



## LAND USE ELEMENT

### Background

The Land Use Element considers existing and future land use by categories, including residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, forestry, mining, public and quasi-public, recreation, parks, open space, and vacant or undeveloped. As reflected in the Vision statement, the Town of Kiawah Island includes a private residential community with a Resort and its population shares a commitment to the natural environment and wildlife. For this reason, land use on the Island is oriented toward residential, parks, open space, recreation, and limited commercial development to service residents and visitors. The incorporated boundaries of the Town of Kiawah Island also include a considerable amount of marsh and water features. The Land Use Element is designed to tell the story of where the Town is and where it desires to be in regard to the utilization of land resources.

### Existing Conditions

#### Existing Land Use

Figure IX.1 depicts the existing land use categories that are present on the Island and percentage of land use compared to the total incorporated area of the Town of Kiawah Island. Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and current Charleston County records were used to detail the existing land use. The land use categories were established based on the general use of each parcel as determined by the Charleston County Assessor's Department. Map IX.1, updated in 2010, entitled "Existing Land Use" illustrates where existing land uses are located on the Island.

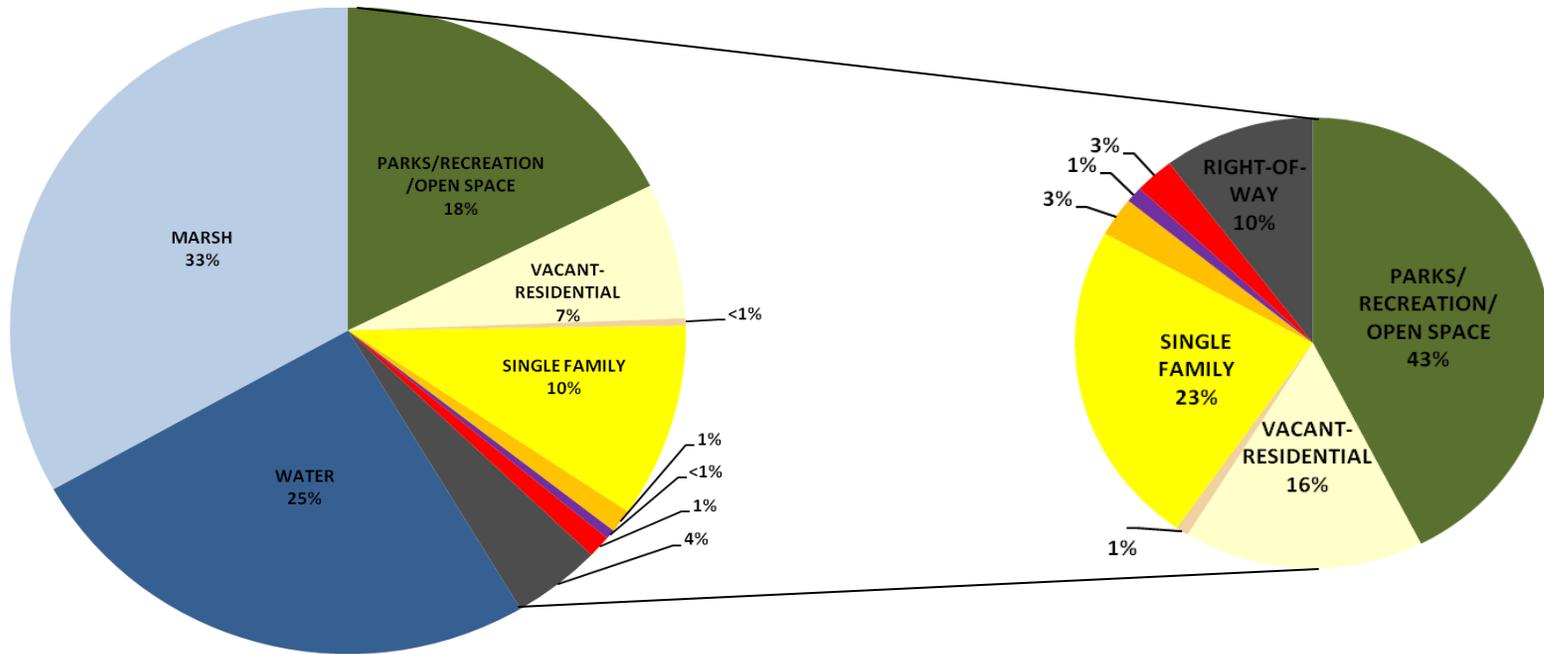




Figure IX.1 Existing Land Use

% Existing Land Use - Total Incorporated Area

% Existing Land Use - Total Land Area (Excluding Marsh & Water)



LEGEND

