

**ORIENTAL, NORTH CAROLINA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

SAILING CAPITAL OF NORTH CAROLINA

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PART ONE: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

SECTION 1: SETTING THE STAGE

This document is advisory and aspirational in nature, meant to serve as a guide for the progress of Oriental.

The statements within are not enforceable – nor should be interpreted as enforceable – law, zoning requirement, or ordinance.

A. Overview

Oriental, the *Sailing Capital of North Carolina*, is a friendly and welcoming waterfront community nestled among several creeks and the Neuse River in southeastern Pamlico County. From the beginning, the natural harbor attracted commercial interests and Oriental was incorporated as a town in 1899. In the early decades of the town, key industries were farming, fishing, logging and sawmills. Railroad and steamship services transported goods to markets. After the Second World War railroads to small towns virtually disappeared causing Oriental’s economy and population to shrink in vitality and size. Commercial fishing and packing helped fill the void, providing employment for many.

As the last sawmill was closing, boaters cruising the new Intracoastal Waterway along with recreational boaters from central North Carolina “discovered” Oriental. In 1960 only a few sailboats called Oriental home, now there are thousands in the area. Eventually recreational boating joined commercial fishing as an important aspect of economic opportunity.

In the 1970’s the farmland on Ragan Road, Link Lane and Lupton Drive was subdivided into single family lots as was the land along Whittaker and Pierce Creeks where marinas and boat yards already existed. Many cruising sailors stopping on their travels ultimately bought or built homes in those areas. Boating, water vistas and small-town charm continue to attract newcomers.

By the end of the last century the local economy had broadened beyond sailing and commercial fishing to ecotourism* type activities including motor boating, kayaking, recreational fishing, biking and related businesses. Restaurants, inns, shops and services developed to cater to residents and an increasing stream of visitors. Along with the enhancement of water-related activities, a growing interest in visual and performing arts and the pursuit of wellness activities helped stimulate Oriental’s growing niche in tourism.

U.S. census data indicate that there has been little change in population between

* See pg 27 for definition.

2000 and 2010. Oriental's population swells on holidays, weekends, and especially during Croaker Festival, Spirit of Christmas, and New Year's Eve Dragon Run. Since the late 1980's and continuing to this day, the town's boundaries have grown through voluntary annexation of mostly residential areas off White Farm Road. Oriental's identity extends to a variety of surrounding neighborhoods whose residents consider Oriental to be "their town," too.

By 2020, the impacts of the changing environment became more apparent. The 2010s brought two "500 year" storms to Oriental, impacting homes, businesses and town infrastructure. Oriental now looks to resiliency* projects and education resources to help mitigate the damage from future environmental impacts.

B. Oriental's Long Range Vision: Background

In 2007, the Town Commissioners appointed a Long Range Planning Committee tasked with creating a Vision Document that would guide the future development of Oriental. This Committee conducted a workshop in September 2008, which created a 30 question survey that organized public input into four areas.

1. Community Identity, Waterfronts, Appearance, and Lifestyle
2. Economic Opportunity, Development and Sustainability
3. Governance and General Operations
4. Growth and Expansion

Respondents were predominately residents but also included part-time and non-residents. In addition to the survey, the Long Range Planning Committee also hosted a workshop that included business owners and non-profit board members. To complete the Vision Document, committee members reviewed the results of the Oriental Planning Conference of 1988, the Waterfront Feasibility Study of 1996 and the 2007 CAMA Land Use Plan Update. The Vision Document was completed and adopted in October 2009.

C. Oriental's Comprehensive Plan: Background

With a valid town vision in place, the Town Commissioners in March 2010, appointed a Long Range Planning Committee II tasked with creating a Comprehensive Plan: a 20-year plan intended to be updated every ten years. This committee consulted all of the Town's standing boards, committees and staff for actions and recommendations. The resulting Comprehensive Plan allows the community to respond to opportunities and threats. The plan directs the efforts of the Town's staff, boards, committees, and volunteers. This document can be amended to meet new challenges or situations. The Town Commissioners have incorporated chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan into the

* See pg 27 for definition.

Town's General Ordinances, which defines the process for periodic review and amendment.

