

# preface

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The Town of Bluffton's Planning & Community Development, in partnership with the Buck Island Simmonsville Neighborhood, is focused on developing a neighborhood plan in response to recommendations provided in the Town of Bluffton's Comprehensive Plan and the community's concern for future conditions of their neighborhood.

While the Town of Bluffton has dramatically increased in size, population, and development in the last decade, the Buck Island Simmonsville (BIS) Neighborhood has remained relatively constant. Recent changes and pending current development loom heavily on the neighborhood, leading the area residents to feel substantial development pressures.

The community's primary goals are to maintain and enhance the stability and security of its residential neighborhood and protect its residential character from commercial encroachment and other nonconforming land uses. Residents fear that the future middle school will have a negative impact on their neighborhood by adding to the recent traffic increases even more. In addition, recent criminal activity in the neighborhood has heightened residents' anxiety about their personal safety. There is a concern from residents that additional commercial development will attract more unlawful behavior.



Figure 1: The Buck Island Simmonsville Neighborhood has an abundance of natural resources.

## purpose of the plan

Neighborhood planning is a critical tool for guiding the vision of the Comprehensive Plan into a reality. While the Comprehensive Plan establishes a definitive course of growth of the Town as a whole, Neighborhood Plans specify in greater detail how each district of the Town is to accomplish those Town-wide goals. Indeed, much of the vision of the Neighborhood Plan is derived from the Comprehensive Plan.

### the vision statements for the comprehensive plan provided guidance throughout this process:

- We acknowledge and accept our diverse population and strive to offer a high quality of life for all residents, visitors, and workers.
- We strive to maintain our sense of community, diversity, and individuality by preserving our cultural resources.
- We will inventory and protect critical resources in a manner which sustains the vitality, function, and beauty of Bluffton's natural heritage.
- We will work to ensure that every resident has decent, safe, and affordable housing.
- We strive to create a vital, diverse, and sustainable local economy that enhances Bluffton's community resources: human, natural, cultural, and economic.
- We share a commitment to provide efficient and reliable facilities and services for the residents and visitors of the Town of Bluffton.
- We will plan for a balance of land uses that ensure a high quality of life, business opportunity, environmentally protected areas, and proper placement of residential uses.
- We will plan an efficient, adequate, and safe transportation network for all users, including motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.
- We share a commitment with our neighboring jurisdictions and agencies to work together to plan and construct the public infrastructure needed by the residents of the Town of Bluffton and Beaufort County.

Since conditions within the Buck Island Simonsville (BIS) Neighborhood could change and thus alter the premise for the various recommendations, it is important to review this plan periodically. The recommendations and action strategies listed in this document are designed for a five to seven-year time period. However, planning is a continuous process and the plan is merely a framework from which to build. It is anticipated that necessary changes will be addressed by adjusting the Neighborhood Plan during future updates. Revisions of the plan should be conducted biannually.

The recommendations in this Neighborhood Plan are primarily intended to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the Neighborhood. The desire is to limit commercial impact, promote quality land use, and enhance the safety of the Neighborhood for all residents.

In conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan, the BIS Neighborhood Plan serves as a long-term, comprehensive policy guide for the development of the BIS neighborhood. The BIS Neighborhood Plan is a vision statement of how the community would like to see its neighborhood in the future. It will serve to:

- Enable the Town Council and Planning Commission to establish long-range development policies.
- Provide a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with these policies.
- Guide public agencies and private developers in designing and funding projects that are consistent with Town policies.
- Provide a realistic and fiscally responsible direction for future change in the BIS community.
- Define the generic parameters for zoning ordinance amendments.
- Revitalize BIS by assisting current and future residents and other stakeholders to create a diverse, mixed-income residential neighborhood with peripheral commercial development at the southern boundary.
- Serve as an official, publicly adopted guide to public and private investment in the Neighborhood over the next decade.
- Demonstrate that a high level of consensus has been achieved in major policy areas.
- Clearly pronounce the collective desires of the BIS stakeholders concerning quality of life issues affecting the community in the short and long term futures.
- Encourage existing and potential partners to make BIS a more caring and cohesive neighborhood of stakeholders sharing a common goal.
- Demonstrate the need for community development activities and programs.