PARKS/RECREATION/ OPEN SPACE	VACANT-RESIDENTIAL	VACANT-COMMERCIAL	SINGLE FAMILY	MULTI FAMILY	PUBLIC/ INSTITUTIONAL	COMMERCIAL	RIGHT-OF-WAY



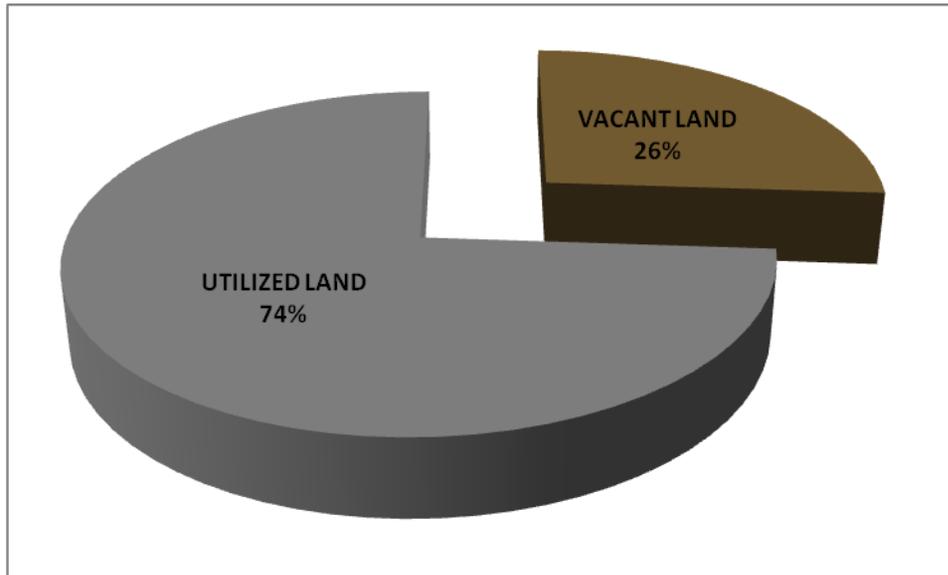
Figure IX.I also shows the percentages of existing use of the total land area excluding marsh and water. A considerable amount, 58 percent, of the Town's total area consists of marsh and water. Parks, recreation and open space encompass the next largest percent of area at 18 percent. Excluding marsh and water, the total for parks, recreation and open space is the largest use of land on Kiawah Island, accounting for 43 percent. As shown on Map IX.1, "Existing Land Use," open space and recreational uses are located throughout the Island in the form of parks, boat landings, wildlife viewing areas, recreational facilities and golf courses.

Single Family Residential land uses encompass 10 percent of the Town's total incorporated area and 23 percent of the total land area (excluding marsh and water) while vacant residential parcels total 7 percent and 16 percent, respectively. Road right-of-ways consist of 10 percent of the total land area. Multi-family and commercial land uses consist of 3 percent each. Residential uses are established throughout the Island. While single family residential uses are found in all areas of the Island, multi-family residential uses are located solely on the western part of the Island.

Commercial land use makes up a very small percent of the land use. These uses are located in both the East and West Beach areas of the Island. Commercial development has occurred (restaurants, a convenience store, small shops, etc.) in proximity to the East and West Beach Resort facilities and at the main gate. Additionally, the private Kiawah Island Club has restaurants and spa facilities at its locations.



