



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH
2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES PLAN
FEBRUARY 2023 *(This is a working document)*

OUR VISION:

The Town of Highland Beach is a beautiful safe harbor in paradise whose residents never leave.

OUR MISSION:

To provide exceptional governance and municipal services, in partnership with our residents, in a fiscally responsible manner with an emphasis on planning for the future.

OUR MOTTO:

“3 miles of paradise”

OUR VALUES:

Help citizens live a better life by providing a safe and secure community.

Inclusiveness – we respect people, value diversity and are committed to equality.

Give exceptional citizen service.

Honor public trust through ethical behavior, transparency and servant leadership.

Lead with integrity at every level.

Assure fiscal responsibility and accountability.

Nurture and respect our natural environment.

Deliver services through collaborated efforts and coordinated actions.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This strategic priority plan identifies ranked community projects and initiatives within four (4) operational categories. These projects and initiatives are classified as “Commenced” and “Planned” based on their implementation status and/or schedule. The strategic priority plan is a dynamic and simple document that serves as a decision-making tool to be updated on a quarterly basis via reports to the Town Commission. The plan is intrinsically linked to the annual operating budget which commits funds to complete the projects and initiatives identified. Completing a project and/or initiative leads to attaining the operational category goal for each, and leads to fulfilling mission and vision of the Town.

Organizational Excellence

Strengthen the Town’s ability to strategically and effectively deliver municipal services in a fiscally responsible, collaborative, inclusive and innovative manner.

Projects/Initiatives:

SP 1: Labor Negotiations

PBA Collective Bargaining Agreement FY 2023 – 2026

FOP Collective Bargaining (General Employees) FY 2023-2026

Description: Negotiation of new bargaining agreements with our two existing employee unions. The process traditionally takes 3 to 6 months concluding with ratification by the Town Commission.

Progress: The negotiation team has reviewed the existing employment agreements for conditions and language adjustments and has reviewed preliminary financial impacts.

SP 3: State Appropriations

Description: Requests for state financial assistance for capital improvement and planning projects. FY 2023 Appropriations: (1) Fire Station Construction (\$1 million) and (2) Lift Stations (\$300,000.) Annually evaluate town operations and capital improvement plan for opportunities for appropriation requests and/or grants.

Progress: The appropriation requests have been forwarded to state representative and/or state senator for sponsorship and introduction. Fire Chief has been evaluating fire grant programs for the new fire rescue department.

SP 5: Charter Review/Amendments—Funding Limitations

Description: Annual review and consideration of necessary charter revisions and/or amendments to ensure effective and efficient town operations consistent with best management practices. This project also involves evaluation of the previous charter amendments with focus on funding limitation question.

Progress: Commission has commenced discussions on possible charter amendments and the process to engage residents on the questions via polling and workshops.

SP 9: Canvassing Board (Charter Amendment)

Description: The Town Commission to review the implications and liability around allowing a county canvassing board versus a local canvassing board as the County Supervisor of Elections is moving away from supporting local canvassing boards. The Highland Beach canvassing board composition is stipulated within the charter; therefore, a change of board composition requires a charter amendment approved by voters.

Progress: Preliminary discussions have occurred at the behest of the Town Clerk.

SP 10: Communication & Community Engagement

Description: Actively communicate with the public through multiple mediums and platforms to ensure the community receives timely value-added communications regarding town business and affairs. Also, plan community events.

Progress: The town has launched a website design project with CivicPlus to improve navigation, usability, and content access. The Manager's Office sends out a weekly news flash, the Manager's Monthly Newsletter (emailed and mailed), updates Channel 99, and regular updates to Facebook. Staff is evaluating the value of using polls, surveys and other social media platforms.

SP 14: Financial Management Systems

Description: The Finance Department in partnership with the Manager's Office is updating the town's investment policy, constructing a dynamic 5-year financial forecast model and development a more effective budget document. Also included in this project is the update to the purchasing policy.

Progress: The 5-year financial forecast model has been completed and will be presented to the Commission in April 2023. The updated purchasing policy will be presented to the Financial Advisory Board for recommendation in April 2023. The investment policy update is schedule for the fall of 2023 and the enhanced strategic budget document will be used for the FY 2024 budget cycle.