The community is indebted to the Long Range Planning Committee II members named below for their tireless efforts to create the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

Ten years later, in May 2022, the Town Planning Board began the ten-year update. Between May 2022 and August 2023, the Town Planning Board gathered information for the Plan update. Sources of information included:

1. A Town Boards Open House at Town Hall
2. A 17-question survey announced in the water bills, and available to town residents, part-time residents, and non-residents both online at TownDock.net and on paper at Town Hall
3. Ideas expressed by people who spoke at regularly scheduled Planning Board Meetings and Town Board Meetings
4. Town Boards input on Goals, Recommendations, and Actions
5. The Pamlico Sound Region Hazard Mitigation Plan
6. Pamlico County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
7. A workshop to integrate the information and finalize the update

The Planning Board built on the existing document, removing references to completed projects and goals, integrating the above information in alignment with the current needs and concerns of residents and the town.

The past decade has demonstrated Oriental's need to be competitive in successfully applying for state, federal, and third-party grants and funding opportunities, particularly in the face of environmental vulnerabilities, and the maintenance and repair of town infrastructure.

A six-month pandemic illustrated how even a robust plan cannot take into account the unforeseen.

With the lessons of the past decade in mind, the Planning Board spent the better part of 2023 updating the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the funding needs of the town, while mapping out the varied visions of its residents.

This document, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 160D, Article 5, (a1) "sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction. A land-use plan uses text and maps to designate the future use or reuse of land. A comprehensive or land-use plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs.

"Planning analysis may address inventories of existing conditions and assess future trends

regarding demographics and economic, environmental, and cultural factors.”

Oriental’s Comprehensive Plan is meant to serve as a guide for the future concerns and development of the town. It is not immutable; the Plan may be changed again and again before the next 10-year update. It is “advisory in nature and without independent regulatory effect.” And this plan does not “expand, diminish, or alter the scope of authority for development regulations.”

In short, it is a guide map with a list of goals and actions that may change as the needs and wishes of the town and residents change.

See Appendix I for the full text of 160D-501, defining a Comprehensive Plan

SECTION 2: VISION

A. Community Identity, Waterfronts, Appearance and Lifestyle

The town's appearance and charm come from its proximity to the Neuse River and the many creeks surrounding it. The harbor waterfront, original town footprint and newer neighborhoods echo the theme of a lifestyle that is safe, friendly and historically reliant on maritime activities and the draw of the natural beauty of the area.

Oriental Waterfronts

- Maintain and expand the public's access to the water, water views, launching and docking facilities, and public waterways throughout the community.
- Promote public and private environmental stewardship* .
- Design for current and future changing environmental conditions.
- Encourage public and private expansions of commercial and recreational maritime activities and services along Oriental's traditional working waterfronts.

Harbor

- Ensure that future development and redevelopment include the public's interest in preserving and expanding access to the harbor's working waterfront.
- Encourage fishing, both commercial and recreational, as important elements of the local economy and traditional reflections of the town's heritage.

Historic Oriental

- Encourage preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of older, historic, and original buildings.
- Promote development and redevelopment that reflect the traditional "front porch" welcoming character of the town.

Whitaker Creek, Pierce Creek, Dolphin Point and other areas

- Encourage development that continues a feeling of small-town togetherness.

B. Economic Opportunity, Resilience, Development and Sustainability

Over the years, Oriental's economic capacity has expanded and contracted based on the success or failure of water-oriented businesses. A comprehensive business development strategy that creates an environment for opportunity, growth and support will help to overcome threats, both real and perceived, which face businesses and entrepreneurs.

* See pg 27 for definition.

Business and Commerce

- Engender an atmosphere of welcome and support for entrepreneurs and business owners.
- Assist in the coordination of community resources, activities and services among the town, its businesses, and volunteers.

Waterfronts

- Encourage and facilitate the continuation and enhancement of working waterfronts such as fish houses, marinas and boat yards while promoting stewardship of the natural environment.

C. Town Governance and General Operations

The town's elected governing body is responsible for enacting the town's procedures and ordinances. The paid staff tends to daily operations and enforcement (GS 160A-148). A long-range vision will assist these individuals in anticipating the town's needs while honoring its heritage.

Public Works, Public and Private Services

- Provide an environment that is safe and functional with appropriate and necessary services.
- Manage the town's facilities and assets to preserve and protect the local environment.
- Link together community and county assets, resources, activities and services.

Transportation, Traffic Circulation and Parking

- Provide traffic patterns for vehicular and alternative transportation modes that are safe, fluid, and accessible.
- Implement transportation routes and parking facilities that enhance Oriental's visual appeal.

Open Areas, Trails and Pathways

- Develop pathways, trails and corridors that interconnect the town's recreational facilities, parks, commercial areas and residential neighborhoods.
- Expand Oriental's park space and recreational opportunities in established and future neighborhoods.

