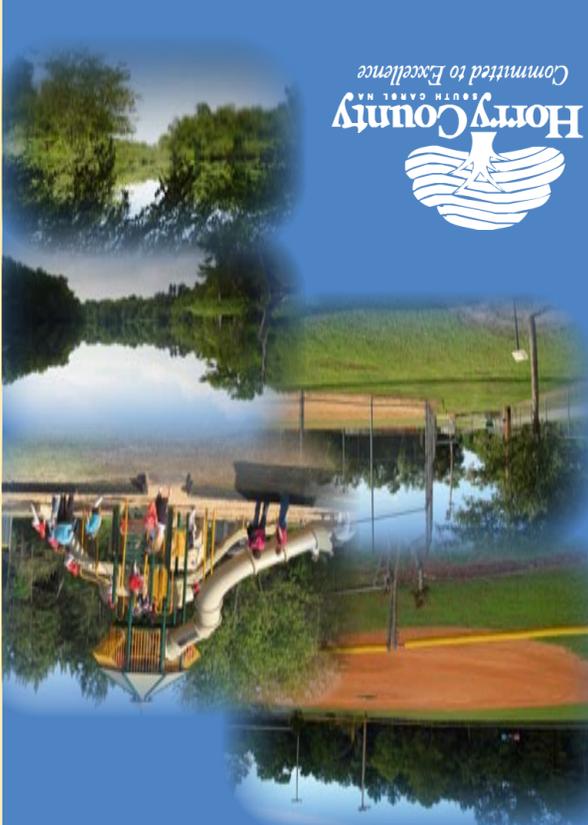


- Promote the preservation of open space, scenic areas and vistas, greenways, squares or village greens;
- Promote the protection and conservation of environmental or natural resources;
- Promote the expansion of quality open space for a wide range of recreational opportunities including playgrounds, playfields, plazas, parks, mini-parks, picnic areas, bicycle or hiking trails, or golf courses for all County residents;
- Promote tourism emphasizing open space, recreational sites, and natural resources of Horry County;
- Promote education, awareness and research relating to environmental and natural resources;
- Assist in coordinating activities of volunteers, organizations, businesses and governmental agencies interested in the preservation of open space, recreational sites and natural resources; prepare and submit to the Horry County Council for consideration a proposed list of areas of open space, significant environmental and natural resources and recreational sites to be acquired, leased, preserved, protected, maintained or developed through a new Horry County Open Space Fund.



Mission - Parks and Open Space Board

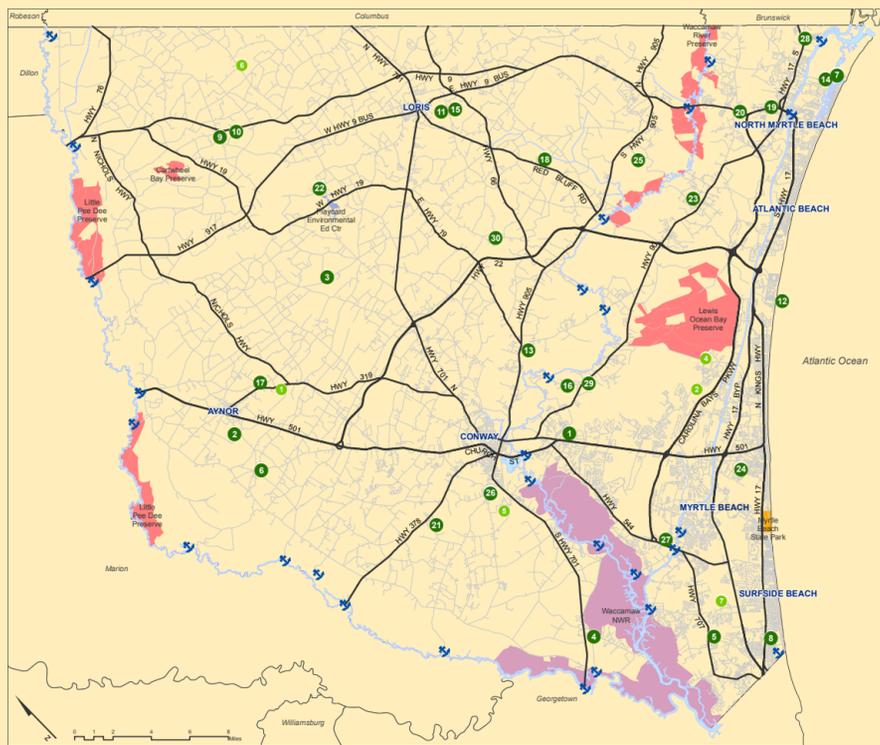
The Parks and Open Space Board was established to serve and assist the citizens of Horry County and their government with the protection of Natural Open Spaces while ensuring the provision of passive and active recreation sites. The Open Space Board was created in 2000 and re-established as the Parks and Open Space Board in 2004 to:



“Bringing Quality to Healthy Life”

Horry County

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE BOARD



Nature Preserves, State Parks, and Wildlife Refuges

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Heritage Trust Program was created in 1976 to preserve those natural features and cultural remains, which are quickly disappearing as the state's population increases in size. The program's purpose is to identify, evaluate, and protect the elements considered the most outstanding representatives of the state's heritage. There are currently four heritage preserves in Horry County.

Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve - This preserve is 5,387 acres, which includes 30 miles of protected river wetlands and bottomland hardwood forests. The property contains the best examples of the endangered plant species, dwarf fimbry.

Cartwheel Bay Heritage Preserve - This 568 acre preserve protects one of the few known Carolina Bay-longleaf pine savannah complexes in South Carolina. The longleaf pine savannahs contain white fringed, yellow fringed and rosebud orchids, venus fly traps, pitcher plants and a diverse array of wildflowers.

Lewis Ocean Bay Heritage Preserve - This 9,393 acre preserve contains a group of 23 undisturbed Carolina Bays. This preserve includes habitats for black bear, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, the threatened Venus flytrap and a pond pine pocosin plant community.

Little Pee Dee Heritage Preserve - This 9,000 acre tract is in both Georgetown and Horry Counties. This property protects the rare sarvis holly, a mature floodplain forest, and scenic frontage along the Little Pee Dee River. The preserve includes Knife Island and four scenic oxbow lakes.

The Civilian Conservation Corp built the **Myrtle Beach State Park** in the 1930's making it the first state park in South Carolina. The park is 312 acres and includes a campground, cabins, a mile of beach, picnic areas, fishing pier and nature center. As a South Carolina Heritage Trust site, the park's nature trail showcases the last stands of maritime forests on the northern coast of the State.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established the **Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge** (NWR) in December 1997. The refuge was established to protect and manage diverse habitat components within an important coastal river ecosystem for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, freshwater and anadromous fish, migratory birds, and forest wildlife. The Refuge includes a wide array of plants and animals associated with bottomland hardwood habitats and provides compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities. These activities include hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, and environmental education and interpretation. Located in portions of Horry, Georgetown, and Marion County, the Waccamaw NWR acquisition boundary spans over 55,000 acres and includes large sections of the Waccamaw and Great Pee Dee Rivers and a small section of the Little Pee Dee River. The USFWS is actively acquiring lands within this acquisition boundary from willing sellers and presently refuge lands purchased total over 9,700 acres (3832 acres in Horry County)



Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is defined as an interconnected network of open spaces that conserves natural ecosystems and functions, and provides associated benefits to human populations. The keys to green infrastructure preservation are twofold: 1) identifying areas worthy of preservation in advance of development; and 2) linking these areas together, since a network of open space functions better as an ecological whole, rather than as separate open space “islands”. When linked together, these open spaces are able to function as an ecological whole, rather than as separate and unrelated parts. This enables them to better: 1) remove pollutants from the air; 2) carry and filter stormwater runoff; and 3) support diverse plant and wildlife species. A green infrastructure network normally consists of these three elements: hubs, linkages and sites.



Hubs: Hubs anchor green infrastructure networks and provide an origin or destination for wildlife and ecological processes moving to or through it.

Linkages: Links are the connections that tie the system together and enable green infrastructure networks to work. Their importance is reflected in both the preservation of plants and species, and in the maintenance of ecological processes.

Sites: Sites are smaller open space areas within a region that may or may not be linked to green infrastructure network, but nonetheless should be identified as part of it. It is the overall goal of the Open Space Plan to map our green infrastructure in a way that provides for long-term ecosystem health and function, meets the recreational needs of County residents and continues to accommodate growth in the region. Green infrastructure is divided into Natural and Man-made systems. About 5 percent of the land area in Horry County has been set aside for natural resource protection and recreation.

tion and recreation.

