and should closely reflect local needs and desires.

ORGANIZATION

“The community spirit of Hatteras Island is contagious!”

Bob Davis, Hatteras Anglers' Club

Organization is a social process that builds consensus and cooperation by creating partnerships among the various individuals and groups with a stake in the success of Buxton, Frisco, and Hatteras villages. Longstanding community development experience elsewhere demonstrates that coordination of public, nonprofit, and business efforts tends to provide the most benefit, rather than centralization by any one sector. When diverse stakeholders work toward shared goals and share responsibility for accomplishments, the result is more effective management and advocacy for the villages. Active volunteers, working in collaboration with businesses, nonprofits and public sector partners representing a broad cross section of the community, can ensure that a balanced range of perspectives are incorporated.

For our resource team site visit, local volunteers organized tours, meetings and community dinners, and coordinated a fantastic array logistics to get people where they needed to be. We saw that the community has already begun mobilizing this asset in this way – by recruiting volunteers. Building this kind of community capacity is at the heart of any volunteer-led, asset-based approach, and assures that community residents and groups are at the heart of each project undertaken, doing the planning, implementing, evaluating, and celebrating. Hatteras Island is ahead of the game in this respect.

Organization is both the most critical, and, in some ways, the least visible of the four Main Street components. It is therefore easy to overlook or avoid. Organization largely determines *who* will implement the recommendations in this report; so it is an essential step for planning, funding and making improvements a reality. Organization requires thoughtful participation by a diverse group of community leaders who can fully represent and engage the island's residents for the long term. It requires strategic thinking based on core values such as cooperation, inclusiveness, and mutual learning.

Recommendation: Establish an implementation steering group

One route to successful implementation of the recommendations in this report is the establishment of a broad-based community organization or group to work with other partners at the local level. Such a group could help pave the way for local initiatives in partnership with such groups as Dare County, National Park Service, Hatteras-Ocracoke Council of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, the public school system, state government, and village civic associations. To be effective, the group needs to be inclusive, rather than exclusive and alert to a full spectrum of interests. It would require a transparent but nimble governing structure to ensure that: 1) lines of communication are open; 2) broad and diverse interests are adequately represented; 3) decisions are informed by appropriate knowledge bases and deliberation; 4) resources are

mobilized to implement decisions; and 5) short-term successes are achieved in order to maintain focus and enthusiasm for longer-term projects.

Initially, it is recommended that an implementation steering group be formed to oversee and guide progress on report implementation. Examples of activities the implementation steering group may take on include, but are not limited to:

- Raising funds and hiring paid staff to assist partners in implementing the strategic plan;
- Helping civic associations and other partners raise funds to implement priority projects; and
- Provide staff support to the standing working groups in reviewing, funding, implementing, updating and evaluating their plans.

The villages along the Scenic Byway visited by the Saltwater Connections resource team may want to consider an umbrella nonprofit organization patterned after a community development corporation that would allow for outside perspectives and partnering opportunities on challenging community issues. It could be structured so that each cluster of communities would have its own goals but provide an overall administrative umbrella for funding, collaboration and oversight. One way to begin would be to form island councils. A Hatteras Island Council could have representatives from each village to work with the community, government agencies, local organizations and the region to address local concerns and provide a collective voice for the villages. A regional entity could be formed to address shared needs, issues and opportunities. The Island Council would serve to improve communication between villages and give a stronger county-level voice on issues specific to Hatteras Island. A regional umbrella organization's role would be to provide support for initiatives where opportunities and challenges are best addressed through a regional approach. Optimally, the nonprofit would be staffed, or have staffing as a goal. While staffing requires significant fundraising, skilled staff can provide valuable continuity, support, and a persistent focus on implementation. It may also be useful to consult with the NC Rural Economic Development Center guidebook *Living on the Margins* for guidelines on planning for job creation, education, and youth engagement, as noted in Resources below.

***Recommendation:* Develop a mission statement, program of work and implementation plan**

The implementation steering group will need to develop a simple mission statement and a two-three year program of work for the group to stay focused and give volunteers markers to determine progress and note accomplishments. As the group's leadership becomes recognized more widely, pressure will emerge to take on additional projects. Getting involved with a wide range of efforts may be fine for individuals, but for group efforts to be successful, the focus must be on implementing a discrete plan rather than taking an opportunistic approach to community development. Just as any successful business begins with a business plan, community development and enhancement projects need a plan, as well. An effective plan will capture the goals and aspirations of the community and encourage proactive planning with a common purpose and shared vision. Projects should be prioritized and accompanied by a work flow that includes short-term and long-term goals, timeframes for targeted completion, and responsibility for tasks/action steps. Steps leading to successful implementation need to be conceived strategically, and outlined. Planning is an



ongoing process that requires flexibility in amending plans as local conditions change. As such, these plans need to be viewed as living documents.

Recommendation: Establish standing working groups (organization, design, promotion, economic revitalization) to implement the strategic plan

Standing working groups targeting particular focus areas are of great importance to the overall success of the vitalization effort. While community development is in many ways a decentralized process, focused working groups can facilitate coordination across the range of efforts, and can help link motivated people with appropriate resources. These groups should be made up of volunteers who are willing to participate and work toward the completion of goals identified in this plan, as well as future endeavors. Volunteers on the working groups should have an interest, and perhaps some experience, in the focus areas. For example, local builders and artisans might be a good fit for the design working group. To fairly represent and be accountable to the larger community it is important that each working group include a mix of people, spanning age, gender and economic status, and including both long-time island residents and relative newcomers. It is also important that they maintain transparent and inclusive decision-making processes, and work actively at outreach to community members who may not have time to take on formalized working group roles but have equally valid ideas about the island's future. These working groups could be formed at village, township, or island levels.

In order to ensure transparency and coordination, the organization working group needs to include representatives from each of the other working groups. As detailed below, all working groups should attend to issues of diversity and inclusion, to ensure thinking outside the box.

Recommendation: Establish a Hatteras Island Emergency Management Council

This recommendation reflects the real and ongoing issues faced by Hatteras Island villagers most recently highlighted in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. This will be an important group to organize and get up and running to work on the proposed recommendations for development of an improved emergency communication action plan, meeting with the Dare County Control Group, as well as other priorities that Council members will identify. The resource team suggests this council have representatives from Ocracoke and all sites accessed by ferry on the mainland. Immediate problems relative to recent hurricane preparedness, planning and recovery were at least two-fold: 1) inadequate communication between Hatteras villages and



Release of Hatteras Island Doves (photo B. Garrity-Blake)

the Dare County Control Group, on which none of the villages had representation since they are not incorporated, and 2) assessment of impacts of the natural disaster had on surrounding areas.

More entrenched problems also exist in the area of natural hazards, however. Island sands and sediments have been shifting since prehistory, and island contours and habitats will continue to shift, confounding even the noblest human efforts. Fixed shoreside real estate boundaries are at increasing risk, as are buildings, infrastructure, and other ecological and human assets. Early in the formation of this Council, to inform strategic thinking, expertise should be sought in hazards planning and adaptation to environmental change, perhaps by forming a closely linked group focused on the longer term challenge of hazards adaptation. Expertise and referrals can be found at state agencies and universities (see Resources below). The burden of developing sufficient plans for response and adaptation can be eased through lessons learned in other communities that face similar challenges. (Also see the recommendation on adaptive land use and hazards planning under Design).

Recommendation: Seek out and secure funding to implement priority projects

Once the program of work has been developed, the implementation steering group should develop a funding/financing plan for priority projects, including projected cost estimates and potential funding sources. The steering group members should meet with potential funding partners, share the project concept, and begin establishing the necessary relationships for project implementation. Potential funding partners may include: Outer Banks Visitors Bureau for tourism-related projects and programs; Dare County Control Board or NC Division of Emergency Management for acquisition of hurricane-impacted properties that may be used for beach access; US Department of Agriculture Rural Development Community Facilities program; the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund for a community center; and the National Park Foundation for priority projects that are aligned with US National Park Service priorities. Community foundations typically have donor-advised funds that target specific interests, so it is recommended to meet with the community foundation representatives to share the vitalization plan and proposed initiatives to identify potential links to donors' interests. The Saltwater Connections initiative has some funds available to help fund starter projects, as well.

Fundraising is about relationships and timely delivery on proposed activities and accomplishments. Existing funding sources might be used to leverage future funding by carrying out the funding obligations, reporting promptly, inviting funders to visit the projects during and on completion of the activities, and publicizing the supporters that made the project possible. The Outer Banks National Scenic Byway Committee has made a great start with securing funding for the paved multi-use path. There will continue to be future funding opportunities connected to the Scenic Byway designation.

The funding plan should be reviewed and updated annually, along with the program of work. All funding regardless of its source – public agencies, family or corporate foundations, individual donors, or citizen groups – should be widely publicized, celebrated and appropriate appreciation expressed to all funders.



Recommendation: Develop civic associations

Local civic associations have worked for years in several villages to identify priorities, to raise local funds, and create projects and activities. They are key venues through which community members can communicate and identify community values and priorities. Buxton and Frisco are the least formally organized of the island villages. They could benefit from having a civic association, or some similar organized body for decision-making and advocacy to facilitate cooperation among the three southern Hatteras Island villages, with the villages to the north and south, and with county and state government. Models for association structure and process vary. More northern Outer Banks villages provide some examples. Corolla recently formed a civic association. Their website details the steps entailed at www.corollacivicasociation.org.