D. Growth and Expansion

Just as the town has evolved since its inception, changes will come to Oriental. In the long-range vision process the public has spoken clearly that in general they like Oriental the way it is now and hope, regardless of what changes may come, that Oriental will continue as a small waterfront town welcoming a variety of individuals, interests and

pursuits.

Establish the means to guide growth, expansion, redevelopment and development that adheres to the points brought forward by the public and contained in this long-range vision.

SECTION 3: VISION, GOALS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Actionable items are the responsibility of the Board of Commissioners, Town Manager or Staff, or related Auxiliary Boards as directives, stated duties, and / or state statute dictates.

A. Community Identity, Waterfronts, Appearance and Lifestyle – Oriental’s Waterfronts, Harbor, Historic and Newer Neighborhoods

The town’s appearance and charm come from its proximity to the Neuse River and the many creeks surrounding that provides its unique natural beauty. The harbor waterfront, original town footprint and newer neighborhoods echo the theme of a lifestyle that is safe, friendly and historically reliant on maritime activities.

GOAL #1A:

Maintain and expand the public’s access to the water, water views, launching and docking facilities, and public waterways throughout the community.

GOAL #1B:

Ensure that future development and redevelopment include the public’s interest, preserves and / or enhances access to the harbor’s working waterfront, and meets requirements set forth by CAMA and other applicable government agencies.

RECOMMENDATION:

Create a harbor/waterfront plan that includes a visual depiction that will help business owners, developers and town planners to shape waterfront projects to meet the Town’s Vision.

ACTIONS:

1. Inventory present assets and identify potential opportunities.
2. Recognize the importance of and promote a waterfront boardwalk with public access from Point Pride Seafood along Raccoon Creek Harbor, connecting with the Water Street boardwalk, under bridge to Wildlife Ramp.
3. Increase short term docking.
4. Maintain legal access at street ends (Church St., west end; Hodges St., west end; Midyette St., south end; end of South Water St. and Water St.; Wall St., east end; King St., east end; South Ave., west end; Street endings along Camp Creek.)
5. Preserve and increase water vistas and water access points.
6. Identify potential environmental vulnerabilities and work to mitigate where and when possible.

GOAL #2:

Encourage public and private commercial and recreational maritime activities and services along Oriental’s traditional working waterfronts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Establish a public/private partnership to leverage Oriental's maritime heritage.

ACTION:

Continue to support partnerships with outside organizations that bring expertise to the table for planning.

GOAL #3:

Encourage fishing, both commercial and recreational, as important elements of the local economy and traditional reflections of the town's heritage.

RECOMMENDATION:

Find a balance between commercial and recreational fishing communities.

ACTION:

Promote educational programs that encourage understanding and cooperation between commercial and recreational fishing communities.

GOAL #4:

Encourage preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of older, historic and original buildings.

RECOMMENDATION:

Remove barriers to those homes being restored.

ACTION:

1. Review GMO regulations and modify to support preservation of older structures and landmarks.
2. Partner with the Oriental Museum and "Friends of Oriental's History" to promote the town's rich history.
3. Encourage hazard mitigation * principles are incorporated where possible.

GOAL #5:

Promote development and redevelopment that reflect the traditional "front porch" welcoming character of the town while incorporating environmental hazard mitigation where and when possible. Encourage development that continues a feeling of small-town togetherness.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Define the characteristics that make Oriental a welcoming community.
2. Define the characteristics that give Oriental a feeling of small-town togetherness.

* See pg 27 for definition.

ACTIONS:

Regularly solicit community opinion and adjust policies and ordinances to support as recommended.

B. Economic Opportunity, Development and Sustainability: Oriental’s Waterfronts, Business and Commerce

Over the years, Oriental’s economic capacity has expanded and contracted based on the success or failure of water-oriented businesses. A comprehensive business development strategy that creates an environment for opportunity, growth and support will help to overcome threats, both real and perceived, which face businesses and entrepreneurs.

GOAL #1:

Encourage and facilitate the sustainability of maritime activities and promote the environmental responsibility of maritime activities and working waterfronts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Endorse maritime business development.

ACTIONS:

1. Where possible, remove barriers to maritime business success within the framework of CAMA Best Management Practices
2. Include maritime businesses in Town directory online

GOAL #2:

Engender an atmosphere of welcome and support for entrepreneurs and business owners.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Direct business owners and entrepreneurs to information and resources that will help them begin and sustain operation.
2. Provide an environment that helps businesses and entrepreneurs to begin and sustain operation.