SP 23: Public Record Digitization/Management Project

Description: This project is the digitization of historical, hard copy records and documents.

Progress: Seventy five thousand (75,000) records digitized to date and the goal is to digitize all historical records by 2024 and create a policy governing record management moving forward.

Departments:

Town Manager's Office
Highland Beach Fire Rescue Department
Finance Department
Clerks' Office
IT Consultant

Advisory Board(s):
Financial Advisory Board

Public Infrastructure & Resiliency

Ensure that Town managed and maintained facilities, infrastructure and public places are afforded appropriate attention, maintenance, repairs, and upgrades.

Projects/Initiatives:

SP 4: A1A Highway RRR Project

Description: Partner with FDOT to ensure the road rehabilitation and resurfacing (RRR) project is completed with limited and controlled disruptions to the community. The project includes needed drainage improvements, paved shoulder enhancements to accommodate cyclists and embedded crosswalk lighting.

Progress: FDOT has completed survey work and preliminary design that will be presented to the public on March 13. FDOT is reviewing traffic control strategies to limit disruptions. Work tentatively scheduled to commence May 2024 with construction lasting 12 to 15 months.

SP 6: Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Contract

Description: The existing solid waste collection and disposal contract is set to expire May 31, 2023. A request for proposal (RFP) for a new contract must be advertised and reviewed with award recommendations sent to the Town Commission for consideration. The solid waste contract includes recycling, yard waste and bulk item collection (and disposal) twice per week with specialized container service for condominium buildings.

Progress: The RFP process has started with bid opening and review in March-April 2023.

SP 8: Marine Accessory Structures Ordinance Amendment(s)

Description: Conduct an in-depth review of all ordinance provisions related to the installation and construction of marine accessory structures to ensure they are appropriate for waterfront property owners. The review shall include a public engagement process. The project is being facilitated by the Planning Review Board, ordinance sponsor and staff at the direction of the Town Commission.

Progress: Ordinance stakeholder group drafted amendment concepts that were presented at three public workshops in December 2022. The Town Commission directed the Planning Review Board to evaluate public review comments when drafting amendments for Commission consideration.

SP 13: Zoning District Evaluation (*Density*)

Description: The Town Commission has directed to the Planning Board to commence a public review process of the permitted zoning densities of each zoning district within the town to see if it is appropriate to revise to preserve town character, accommodate redevelopment and protect property values.

Progress: The Planning Board has commenced its discussion of the public engagement process.

SP 18: Town Entry Signs (A1A)

Description: The two existing town entry signs have deteriorated and need to be replaced.

Progress: The commission has solicited resident input via a design contest which closed in February 6, 2023. The commission will review the submissions and then move into formal design and construction. Target completion winter 2024.

Departments:

Highland Beach Fire Rescue Department
Public Works Department
Town Planner
Town Manager's Office
Finance Department

Advisory Board(s):

Financial Advisory Board
Planning Board

Community Safety

Proactively plan for and responsively maintain a safe and resilient community focused on visibility, awareness and care for residents and visitors.

Projects/Initiatives:

SP 2: Fire Rescue Department Implementation

Description: Multi-year project that involves the establishment of the town's first fire rescue department. Project involves contract termination with the City of Delray Beach, organizational expansion (HR), recruitment of fire rescue personnel, procurement of apparatus and special equipment, development of EMS and Fire policies and protocols, and Fire Station Construction.

Progress: Commenced in FY 2021. Targeted completion May 2, 2024. Major Tasks: (1) Secure Charter Funding Approval \$10 million (Complete); (2) Hire Fire Chief (Complete); (3) Secure Medical Director (Complete); (4) Fire Station Construction (start April 2023); (5) HR/Risk Management Director (April 2023); (6) Veteran's Memorial Design/Location (TBD); (7) Recruit and hire Fire/Paramedics, Driver/Engineers and Captains (Start June 2023). It is important to note that aforementioned project components is not exhaustive list and that many other related tasks exists.

SP 7: Building Recertification Program (Senate Bill 4D)

Description: The Town Commission has expressed concerns with the state law as it requires significant capital reserves for condominium/threshold buildings that accompanies a building recertification program. The Commission also has concerns related to the time provided to address any deficiencies discovered during the inspection process.