**Figure IX.2 Percentage Use of the Total Buildable Area**



**Future Land Use**

Future land use is intended to provide guidance for the location and types of proposed future land uses to support the Town of Kiawah Island’s Article 12 Land Use Planning/Zoning Ordinance. The aspects of the Land Use Element establish a flexible yet predictable method for determining the appropriateness of proposed development to shape the future of the Town. Map IX.2, “Future Land Use,” updated in 2010, shows how the community envisions future growth for the Island. Figure IX.2 to the left illustrates the percentage of utilized land (74 percent, including: residential, commercial, public/institutional, parks, golf courses, etc.) to vacant land (26 percent) out of a total buildable area of 4,007 acres.

Future grass roots development on the Island may be largely confined to the area of Cougar Island at the eastern end of Kiawah with continued residential development at The Settlement and other platted but undeveloped properties throughout the Island. The entire island will be subject to redevelopment in the years to come. With roughly half of the housing stock constructed prior to 1985 (see Housing Element), increased redevelopment in residential areas can be expected in the future as the existing housing stock continues to age.

Redevelopment will not be restricted to residential areas. Kiawah Island Golf Resort has closed portions of the existing West Beach area; a redevelopment plan for this area is the subject of a recently negotiated Development Agreement. This area currently includes a 150 room Inn (now closed), golf course and club house, tennis center, and commercial space.



## Key Issues

The following are the key issues related to the Land Use Element:

- Expectation that the Town’s residential character and natural environment will be maintained and will preserve the integrity of the Vision Statement;
- Develop criteria and standards that encourage future development and redevelopment consistent with the Vision Statement;
- Assuring that continued development is accompanied or preceded by available services and community facilities;
- Zoning standards that are flexible and responsive; and
- Compatibility between land use and the Island’s wildlife and wildlife habitat.

## Goals

To help the Town further realize its Vision, the following goals should be considered when evaluating proposals for change:

### 1. Maintain and enhance the residential character of the Town.

	<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
a.	Develop standards that assure that new development is high quality and compatible with the existing community's residential character and natural habitat.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
b.	Encourage the Developer (KDP and its successors) and the Resort (KIGR and its successors) to enter into development agreements with the Town which clearly set forth the rights and responsibilities of both parties and are consistent with the Vision Statement of the Island and this Plan.	Town Council	Ongoing



**2. Provide for high quality, orderly, controlled development and redevelopment.**

	<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
a.	Ensure development criteria and standards are determined to be consistent with the Vision Statement of the Island and this Plan.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
b.	Develop standards that are flexible enough to allow property owners and developers to respond to changing conditions and ensure compliance with such standards.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
c.	Maintain compatibility of commercial, residential, and resort areas with adjacent and nearby properties such that redevelopment will not create demands for recreational facilities, roads or utilities in advance of their availability.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
d.	Monitor development and evaluate changes in the Town including its natural resources, economy and public services. Provide planning commission with annual report to assess actual development by type versus projected development; the monitoring system should include subdivision plans and plat applications and approvals, rezoning requests and approvals, building permit applications and permits issued and certificates of occupancy issued, on a geographic basis throughout the Island.	Town Administrator Planning Director	Annually

**3. Encourage expansion of the Kiawah Island Conservation Areas.**

	<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
a.	Zone environmentally sensitive areas such as marshes and any future accreted land in the Conservation District.	Planning Commission	Ongoing

**4. Thoroughly evaluate any annexation proposals.**

	<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
a.	Ensure that annexation proposals protect environmentally sensitive areas, are consistent with the Town’s Vision, the spirit of this Comprehensive Plan, and enhance the character of Kiawah Island.	Town Council	Ongoing



**5. Continue to improve monitoring and evaluating spatial relationships of physical properties and land use (such as zoning, lot size, natural resources, transportation, and community services) with updated, accurate GIS data.**

	<b>Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
a.	Broaden use of the Town's GIS System and upgrade as appropriate.	Town Council	By 2015