



**bluffton**  
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY™



The Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

# POPULAR ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2015



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## Demographic and Economic Statistics

### Population Statistics

Population.....	12,893 <sup>(1)</sup>
% Male .....	48.9% <sup>(1)</sup>
% Female.....	51.1% <sup>(1)</sup>
% with Bachelor's degree or higher.....	33.2% <sup>(1)</sup>
Median age .....	32.7 Years <sup>(1)</sup>
Per capita income .....	\$27,247 <sup>(2)</sup>
Median family income .....	\$64,000 <sup>(2)</sup>
Average travel time to work in minutes ....	22.9 <sup>(2)</sup>

### Unemployment Rate

County.....	5.7% <sup>(3)</sup>
State.....	6.5% <sup>(3)</sup>

### References

- (1) 2010 Census
- (2) U.S. Census Bureau, 2007—2011 American Community Survey
- (3) Annual Bureau of Labor Statistics (12/2014)



## Town of Bluffton Vision 2030

Bluffton 2030 is a beautiful Southern town that is the Heart of the Lowcountry. Bluffton is the Regional Center of the Lowcountry.

The Bluffton community has an authentic historic district, celebrates the May River and respects the Bluffton character.

Bluffton is a community of livable neighborhoods and has unique community destinations.

Bluffton residents enjoy an active lifestyle and opportunities to have fun.



# A Message from the Director

## To the Citizens of the Town of Bluffton:

I am pleased to present to you the Town of Bluffton's Popular Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015. This report is intended to increase awareness throughout the community of the financial operations of the Town. As such, this report is written in a manner that will summarize and communicate, in a user-friendly manner, the Town's financial condition. I am pleased to announce that for the fourth consecutive year the Town of Bluffton received the Award of Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for our Popular Annual Financial Report prepared for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2014.

In addition to providing financial information, it is important to demonstrate what makes Bluffton a great place to live and work. Bluffton's "State of Mind" uniqueness contributes to a variety of community events and destinations. It is important for us to demonstrate the role the Town government is playing in supporting these activities.

Financial information within this report is derived in large part from the Town's 2015 independently audited set of financial statements that are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. These audited statements are part of the Town's 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). We are proud to say the Town's CAFR has been awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association for each of the last six years.

I welcome any feedback, comments, or concerns regarding the information included in this report.

Sincerely,

Shirley A. Freeman  
Director of Finance / Administration





# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Bluffton at a Glance

Established in 1825 as a popular summer location for wealthy Savannah merchants and plantation owners, Bluffton is now considered one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the state. The town situated on a bluff along the May River just twelve miles from Hilton Head, has grown 911% between 2000 and 2010. Now designated a National Historic District, Bluffton is part of the Hilton Head Urbanized Area, the Sun City-Hilton Head Urban Cluster and the Hilton Head Island—Bluffton—Beaufort Metropolitan Statistical Area.



The Hargray building at the USC Beaufort Campus

## Colleges and Universities

The following post-secondary schools provide educational advancement opportunities to the citizens of Bluffton:

- ▶ The University of South Carolina at Beaufort (USCB)
- ▶ The Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL)
- ▶ Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD)

## Transportation

Bluffton is located:

- ▶ 15 miles from Interstate Highway 95
- ▶ 26 miles from the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport
- ▶ 12 miles from the Hilton Head Island Airport

The Palmetto Breeze offers public transit service via nine routes through Bluffton daily.

The Town joined the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS), a Metropolitan Planning Organization for regional organization, federally mandated to plan for transportation improvements.



## About this Report

Although this report is largely derived from the Town’s 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), this report is not prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Information on governmental funds is presented using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. The report is presented in a summarized manner and certain financial statements, discretely presented component units and note disclosures required by GAAP are omitted. A copy of the Town’s audited 2015 CAFR, which is prepared in accordance with GAAP and contains more detailed information, is located at [www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/documents/cafr.2015.pdf](http://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/documents/cafr.2015.pdf)

## A Bluffton “State of Mind”

Bluffton’s “State of Mind” contributes to a unique variety of community events and destinations. The Town hosts festivals throughout the year that celebrate the May River, Gullah Heritage, seafood harvests and other local art and cultural interests. Bluffton supports its active community by providing for areas to engage in river sports, nature pathways and parks. Local art, festivals and activities foster community spirit among neighbors and provide a means for town expression and entertainment.