Recommendation: Increase and diversify volunteerism on the island

There are no municipalities on Hatteras Island, which means a lot rests on community leaders and volunteers. Community efforts, such as this one, require increased human resources, particularly in the current economic period when grant funding is hard to come by. There is an incredible range of skills and talents to be found among the island's residents. To begin with, a community-wide effort should be initiated to identify and recruit volunteers, and invite them to participate in the new organization and its standing working groups. While county, state and federal agency staff can provide guidance, the day-to-day work must be done by community members. Everyone living and working on the island has a stake in the island's future. This project offers everyone the opportunity to shape that future. Specific training sessions, capacity-building experiences, and workshops help community members learn facilitation skills, establish effective communication mechanisms, and inventory existing experiences and skills to better utilize volunteer investment. Building of a core of quality volunteers in community projects encourages more investment, increases productivity and contributes to community pride. There must be a role for all interested community members, from retirees to young people, regardless of the time they can devote. While some volunteers may prefer to fill ready-made roles, others may be inspired to become social entrepreneurs, bringing new vision and energy to identify shared concerns, and develop collective solutions.

The amount of volunteer support necessary to complete projects should be tracked, documented and shared widely with project partners, the media and funders. Funders want to know that projects are the community's priority, and are community-driven. Tracking the value of the sweat equity community members invest in projects and sharing that information with funders demonstrates the project commitment and places a dollar value on that investment. A few examples of these in-kind contributions include:

- The market value of food and lodging that was provided for the resource team members was a significant in-kind community contribution to developing this plan;
- If a local landscaping company donates labor to install entryway signage to the villages or Hatteras Island, the market value of the contribution of labor should be counted;
- If an attorney donates her time to help incorporate a nonprofit organization, that time could be calculated at regular billing rates and included in the tally of in-kind contributions; and



- If volunteers perform general labor to prepare for and operate a community festival, their time could be calculated at the federally approved hourly rate for that time period, which currently is \$7.25 per hour. (www.irs.gov)

It is easy to see how the numbers add up to significant contributions that demonstrate strong commitment by community members to help themselves. Be sure to share these numbers with the volunteers to encourage continued volunteer activities and build momentum to raise funding to move the larger effort forward.

Recommendation: Develop a leadership training program

Effective local leadership is the single most distinguishing feature of vibrant rural communities, but the high demand on volunteers within these small communities often leads to burnout. Visionary leadership can help volunteers avoid burn out by transforming band-aid solutions into more structural change efforts. They can help convert local knowledge and expertise into broader policy innovations. The most effective and sustainable leadership models are often decentralized, which may be unfamiliar to some. Decentralized leadership is bottom-up, and encourages innovation at the grassroots instead of commands from above. It allows many people to take initiative and responsibility. Leadership recruitment also needs to cross economic, age, and other demographic boundaries. Hands-on trainings help strengthen local skills, so community projects occur quicker and more effectively. With moderate funding levels, most local leadership training needs are easily matched with outside expertise. Highly useful skills and knowledge areas include: interpersonal communication, meeting facilitation and group process, how to effectively influence government decision processes (see below), grant writing and fundraising, project management and event planning, conflict resolution, and media outreach. Ideally, these trainings are designed to build new relationships among leaders from different island communities. These relationships can then provide long-term informal learning opportunities, and mutual support to prevent burnout. Training models can be adapted from many organizations, including the NC Rural Economic Development Center, The Conservation Fund, Penobscot East Resource Center, the Island Institute, and Cooperative Extension.

Recommendation: Strengthen capacity for grassroots participation in governmental decision processes

Many community members expressed frustration with decisions and processes associated with governmental entities, particularly on issues like federal land use policies, small business assistance, environmental stewardship, and fishing regulations. Opportunities for public participation in governmental decision processes are often limited and challenging, but they do exist once people understand how the processes work and develop some basic skills. These areas of knowledge and skill are rarely taught in formal educational settings. Some communities elsewhere have developed experiential learning programs for this purpose – to show ordinary citizens how government decision processes work, and how they can participate effectively. As a result, citizens are more able to advance their interests and offer uniquely valuable policy solutions based in local knowledge and practical experience. Local communities might consider hosting or developing a program of this sort to build stronger local involvement in government decision making. One model is the Community Fisheries Action Roundtable developed by the Penobscot East Resource Center. Another is the Marine Resource Education Program hosted by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. In particular, these programs try to address



the problem that government regulation is by necessity fairly rigid and standardized, while small businesses and resource-dependent communities must routinely adapt to environmental change in ways that require more flexible, localized decision making.

Recommendation: Coordinate delivery of health and human services

There are good county-funded services and facilities as well as an array of nonprofit groups working hard to meet human needs. An island-wide partnership between public and non-profit groups for the delivery of comprehensive health and human services would be helpful in matching services with clients. Needs still exist in mental health education and outreach and in integrated wellness approaches. Funding might be sought from foundations such as The Duke Endowment, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, and the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation. Creating opportunities for retired newcomers to give back to the community could be useful in the overall provision of services – particularly through the schools, youth activities, and human-services.



Classroom science experiment (photo B. Garrity-Blake)

Recommendation: Repair relationship between Hatteras Island residents and the National Park Service

The relationship between the National Park Service (NPS) and some Hatteras Island villagers and visitors has become problematic in recent years. This is partly because major decisions about beach closures to protect endangered species from off-road vehicles and pedestrians have been made not only off-island but out of state. Even as interested parties and the NPS invested in a localized decision process, national environmental advocacy organizations took legal action, circumventing any possibility for local agreement. While some federal offices have a long history of sidelining local concerns to advance projects they believe are in the national interest, other offices have come to value more collaborative relationships with local residents and groups.

Volume One of the Park Service *Ethnohistorical Description of the Eight Villages of Cape Hatteras Seashore* contains a brief discussion of the relationship between residents and park personnel (pg. 66-71, not available online). Several recommendations were made to the NPS to improve local relationships, including: adopt a collaborative model of problem-solving with community

members, dedicate a staff member as communications/cultural envoy to meet regularly with civic groups and residents, offer to share historical photographs, interviews and artifacts at civic and historical group meetings, design interpretive programs that make better use of cultural information, and sponsor events that involve local residents' participation such as yaupon-tea making, net hanging, storytelling, or cooking demonstrations. Moving local perspectives on the off-road vehicle issue forward will likely require focused investments in relationship building with the NPS, and perhaps with environmental and scientific organizations more attuned to the complexities of local human-environment relationships.

Additional options might include:

- 1) Develop a facilitated process, bringing together the park superintendent and staff with residents who are interested in moving past the off-road-vehicle conflict, to identify areas of common concern and interest, and possible routes to collaboration. If needed, invite a mediation or dispute settlement organization to support the process.
- 2) Involve the NPS in developing eco-tourism and heritage tourism initiatives.
- 3) Encourage the NPS to invest in relationships with the next generation of island residents. This might include strengthening their Junior Ranger program, starting a new program focused on local students, or offering educational programs to island schools.

DESIGN

"Irene's given us an opportunity to re-think life on Hatteras."

Island resident

The community character that historically defined the Hatteras villages has changed dramatically in recent years with increased development, especially along NC-12 and the waterfront; yet, there are vestiges that remain in the older neighborhoods, the working fish houses, the community grocery stores, and the mom-and-pop businesses that serve residents and visitors year-round. These places are helping to retain the sense of "place" and cultural integrity that were key to the successful designation of the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway. The design working group faces a broad range of issues, from signage to bike and pedestrian paths, from trails and greenways to ocean and sound access, and from storefront facade programs to NC-12 and other transportation issues. The island has an unusual opportunity to identify and protect the places, land uses, buildings and other design components that can ensure that Hatteras does not lose its sense of place forever. These assets include (but are not limited to):

- A strong predominance of locally owned, small businesses, and an impressive lack of fast food restaurants and franchises that erode the unique character of a place;
- A landscape dominated by coastal lands and water that are part of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, keeping much of Hatteras Island relatively intact; and
- A history and culture that have been kept alive in the stories and historic structures and passed on by long-time residents.

In "old times," people gathered in semi-public places like small stores, dance halls, and landings. The development boom happened with little consideration of design principles or techniques that might have been used to encourage walk-ability, or foster the types of social gathering places that are critical to maintain a sense of community. The current downturn in construction provides an opportunity for the villages to explore implementation of design guidelines that can encourage patterns of activity, movement, and human interaction that define quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Municipalities highly regarded as desirable places to live, work, and vacation generally protect collective interests of residents and businesses. They develop and protect congregating areas by fostering comfortable, accessible, attractive environments for public use. These might be as simple as ensuring that a morning newspaper and cup of coffee are within walking distance of homes and small businesses. For example, towns could encourage more dense development of town centers, redirecting the focus of growth away from open spaces at the edge of town, and concentrating human activity in locations with existing infrastructure and services.



Recommendation: Create and protect walkable village centers

Because the island's southern villages suffer less from traffic problems thus far, compared to the northern villages, opportunities exist to direct automobiles appropriately, and create and protect public spaces for pedestrian uses. Streetscape planning, undertaken with broad public participation, would provide opportunities to discuss and advance thoughtful, deliberate development. An approach focused on the human scale can accommodate foot traffic to benefit small businesses. It can also encourage face-to-face contact between visitors and local residents, encouraging visitors to better appreciate local ways of life and linger at the cultural, historic, and natural sites that make the villages unique destinations.