Progress: The Town Commission authorized the mayor to send a letter to legislators expressing our concern and seeking modification of state law. The letter was sent at the beginning of February 2023.

SP 15: Home Occupation Ordinance Provisions

Description: House Bill 403 which became effective July 1, 2021, prohibits local governments from taking certain actions relating to the licensure and regulation of home-based businesses, specifies conditions under which a business is considered a home-based business, authorizes home-based businesses to operate in areas zoned for residential use if the business meets certain criteria, specifies that home-based businesses are subject to certain business taxes and authorizes adversely affected current or prospective home-based business owners to challenge certain local government actions in violation of the statute.

The current “home occupation” regulations provided in Chapter 30 need to be revised to be compliant with Florida Statutes

Progress: Draft revisions have been completed by staff and will be presented to Planning Board and Town Commission in the summer 2023.

SP 16: Temporary Sign Ordinance Review

Description: The Town Commission has directed staff to update the ordinance provisions related temporary signs with a focus on political signs and real estate signs.

Progress: Target start date is fall 2023.

SP 21: Water Tower Lease

Description: Sprint/T-Mobile cellular equipment exists on the town’s elevated water tank and it is set to expire in 2025. Additionally, other providers have reached out with potential interest to set their cellular equipment. The commission needs to consider granting an extension and develop a policy on the use of the water tower.

Progress: Target start date fall 2023.

Departments:

Police Department
Building Department/Code Enforcement
Town Planner
Highland Beach Fire Rescue Department
Town Manager’s Office

Advisory Board(s)/Community Support Group(s):

Planning Board
Board of Appeals and Adjustments
Code Enforcement Board
Highland Beach Police Foundation

Community Enrichment & Sustainability

Recognize the vital role Highland Beach's natural resources play in a healthy community and implement projects and policies that sustain them. Support residents' desire for community services and programs that enhance personal growth, knowledge and quality of life.

Projects/Initiatives:

SP 11: Sea Turtle Lighting Ordinance

Description: Develop lighting standards and provisions within the Town Code of Ordinances to protect and enhance sea turtle habitat and nesting activities on our beaches. The town currently has limited lighting provisions.

Progress: Lighting standards and provisions have been written by staff and are consistent with best management practices and state guidelines. The Town Commission directed review of the draft standards and provisions to the Natural Resource Preservation Advisory Board (NRPAB) and Planning Board. The NRPAB has recommended its approval and the Planning Board is to review the zoning implications in March 2023.

SP 12: Dune Restoration & Management

Description: The Town Commission assigned the Natural Resource Preservation Advisory Board (NRPAB) to work with staff to educate the public on importance of dune restoration and management. Additionally, the commission directed staff to obtain proposal from coastal engineering firm to update the 2013 Beach Erosion Study, and that the study identify dune areas in need of restoration.

Progress: The NRPAB is hosting a dune restoration and management workshop in March 2023 and staff have started the process to solicit proposals for the update of the 2013 Beach Erosion Study.

SP 17: Seawall Ordinance Review

Description: The recent FEMA flood insurance rate map (FIRM) increased the base flood elevation (BFE) for the town. The BFE is the target height for seawalls and the town does not have a maximum seawall height. Based on existing ordinance requirements, seawall height has started to create concerns amongst waterfront property owners. Therefore, ordinance provisions regarding seawall height may need to be modified.

Progress: Target start date summer 2023.

SP 19: Milani Park

Description: Continue to work with Palm Beach County Administration and Parks and Recreation Department along with County Commissioner on the future development of the Milani Park. Milani Park is governed by a settlement agreement that stipulates design of the park and the timing of construction. The county has one more 5-year extension.

Progress: The Mayor and the Town Manager continue to meet regularly with the county staff and county commissioner to express town concerns over the park development.

SP 20: Intracoastal Waterway (*Speed Control*)

Description: Community concerns exist regarding the safety of the intracoastal waterway, and the town needs to take an active role in its management.

Progress: The Marine Unit of the Police Department started in March of 2022 to improve boater safety by enforcing existing speeds, educating boaters and heighten presence. The police department will collect data and information that can be utilized by all stakeholders in the future to lower speeds and wakes in the intracoastal. The town will continue to meet with our neighboring communities and stakeholders to form partnerships to manage this critical resource.