### Parks and Leisure

- ▶ Oyster Factory Park
- ▶ DuBois Park
- ▶ Oscar Frazier Park
- ▶ Buckwalter Regional Park
- ▶ Tom Herbkersman Commons
- ▶ Pritchard Pocket Park
- ▶ Buckwalter Place Greenway Trail
- ▶ Linear Park and Leisure Trail
- ▶ MC Riley Sports Complex



### Lowcountry Artists

- ▶ Four Corners Art Gallery
- ▶ Jacob Preston Studio
- ▶ Society of Bluffton Artists
- ▶ Pluff Mud Art
- ▶ Palmetto Bluff Gallery
- ▶ May River Art Gallery
- ▶ The Filling Station Art Gallery
- ▶ Gallery without Walls

### Annual Festivals and Events

The Town helped to coordinate more than 230 special events during the year, below is a list of just a few:

- ▶ Bluffton Farmers Market
- ▶ Bluffton Village Festival
- ▶ Historic Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival
- ▶ May River Clean-up
- ▶ Burning of Bluffton
- ▶ BBQ & Blues Festival
- ▶ Beer & Brats Festival
- ▶ Bluffton International Craft Beer Festival
- ▶ The Turkey Chase 5k
- ▶ Annual Bluffton Christmas Tree Lighting and Light Up the Night Events
- ▶ Bluffton Christmas Parade





# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Elected Officials

The Town of Bluffton was incorporated in 1852. The Town operates under a Council–Manager form of government. Town Council is composed of a Mayor and four council members. Mayor and council members serve staggered four-year terms. The at-large elections are non-partisan and as of November 3, 2015 there were 11,459 registered voters on the rolls.



**Councilman  
Fred Hamilton**

**Councilman  
Larry Toomer**

**Mayor Lisa Sulka**

**Councilman  
Ted Huffman**

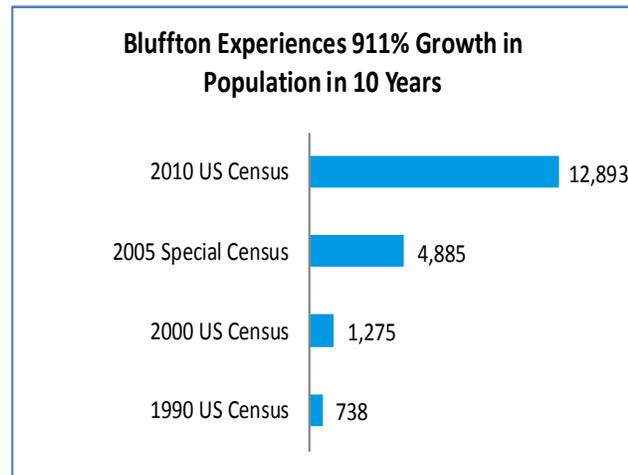
**Councilwoman  
Karen Lavery**

FY 2015 Fact	Figure
Town Property Tax Rate:	\$40/\$1,000 TAV
Town Bonded Debt Tax Rate:	\$4.35/\$1,000 TAV
Total County–Wide Property Tax Rate:	\$260.44/\$1,000 TAV
Town Share of Total:	17%
Total Annual Budget:	\$25,604,825
Employees:	112 FTEs
Outstanding Debt:	\$16,132,954

TAV—Taxable Assessed Value

FTEs—Full-time Equivalents

Town Council is responsible for setting millage rates during the annual budget process prior to the start of each fiscal year. The property tax rate was 49 mills in the year 2000 but has decreased to 44.35 mills in recent years due in large part to the Town’s increased population and property development.