ACTIONS:

1. Provide, in an easy to understand format, information and guidelines for potential business owners.
2. Work with Pamlico County’s Economic Director, PCC Small Business Center, and Chamber of Commerce.
3. Help businesses promote “front porch”, “Sailing Capital of NC”, and recreational and guided fishing

4. Examine current regulations and ordinances to determine how they might better facilitate this goal.

GOAL #3:

Assist in the coordination of community resources, activities and services among the town, its businesses, and volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION:

Coordinate community resources, activities and services.

ACTIONS:

1. Advertise and provide information.
2. Collect and make available information about the town's activities so businesses can be prepared for events.
3. Support public/private partnerships, activities and services among the town, its businesses and volunteers to promote local travel and tourism and to market Oriental.
4. Promote ecotourism.
5. Join countywide tourism efforts to promote Pamlico County in general and Oriental specifically.

C. Town Governance and General Operations: Public Works / Public and Private Services; Transportation / Traffic Circulation / Parking; Open Areas / Trails / Pathways

The Town's elected governing body is responsible for enacting the town's procedures and ordinances. The paid staff tends to daily operations and enforcement (GS 160A-148). A long-range vision will assist these individuals in anticipating the town's needs while honoring its heritage.

GOAL #1:

Provide an environment that is safe and functional with appropriate and necessary services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Establish the physical needs to make Oriental safe and functional.
2. Create a plan to enhance town services as the town's needs grow. (i.e. provide quality waste and recycling services and adequate police protection).

ACTIONS:

1. Create the ADA Transition Plan and begin implementation.
2. Provide quality waste and recycling services.
3. Continue to provide an online educational program for the public on the benefits of recycling.
4. Continue to update a preparedness and recovery manual based on findings from previous tropical weather events.
5. Develop a standard operating procedure for all parks and recreational assets.

GOAL #2:

Manage the town’s facilities and assets to preserve and protect the local environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Anticipate population change and project future infrastructure needs.
2. Maintain a qualified staff.
3. Plan for future capital improvement needs.
4. Identify potential environmental vulnerabilities and work to mitigate where and when possible.

ACTIONS:

1. Keep the water distribution system up to date, manage and maintain the water treatment plant.
2. Prepare a long-range plan for improving water quality.
3. Provide appropriate training of staff to do much of the maintenance and repair of the town’s facilities/assets.
4. Regularly update a plan for future capital improvement needs.
5. Research and seek funding opportunities to pay for actions.
6. Utilize Best Management Practices* for individual facilities.

GOAL #3:

Link together community and county assets, resources, activities and services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Build positive communication avenues among individuals responsible for town governance, its citizens and business owners.
2. Build positive communication avenues between town and county officials.
3. Build positive relationships between town and county economic development efforts.
4. Advocate for regional flood maps to continue to be updated.

ACTIONS:

1. Create procedures that assure public input where appropriate.
2. Participate in quarterly County Leadership meetings.
3. Ensure that the town is represented on committees, boards and associations that promote Pamlico County economic development.
4. Compare all official plans and resolve inconsistencies.

* See pg 27 for definition.

GOAL #4:

Provide traffic patterns for vehicular and alternative transportation modes that are safe, fluid, and accessible.

RECOMMENDATION:

Anticipate and plan for environmentally and physically safe transportation patterns and modes.

ACTIONS:

1. Repair and replace sidewalks as needed.
2. Periodically update the adopted bicycle plan for Oriental.
3. Partner with NCDOT to provide safer alternative transportation spaces.
4. Add bike/walking lanes to streets where practicable.

GOAL #5:

Implement transportation routes and parking facilities that enhance Oriental's visual appeal and Town infrastructure needs. Look for opportunities as they arise.

RECOMMENDATION:

Anticipate and plan for transportation routes and parking needs that reflect increased tourism and a larger residential population in Oriental.

ACTION:

Establish a transportation and parking plan that anticipates increased traffic but also enhances Oriental's visual appeal.

GOAL #6:

Expand Oriental's park space and recreational opportunities in established and future neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATION:

Integrate recreational facilities and increase recreational capacity throughout town.

ACTIONS:

1. Encourage established neighborhoods which currently do not have public recreational areas to consider park/recreational areas.
2. Regularly update a comprehensive recreational plan for Oriental.
3. Consider a youth-oriented park on or near the 800+ block of Midyette Street.
4. Ensure through regulation that park/recreational space is reserved in future developments and annexations.
5. Seek funding options for enhancing park and recreation areas in Oriental.
6. Maintain and enhance public water access.