SP 22: Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Regulations

Description: Community concern has surfaced over the continued use of gas-powered leaf blowers within the community based on noise, pollution and personal health.

Progress: Target start date winter 2024.

Departments:

Town Planner
Highland Beach Library
Town Manager's Office

Advisory Board(s)/Community Support Groups:

Natural Resources Preservation Advisory Board
Planning Board
Friends of the Library
Library Volunteers

Emerging Issues

The following emerging issues may require action by the community in the short-term planning horizon resulting in the creation of a new project/initiative or require re-prioritization of existing projects/initiatives.

The emerging issues include:

- Aging/Underbuilt Infrastructure, Facilities & Structures
- A1A Drainage/Flooding Issues
- Climate Change/Sea Level Rise effect upon Intracoastal Waterways
- Outdated Management Systems
- American Disabilities Act (ADA) Requirements
- Inflation/Recessionary Concerns
- Charter Spending Limits
- Property Insurance
- Affordability/Cost of Living

Action Planning

The successful implementation of the projects and initiatives defined in the strategic priorities plan is contingent upon the development of an action plan. The action plan must provide clear direction with the ordered tasks/steps needed with target completion dates along with resources needed to complete the project. The plan shall identify those responsible for completing the steps and tasks and monitoring the progress of the project.

As a project or initiative identified in the Strategic Priorities Plan moves from the “Planned” stage to “Commenced” stage, an action plan will be created by the assigned department. The action plan shall include:

- A well-defined description of the project/initiative to be completed
- Tasks/steps that need to be carried out to complete the project/initiative
- Department/Employee who will be in charge of carrying out each task
- When will these tasks be completed (deadlines and milestones)
- Resources needed to complete the tasks
- Measures to evaluate progress

The assigned department shall forward its action plan to the Town Manager for review and approval. Once approved, the action plan will be posted on the Town website and will be updated on a monthly basis. It is important to note that some project may require a more complex action plan based on the scope of the project/initiative. The *Action Plan Template* is attached for reference.

Strategic Priorities: Completed Projects & Initiatives List

Fiscal Year 2020

1. PBA Collective Bargaining Agreement 2020 - 2023
2. FOP Collective Bargaining/General Employees 2020-2023
3. Sanitary Sewer Collection System Evaluation -- CCTV
4. FY 2020-2025 Water & Sewer Rate Study
5. Crosswalk Enhancement Project – Pedestrian Activated Signs/Flashers
6. Install ERP IT System: BS&A Modules Permitting, GL, Fixed Assets, Cash Receipting, AP/AR, PO, Utility Billing
7. Define Purchasing/AP/AR Process, Roles & Responsibilities
8. Update Building Administrative Code Section -- 7th Edition of Florida Building Code:
9. Complete Salary Table & Job Description Update
10. Implement Geographic Information System (GIS) & Expand Capacity
11. Southeast Palm Beach County Coastal Resiliency Partnership & Climate Vulnerability Assessment
12. Bucket Tree Pilot Program

Fiscal Year 2021

1. Charter Review Process
2. Study Alternate Fire Rescue Service Models
3. Building Recertification Ordinance/Program
4. Crosswalk Enhancement Project – Overhead Lighting
5. Police Department – Marine Unit Formation
6. As-built drawing for Municipal Complex project
7. Right-of-Way (ROW) Disruption Ordinance
8. Town Hall Building Improvements
9. Fire Rescue Services Implementation
PR Campaign, Retain Fire Rescue Services Consultants; Retain Medical Director and Assistant Medical Director; Election; Retain architect for fire station design; Commenced fire station design process; Development of Medical Protocols; EMS vehicle selection; Execution of fire services dispatch agreement; Preparation of COCPN and State EMS application documents
10. FY 2020-2025 Water & Sewer Rate Study Update

Fiscal Year 2022

1. Veterans' tab on Town's website
2. Police Department Accreditation (inlc. Marine Unit)
3. Fund Balance Guidelines/Policy Revision
4. Property Rights Element – Comprehensive Plan Update
5. Building Permit Discount