## Where Your Property Tax Dollar Goes



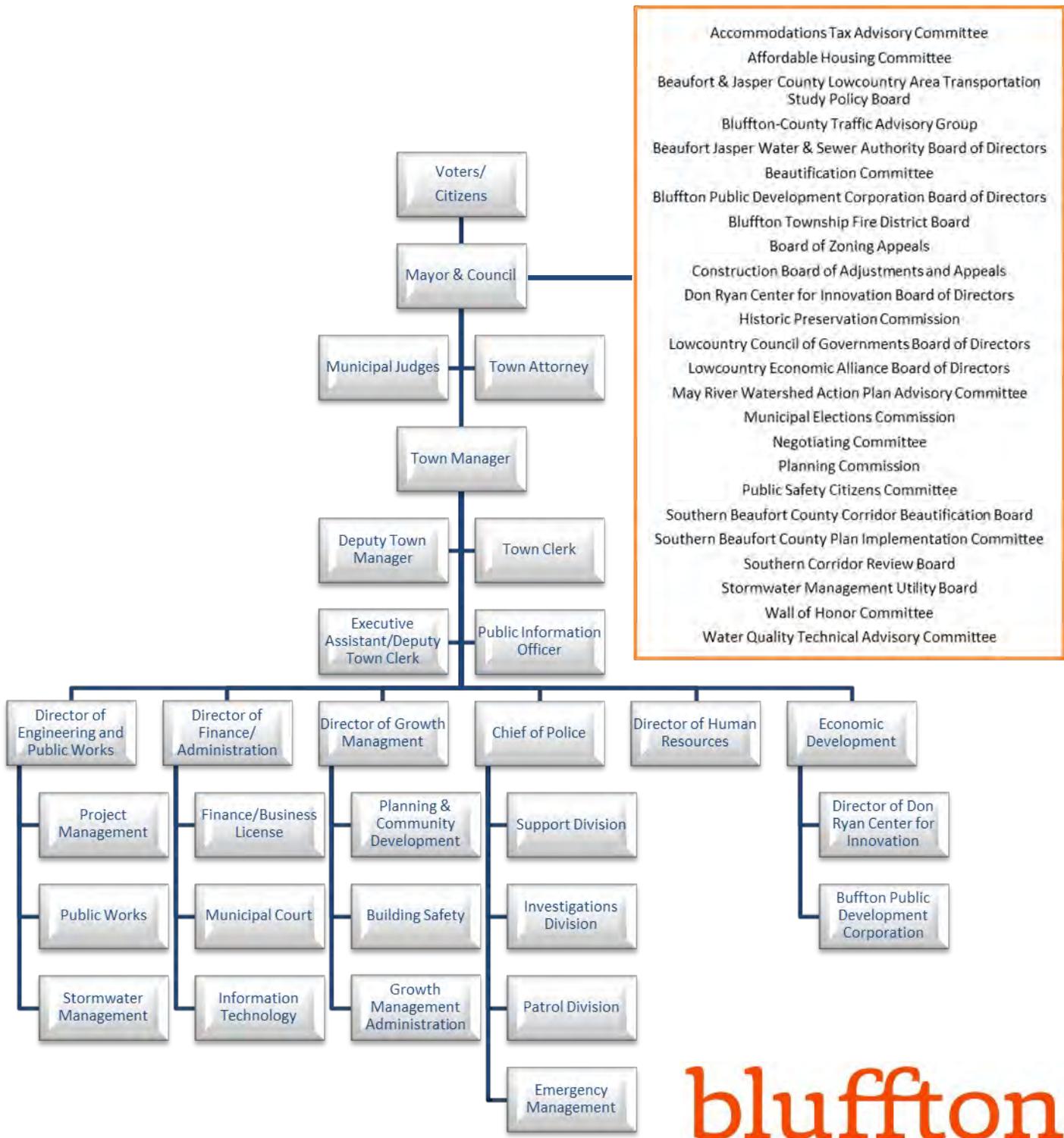
**Town  
17%**

**County  
22%**

**School District  
51%**

**Fire Dist.  
10%**

# Organizational Chart

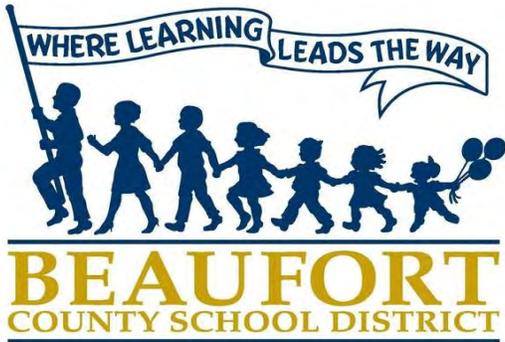




# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

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## Education News

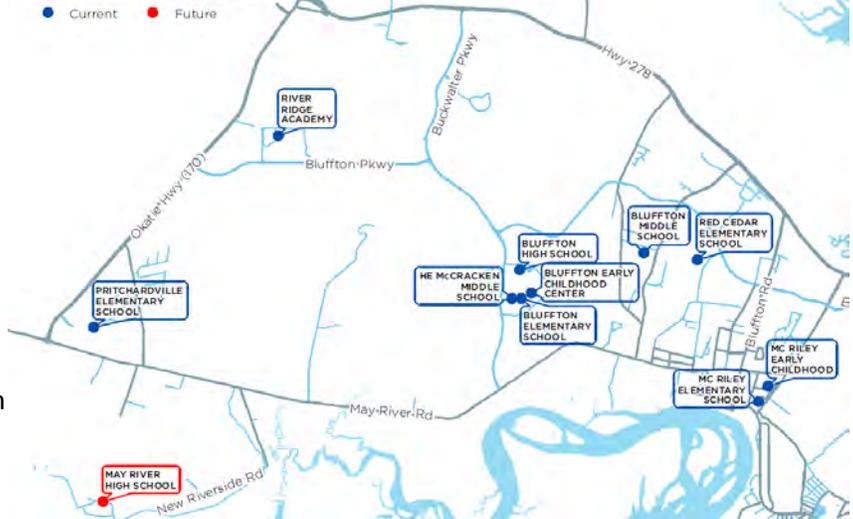


Ten years ago, the town of Bluffton had one elementary school. Today we are proud to claim five elementary, one PreK-Grade 8, two middle and one high school.

Red Cedar Elementary School earned a 2015 Palmetto's Finest Award from the South Carolina Association of School Administrators, just one year after Okatie Elementary School became the first school in state history to earn three top honors in the same year: Palmetto's Finest, a National Blue Ribbon School award from the U.S. Department of Education and the 2014 Dick and Tunky Riley Award for the state's top School Improvement Council.

All of Beaufort County's public schools are now schools of choice, giving students and parents the flexibility to apply for academic programs offered in schools outside their zoned attendance areas. And all district students now have personal mobile computing devices that they can use to enhance their learning, not only at school but also at home.

### Bluffton Schools



River Ridge Academy, a 1,000-capacity PreK-8 school near the intersection of Bluffton Parkway and Highway 170, opened in August 2015, and the 1,200-capacity May River High School is scheduled to open in August 2016.



Beaufort County is one of the America's Promise Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People for its comprehensive menu of initiatives to help young people succeed. The national competition recognizes communities across the country that focus on reducing high school dropout rates and providing service and support to youth.