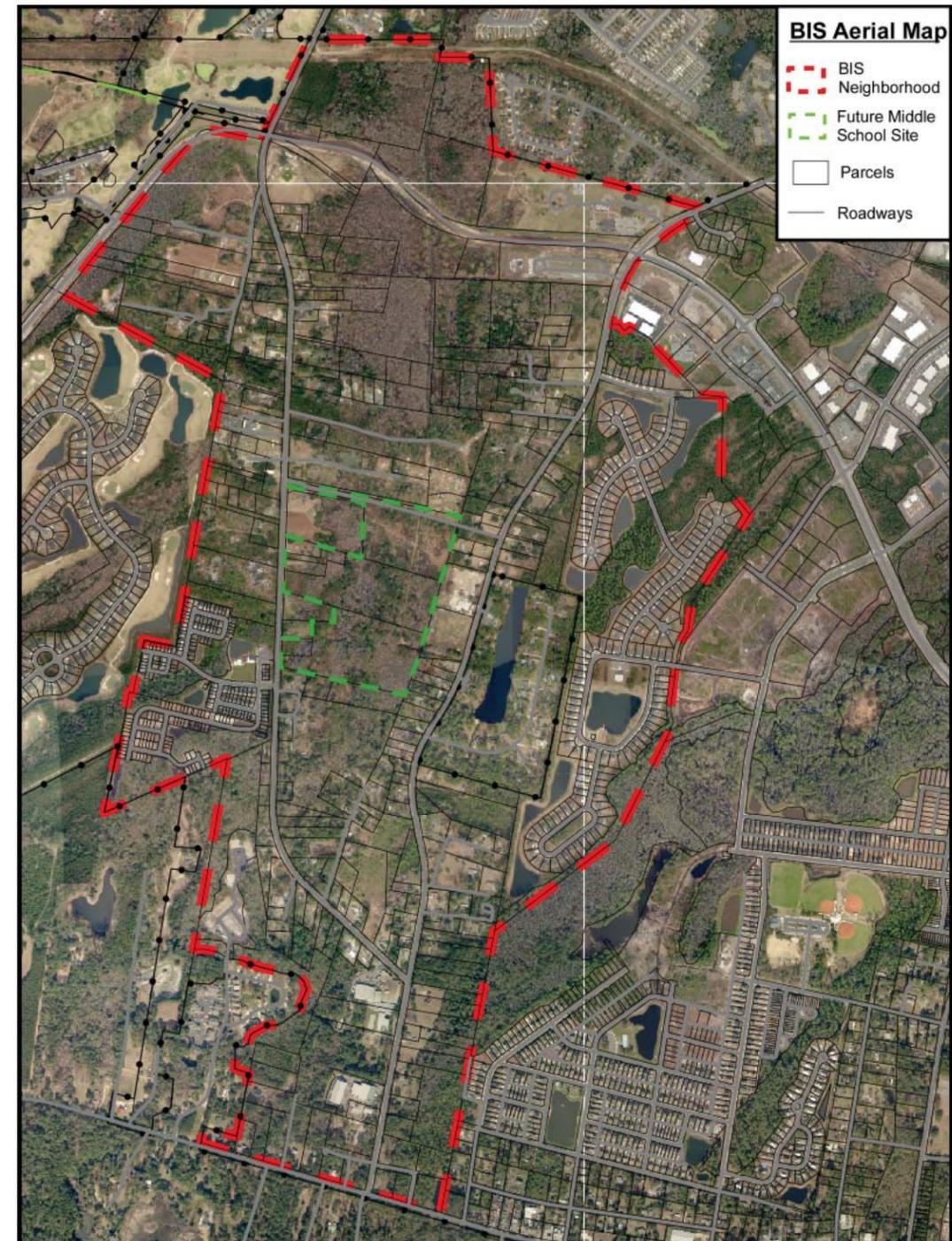


Figure 2: Aerial of the BIS study area.