GOAL #7:

Aggressively pursue grants and other responsible funding opportunities to repair,

maintain, and enhance the Town of Oriental.

RECOMMENDATION:

Encourage town staff to apply for grants with the assistance of outside agencies and with other appropriate third parties.

ACTIONS:

Seek grant opportunities and promote partnerships with appropriate partners for grants and other funding sources.

D. Growth and Expansion

Just as the town has evolved since its inception, changes will come to Oriental. In the long-range vision process the public has spoken clearly that in general they like Oriental the way it is now and hope, regardless of what changes may come, that Oriental will continue as a small waterfront town welcoming a variety of individuals, interests and pursuits.

Oriental's future growth and vitality may be affected by potential environmental changes, such as rising water levels and the strength and frequency of large storms. The town's large estuary location makes it extremely vulnerable to storm surge inundation, wave and wind damage. Oriental's vitality comes from its unique position on the lower Neuse and bisected by three of its tributaries. The setting is what makes this town unique compared to most others.

GOAL #1:

Establish the means to guide growth, expansion, redevelopment and development that adheres to the points brought forward by the public and contained in this long-range vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Revise the Town's regulations and ordinances to reflect the Town's Vision and Comprehensive Plan.
2. Adhere to appropriate "Smart Growth" principles^{*}.

ACTIONS:

1. Seek professional planning assistance and appropriate legal advice when making changes to the town's regulations and ordinances.
2. Continue review of the Growth Management Ordinance with a view to simplify, add flexibility and clarity.

^{*} See pg 28 for definition.

3. Consider incorporating proven planning “tools” such as overlay districts for sensitive areas (i.e. Harbor, Working Waterfronts, and Historic Oriental) according to “Smart Growth” Principles.

GOAL #2:

Establish a plan in conjunction with the Harbor Waterfront Advisory Committee to anticipate the effects of environmental changes that may impact the vitality of waterfront areas and their future use and development.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Promote the lower estuary marine habitats that nearly surround the town and waterfront area.
2. Pursue living shoreline* solutions in place of hardened stabilization* where feasible, environmentally friendly building practices, municipal, commercial and residential clean water standards that provide citizens and visitors a safe place to live, boat, fish and swim.

ACTIONS:

1. Work with REALTORS® to help inform commercial and residential buyers of potential losses caused by storm damage and ways to mitigate them.
2. Coordinate with governmental and non-profit organizations to help and to fund waterfront projects.

* See pg 27 for definition.

* See pg 27 for definition.

PART TWO: CENSUS DATA AND CHARTS

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY PROFILE, 1990 - 2020

Numbers documented in the charts were obtained from the Bureau of Census American Community Survey data (<https://data.census.gov>). Data for 1990 were not available for many categories.

The 2020 Census was disrupted by the outbreak of Covid, and the ensuing national shutdown. The Census Bureau's Post-Enumeration Survey and Demographic Analysis showed there were under-, over-, and miscounts in the data. For that reason, the data for 2020 overall population includes the margins of error as found in the 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (conducted by the Census Bureau annually) and used on data.census.gov.

A. Population - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Population - US Census Data					
	1990	2000	2010	2020	2020 ±
Oriental	804	845	900	880	989 ±171
Pamlico County	11,372	12,934	13,144	12,276	12, 293 ± N/A

B. Age Distribution - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Age (Years)/Sex Distribution - US Census Data				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
<19	N/A	100	91	57
20 – 49	N/A	302	158	121
50+	N/A	473	651	702
Total	804	875	900	880
Sex (M/F)		419/456	446/454	397/483
Pamlico County				
<19	2,983	2,971	2,625	1,989
20 – 49	4,378	5,880	4,320	3,426
50+	3,950	1,868	6,199	6,861
Total	11,311	10,719	13,144	12,276
Sex (M/F)	N/A	6,513/6,421	6,710/6,434	6,241/6,035

C. Household Size and Type - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Household Size and Type - US Census Data				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
Own	N/A	353	370	474
Rent	N/A	87	107	137
Vacation/ Recreation	N/A	136	137	NA
Total		576	614	611
Family	N/A	293	293	387
Non-Family	N/A	147	184	224
Pamlico County				
Own	N/A	4,256	4,337	4,045
Rent	N/A	922	1,153	1,075
Vacation/ Recreation	N/A	1,603	1,202	
Total		6,781	6,692	5,506
Family	N/A	3,718	3,724	3,534
Non-Family	N/A	1,460	1,766	1,972