## Bluffton Tourism



As depicted in the map to the left, the Town of Bluffton is located in Beaufort County, a southern coastal county in South Carolina. Bluffton is located just 12 miles west of Hilton Head Island, SC approximately 20 miles northeast of Savannah, GA, 25 miles southwest of Parris Island and 90 miles southwest of Charleston, SC.

Hilton Head Island is home to one of golf's greatest traditions, South Carolina's only PGA Tour event, the RBC Heritage is sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada and presented by Boeing typically the week following the Masters in April.



The St. Patrick's Day celebration in Savannah, Georgia is the city's largest annual celebration and the second largest St. Patrick's Day gathering in the United States. Attracting roughly 400,000 Irish, honorary Irish visitors and local celebrators each



year, Savannah's St. Patrick's Day traditions are steeped in the area's rich Irish heritage.

Parris Island, where all Marine recruits are trained east of the Mississippi River, is one of the most visited military facilities in the world. This translates into a significant economic impact for surrounding communities. Most visitors come to attend the recruit Graduation Ceremony.



Visitors to these and other area events can find lodging, dining, tours and attractions in nearby Bluffton.

The Town of Bluffton is home to the award winning Inn at Palmetto Bluff. The Inn was developed by Charlotte-based Crescent Communities and is managed by Montage Hotels & Resorts. It is in the planned community of Palmetto Bluff in Bluffton and features 50 cottage-style suites, a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, day spa and amenities such as horseback riding, kayaking and nature preserves. Crescent Communities has announced a \$100 million expansion plan to the Inn that will open in the Spring of 2016. Current awards include:



- ◆ *U.S. News and World Report* "Best Hotels in the USA"
  - Top Hotels in South Carolina (Ranked #1) and Top 10 Hotels in the USA (Ranked #3)
- ◆ AAA Five Diamond Award "Most Luxurious Accommodations North America" (2014, 2015).
- ◆ *Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards* (2014)
  - Top 50 Hotels Overall (Ranked #46) and Top Resorts in the Continental U.S. (Ranked #5)
- ◆ *Robb Report* "Top 100 Resorts of the World" (2014)



# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Bluffton Business News

Bluffton serves as a critical hub in the Beaufort County region, and with steady population growth throughout the last 20 years, the future development of the region has come into focus. Through several public sessions, the Growth Framework Map was created to define where growth should occur. It is a planning tool that organizes the future growth patterns of the Town and identifies centers for development and surrounding edges with varying degrees of residential and non-residential intensity.

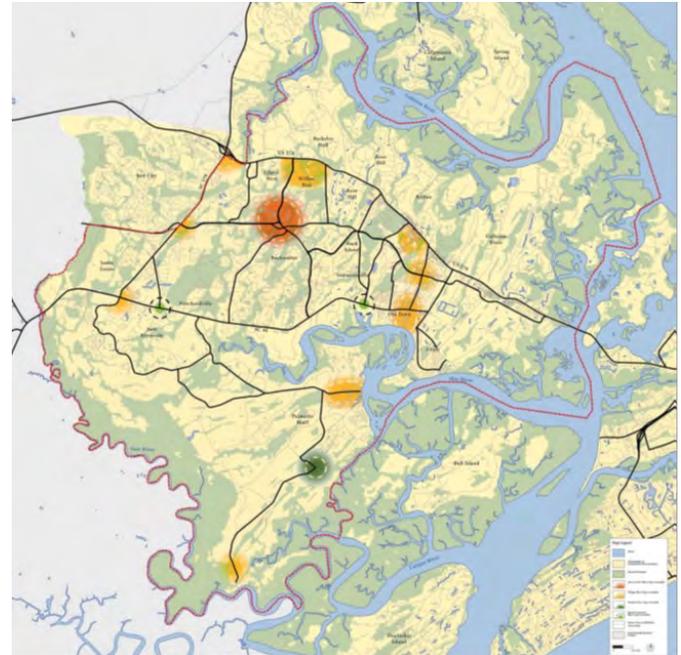
The vision of the plan prepares for a more compact and sustainable future, where new development is at higher density and focused away from key natural resources. It envisions the next century of Bluffton as a period during which Bluffton matures into a connected, complete southern town that effectively and efficiently provides services and attracts development.

Where you do business says as much as how you do business. It's why more and more companies are moving to the heart of the Lowcountry—Bluffton, SC. Dedicated to entrepreneurship, innovation and attracting high-tech industries, Bluffton provides an atmosphere that inspires new ideas and encourages business growth.

Please visit the Town's website or the Bluffton Public Development Corporation's website at [www.blufftonpublicdevelopmentcorporation.com](http://www.blufftonpublicdevelopmentcorporation.com) for more information.