Zoning and Land Development Regulations

Requiring a developer of land in Horry County to provide open space is triggered during the development review process. In the Land Development Regulations, open space is required once the density of the project exceeds its density threshold. Open space within a project can be achieved by providing a combination of common and/or recreational elements. Open Space must be usable for active recreation and shall also preserve existing woodlands and other unique geographic features.

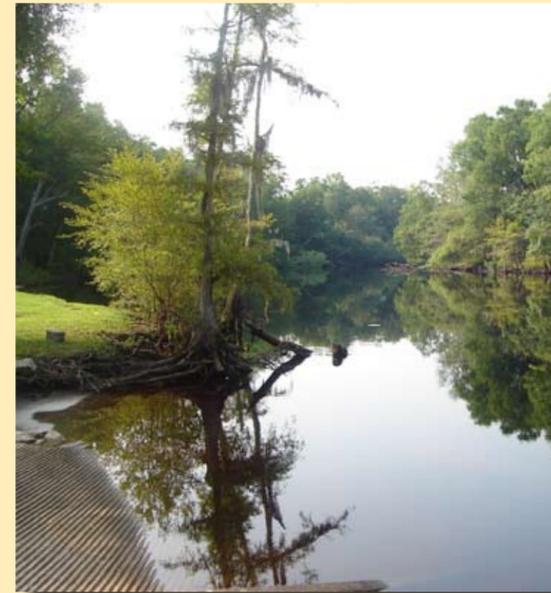


If providing open space on site is not feasible, the Land Development Regulations provide several options for the developer. Options include a land exchange, a fee-in-lieu payment, or a combination of both. Land exchange is when the developer may mitigate the open space for a particular project at a different off-site location. Depending on the amount of open space acreage that is required, all or a portion of the land may be exchanged. The fee-in-lieu option is a payment of a fee equal to the value of the open space acreage to be provided on-site in lieu of providing the open space within a development. A developer requesting exchange can pay the appraised value of the land. Monies collected through this process are placed in the Horry County Open Space Fund.



East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway is a multi-use urban trail system extending from Maine to the Florida Keys. Horry and Georgetown Counties approved a master plan that identifies route options for users of the Greenway to traverse each county. Segments of the trail have been installed within Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach and Georgetown County. The South Carolina Department of Transportation is a strong supporter of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and has made them an integral part of current and new projects.



OPEN SPACE DEFINITION

Open space is an undeveloped piece of land that adds ecological, scenic or recreational value to an area. Examples include forests, marshes and wildlife sanctuaries. Open spaces can also include farmland, wetlands, floodways and floodplains. Open space may be publicly or privately owned and maintained.

Benefits and functions of Open Space

All types of open space may serve as “green infrastructure” that provide a number of important functions and benefits to county residents and visitors. Different types of open space provide benefits depending on the nature of open space, location and other factors. Following are key identified functions and benefits.

Hazard reduction and public safety – reduces risk to life and property associated with lands prone to hurricanes, floods, and fires or other constraints such as unsuitable soils and wetlands that make lands unsuitable for development for public safety or health reasons.

Resource protection – includes maintaining water supplies, preserving water quality, filtration of wastewater and enhancing air quality. These may also include corridors for drainageways and utility right-of-way as well as mitigating noise along highways or security zones around airports or military reserves.

View preservation – protects scenic views and important visual backdrops. Scenic roadways provide a sense of place with their natural, historic, or cultural significance. Similarly, scenic waterways are designated areas at key locations that afford users an opportunity to view significant waterways, water features and wildlife habitat.

Comfort and link to nature - provides accessible places for relaxation, contemplation and quiet.

Health and fitness - offers accessible places that promote and facilitate passive recreational uses such as hiking, biking, and jogging.

Access and linkage - provides residents access to green spaces and open space networks (greenways). Links open spaces together into contiguous functioning networks and systems.

Wildlife protection - conserves diverse and healthy biological systems including both flora and fauna.

Special landscape preservation – protects unique and irreplaceable landscapes, geological formations, cultural resources and sacred places.

Agricultural lands preservation – protects existing and potential future agricultural resources including working croplands and timberlands.

Economic value - provides economic benefits as a result of preservation including tourism, property value protection and enhancement and attracting business and industry.

Community identity and character – shapes and defines urban form including relief from urban sprawl, separation of large urban expanses and creating a sense of readily accessible (or viewable) open space from residences and businesses.