D. Income Level - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Household Income - US Census Data				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
<\$34,999	N/A	242	139	225
\$35,000 - \$99,999	N/A	199	192	206
\$100,000+	N/A	41	139	180
Number of Households		432	470	611
Pamlico County				
<\$34,999	N/A	2,647	2,317	2,114
\$35,000 - \$99,999	N/A	2,200	2,549	2,312
\$100,000+	N/A	307	597	1,080
Number of Households		5,154	5,463	5,506

E. Education Level - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Education Level - US Census Data (25 yrs and over)				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
< Associate	N/A	82	315	348
Associate	N/A	52	84	96
Bachelor's	N/A	166	258	239
Graduate or Higher		99	157	231
Pamlico County				
< Associate	1,829	7,346	7,207	6,790
Associate	115	617	902	1,053
Bachelor's	72	883	1,044	1,185
Graduate or Higher	19	486	680	967

F. Commuting Time to Work - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Commuting Time to Work - US Census Data				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
Vehicle	N/A	200	327	250
Walked	N/A	22	8	7
Other	N/A	10	17	0
Works at Home	N/A	22	34	41
Mean Travel Time	N/A	30.8 min	33.5 min	19.7 min
Pamlico County				
Vehicle	8,626	4,484	782	4,042
Walked	90	154	116	31
Other	145	93	96	79
Works at Home	118	171	144	251
Mean Travel Time	26.1 min	28.9 min	25.7 min	26.1 min

G. Racial Demographics - US Census Data for Oriental and Pamlico County

Racial Demographics - US Census Data				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Oriental				
White	N/A	794	823	798
Black	N/A	64	51	42
Hispanic/Latino	N/A	12	10	6
Other (incl. 2 or more)	N/A	5	16	34
Total		875	900	880
Pamlico County				
White	8,365	9,464	9,828	9,216
Black	2,946	3,178	2,618	2,061
Hispanic/Latino	61	171	412	243
Other (incl. 2 or more)	1,372	121	286	756
Total	12,744	12,934	13,144	12,276

PART THREE: RELATED PLANS AND STUDIES

SECTION 1: PLANS RELATIVE TO THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY

Individual plans / documents are located separately at Town Hall.

SECTION 2: OTHER PLANS AND STUDIES RECOMMENDED AND APPROVED BY THE TOWN BOARD

- A. CAMA Land Use Plan – created 2004, updated 2007, 2023
- B. Oriental Thoroughfare Plan, August 1988 – NC Dept. Of Transportation
- C. Storm - Water Runoff Study for the Town of Oriental, 1988 and redone by ECCOG 2014
- D. CAMA Plan – original cover included, updated 2023
- E. Long-Range Tree Planting Master Plan, June 1995
- F. Oriental Bicycle Plan, April 2011
- G. Oriental Street Assessment 2018

Other Plans and Studies Recommended and Approved by the Town Board

- A. RENA (resilience) study through NCDEQ for recurring flooding
- B. Signed on to Pamlico Flood Mitigation Ordinance and Plan 2021
- C. Dredging projects
- D. Shoreline restoration/acquisition Whittaker Pointe
- E. ADA transportation/accessibility plan study 2023
- F. Visioning the Future of the Harbor Area, November 4, 2006 – Facilitated by ECC (This is a summary of a survey. The complete report is in a separate binder.)
- G. Coastal Initiative Application, June 1988
- H. Oriental Planning Conference, March 1988 (An overview of the Town's assets.)
- I. Trees for Oriental – Implementation Guide, June 1995
- J. Tree Recommendations for Oriental, NC 1997

PART FOUR: APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: NC STATE STATUTE 160D-501, DEFINING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

§ 160D-501. Plans. (a) Requirements for Zoning. – As a condition of adopting and applying zoning regulations under this Chapter, a local government shall adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan or land-use plan.

(a1) Plans. – A comprehensive plan sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction. A land-use plan uses text and maps to designate the future use or reuse of land. A comprehensive or land-use plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs.

Planning analysis may address inventories of existing conditions and assess future trends regarding demographics and economic, environmental, and cultural factors. The planning process shall include opportunities for citizen engagement in plan preparation and adoption.

A local government may prepare and adopt other plans as deemed appropriate. This may include, but is not limited to, small area plans, neighborhood plans, hazard mitigation plans, transportation plans, housing plans, and recreation and open space plans.