### The 10 Largest Employers

- ▶ Beaufort County School District (Bluffton sites)
- ▶ eviCore National, LLC
- ▶ The Inn at Palmetto Bluff
- ▶ Publix Supermarkets
- ▶ NHC Healthcare (Bluffton site)
- ▶ Resort Services, Inc.
- ▶ Hargray Communications
- ▶ Bluffton Township Fire Department
- ▶ Kroger
- ▶ Town of Bluffton



### Southeastern Development Associates Makes Plan to Further Develop Buckwalter Place Commerce Park

In 2015 Mayor Lisa Sulka announced the signing of a public-private partnership agreement between the Town of Bluffton, the Bluffton Public Development Corporation and Southeastern Development Associates to further develop Buckwalter Place Commerce Park. The Plan includes the construction of a mixed-use development comprised of office space, multi-family housing units, retail and commercial space and the first Kroger Marketplace store in the Lowcountry. The Town and Bluffton Public Development Corporation will invest in the planning and the implementation of shared public infrastructure projects.

“This partnership further enhances our economic development initiatives and will provide job- ready sites for business recruitment and expansion” Berl Davis, chairman of the Bluffton Public Development Corporation said.

## Don Ryan Center for Innovation



In a world of innovation, one thing is certain: The better the idea, the faster you need to get it to market.

The Don Ryan Center for Innovation is a public-private partnership between the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development, eviCore National and the Town of Bluffton. Our mission is to advance regional economic development by offering a technology incubator program that provides the resources entrepreneurs, inventors and small business people need to assist them in their quest for success.

The center offers space and resources, and links participants to support in intellectual property, technology evaluation and product development services as well as seed financing, business mentorships, corporate relationships and hands-on consulting support.

Located in Bluffton, in the beautiful South Carolina Lowcountry, the Don Ryan Center for Innovation is the catalyst innovators need to make their vision a reality.

### Meet One of Our Innovators—Taylor Offshore

The revolutionary idea of Taylor Offshore™ was thought of in the summer of 2008. After 4 years of rigorous testing and development they are now proud to offer the universal rigging platform that will change the way you fish forever.

The patented Taylor Offshore Gamut ProLink™ design enables you to catch more fish with ease while saving money and time, making your fishing trip less of a chore and more of a sport.

The *E1* makes the Gamput ProLink System™ universally interchangeable. Dedicated to each rod, these units are attached directly to your wind on leader, eliminating the need for any and all lure specific leader. Just a pull on the collar will release the lure, dredge bait, daisy chain, kite rig or live bait rig from the freely swiveling construct.

The *M1 Series* attaches directly to the *E1*, while swiveling freely. A slight pull on either *E1* collar releases the *M1* from the leader. The *M1* goes into the box with the fish **without the leader**, allowing another pre rigged *M1* to snap into place. Lines are back in the water within seconds.

Stop rigging. Start fishing. For more information visit [www.taylor-offshore.com](http://www.taylor-offshore.com)

For more information about our other innovators, please visit <http://www.donryancenter.com>





# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## What's Happening Around Town



Insurance Services Office, A nationwide provider of insurance data information, has audited the Town of Bluffton's Building Safety Office and placed the office in the top 10% of effectiveness for enforcing building safety standards in South Carolina. The audit referred to as the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) is a nation-wide program which assesses and grades building codes, building plan review, effectiveness of inspections as well as office operations and procedures and how those procedures mitigate losses from natural hazards. This was the Town's first audit since the Building Office was established in 2009.



The Hilton Head Island—Bluffton Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class of 2015 wants visitors and locals to “follow the fiddlers” to learn more about the unique crabs that scurry along the May River. The class placed informational story boards and scattered ten of the crabs, created by Savannah sculptor Susie Chisholm, along Calhoun Street as part of a public art project aimed at building community awareness of marine life.



The Bluffton Farmers Market was ranked 1st in the state of South Carolina and 16th nationwide in the midsize market division by American Farmland Trust (AFT). The AFT's America's Favorite Farmers Markets™ contest's purpose is to raise national awareness about local farmers markets, the role they play in supporting local farms and the need to protect America's farmland.



The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) awarded Bluffton Police Department Accreditation with Excellence; the highest level of recognition of the reaccreditation process. This is Bluffton Police Department's 2nd reaccreditation and its first application for the Gold Standard Assessment. The Bluffton Police Department is the 8<sup>th</sup> department in the state to receive this level of recognition. Through this process, assessors are evaluating the department's professionalism, stewardship, integrity, diversity, independence, dedication to continuous improvement, objectivity, accountability and collaboration.

## 2015 Financial Highlights

The previous sections of this document provided information on what is happening in our Town. The remainder of this document will provide readers with the Town's financial information for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015.



The Heyward House and Bluffton Welcome Center circa 1840

### A Successful Year

- ▶ The General Fund (the chief operating fund of the Town) had revenues in excess of expenditures (net change in fund balance) in the amount of \$3,935,113 during the fiscal year. The Town saw growth in the number of residential building permits and its related fees as the economy continues to recover.
- ▶ At the end of the fiscal year the General Fund had an unassigned\* or unrestricted fund balance of \$8,019,132 or 66% of the year's total General Fund expenditures (\$12,152,170). This indicates a strong financial position for the Town.
- ▶ In December 2014 the Town issued \$8,923,000 of tax increment financing (TIF) bonds for a current refunding of the \$9,920,000 of outstanding principal. The refunding was undertaken to take advantage of the lower interest rates available in the tax exempt bond market. This resulted in an economic gain of \$254,853 and a reduction of \$736,548 in future debt service payments.