Recommendation: Encourage the public to be involved in the bike lane design process, and generate on-going community support for implementing and extending the paved paths along the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway

Residents of all ages – including the elementary and secondary students interviewed during the resource team visit – spoke about the importance of residents being able to walk, ride bikes and use other forms of alternative transportation. In order to generate on-going support for this and future transportation-related projects, it will be vitally important to involve residents and property owners in the planning process through participation in public hearings and planning meetings, on-going communication about the process and progress of the project, requests for input, regular progress reports, and celebration of the completion of the funded project. Be creative in outreach; engage young people, ask the elders what they need, host potluck suppers to share reports on the progress, and use a variety of communication including social media to make sure that information flows throughout the process.

Recommendation: Work with the National Park Service to develop better signage and improve communication about beach closures

Among the most contentious issues voiced on Hatteras Island were the off-road vehicle and beach closure policies of the US National Park Service, particularly with regard to communicating the current closure locations. The Service provides real-time information on their website, but beachgoers without real-time internet access have limited information channels. A focus team could work with the Service to develop more appropriate



Little Grove church, Frisco (photo S. West)

communication materials and methods that emphasize the open areas for public use.

Recommendation: Explore potential benefits of historic district designation

Historic districts attract tourism and related small businesses. To identify historic buildings and neighborhoods, surveys and other assistance are available through the NC Department of Cultural Resources: www.ncdcr.gov/. Hatteras has a “Hatteras on my mind” tour online that could be promoted or adapted as a walking or biking tour. Partial historic surveys for Buxton and Frisco may reside with the Department of Transportation, which undertook them in the past. The state and UNC system have historical archives that might be useful, including maps, photographs, film footage, and documents. A 1999 publication by Nancy Van Dolsen on the historical architecture of Hatteras Village is available online at: www.hatterasonmy mind.com/HVCA/HatterasVirtualTour/TitlePage/TitleSurvey.pdf



Recommendation: Design and install wayfinding signage for island assets

Wayfinding is a series of signs and/or kiosks strategically located throughout a community to help visitors identify and find local points of interest. Some of the more common examples of wayfinding can be found in historical areas or districts. The signs are usually uniform in design (similar size, shape and color) and placed or located in visible locations, so sites can be found easily and enjoyed. If the public begins to play a role in bike lane design, taking into consideration private property rights, limited land resources, appearance and physical design of the bike lane itself, and perhaps most importantly, the safety of those utilizing the bike lane, this presents a good opportunity for village residents to discuss signage on a community scale. Wayfinding is a means to engage local artist talent. As always, the public should have a say in which community assets are promoted through the signage. The Outer Banks National Scenic Byway has federal funding to design, fabricate and install wayfinding signage for the entire Byway. Thoughtful community input can ensure that the system directs visitors to appropriate sites.

Recommendation: Provide a series of kiosks to showcase the island's attractions

A series of kiosks should be placed in areas of high-volume foot traffic and at attractions along NC 12. These kiosks could provide a map, noting the current location, and locations of other Island attractions. In addition to local artists, carpenters could contribute to the construction and design of the kiosks. A grant application currently is at the national office for the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway to assist with planning, designing, fabricating and installing interpretive signage throughout the Byway. A decision on this application is expected mid 2012.



Recommendation: Petition the County to enforce business signage guidelines

Though this is a greater problem in the northern villages, in some locales, business signs and promotion clutter the landscape. These can detract from precisely the island assets that attract visitors. Intrusive signage can diminish sweeping views of sand, surf, and marshes – views that hold great market value because they are so unique. Large scale signage can overwhelm the smaller human scale of maritime forests, historic architecture, and village neighborhoods – and it is this human scale that captures the imaginations of urban and suburban visitors who feel more human here than elsewhere. On the other hand, signage that is completely standardized can make a place feel sterile, like it could be anywhere, not such a special place. Signage ordinances are established in the interests of public safety, community aesthetics, marketability, and the public need for clear visual communications. Visual distractions, impediments to traffic visibility, and competition with traffic control devices all are considerations in crafting sign regulations. A remedy should be two-fold: 1) updating businesses on current sign signage placement, size, design and lighting requirements; and 2) beginning a dialog with the County on improved enforcement of the zoning regulations.

Recommendation: Anticipate environmental hazards

While some challenges relating to emergency response and environmental hazards require immediate action (as discussed above in the organizational recommendation for an emergency management council), some solutions will simply emerge over time. Yet other issues beg for more strategic and longer term thinking. It may be appropriate to form a group to think through some of the increasing challenges around environmental change and hazards. This might focus initially on the stimulation of bottom-up innovation and social entrepreneurship, and eventually on issues relating to policy and planning, since the best policy is based on lived experience.

Islanders have long proven themselves to be highly adaptive to environmental change. Buildings were once laid on logs, so they could be rolled across shifting sands. Floors were constructed with trap doors or hatches to allow rising waters to enter and exit with less structural damage. Property boundaries ran from ocean to sound side, shifting seaward or leeward with the sands. Homes were built on the highest ground. Cupboards and larders were rotated to enjoy seasonal bounties. Fishermen still rig boats and gear in response to changes in weather, fish migrations, and population cycles. Any number of modern conveniences have created an illusion of ecological stability and permanence – including supermarkets that sell strawberries in January, and air conditioners that can beat the heat in August. But these conveniences can't stop the hurricanes, flooding, storm surges, erosion, heat waves, and droughts that are increasingly costly and dangerous, both on-island and off. Islanders can play an important role in showing urbanites and suburbanites in North Carolina and elsewhere what it means to respect and adapt to environmental change. Long term island residents can likely teach a thing or two to newcomers. Devastating though they can be, environmental hazards offer opportunities to reconsider community priorities and tradeoffs, to think strategically about investments of financial capital and human effort. Other islands and coastal settlements around the globe face similar environmental threats, and might learn from the island's collective experience.

For example, on Durant's Island, school children and other community members partnered with the Coastal Federation to build a living shoreline, protecting Hatteras harbor. This stewardship approach typifies the resourcefulness and resilience that has enabled



islanders to survive and thrive. Yet the island faces unmet challenges around how to maintain paved roads, bridges, and other fixed structures on shifting sands. The villages might wish to host competitions for architects, planners, engineers, and landscape architects, competing to design buildings, infrastructure, neighborhoods, and outdoor areas that are resilient to the island's ever-changing conditions, and that maintain the intimate feeling of village life. As noted below (in recommendations relating to affordable housing for economic revitalization), the island's ecology offers a unique laboratory for such experiments. Competitions in other communities focused on environmentally appropriate housing and transportation have attracted national attention – not unlike early aviation experiments on beaches just to the north.

Recommendation: Consider building a community swimming pool

People of all ages might use a community swimming pool, from children learning to swim, to teenagers playing indoor watersports, to retirees seeking exercise that doesn't stress joints. Working through the County, the villages could pursue a NC Division of Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant. Private fundraising, such as engraving donor names on bricks, has been successful in similar projects elsewhere.

Recommendation: Support the proposed Hatteras Island Ocean Center

Storm damage to Frisco Pier has created a need for a local fishing pier. The proposed Hatteras Island Ocean Center project will fill this need, and draw tourists. It will be a destination for day-trippers, for folks going to and from Ocracoke, and can serve as the island's center for ecotourism. Facilities might include a fishing pier, oceanview deck for weddings and parties, indoor and outdoor food takeout stands, restaurant, and coffee shop, a playground, a pinball arcade, plentiful parking, a public bathhouse, tackle shop, surf shop, equipment rental, indoor and outdoor exhibits, classrooms, research areas, and wildlife rehabilitation area. Leadership of the proposed Ocean Center might benefit from the support of a community advisory committee. This might include the Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies, North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching, and other partners.



Buxton Woods (photo NC Coastal Reserve)

P R O M O T I O N

“It is hard to remember that the rest of the world doesn’t see places like this every day.”

Hatteras resident

Building on the popularity of the Outer Banks as a destination, Hatteras Island would benefit from a fresh branding campaign. There are still many families and individuals who have been vacationing at Hatteras for generations who continue to return year after year and stay at campgrounds, small family-run motels, and seasonal cottages. However, many residents remark that newer visitors interact less with locals, staying in luxurious corporate-owned beachside rentals instead of owner-operated cottages or bed and breakfasts. These visitors seem oblivious to how local people live, or that there are people who live on Hatteras year-round.

The island has a rich history like Ocracoke and Portsmouth Islands, but one that is less recognized. It offers world class charter boat and surf fishing. Its tenacious commercial fishing industry is a remarkable example of how small, diversified, locally-based businesses can adapt to environmental change – a lesson often lost on urban and suburban visitors. Much could be done to support and promote these assets. When visitors begin to grasp the challenges and joys of living on the island, they appreciate the resilience of islanders in the face of an unpredictable environment. They become aware of how deeply people here rely on one another, and how thoroughly life here is shaped by natural cycles – including those of seasons, storms, and living creatures. These are profound experiences that can inspire one-time vacationers to come back again and again, supporting local businesses and non-profits, or to making longer term community investments.