(b) Comprehensive Plan Contents. – A comprehensive plan may, among other topics, address any of the following as determined by the local government:

- (1) Issues and opportunities facing the local government, including consideration of trends, values expressed by citizens, community vision, and guiding principles for growth and development.
- (2) The pattern of desired growth and development and civic design, including the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land uses, urban form, utilities, and transportation networks.
- (3) Employment opportunities, economic development, and community development.
- (4) Acceptable levels of public services and infrastructure to support development, including water, waste disposal, utilities, emergency services, transportation, education, recreation, community facilities, and other public services, including plans and policies for provision of and financing for public infrastructure.
- (5) Housing with a range of types and affordability to accommodate persons and households of all types and income levels.
- (6) Recreation and open spaces.
- (7) Mitigation of natural hazards such as flooding, winds, wildfires, and unstable

lands.

- (8) Protection of the environment and natural resources, including agricultural resources, mineral resources, and water and air quality.
- (9) Protection of significant architectural, scenic, cultural, historical, or archaeological resources.
- (10) Analysis and evaluation of implementation measures, including regulations, public investments, and educational programs.

(c) Adoption and Effect of Plans. – Plans shall be adopted by the governing board with the advice and consultation of the planning board. Adoption and amendment of a comprehensive or land-use plan is a legislative decision and shall follow the process mandated for zoning text amendments set by G.S. 160D-601. Plans adopted under this Chapter may be undertaken and adopted as part of or in conjunction with plans required under other statutes, including, but not G.S. 160D-501 Page 2 limited to, the plans required by G.S. 113A-110. Plans adopted under this Chapter shall be advisory in nature without independent regulatory effect. Plans adopted under this Chapter do not expand, diminish, or alter the scope of authority for development regulations adopted under this Chapter. Plans adopted under this Chapter shall be considered by the planning board and governing board when considering proposed amendments to zoning regulations as required by G.S. 160D-604 and G.S. 160D-605.

If a plan is deemed amended by G.S. 160D-605 by virtue of adoption of a zoning amendment that is inconsistent with the plan, that amendment shall be noted in the plan. However, if the plan is one that requires review and approval subject to G.S. 113A-110, the plan amendment shall not be effective until that review and approval is completed. (2019-111, s. 2.4; 2020-3, s. 4.33(a); 2020-25, ss. 11, 51(a), (b), (d).)

APPENDIX II: DEFINITIONS

Best Management Practices:

Best practices are a set of guidelines, ethics, or ideas that represent the most efficient or prudent course of action in a given situation.

Best practices may be established by authorities, such as regulators, self-regulatory organizations (SROs), or other governing bodies, or they may be internally decreed by a management team.

Ecotourism:

Responsible tourism to nature areas that conserves the environment, benefits locals, and involves interpretation and education.

Environmental Stewardship:

The responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices to enhance ecosystem resilience and human well-being.

Hardened Stabilization:

Erosion control practices using engineered structures such as seawalls, bulkheads, jetties, levees, breakwaters, and revetments.

Hazard Mitigation:

Hazard mitigation is the practice of reducing risks to people and property. Keeping hazard mitigation as part of future planning will allow the town to:

- promote the public health, safety and general welfare of residents and minimize public and private losses due to natural hazards
- reduce the risk and impact of future natural disasters by regulating development in known high hazard areas
- pursue opportunities to reduce the risk of natural hazards to existing developments where such hazards are clearly identified, and the mitigation efforts are cost effective
- expedite post-disaster clean up and reconstruction
- protect fragile natural and scenic areas within the planning jurisdiction

Living Shorelines:

A protected and stabilized shoreline that is made of natural materials such as plants, sand, or rock. An infrastructure technique using native vegetation alone or in

combination with low sills to stabilize the shoreline. Living shorelines provide a natural alternative to 'hard' shoreline stabilization methods like rip rap or bulkheads, and provide numerous benefits including nutrient pollution remediation, essential fish habitat structure, and buffering of shorelines from waves and storms. Research indicates that living shorelines are more resilient than bulkheads in protecting against the effects of hurricanes.

Resiliency:

The ability of a community to "bounce back" after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts.

