SUBCHAPTER 7B - LAND USE PLANNING GUIDELINES

SECTION .0100 - INTRODUCTION TO LAND USE PLANNING

15A NCAC 07B .0101 PURPOSE

(a) The Coastal Resources Commission finds that the Coastal Area Management Act of 1974 establishes a cooperative program of coastal area management between local governments and the state. The Commission further finds that land use planning lies at the center of local government's involvement and gives the local leaders an opportunity and responsibility to establish and enforce policies to guide the development of their community. While regulations, land acquisition, education and other management tools must continue to play an important role, the Commission finds that land use planning offers the best chance for developing a common vision and goals for the future that balance the economic development and resource protection necessary for a healthy coast.

(b) The land use planning should provide opportunities for careful technical analysis of the implications of various development alternatives, allow meaningful involvement of citizens in discussing the future of their community and provide a chance for local elected officials to make clear public policy choices for the future that help guide public and private investments. Land use planning is an important tool for effectively addressing the many complicated issues that face areas with high growth as well as those areas that are economically distressed and in great need of new employment opportunities. To those ends, these guidelines establish standards and procedures for development of local government Land Use Plans

(c) The rules in this Subchapter serve as state guidelines to assist local governments in each of the 20 coastal counties with the preparation of their own individual Land Use Plans. Each county and municipality shall develop a plan which reflects the desires, needs and best judgment of its citizens. Once approved by the Coastal Resources Commission, the local Land Use Plan becomes part of the North Carolina Coastal Management Plan.

(d) This Subchapter also sets forth general standards for use by the Commission in reviewing and considering local Land Use Plans. These standards include a basic format for the plans. These standards of review shall be considered by the Commission in determining whether to approve local Land Use Plans. The Commission, in its review, also shall consider submission dates, content, and similar matters as outlined in this Subchapter.

(e) Land development generally takes place as the result of a series of decisions by private individuals and government. If left entirely to chance, the resulting pattern of development in a locality may not be in the best interest of the overall community. In order to promote community interest for both present and future generations, a Land Use Plan shall be developed, adopted and kept current by local governments in the coastal area.

(f) The Land Use Plan is a framework that guides local leaders as they make decisions affecting development. Businesses, investors, new residents and other private individuals, as well as other levels of government, also use the plan to guide their land use decisions. Use of the plan by these groups leads to more efficient and economical provision of public services, protection of natural resources, sound economic development, and protection of public health and safety.

(g) Local governments, through the land use planning process, address issues and adopt policies that guide the development of their community. Many decisions affecting development are made by other levels of government, and local policies must consider and be consistent with established state and federal policies. Most development-related decisions, however, are primarily of local concern. Policies which address the type of development to be encouraged, the density and patterns of development, and the methods of providing public access to beaches and waterfronts are examples of these local policy decisions. When such development issues are carefully and explicitly addressed in the local Land Use Plan, other levels of government will follow local policies in their actions that affect those issues. State and federal agencies will use the local Land Use Plans and policies in making project consistency, funding and permit decisions.

History Note: *Authority G.S. 113A-110; 113A-124;*
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15A NCAC 07B .0102 OBJECTIVES
15A NCAC 07B .0103 POLICIES
15A NCAC 07B .0104 STANDARDS

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