For these reasons, the promotion working group will want to work with tourism agencies, local businesses, and other public and non-profit partners to develop and to promote festivals, events, and other community activities. The visitors who will treat the island well and will be happy spending their money here, are visitors who feel some sense of connection to the local community, even if only for a few days. They are people who appreciate and respect the uniqueness of the place and its people.

The resource team heard clearly that the cost of living is high, and activities and amenities for nurturing seniors or striving singles and youth are limited. Young people who are growing up on the island acknowledge the challenges – low wages in seasonal jobs and lack of affordable housing – but most are clear they want to live, work, and raise their families here. The island and its villages are home to incredibly resourceful and resilient residents who care deeply about and have worked hard to preserve the quality of life that distinguishes island communities. Quality of life is one of the most important aspects businesses look at when considering expansion or re-location. Businesses want their employees to be happy and productive. Nothing helps create that environment like a sense of place and belonging to a community.

Recommendation: Begin conversations with the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau to establish a tourism development position specifically for Hatteras Island

Hatteras Island would benefit from a community-based tourism development professional working specifically with island businesses and organizations to develop events, promotions, training, websites and other services to promote eco- and cultural tourism on the Island. Ideally, this would be a full-time, year-round position.

Recommendation: Promote the island's quality of life to entice relocations by desirable employers

One of the key strategies of the economic revitalization recommendations is working to diversify the economy to ensure that there are more than seasonal jobs available. In the internet age, many entrepreneurs and employees work remotely. These people often choose where they want to be located based on lifestyle and quality of life considerations (as long as high-speed internet access is available). It will be important to work closely with the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, North Carolina's Northeast Economic Development Commission and other economic development agencies to promote Hatteras Island and its quality of life as an ideal location for small businesses. Strategies include hosting corporate gatherings during the shoulder season or off-season to raise awareness about the amenities and lifestyle Hatteras has to offer, and having Hatteras Island represented at trade shows for technology-related small businesses.

Recommendation: Diversify the economy by creating a tourism development plan around "immersion" tourism and educational activities, especially related to natural resources and history

Hatteras Island is the premier location on the east coast, perhaps the world, for participating in water-related sport and activities. The island also has untapped cultural resources. But many vacationers come and go without getting a feel for what it is like to actually live and work on the island. A growing market in tourism is immersion travel, in which visitors experience some aspects of local life, so they can appreciate it as a living place with unique assets, not just another picture postcard. The US Park Service facilities offer many educational opportunities, but visitors don't fully grasp the unique relationship between islanders and their natural environment until they experience the environment on a more human scale, such as talking to islanders or visiting sites where residents have developed unique adaptations to environmental change. Nor do most visitors appreciate the island's rich history. Activities focused on cultural and educational activities can be scheduled during shoulder seasons, when tourism dollars are most needed. Software applications accessible via cell phones could be developed, including maps, tour narration, and oral history.

Unique island immersion experiences could center on life as a waterman. Visitors could participate in a fishing trip, speak with members of commercial fishing families about the challenges they face, and learn about the ecology of the area through the eyes of watermen. The Day at the Docks event could be expanded to include multiple villages in the region. The industry's history and folklore could be conserved in museum exhibits, drawing on collections of the US National Park Service. Historic natural resource industries include rendering of porpoise fat and harvesting marine eel grass. The villages have lanes, neighborhoods, and



picturesque overlooks resembling those prized by tourists to Okracoke, but thus far they have not been conserved or promoted. The island's architectural history illustrates unique adaptations by residents to a harsh and shifting environment.

Other immersion activities could involve boat building, waterfowl hunting, navigation, and shipwrecks. Guided tours could be developed around clamming, bird watching, photography, landscape drawing and painting, and coastal ecology. Homegrown arts and music might be of interest. Food-related tourism is a growing market. There may be visitor interest in local recipes passed down from generation to generation. Visitors could be introduced to wild harvested foods and different preparation methods in cooking classes, promotional materials, waterfront venues, restaurants, food markets, and gift shops. Residents have expressed interest in training bird dogs. This could attract more distant visitors and encourage them to linger for hunting trips. Voluntourism is a growing market, where travelers undertake voluntary service as a local immersion experience, usually combined with recreational and social activities.

The Parks Service has local ethnohistory materials for interpretive heritage tours at http://www.nps.gov/ethnography/research/docs/caha_ethno_v2.pdf (p. 417+). Ideas might be found in the Cape Hatteras School Sea Chest articles archived at the Hatteras library, Southern Oral History Project, and Park Service ethnohistory interviews archived at the Outer Banks History Center in Manteo. North Carolina's Handmade in America (www.handmadeinamerica.org/), and the NC Folklife Institute (<http://www.ncfolk.org>) are additional sources of information and unique tourism development ideas. Other ideas and funding leads for education and stewardship programs are available through the National Estuarine Research Reserve system, the federal partner of the North Carolina Coastal Reserve, including Buxton Woods. The federal program exists partly for the purpose of exchanging ideas among coastal professionals around the U.S.

To be effective, these efforts should integrate local voices and expertise. For instance, whittling benches foster interactions between visitors and old-timers, and a public-friendly waterfront encourages visitors to interact with fishermen. Local students can help collect oral histories, take photos, and design displays. Airbnb.com is an internet service matching travelers directly with local accommodations offered by private individuals, from simple rooms to family homes.



Blessing of the fleet (photo S. West)

The Outer Banks Visitors Bureau will be an important resource partner in promoting the outdoor adventure activities and opportunities that exist and can be developed on Hatteras. One strategy that is often used in the tourism industry to promote certain destinations is to host a familiarization (“fam”) tour, which is a free or reduced-rate trip offered to travel professionals to acquaint them with what a destination, attraction or supplier has to offer. Fam tour participants typically include tour and travel companies, meeting and event planners, and writers and journalists, such as the Travel Writers Association. One of these target audiences, ElderHostel, Inc., is a national organization that is dedicated to lifelong learning for retirees and seniors. Their subsidiary, Road Scholar, offers more than 7,000 educational tours in all 50 states and 150 countries. The promotion working group should work closely with the Visitors Bureau to develop and implement strategies that promote Hatteras Island to target audiences and to cultivate these new relationships to diversify the economy.

Recommendation: Encourage sustainable tourism

Many residents expressed concern about a shift in visitor focus and preferences. In the past, visitors developed personal attachments to the island and its residents, with many returning year after year, even into the next generation. They rented rooms or small cottages from locals, shopped at local stores, and ate at local cafes. Today, many visitors come and go without understanding that this is home for the people who live here year round, and few become acquainted with local people. Various strategies might counter this trend. Encouraging visitors to get out of their cars is a critical first step. Corresponding strategies suggested elsewhere in this report address streetscape planning, common green areas, walkways and bikeways, and water transport. Another strategy is to discount federal and private camping fees for hikers and bicyclists. Marketing to birders has enormous potential. The North Carolina Paddle Trails Association could provide ideas to make Hatteras Island more kayaker-friendly (www.ncpaddletrails.com).

Recommendation: Promote Frisco as a destination for art and art galleries

Frisco has a significant number of local artists selling their wares. These businesses could expand their markets through cooperation and innovation. Adapting successful practices from art colonies such as Taos, New Mexico, and Black Mountain and Sea Grove, North Carolina may be useful for marketing Frisco as an art destination. It might be possible to host an annual Outer Banks Art Fair to showcase local artists.



Albatross fleet (photo B.Garrity-Blake)

ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

“Fishermen
are
conserva-
tionists.”

Ernie
Foster,
fisherman

Fulfilling livelihoods and sustainable economies require more than a few paychecks. It is critical that the right people get matched with the right opportunities, to maximize human potential. For this reason, the economic revitalization working group should focus on two broad areas: 1) strengthening existing businesses, and 2) supporting and recruiting new businesses that help to strengthen and diversify the economy on the Island. Given the extraordinary natural resources and coastal environment, the working group should work to emphasize sustainable business practices, green jobs and creation of higher-quality jobs with livable wages and benefits.

To strengthen and diversify the economic base, it is recommended that the economic revitalization working group work closely with existing businesses, and with county, regional and state economic development agencies and programs. Examples of the latter include the Hatteras-Ocracoke Council of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, the Northeast Economic Development Commission, and Outer Banks Catch. Additionally, a sustainable approach to economic revitalization includes partnerships with schools, organizations interested in training and workforce development, and offices working with youth and young adults, since it is important to create quality jobs *and* encourage economic and social entrepreneurship among young people.

STRENGTHEN EXISTING BUSINESSES

Residents expressed a strong desire to keep mom-and-pop businesses part of the island economy, which is a marketing asset. North Carolina is a state of small businesses, with over two-thirds of the jobs in the state provided by businesses with fewer than 100 employees and 17% of all jobs occurring in sole proprietorships or businesses with no employees. Almost 27% of the businesses in North Carolina are family-owned. Strengthening existing businesses is a sound economic development strategy for a variety of reasons, particularly because it is easier and more cost efficient to help existing businesses expand and create new jobs than it is to recruit new industries.