### The Challenges Ahead

- ▶ Fund Balance Reserves—The Town strives to maintain service levels and adequate fund balance reserves through the adoption of financial policies. Financial policy standards were all met again in FY 2015.
- ▶ Infrastructure Maintenance—Appropriately funding public assets and infrastructure as to not accumulate deferred maintenance costs. The Town continues to fund an Equipment Replacement Reserve to help alleviate the costs of future vehicle replacements.
- ▶ Economic Development—Attracting and retaining businesses and adopting additional economic development strategies will continue to be a top priority in FY 2016.

\* Unassigned fund balance represents fund balance that is not designated as nonspendable, restricted, committed or assigned for other intended purposes by external parties from the government, government elected officials or assigned staff.



# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Where Our Money Comes From

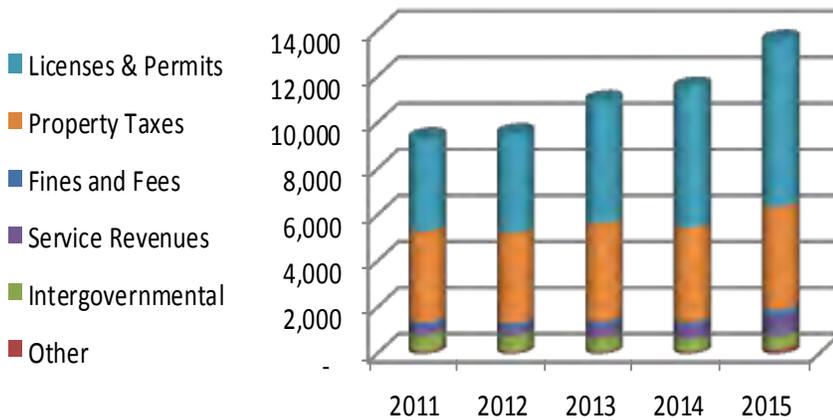
The Town pays for the services it provides to its citizens and businesses from various sources, referred to as revenue, such as various taxes, grants and charges for services.

### The General Fund

When assessing the financial results of the Town, the Town’s General Fund is the primary focus. The General Fund is the general operating fund of the Town and supports the regular day-to-day operations. It is used to account for all revenues and expenditures of the Town, except for those required to be accounted for in another fund such as Capital Improvement Projects or Stormwater activity. Below are the details of where the Town’s General Fund revenues come from:

### Revenue by Source

Last 5 Years - In Thousands



### Licenses and Permits

License and permit collections remain the leading source of revenue at 53% and increased by over \$1 million from fiscal year 2014. These revenue increases indicate a strengthening local economy. Major sources of revenues from licensing and permitting are as follows:

- ▶ Franchise Fees—Revenues resulting from any utility franchise fees paid to the Town including gas, electric and cable.
- ▶ Business Licenses—Revenues collected for all businesses licensed in the Town.
- ▶ Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) Telecommunications and Insurance Tax—Revenues collected by MASC for the Town pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1999 and insurance and broker’s tax.
- ▶ Building Safety Permits—Revenues from building permitting and inspection fees collected for residential and commercial development.

#### Licenses & Permits

	2015	2014
Franchise Fees	\$ 1,944,479	\$ 2,035,453
Business Licenses	1,786,429	1,416,147
MASC Insurance Tax Collections	1,645,522	1,310,818
MASC Telecommunications	89,475	102,901
Building Permits	1,608,131	1,090,532
Administrative Fees	44,000	50,646
Fee in Lieu of Developer Fees	-	10,573
Application Fees	63,225	36,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 7,181,261</b>	<b>\$ 6,053,330</b>

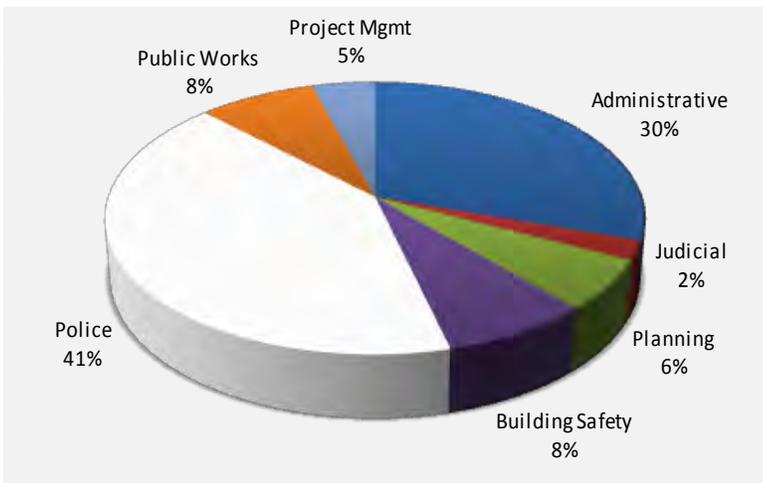
## Where Our Money Goes



Once the Town receives taxes and other revenues, the monies must be efficiently spent to provide services to the citizens and businesses of the Town. As detailed in this section, the Town provides a variety of services to its residents and businesses.

