

MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF CAROLINA BEACH, NC

May 2008

For many decades, people have visited Carolina Beach to experience the riches nature has bestowed upon it. Carolina Beach is renowned for its sandy beaches, warm waters and ocean breezes. Each new day is announced with a dramatic sunrise over the Atlantic Ocean. The estuarine environment of the Cape Fear River meeting the Ocean provides a world rich in wildlife and landscape form. Carolina Beach is a community immersed in natural beauty. It is a community whose evolution is deeply rooted in its relationship with the natural environment.

Carolina Beach became a popular recreation destination following the end of the Civil War. Several steamers transported people across the River to the peninsula to enjoy the sun and ocean waters, and it wasn't long before private cottages were seen along the beach. Near the turn of the 20th century, two beach clubs were built to accommodate the new visitors. Lodging, restaurants, entertainment and amusements were now available; Carolina Beach became a major attraction.

The primary attraction of the Town were the many activities of the "Boardwalk." Originally a single pavilion and bathhouse, with a wooden promenade for strolling, the Boardwalk evolved into the nucleus of Carolina Beach and a place full of life, energy and activity. The Boardwalk boasted a theatre, a bowling alley, an arcade with games, amusement rides and several eateries and gift shops.

The past few decades has unfortunately seen the decline of the Boardwalk area and in turn, the Central Business District (CBD). Changes in visitor demographics, preferences and habits and economic and market conditions, as well as coastal legislation introduced to protect the community from the devastating effects of hurricanes and flooding, all contributed to the decline of the CBD.

Purpose of the Study

Recognizing the wealth of opportunity inherent in its location, and in response to new development pressures, the Town of Carolina Beach retained peter j. smith & company, inc., to prepare a Master Development Plan for the CBD. The fundamental purpose of the Plan is to provide a clear and exciting vision for the CBD that stimulates revitalization and provides guidance and direction to the Town as it endeavors to pursue its future.

While memories of the past are ever present, the future that awaits is full of excitement and opportunity. Carolina Beach is poised once again to become a Town that offers residents a remarkable quality of life and rewards visitors with a truly memorable experience. In summary, this study is about *Recapturing the Spirit* that once filled the Town of Carolina Beach.

Plan Organization

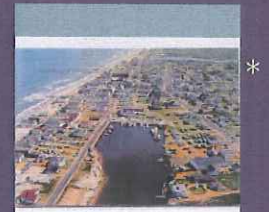
The Plan is organized in two sections: *The Plan* and *Background*. *The Plan* section provides the direction for the Town, with actions and strategies for Carolina Beach. The *Background* section provides information regarding the research, analysis and public input conducted to complete the Plan. Within both sections are action-oriented chapters that can be identified by historic postcards of Carolina Beach. The specific organization of the Plan is detailed in the adjacent Table of Contents. Additional support documents for the Plan are provided under separate cover.

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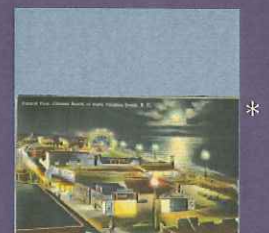
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*Postcard from *Postcard History Series: Carolina Beach* by Elaine Blackmon Henson
www.arcadiapublishing.com

Figure 5: Boardwalk Core Area - Pier Park Concept



PIER PARK CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE

- Develop full block, Boardwalk Core Area East, into public park and green space
- Contain Park block with building masses around exterior of block (12 stories) to overlook Park and the Ocean
- Develop Pier extending into ocean; extend Pier towards CBD and provide frontage onto Canal Drive
- Develop retail pavilions on Pier
- Integrate Pier into dune system and the ecology of the beach landscape
- Provide access from Beach Boardwalk to Pier
- Concept accommodates approximately 270,000 gfa commercial space west on the side of Canal Drive with 12 story buildings (in AE zone; commercial space at grade)

Figure 6: Boardwalk Core Area - Town Square Concept



TOWN SQUARE CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE

- Create a Town Square as the primary public space in the Town and the focus of activity
- Integrate an outdoor amphitheater to accommodate programmed events, special performances and large group gatherings
- Develop commercial space on the second level and link with a continuous elevated walkway
- Integrate the top level of the amphitheater with elevated walkway, Beach Boardwalk
- Integrate an observation tower providing distant views over the Town and ocean as a vertical anchor of the Square
- Define the Square by a perimeter buildings ranging in height from 8-12 stories
- Develop parking on the ground level of buildings containing the Square
- Develop temporary use retail "kiosks" on the ground level underneath buildings fronting the Square
- Develop "Market Square" fronting onto Main Street, with indoor/outdoor commercial space linking spaces together
- Concept accommodates approximately 270,000 gfa commercial space on existing Boardwalk site with 9 story buildings (8 over 1 in VE zone)