Recommendation: Conduct a market analysis to identify existing small business needs

One of the distinctive features of the Hatteras Island economy is the predominance of small and family-owned businesses and the lack of fast food restaurants and other franchises. While this is a strength that should be marketed as part of the branding and marketing campaign, it also has inherent challenges, given the seasonal nature of the tourism economy and the difficulties most small businesses face. Retirement, particularly of baby boomers, is big business, as are weddings. One question that needs to be considered as part of the overall economic development plan is, where are the island's key economic growth areas? By identifying



these preferred growth areas, the economic revitalization working group can focus on resources needed to spur economic development such as the need for: increased access to capital, coordinated marketing, increased use of social media in marketing, and expanding customer bases through internet sales. All of these issues were raised during the resource team visit.

Working with the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Center at College of the Albemarle, and other economic development entities economic revitalization working group should survey business owners on the island to identify their needs related to financing, marketing, management, etc. Once the data has been compiled, the next step would be to identify the types of support needed to determine: 1) training needs for business owners; 2) services that might be provided by existing nonprofits or programs such as Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) to grow and expand businesses ; and 3) services that might provide new business development opportunities, such as accounting and website development.

Recommendation: Foster innovation in markets for local seafood through focused networking

On the North Carolina coast and elsewhere in the United States, the sustainability of fisheries and small boat fishing communities may rely on raising ex-vessel prices received by fishermen. When fish are marketed as global commodities, the industry gets stuck in a race to the bottom. In that intensely competitive market, fish are caught and sold at the lowest possible price for the largest possible volume, and become interchangeable with product harvested and processed half a world away, using methods that incur environmental and social damage. Alternative marketing strategies have emerged in Alaska, North Carolina, New England, and elsewhere to counter this destructive trend. Cooperatives and non-profits can raise the quality of product purchased by consumers, increase public awareness of economic, social, and ecological differences among seafood products, boost profits for seafood harvesters and dealers, increase market incentives for sustainable fishing practices, and may even help influence marine resource policy to become more adaptive to local change. North Carolina has spearheaded alternative marketing efforts and several models



Fisherman (photo B.Garrity-Blake)

have emerged elsewhere, some linking up to regional food systems.

For example, some groups are working with schools, hospitals, and other organizations that provide meals and information to average consumers. They help ensure that local people get healthy food, and that local producers, processors, and distributors have strong markets. This approach has also changed the way consumers think about what they eat, and how it affects their health and the environment. Along these lines, Hatteras has begun involving school children in seafood education. To be successful with this approach, communication, cooperation, and innovation across the economic spectrum are imperative. Down East NC fish marketing cooperatives have been very successful. More focused efforts might engage island fishermen and fishhouses in conversation with groups such as Walking Fish, Core Sound Seafood, and North Carolina Catch. Other resources include the Fish Locally Collaborative, which is based in New England and has members in North Carolina. While competition could be inherent to marketing efforts, it is conceivable that new start ups could support and strengthen one another, incubating new ideas, alliances, and collective learning. A collaborative approach may be possible if a cooperative business model is adopted that includes small scale processing or an integrated local distribution system. It is important that such efforts not be perceived as displacing existing dealers and processors, but collaborate with them from the beginning to ensure a broad base of support, and an economic model that can be sustained over time with the capacity to evolve and adapt to changing economic and environmental circumstances.

SUPPORT AND RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES

New business development and recruitment should include a mix of new start-ups that are locally owned and managed with new or existing businesses that relocate to Hatteras from other areas. It will be important to work with the range of agencies and other community and economic development entities to identify, recruit and/or support businesses that will help to strengthen and diversify the economy on the Island. Quality of life is a large part of the decision-making process that draws business into an area, as well as an appropriate labor pool, available infrastructure, institutional support and consumer base to sustain the business.

Recommendation: Conduct a local market analysis to identify small business opportunities

The economic revitalization working group should connect with the Chamber of Commerce and the Northeast Economic Development Commission to identify existing studies or market analyses. If none have been undertaken recently, working group members should explore partnership opportunities with these agencies, a community college Small Business Center, or the Business School at East Carolina University to conduct a market analysis. The Center for Green Research and Evaluation at Elizabeth City State University is working to complete a regional green economy plan that identifies seven strategies with high potential for “green job” creation including: energy efficient construction, eco- and heritage tourism, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy production, recycling industry and green manufacturing, stormwater management and low-impact development, and green education and training.

Green industries are gaining in acceptance, and actively recruiting these types of businesses can help demonstrate community commitment to job creation that is consistent with protection of quality of life and rich natural resources. It is important to coordinate this market analysis with the existing business needs survey to ensure that new businesses will add value to the existing businesses while rounding out the economic activities on the island.

Recommendation: Seek support for sales of seafood at the farmers market from the Dare County Department of Public Health Board

In November, the Dare County Department of Public Health Board discussed the possibility of allowing sales of seafood at farmers market. It will be important for the economic revitalization working group to follow up with the Public Health Board and the County Commissioners to ensure that the approvals are finalized.

Recommendation: Explore value-added products for local seafood and seafood processing waste

Value-added seafood products present an opportunity to increase profit margins. Examples might include a filleting and processing facility that could tap into the increased demand for local seafood, and a production facility where specialty foods, such as canned seafood chowders and stews or frozen fish cakes could be produced, packed, stored and shipped. The economic revitalization working group should research the feasibility of value-added production on the island, including development of a commercial grade, shared-use community kitchen.

Seafood processing waste, such as fish carcasses and scraps present another income-generating opportunity. Commercial fishermen might explore how this processing by-product can be converted into non-edible products like certified organic plant fertilizer. Similar to many of the aforementioned recommendations, the economic revitalization working group should research other coastal, fishing communities for economic concepts and niches that are not being tapped on-island currently.

Recommendation: Maintain working waterfront areas and seafood landing areas

The value of maintaining Hatteras Island's working waterfronts, its fish houses and boat repair facilities, cannot be overstated. When working waterfronts convert to recreational and residential uses, a few people garner windfall profits, but the longer term monetary value to the wider community is reduced, in terms of tax revenue and jobs. A seafood dealer creates a direct economic impact by selling seafood that he/she buys from local fishermen. A portion of the sales goes toward paying fishermen, as well as the dealer's overhead and employee wages. An economic ripple effect, a multiplier, occurs as fishing dollars are reinvested in the business or in goods and services such as fuel, groceries, insurance and boat repairs. The impact on the local economy is significant, as well. Because fishing families live locally, fishing income is distributed locally -- spent on homes, food, clothing, supplies, and services. Local benefits are reaped repeatedly as money is spent and re-circulated in the local economy.

Hatteras is lucky to still have a few fish houses on the southern end of the island. Vessel berths, landing facilities, and shoreside services are severely limited, however. The closure of any remaining fish house on the island would result in a critical shortage of docking space for commercial fishing boats, forcing many fishermen to exit the fishery, and negatively impacting the economy. Residents should seek state legislation that authorizes voluntary working waterfront conservation easements, similar to those authorized for farm and forestry land in NC, creating a NC Seafood Development and Working Waterfront Preservation Trust Fund structured similarly to that for farmlands in GS 106-744. The NC Waterfront Access Study recommended this action in its 2007 report to the General Assembly. This legislation would position the island and the state to benefit should federal working waterfront protection legislation be enacted. Waterfront ownership and management options also exist for public, non-profit, or cooperative entities. One way to diversify the fish house business model would be to develop a substantial retail front. Working waterfronts also present opportunities for heritage or occupational tourism, as noted earlier in this report.

Recommendation: Support young commercial fishermen

Hatteras Island seafood dealers complain that young people are not entering the industry in sufficient numbers to maintain the commercial fishing industry. On the other hand, primary and secondary school students express interest in commercial fishing. As one young man said, “who wouldn’t want to fish?” Islanders might consider establishing a junior fisherman apprenticeship program at Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies in which students acquire a commercial fishing license by fishing with a licensed sponsor and showing income from the sale of fish for three years. This could be combined with educational units in boating safety/navigation, mariculture and other marine-related studies. This type of program would address an immediate labor need of seafood dealers and create local jobs. The state has some 1,500 commercial fishing licenses available. If the applicant is the child/grandchild of a Standard Commercial Fishing License holder, the three-year income requirement is waived. Young fishermen are also limited by access to federal species permits, many of which are now sold on open markets. Some cost a few thousand dollars, others more than a million. Other fishing communities facing similar challenges have established permit banks and other community-based permit programs, run by public or non-profit groups. Collaborative research projects can foster better communications, mutual respect, and information exchange between scientists and fishermen coming up in the industry.

Recommendation: Investigate the feasibility and economic potential of expanded shellfish mariculture

A handful of entrepreneurs in North Carolina are experiencing some success growing oysters in suspended cages for the lucrative half shell market. This is a multi-million dollar industry in Virginia but is in its infancy in North Carolina. An expanded shellfish mariculture program should be explored for Hatteras Island since the ecology of the area is ideal for oysters and clams. The Cape Hatteras Secondary School, the UNC Coastal Studies Institute (Manteo) and NC Sea Grant are studying mariculture possibilities on-island and could serve as great resources for locals wishing to explore this option.

