



FY27-FY28 Strategic Plan
WAPAC Priorities

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Agenda

Background
WAPAC FY27-FY28 Strategic Plan Priorities
and Next Steps

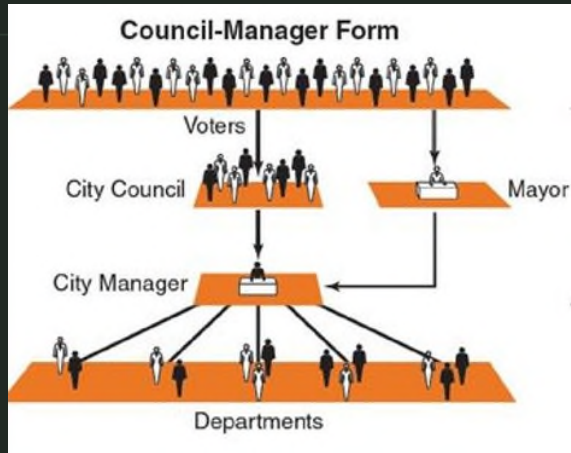


2026

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Background



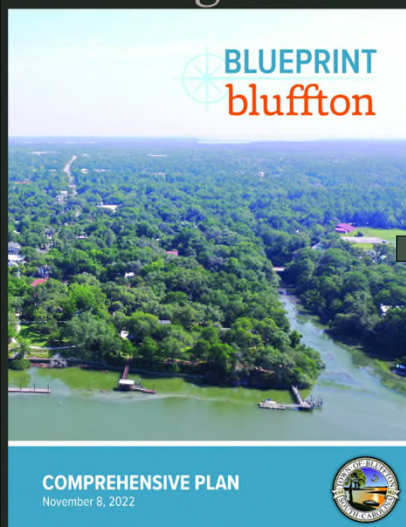
Projects & Watershed Resilience



Watershed Management Division

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Background



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Background: Strategic Plan

- Assist the Town with implementing its Vision and Mission and requires collaboration between Town Council, Town Manager, and Staff.
- Used to:
 - Develop the Town's operating budget.
 - Consider revisions to capital improvement projects.
 - Develop new projects and assign them to Staff for execution.
 - Implement projects and initiatives already approved in existing Town plans.
 - Determine an agreed upon process and schedule to prioritize projects & revise as necessary.
- Current plan will be guiding framework for FY27-FY28

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Background: WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

- On July 24, 2025, the May River Watershed Action Plan Advisory Committee (WAPAC) recommended and prioritized a list of May River Watershed Action Plan Strategic Plan initiatives for Town Council's consideration.
- Town Council held a Strategic Planning Workshop on 11/06/25.
- Town Council voted to approve a Resolution to approve the Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year 2027.
 - This Plan includes the WAPAC's seven (7) priorities.

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WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

1. Evaluate the recommendations and projects that arise from the Town's stormwater model XPSWMM to PCSWMM conversion. This will include examining the 2021 May River Watershed Action Plan Model Report Impervious Surface Restoration Water Quality projects and locations to help demonstrate their effectiveness for both water quality and water quantity. (May River Watershed Action Plan Model Report).

NEXT STEPS:

- McCormick Taylor, Inc. developed the updated PCSWMM water quality model for the May River headwaters, incorporating all current Water Quality Program data.
- FY27 funding allocated for WAPAC Priority 1 and work underway as of July 1.
- Action Plan project evaluation to WAPAC in October 2026.

WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

2. Complete annual reviews of the stormwater regulations and Design Manual in the Unified Development Ordinance, particularly the Better Site Design element, to ensure intended outcomes are being met and modify the regulations if necessary (Town Comprehensive Plan, R2.1).

NEXT STEPS:

- Anticipated to begin in early 2027.
- Includes public comment periods.
- WAPAC will participate in the approval process, as with prior stormwater ordinance revisions.

WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

3. Advance the development of targeted best management plans, both structural and non-structural, tailored to the needs of each sub-basin within the May River Watershed. These plans should utilize insights from the May River Baseline Assessment Update, Resilience Analysis, Comprehensive Drainage Studies, Town Water Quality Program data, and other relevant sources. The objective is to develop specific solutions for each sub-basin that include but are not limited to seeking public-private partnerships, exploring education and outreach solutions, and strengthening ongoing collaborations with local governments and universities aimed at improving water quality and reducing flooding. (May River Baseline Assessment Update, Resilience Analysis, Comprehensive Drainage Studies, and Town Water Quality Program data).

NEXT STEPS:

- FY27 funds allocated for this WAPAC priority.
- Staff to develop anticipated timeline for development of individual plans.
- Staff to seek WAPAC input into draft best management plans.

Background: WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

4. Establish a Resilience Plan for adaptation to coastal impacts from changing environmental conditions (“rain bombs” and sea level rise) on stormwater runoff water quality and quantity. Develop strategies, policies, and ordinances aimed at increasing resilience and reducing long-term risks. Assess the environmental resilience of stormwater ponds to changing climate conditions for retrofit opportunities, e.g. ensuring ponds have capacity to hold rain events. (Town Fiscal Year 25-26 rollover)

BACKGROUND:

- At the May 12, 2026 meeting, Town Council approved a contract with RK&K and Biohabitats to develop the Town Resilience Plan. Project underway, with Task 1 in progress.

NEXT STEPS:

- Final plan development, presentation, and adoption are scheduled over a two-year timeline.
- Stakeholder engagement is anticipated to begin in August or September 2026.

WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

5. Establish a policy to guide public-private partnerships to implement Action Plan projects/retrofits within neighborhoods, utilize stormwater ponds for irrigation, and coordinate with property management companies to capitalize on forecasted private improvement projects to incorporate stormwater retrofit opportunities. (May River Watershed Action Plan and Town Fiscal Year 25-26 rollover).

NEXT STEPS:

- Staff to develop timeline for development of internal policy to guide public-private partnerships.

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WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

6. Examine opportunities at the time of Intergovernmental Agreements involving the Town of Bluffton, the Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority, Beaufort County Government, and any other parties to safeguard zoning densities of the May River Community Preservation (referred to as MRCP or the CP District). The aim is to preserve the low density and rural character of the existing corridor. Also, examine opportunities at the time of each agreement for bacteria source-reduction from septic systems (sewer extension & connection) and from the wastewater system, e.g. asset inventory, inspection, maintenance and prioritization for replacement plan. (Town Comprehensive Plan, R2.2 and Town Fiscal Year 25-26 rollover).

NEXT STEPS:

- As opportunities arise.

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WAPAC FY27-FY28 Priorities

7. Examine public-public partnership (PuPs) opportunities with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to focus on capturing stormwater runoff from bridges. Prioritize the SCDOT overpasses on Bridge Street at Heyward and Huger Coves, based on findings from the May River Baseline Assessment Update. Maintain communication with SCDOT to implement additional stormwater retrofits within the constraints of roadway improvement or maintenance projects. (May River Baseline Assessment Update and Town Fiscal Year 25-26 rollover).

NEXT STEPS:

- As opportunities arise.
- Comprehensive Drainage Projects and Asset Owner Reports.

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