Most service expenditures are recorded within the Town’s General Fund since this fund finances the Town’s daily operations.

During the year ended 2015, the Town expended its funds as shown below. The per capita amounts represent the amount that the Town expended on each type of service per resident while the aggregate represents the total amount spent.



The expenditures shown to the right are classified by the type of service provided. Below is a summary of the function and departments reported within the pie chart.

**Administrative** expenditures include the costs of all elected officials and the departments of Executive, Human Resources, Finance, Information Technology Departments and other Town-wide costs.

**Judicial** expenditures include the costs of Municipal Court and Judges.

**Planning** expenditures include the costs of Growth Management and the Planning & Community Development Departments.

**Public Works** expenditures include the costs of the Facilities/Asset Management Department.

The remaining functions represent actual individual departments within the Town.

The Town continues to experience rising revenues and expenditures related to Building Safety services with the ongoing growth of the area.

Expenditures Per Capita				
	2015 \$'s	Per Capita	2014 \$'s	Per Capita
Administrative	\$ 3,657,785	284	\$ 3,043,277	236
Judicial	274,448	21	260,994	20
Planning	732,924	57	810,964	63
Building Safety	943,115	73	848,123	66
Police	5,020,740	389	4,025,750	312
Public Works	988,806	77	882,139	68
Project Mgmt.	534,352	41	490,314	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,152,170</b>	<b>\$942</b>	<b>\$10,361,561</b>	<b>\$803</b>



# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Assets and Liabilities

In addition to where the Town's money comes from and where it goes, it is also important to understand the flow of the Town's financial position. When we look at the overall financial condition of the Town, it is better to use the full accrual basis of accounting, which is similar to the basis of accounting used in the private sector. This allows us to consider all assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses of the Town.

The following schedule is intended to show the difference (defined as net position) between the Town's total assets and the Town's total liabilities as of June 30, 2015. The Statement of Net Position reflects a healthy financial condition.

### Net Position

#### Our Assets—What We Have

Unrestricted current assets consisting mainly of cash and amounts owed to the Town	\$16,107,629
Restricted current assets consisting entirely of cash	6,316,877
Capital assets consisting primarily of land, buildings, equipment and vehicles	27,489,463
Total Assets of the Town	\$49,913,969
Deferred Outflows of Resources Related to Pensions	\$1,007,019

#### Our Liabilities—What We Owe

Current liabilities consisting of all the amounts the Town owes and expects to pay in FY 2016 except for bonds	\$ 2,801,100
Amounts the Town owes and expects to pay after 2016, except for bonds and pensions	959,408
Amount of bonds payable	15,013,000
Net Pension Liability	9,839,884
Total Liabilities of the Town	\$28,613,392
Deferred Inflows of Resources Related to Pensions	\$932,323
Net Position	\$21,375,273

The assets of the Town exceeded its liabilities at the close of the fiscal year by \$21,375,273 (net position). Of this amount, \$1,316,955 (unrestricted net position) may be used to meet the Town's ongoing obligations to its citizens and creditors. Portions of the restricted net position amount are designated for future capital improvements, tourism projects and related support, debt service and other designated purposes.

## Outstanding Bonds



Streetscape at the Calhoun Street Promenade

### Bonds

(in thousands)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>General Obligation Bonds</b>					
Beginning balance	\$ 20	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,300
Debt issued during the year	6,500	-	-	-	-
Principal repaid during the year	(20)	-	-	-	(210)
Ending Balance	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,300	\$ 6,090
<b>TIF Revenue Bonds</b>					
Beginning balance	\$ 12,875	\$ 11,870	\$ 11,240	\$ 10,590	\$ 9,920
Debt issued during the year	-	-	-	-	8,923
Principal repaid during the year	(12,875)	(630)	(650)	(670)	(9,920)
Ending Balance	\$ 11,870	\$ 11,240	\$ 10,590	\$ 9,920	\$ 8,923
<b>Total Outstanding Bonds</b>	<b>\$ 18,370</b>	<b>\$ 17,740</b>	<b>\$ 17,090</b>	<b>\$ 16,220</b>	<b>\$ 15,013</b>
<b>Outstanding Bonds per Capita (\$000's)</b>	<b>\$ 1.43</b>	<b>\$ 1.38</b>	<b>\$ 1.33</b>	<b>\$ 1.26</b>	<b>\$ 1.16</b>

A major liability of the Town is the amount of outstanding general obligation and revenue bonds. General obligation bonds are debt instruments issued by the Town to raise funds for public projects (i.e. Law Enforcement Center). What makes general obligation bonds (or GO bonds for short) unique is that they are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuing municipality. The Town's total bond issuances outstanding as of June 30, 2015 equal approximately \$15 million. The Town maintains a bond rating of Aa2 from Moody's and improved to a AA+ Municipal Bond rating from Standard and Poor's rating agencies in 2014. Rating agencies assess the credit quality of municipal bond issues and assign a credit rating based on their analysis. Both agencies stated the high ratings reflect the growth in the Town's tax base in recent years and a healthy financial position supported by fiscal policies, professional management and modest debt as shown in the bonds per capita results above.



# Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

*Established 1825*

## Revenues vs. Expenditures

The table below summarizes the revenue and expenditure activity of the Town’s General Fund. The Town’s revenues covered service expenditures as well as limited debt and capital outlay expenditures.

The General Fund	
Revenues of the Town including other financing sources*	\$ 14,655,349
Expenditures of the Town to provide services	(11,508,606)
Excess Revenues	\$ 3,146,743
Debt Service Expenditures	(170,612)
Capital Outlay Expenditures including other financing uses*	(472,952)
Excess Revenues	\$ 2,503,179

The Town maintains a separate Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Fund to account for the financial transactions and resources used by the Town for the acquisition or construction of major capital projects. The table below lists the CIP projects and related expenditures that the Town incurred during fiscal year 2015.

The Capital Improvements Program Fund	
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 2,257,715
Capital Improvements Program Revenue	638,035
Capital Expenditures by Project:	
Buckwalter Place Technology Park Expansion	(100,000)
May River Road/Bruin Road Streetscape	(23,238)
Calhoun Street	(45,220)
Parks Projects	(113,613)
Buck Island/Simmons ville Sewer Projects	(201,146)
Police Substation and Camera System	(113,027)
Bluffton Parkway	(41,102)
Other Projects	(60,355)
Funding transfers from other Funds	653,452
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 2,851,501



The Stormwater Fund is used to account for stormwater utility fees collected on property tax bills and restricted for use in the Town’s Stormwater Management Program. Related grants are also recorded in this fund. The table below lists the routine operating and capital expenditures that the Town incurred during fiscal year 2015.

The Stormwater Fund	
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 1,871,197
Stormwater Fund Revenue	1,120,604
Personnel & Operating Expenditures	(619,579)
Capital Expenditures by Project:	
Wetland Restoration	(58,626)
Section 319 Grant Projects	(49,608)
Funding transfers to other Funds	(152,701)
Ending Fund Balance	\$ 2,111,287

\* Other Financing Sources (uses) are increases (decreases) to Fund Balance and include Proceeds from Capital Leases and Transfers In and (Transfers Out) from and (to) other funds.

## 2016 Budget Highlights

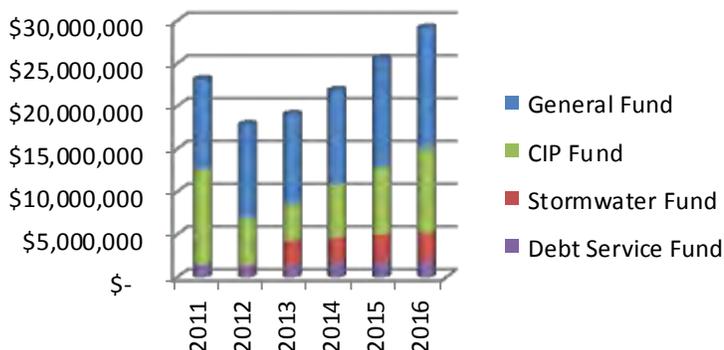
### Town of Bluffton Strategic Planning Goals



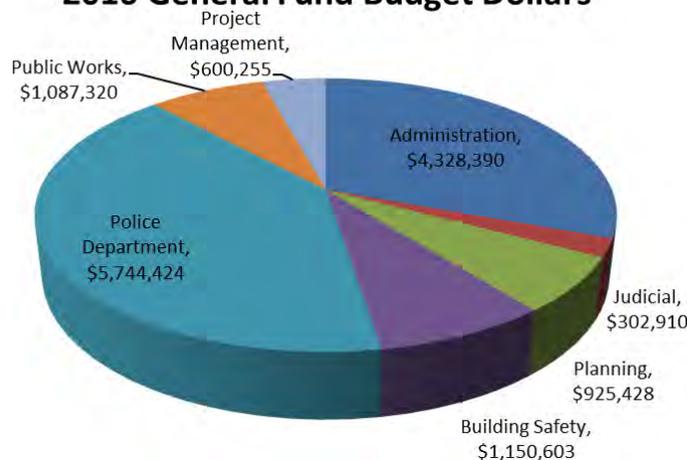
Our Fiscal Year 2016 budget sets forth our financial policies, long term financial projections, the priorities of Town Council, and maintains a healthy financial position. The budget process is one of the most important duties we have to ensure and demonstrate to our citizens our ability to manage the operations and finances of the Town.

The Town adopted consolidated budget of \$29,143,795 maintains the same millage rate as the prior year at 44.35 mills; 40 mills for General (operating) Fund and 4.35 mills for the Debt Service Fund.

### Total Consolidated Budget



### 2016 General Fund Budget Dollars



Courtesy of Unique Perspective, LLC

View of the May River and the Church of the Cross circa 1854 from above



Additional copies of this report may be obtained by contacting:

The Town of Bluffton  
Attn: Finance Department  
20 Bridge Street  
Bluffton, SC 29910  
(843)706-4545

In addition, this report is available at:

[www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/documents/pafr.2015.pdf](http://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/documents/pafr.2015.pdf)

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