Recommendation: Explore an island shuttle services and water tours as opportunities for local entrepreneurs

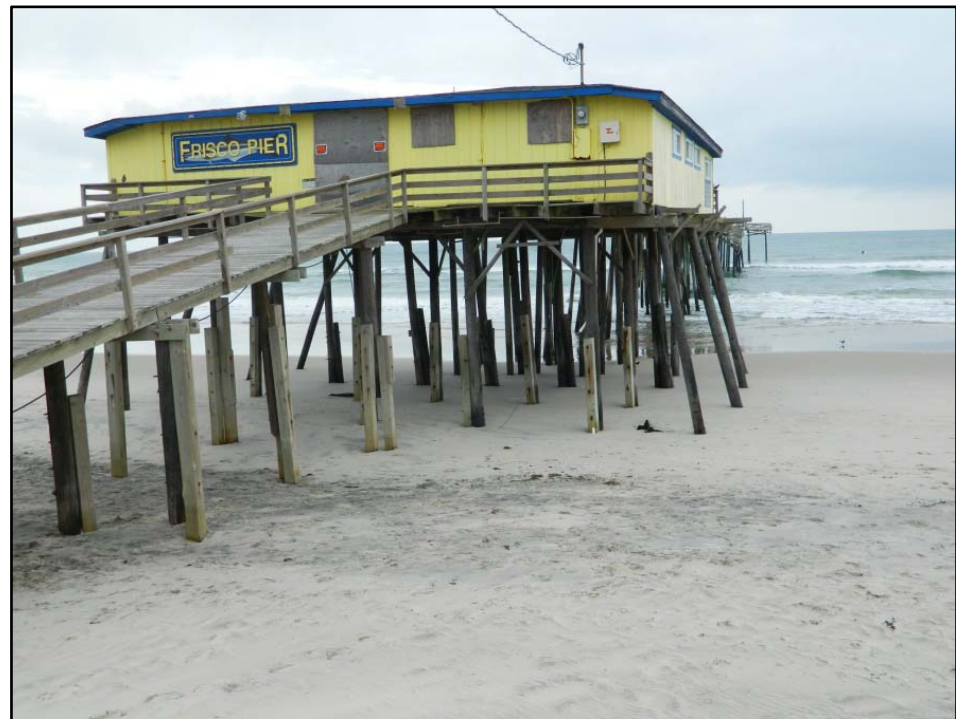
There was an expressed need for public transport or private shuttle services for both local residents and visitors. Very small craft running along the shore of the sound and into canals would offer a unique experience for all visitors, and a slower-paced view of island sights. It may be feasible to provide water-taxi service to transport anglers to Cape Point or other areas otherwise closed to beach driving at certain times of the years. Depending on the specifics of the closure, it may be legal for anglers to fish from desired points so long as they do not drive across designated beach areas during bird and turtle nesting seasons. Water transport/small charters could be used by visitors for clamming, bird watching, photography, or other pursuits.

Recommendation: Strengthen pier-based recreational fishing opportunities

Given the negative impacts of off-road vehicle closures reported by local businesses, particularly tackle shops (some of which report a 60% decrease in spring revenue), other fishing opportunities, such as pier fishing, should be promoted. Hatteras Island's two operating piers are located in Rodanthe and Avon. They represent 10% of the state's remaining public fishing piers. The costs of operating an offshore boat have risen, especially fuel, and four-wheel-drive vehicles are prohibited on large stretches of Hatteras Island beaches. Fishing piers allow saltwater anglers, especially low-income, subsistence, and handicapped fishers, to access public fisheries resources despite ocean access challenges. Promising plans are in place to develop an Ocean Center – a pier with associated educational activities and private concessions (see organizational recommendation above on supporting the Ocean Center).

Recommendation: Increase the inventory of affordable housing for residents

Lack of access to affordable housing is one of the primary reasons youth are likely to have to leave the island to get a job or raise their family. Housing for seniors is also a problem. The economic revitalization working group should work closely with the Outer Banks Community Development Corporation to explore options for collaborating on increasing the supply of



Old Frisco pier (photo S.West)

affordable housing on the island. Some local jurisdictions have adopted inclusionary zoning policies that require or encourage developers to set aside a percentage of the units in housing developments for low- and moderate-income residents. Most inclusionary housing programs offer density bonuses or other incentives to offset the developer's project costs and compensate for providing affordable units, which may otherwise yield reduced profits. This approach enlists private sector help in contributing to the affordable housing supply, and reduces segregation of affordable and market-rate housing. This should be researched with the Dare County Planning Department.

As noted above (in Design recommendations), other communities have hosted competitions for affordable housing designs that are environmentally sustainable. The island's ecology offers a unique laboratory in which architects or architecture students might pilot new ideas, potentially attracting national attention. Locals could perhaps be involved in judging the entries. Habitat for Humanity is a reputable national resource that has helped tens of thousands of partner families move into simple, decent, affordable houses through personal investments of sweat equity. Habitat's responsibility includes advocacy and public awareness with local and state elected officials, an additional benefit. Habitat supports a national Affordable Housing Trust Fund (HTF). The HTF would be a new source of revenue to assist in the production of affordable housing and the rehabilitation of existing housing. Habitat offers a disaster response, which is bonus to an island highly prone to hurricane impacts. While there are a number of nonprofits on the island, affordable housing will likely require non-profit involvement, and the Habitat model merits careful consideration.

Recommendation: Develop a comprehensive transportation plan for the island

Residents identified a need for public transit, such as shuttle vans running regular routes between villages. Transportation needs were identified for low income and elderly residents in particular. Suitably developed public transit options might help increase pedestrian traffic by vacationers among small businesses by getting people out of their cars, especially if they might accommodate bicycles. A well-executed transportation study would provide data on anticipated use rates and costs.

Recommendation: Create opportunities for children, youth, and young adults

As one resident remarked, the future of the island is its children and young people. These children grow up with opportunities and challenges that are in many ways unique, and in other ways are typical of rural areas. Like most children, they tend to be curious, creative, thoughtful, and industrious. As one high school student said, "I like work." Many wish to stay on the island as adults, and lament the possibility that the island may end up dominated by chain hotels and fast food franchises. The question, however, is whether these children will have the skills necessary to find on-island employment that is rewarding enough and pays enough to stay. High school students told the resource team that they are often bored, and that this contributes to drug use. Especially in winter, they would like to have opportunities to do things like bowl, play arcade games, see movies, participate in theater productions, or hear concerts. Adults noted that children spend less time playing outdoors than in the past. They aren't as comfortable in, or familiar with, the natural environment. As one put it, they are less "aware of their environmental heritage." A coastal studies curriculum exists, but might benefit from continued attention and support. School gardening projects have proven very popular elsewhere, like



most field-based learning experiences. Summer fishing camp or programs could attract both local kids and visitors. Young people might participate in activities organized around charter and commercial fishing, sail training, maritime crafts and history, or general boatsmanship. Adults noted a need for a family beach, probably on the sound side, without big surf, free of fish hooks and vehicles, and with parking. The island has a strong tradition of homegrown music, but few young people participate. Introducing young children to the pleasure of making their own music, such as in school workshops, can help them improve self-confidence, grow healthy social bonds with peers and elders, and express themselves as individuals. Musical skills and appreciation acquired by children will stay with them throughout their lives. Many of the needs noted here can be met with minimal expense, through volunteer labor by residents of all ages. Young people will feel more invested in their community and their own futures if they are included in voluntary service activities. As noted elsewhere in this report, they offer skills, creativity, energy, and enthusiasm that are uniquely valuable in the implementation of proposed projects.

Recommendation: Provide free WiFi

Free wireless internet would be an attractive draw for new businesses, and could help existing businesses grow as well as allowing island visitors to extend their stay if they can telecommute to work. Actively marketing the option to telecommute could attract new visitors who need to work for a few hours or days during their stay while still enjoying some leisure time. Other benefits of wireless internet include making this service available to low income families who cannot afford home internet, and to school students who do not have access to transportation to use in-school computers after classes end. Improved access to WiFi would thus benefit a broad spectrum of islanders.



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following suggestions are derived from what the public told us during our visit in October of 2011, and also reflect the resource team’s outside perspectives. During the visit, the team asked individuals to share their impressions of various projects and initiatives that have been implemented in their community, or that might be appropriate to implement. The team’s recommendations are ranked according to themes **not** priority. The next step in this process is for team members to ask the communities to rank their priorities for future projects and activities. These recommendations represent a starting point, designed to provide the communities with several achievable goals within the four areas of the Main Street approach. As the community working groups begin to act towards the completion of these suggested projects, those groups tasked with the completion of community priorities may wish to use this list as a guide and adapt it as appropriate. Suggested projects can be added or removed as the standing working groups deem appropriate. This is a local effort and should closely reflect local needs and preferences.