Smart Growth Principles:

- Compact building design
- Create range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive neighborhoods with a strong sense of place make development decisions predictable, fair, consistent, and cost effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing neighborhoods
- Promote hazard mitigation

APPENDIX III: WHITTAKER CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT

PROGRAM EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Press Esc to exit full screen

COMMUNITY Sustainability

Under 10,000 Population

WHITTAKER POINT SHORELINE RESTORATION Oriental, North Carolina

Diane H. Miller, ICMA-CM, Town Manager



As a retirement community, Oriental is gifted with a wealth of professionals who are willing to lend their knowledge and expertise to the town at no cost. James Blackerby, a retired geologist, provided the town with an assessment of the erosion of a peninsula of land that had protected access to one third of the residential land, both boatyards, and five marinas that are essential to the tourist-driven economy. Oriental is located on the Inner Banks of North Carolina, on the Neuse River, west of the entrance to the Pamlico Sound. This sound is the largest on the East Coast of North America and is home to multimillion dollar commercial and recreation fishing. Whittaker Pointe, a privately owned peninsula, had eroded from around 18 acres to just five acres and decreased even more during the planning phases with large, near-permanent breaches, providing little to no protection in an area frequented by tropical activity.

As the mayor and board began to understand the problem, noting the shoaling of the entry creek to the largest businesses and the more frequent need for dredging, town manager Diane



H. Miller was directed to look for solutions. The team, armed with Mr. Blackerby's documentation, including depth readings, historic outlines, and fetch and wave energy from NOAA and the U.S. Geographic Survey, approached Dr. Lexia Weaver at the North Carolina Coastal Federation (NCCF), whose expertise is in living shorelines, protection, and sustainability. Dr. Weaver engaged NCCF and the National Fish and Wildlife Service (NFWS), noting that the energy directed toward this peninsula had already caused significant damage and a substantial fix would be needed.

As a former grant writer, Miller began to gather several state, federal, and private sources who all recognized the importance and impact of this erosion: The Golden Leaf Foundation (GLF), the USDA and NCDA (Emergency Watershed Protection), and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ). The town was looking for a permanent



and comprehensive solution that would incorporate environmentally friendly solutions to withstand wave energy coming 77 miles directly from an opening in the Outer Banks, near Rodanthe. Before engaging partners, the town acquired the private land from owners who attempted to protect the shoreline in the past and realized the greater need. Once acquired, Quible Engineering and its project manager, Brian Rubino, worked closely with the town, Dr. Weaver, and all agencies to properly educate all parties on the erosion acceleration, the need for substantial structure, and the ongoing impact that would have led to the complete disappearance of the peninsula and the protection it afforded.

A comprehensive plan was developed in about one and a half years and funding totaling \$3,680,752 was secured by a combination of all agencies involved. The town secured the land for the cost of legal filings and used time and effort costs, but the entire cash cost of the project was borne by a combination of grants.

The work began in late 2021 to combine a Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) permitted project that included an 18 foot wide and 9 foot high granite sill along the forward-facing side of the peninsula, a wraparound granite sill of over 2,426 feet, approximately 1,200 linear feet of a bagged and loose oyster cultch sill on the back-facing side for stabilization, thousands of local marsh grasses, bracing structures at the required 100 foot dropdown to prevent erosion, and about 15,000 cubic yards of donated fill. Volunteer assistance from several North Carolina Universities' marine sciences programs and local residents assisted in the placement of oyster shell bags and cultch, provided labor for the placement of plants, both in the completion and the following spring planting season.

The project was completed after several unanticipated issues and adjustments that required lengthy comment periods with CAMA regarding modifications to the original permits. Miller brought in the USDA and NCDA to the project party, as costs and requirements changed and the secured funding proved to be inadequate. This was not something that a town of 928 residents with a general operating budget of under \$2 million could absorb on its own. The team, in particular Dr. Weaver and Rubino, were extremely flexible and adapted throughout the project according to environmental signals coming from the reconstructed Pointe to ensure sustainability for generations to come.

The project was finally closed out and inspected by all agencies involved in December 2022, though an osprey relocation and adjustment to the project permit were ongoing as of March 2023. The project is also now acquiring additional land up to the sill and possibly beyond and is being used as a benchmark for sustainable restoration. It was an extremely difficult project, but a worthwhile one that will protect the residents, livelihoods, and environmental conditions of Oriental and its surrounding areas. **PM**



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APPENDIX IV: REGIONAL FLOOD MAPS / DAMAGE

LINK: [Pamlico County Hazard Mitigation Plan - Oriental, North Carolina \(townoforiental.com\)](https://townoforiental.com) Government>Ordinances and Documents> Pamlico County Hazard Mitigation Plan