Recommendation	Time Frame	Partners
Organization		
Establish an implementation steering group		
Develop a mission statement, program of work and implementation plan		
Establish standing working groups (organization, design, promotion, economic revitalization) to implement the strategic plan		
Establish a Hatteras Island Emergency Management Council		
Work with Dare County to appoint a Hatteras Island representative to the Dare County Control Group		
Seek and secure funding to implement priority projects		
Coordinate delivery of health and human services, including mental health education and outreach, and integrated wellness approaches		
Develop civic associations		
Improve relationships and communication between residents and the National Parks Service		
Increase volunteerism		
Develop leadership training		
Strengthen capacity for grassroots participation in governmental decision processes		



Design		
Create and protect walkable village centers		
Encourage the public to be involved in the bike lane design process, and generate on-going community support for implementing and extending the paved paths along the Outer Banks National Scenic Byway		
Work with the Park Service to develop better signage and improve communication about beach closures		
Explore potential benefits of historic district designation		
Install wayfinding signage and information kiosks to showcase island assets		
Petition the county to enforce business signage guidelines		
Consider a community swimming pool		
Work with proposed Ocean Center to develop partnerships		
Promotion		
Begin conversations with the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau to establish a tourism development person specific for Hatteras Island		
Develop a Hatteras Island brand around a “best known for” local Island feature		
Promote the island’s quality of life to entice private company relocation		
Diversify the tourism economy through immersion tourism, eco-tourism, and educational activities, such as natural history, historic sites, commercial fishing, foodways, etc.		
Encourage sustainable tourism		
Create walking/biking tours/trails to showcase historic areas and working waterfront		
Promote Frisco as a destination for art and art galleries		
Explore options for angler ferries, and soundside/canal boat tours (see recommendation under economic revitalization)		
Economic Revitalization		
Conduct market analyses to identify small business needs and opportunities		
Promote small business development and entrepreneurial, community-based economic development, including telecommuting and cottage industries		
Seek support for sales of seafood at the farmers market from the Dare County Department of Public Health Board		
Explore alternative seafood distribution, processing, and value-added		
Maintain working waterfront areas		



Encourage schools, hospitals and other institutions to buy and promote local seafood		
Investigate the feasibility and economic potential of expanded shellfish mariculture		
Explore small scale water taxis and tours		
Strengthen pier-based fishing opportunities		
Increase the inventory of affordable housing for residents		
Develop a comprehensive transportation plan for the island		
Create opportunities for children, youth, and young adults		
Provide free WiFi on the island		



GETTING STARTED

Coastal residents understand fully that “all things are connected” – for example, tourism development, a vibrant local economy, strong businesses, and water access are all inextricably linked. In addition to the four focus areas of the Main Street Approach, eight principles will guide plan development to foster the best chance for success. These include –

Comprehensive – progress should be made in all four areas

Incremental – start with small, easier projects and work up to the more challenging initiatives.

Self-help – maintain community involvement and commitment in each on-the-ground activity.

Partnerships – each group has a role to play and working together engages everyone’s strengths.

Capitalize on existing assets – make the most of the natural, historical, cultural and human resources in each community.

Quality – the number of community improvements is less important than the impact of each activity on residents and visitors alike.

Change – carefully plan your initial projects to have successes early on that will help shift public perceptions and practices in support of change.

Implementation – it is better to see a few projects through to completion than to start multiple initiatives that come up short due to resource limitations

Changes in the organization, business, promotion and built environment in the Tri-Villages and Avon need to balance resources with potential impact. Some changes will occur faster due to interest, funds and timing. As a guide, specific projects on the Island should be:

DOABLE: Projects should be undertaken with a clear understanding of the resources and capacity to complete them. Focus limited resources on small-scale projects with big impact. Choose projects that allow community members to contribute their skills and expertise.

VISIBLE: Choose projects that are easily seen by many and in prominent locations. Timing is key – it is important that action is taken soon after recommendations are made. For example, projects along Highway 12 would be noticeable immediately.

AFFORDABLE: Projects should respect the limited resources of the villages. The selection and design of projects should balance the costs with the potential impacts.

FLEXIBLE: Instead of projects focusing or supporting one type of activity, they should be designed to be flexible enough to support a range of activities, planned and unplanned.

INCLUSIVE: The design, planning and construction of projects should actively engage members of the community as well as visitors to build ownership into the process. Newer and longer term residents must be fully involved. Projects should be designed in a way that will be children-, youth-, and young-adult-friendly, as well.

TRAINING: As projects roll out, make an effort to build and enhance the skill set of community members throughout the process.

APPROPRIATE: Projects should respond to the feedback received from community members, stakeholders and the planning and design professionals that worked together to generate this report.

SUSTAINABLE: Projects should respond to the natural environment. Local materials and contractors should be used wherever possible to ensure that the economic impact of the projects remain, for the most part, local.

Some basic things to keep in mind as you move forward:

Attitudes

- Be authentic – remember who you are, and what’s important to the community
- Build on your assets
- Build your strengths by addressing your weaknesses
- Be patient
- Listen to the community, and to each other
- Find win-win solutions
- Cultivate your funders and partners

Actions

- Work hard
- Work together
- Plan and organize well
- Work the plan, but remember that the plan is a living document that can be adapted to changing circumstances.
- Get the whole community involved, especially the naysayers
- Feed the volunteers – people who eat together work together better

Communications and Manners

- Tell your story – in newsletters, newspapers, and in person
- Thank your volunteers, funders, and investors – many times and many ways
- Keep the community informed

Celebrate your successes

- Continue to cultivate your funders and partners
- Evaluation
- Evaluate quantitatively (how much) – and qualitatively (how good)
- Learn from your mistakes, and your successes
- Take pictures – before, during, and after
- Take stock of what you have accomplished – write it down
- Let the community know what they have accomplished collectively, through direct and indirect support
- Remember you can accomplish anything if you don't mind who gets the credit
- Ask the community what they think



MONITORING & EVALUATION

Constant evaluation of the recommendations in this plan, via regular review sessions with the organization working group, is critical to ensuring that the plan remains viable, a living document. You will need to monitor how well you are furthering the Four Point Approach and how successful you are at managing projects, meeting deadlines, communicating internally and to your multiple external audiences, and utilizing the resources available continually to determine progress.

Remember, this plan is a living document used to prioritize the needs of the community and outline recommendations. The value of the plan lies with the ability of the organizational body to set realistic goals — and implement innovative strategies — against which progress can be measured. It also allows the community to measure the ongoing product. Implementation, evaluation and modification should be continuous in order for the plan to remain relevant, responsive and proactive. This strategic effort will provide greater accountability representing an organization-wide approach to preserving and enhancing the quality of life your very special community enjoys.



RESOURCES

The following are just a few organizations, resources, and programs that the resource team has found useful for purposes similar to those discussed in this report.

Human Capacity –

Living on the Margins – A Guidebook Connecting Individuals with Opportunities

This NC Rural Economic Development Center publication walks community groups through a planning process with step-by-step exercises to create actionable plans for job creation, educational opportunities, and youth engagement:

www.ncruralcenter.org/publications.html

Sustainable Communities

Developing more sustainable communities is important to our national goals of strengthening our economy, creating good jobs now while providing a foundation for lasting prosperity, using energy more efficiently to secure energy independence, and protecting our natural environment and human health. Three federal agencies came together to create the Partnership for Sustainable Communities to help places around the country develop in more environmentally and economically sustainable ways.

www.sustainablecommunities.gov/toolsKeyResources.html

AmeriCorps

Part of any community development effort is cultivating human resources in addition to monetary. More than \$3.4 million in federal grants are available for North Carolina non-profits and government agencies to recruit AmeriCorps members. AmeriCorps volunteers assist non-profits and government agencies with providing tutoring, mentoring, disaster services, environmental stewardship, education on healthy futures, and job training and placement. The N.C. Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service coordinates the grants. Grant applications are due to the N.C. Volunteer Commission by noon on Friday, March 16, 2012.

Application forms are available on the N.C. Volunteer Commission's website at: www.volunteernc.org, or by calling 919-715-3470 or 1-800-820-4483.

Volunteers for Peace

Bringing outside volunteers can help attract new energy to a project, and can bring the fresh perspective of seeing one's own community through the eyes of others. The non-profit organization Volunteers for Peace facilitates the placement of international and national volunteers for this purpose. Most are college-aged and unskilled, but they bring high energy and enthusiasm. In the past they have assisted projects such as festivals and fundraising events; construction and renovation; historic preservation;

environmental conservation and education; and working with children, elderly, disabled, or disadvantaged groups. More information is at: www.vfp.org/join-us/host-a-project

East Carolina University

ECU has experts in relevant areas such as regional planning, hazards response, development of natural resource economies, education, sustainable tourism, and social services. Many resources can be accessed by developing collaborative research and outreach relationships with appropriate faculty. Finding the right folks, however, can be harder. First stops for hazards response expertise might include the ECU Geography Department, Renaissance Computing Institute, and Center for Natural Hazards Research. General planning expertise is also based in the Urban and Regional Planning Program, housed within the Geography Department. The Geography Department also has expertise in natural resource economies and sustainable tourism. The College of Education, Center Sustainable Tourism, and School of Social Work might also offer helpful resources. www.ecu.edu/cs-cas/geog/index.cfm, www.ecu.edu/cs-cas/plan/, www.ecu.edu/renci/, www.ecu.edu/hazards/, www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/sustainabletourism/, www.ecu.edu/che/socw/

Penobscot East Resource Center

Penobscot East works in an area similar in many ways to the Outer Banks, on issues relevant to this report. Their mission is to support sustainable coastal communities in rural eastern Maine. Their primary target is small boat fishing operations, but their model is also useful in a broader sense. They actively work toward public participation in resource management decision making, community-based innovations in fisheries management and seafood markets, collaborative research, and resource stewardship education. Among their programs is the Community Fisheries Action Roundtable, as noted above, which offers knowledge and training to encourage resource stewardship through public participation in government decision processes.

www.penobscoteast.org/default.asp

Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance

Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance offers a somewhat different model for grassroots involvement in natural resource decision making, again focused on the fishing industry. They conduct targeted advocacy campaigns to mobilize support for small businesses in natural resource management, and they support seafood market innovations. This group mainly works in the Northeast, but also has strong contacts here. Their focus is more on mobilizing regional support for regional and federal level advocacy, whereas Penobscot East organizes at the local level and targets mostly state and regional issues. <http://namanet.org/>

Island Institute Leadership Training

The Island Leaders Program serves those currently in leadership positions – as well as island residents who want to make a greater commitment to their communities – with skill-building and networking opportunities, linking leaders across Maine’s archipelago to discuss and address island issues.



Preserving Coastal Heritage Video

The link provided is for a video about Down East and Hatteras Island fishing communities that was featured at the NC Rural Economic Development Center 2010 Rural Partners Forum in Raleigh:

www.yousendit.com/transfer.php?action=batch_download&send_id=981070217&email=f93396b06712c33f1c2e116e04c65383

US National Park Service's ethnohistory report

www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/caha/caha_ethno_v1.pdf

House Museums Info

There are a number of online resources for local and "house museums," including some provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.preservationnation.org); and OldHouses.com (www.oldhouses.com).

North Carolina Handmade in America

Handmade in America offers resources for crafters, artists, apprentices, schoolteachers. Their website has search functions for customers to find craftspeople and their products. They promote handcrafts by facilitating market connections.

www.handmadeinamerica.org/

North Carolina Folklife Institute

The Folklife Institute supports programs and projects that recognize, document, and present traditional culture, including oral histories. They sometimes offer training in documentary filmmaking. Their website hosts travel itineraries and has links to other resources. www.ncfolk.org

North Carolina Paddle Trails Association

The Paddle Association promotes paddling in North Carolina, including trail maps and event announcements, and links to outfitters and guides. www.ncpaddletrails.com

UNC School of Government Community Economic Development Program

Provides public officials with training, research, and assistance that support local efforts to create jobs and wealth, expand the tax base, and maintain vibrant communities. www.sog.unc.edu/programs/cednc Published the booklet *Small Town Big Ideas: Case Studies in Small Town Community Economic Development* www.sog.unc.edu/programs/cednc/stbi/pdfs/stbi_final.pdf

NC Department of Cultural Resources

The Department of Cultural Resources has staff with expertise in the arts, crafts, education, historic architecture, archaeology, etc.: www.ncdcr.gov/



Financial Capacity –

Habitat for Humanity

Around the country, Habitat has helped tens of thousands of partner families (through sweat equity) move into simple, decent, affordable houses. To help even more, part of Habitat's responsibility includes advocacy and public awareness with local and state elected officials. Habitat supports a national Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The HTF would be a new source of revenue to assist in the production of new affordable housing and the rehabilitation of existing housing. As a bonus, Habitat offers a disaster response, which is bonus to an island highly prone to hurricane impacts. www.habitat.com

The Duke Endowment ~ Rural Church Program

Over the years, the United Methodist Church has played a pivotal role in dozens of North Carolina's rural districts, where the local church is the center of weekly worship, baptisms, weddings, funerals and community events, as well as home to food pantries and centers for child and elder care. Through our grants for rural churches, the Endowment seeks to help build facilities that support community service, and help churches explore sustainable building practices that can meet spiritual needs and economic realities. www.dukeendowment.org/grants/grants-overview

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

The Foundation provides grants for environmental, community development and pre-collegiate education projects and organizations. Hawley Truax is the environmental program officer and Tracey Greene-Dorsett is the community development program officer. Their next deadline is February 1, 2012. The first step is to contact the program officer and request a meeting; it is good to bring a one- or two-page description of the project and what problems it is designed to address. www.zsr.org

National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant Program

Through the Our Town program, the Endowment provides a limited number of grants, ranging from \$25,000 to \$150,000, for creative "placemaking" projects that contribute toward the livability of communities and help transform them into lively, beautiful and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Applications are due on March 1, 2012. www.nea.gov/grants/apply/ourtown/index.html

Self-Help Credit Union

This community development financial institution provides loans for business and economic development purposes, particularly to borrowers that are higher-risk or not understood by traditional lenders. www.self-help.org

Airbnb.com

Airbnb is an internet service matching travelers directly with local accommodations offered by private individuals, from simple rooms to family homes. www.airbnb.com/

The Conservation Fund's Natural Capital Investment Fund

This investment fund is a community development financial institution that provides loans and technical assistance to natural resource-based businesses, which often have a hard time getting loans from traditional lenders. The loan range typically is from \$50,000 to \$250,000 and Rick Larson (rlarson@conservationfund.org) heads up the N.C. lending. www.ncifund.org

The Conservation Fund's ShadeFund

This web-based, micro-loan program for natural resource-based businesses subsidiary of The Conservation Fund also is spearheaded by Rick Larson, but the loans typically range from \$5,000 to \$35,000. A resource-based organization can contact Enrique Perez (eperez@conservationfund.org) to see about being a field partner, which does not cost anything. The entity merely agrees to refer natural resource-based small businesses to them, and then the organization is listed as a partner on their website. www.shadefund.org

NOAA's Small Business Innovation Research Phase I 2012

The US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) plans to seek proposals from small business firms for participation in Phase I of the Fiscal Year 2012 NOAA Small Business Innovation Research Program. The purpose of Phase I of the SBIR program is for firms to conduct research and development which will allow the Government to determine the scientific or technical merit and feasibility of concepts, ideas and quality of performance as a prerequisite for further Government support which may follow in Phase II of the program. The following are the NOAA, Research and Development topics available for Phase I: Climate Adaption and Mitigation, Weather-Ready Nation, Healthy Oceans, Resilient Coastal Communities and Economies. The 2012 proposal deadline is February 1.

https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&tab=core&id=fada14ff631c75636708234c986f3c3b&_cvview=0

US Department of Agriculture Rural Development Program

The US Department of Agriculture has a wide range of grant and loan programs, including the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program that is administered by the electric membership cooperatives and provides (some) grant dollars and (more) low-interest loan dollars for buildings and other capital improvements. They also have funding for community economic development, small business loans and loan guarantees, housing, job creation, and also, a small business innovation research grant program. To find out more about these programs, contact the local electric co-op or the regional USDA RD person. www.rurdev.usda.gov/nc/

US Economic Development Administration

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides federal funds on a dollar-for-dollar match basis for buildings and other bricks-and-mortar improvements that will create jobs. These are very competitive, and it would probably be good to talk with the County economic developer about these programs, as it would strengthen a proposal to do it in partnership with the County and/or the Council of Governments. They even have a Global Climate Change Mitigation Incentive Fund program that provides funding if your building is LEED certified, uses alternative energy, etc. The EDA requires letters documenting that jobs will be created; the

contact person is Robin Cooley, the program officer for North Carolina and South Carolina, and her office is in Columbia, SC. Her email address is rcooley@eda.doc.gov. For general information visit: www.eda.gov/InvestmentsGrants/Programs.xml

US Economic Development Administration Supplemental Disaster Relief

The EDA intends to award investments in regions experiencing severe economic distress as a result of severe storms and flooding that occurred between March and May 2010. Under this announcement, EDA solicits applications for Economic Adjustment Assistance investments under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended. Through the Economic Adjustment Assistance program (CFDA No. 11.307), winning applicants will utilize EDA's flexible set of program tools to develop and implement on a regional basis long-term economic redevelopment strategies for certain disaster-impacted regions in the U.S. The deadline appears to be on a rolling term until March 9, 2014.

www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=cjtRTkTG4p1gTDLsknLn3YLyW7F8TzRkB06vY0b0Sn8SVJhynLJK!-102435184?oppld=69933&mode=VIEW

North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation Trust Fund

The Fund provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for parks and recreational projects to serve the public. A group would have to partner and submit the application through Dare County. Their maximum grant is \$500,000, and the money can be used for land acquisition or capital improvements like buildings, boardwalks, piers, signage, parking areas, restroom facilities, etc. The 2012 submittal deadline is January 31, and a first step is to contact the eastern field representative and introduce them to the project, while also contacting the County Parks and Recreation folks to see if they are already planning to submit grant requests for other projects. www.ncparks.gov/About/grants/partf_main.php

North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center

The Rural Center has a variety of grant and loan programs, particularly the Economic Innovation grants program and the Capital Access Program, which is designed to encourage banks to invest in riskier or non-traditional loans; and they provide micro-loans. They also recently announced a special youth initiative that has a range of programs to engage young adults in entrepreneurship, and community-based planning and project implementation. www.ncruralcenter.org

Outer Banks Community Development Corporation

The Outer Banks Community Development Corporation (CDC) offers housing counseling services, and development and governmental support assistance to Dare and surrounding counties. www.obx-cdc.org

A. J. Fletcher Foundation

There are some foundations that provide capacity-building support, including this Foundation. Unfortunately, it is not making any grants in 2012. Looking to the future, this is a program that could help hire staff for community efforts. In the meantime, one thing community leaders should definitely do is keep track of the cash and in-kind contributions of volunteers' time and any other support received from lawyers, real estate agents, etc. The dollar amount of those in-kind contributions will demonstrate strong community

support for the project, which will give a competitive advantage over groups that do not have strong community support.
www.ajf.org

Golden LEAF Foundation

Golden LEAF's mission is to promote the social welfare of North Carolina's citizens and to receive and distribute funds for economic impact assistance to economically affected or tobacco-dependent regions of North Carolina. <http://goldenleaf.org/>

