

2018 Local Legislative Agenda

Public Policy and Organizational Priorities

The Public Policy and Organizational Priorities of the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, CVB, support and advocate two distinct strategies:

1. Grow our North Myrtle Beach Visitor and Destination Market
2. Diversify the North Myrtle Beach Economy

The following position statements have been adopted by the Board of Directors of the North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau, as priority issues of importance to the business members of this organization. This now becomes the 2018 Local Legislative Agenda and will be presented to our city and county elected leaders for support and assistance.

Hospitality / Tourism

Tourism generates over \$1.2 billion dollars annually to the North Myrtle Beach economy. The North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce, CVB is recognized as the city's designated "Destination Marketing Organization" for marketing and promoting the community nationally and internationally with the support of accommodations tax dollars.

We support:

- Adoption of the 1% Tourism Development Fee as a proven option to generate new revenue for the City of North Myrtle Beach versus reducing public services or increasing the local property tax rates.
- Continued and increased A-Tax funding to meet our mission as the "best family destination" available on the east coast.
- Continued support of a Sports Ambassadors Program to assist and support sports tourism in partnership with the City's Parks and Recreation Department.
- Marketing of sports tourism as a part of our responsibility as the DMO for the City of North Myrtle Beach.
- The enforcement of current laws for the collection of all appropriate licenses and taxes from individuals or businesses who rent property commercially for more than 30 nights in a given calendar year.
- The reactivation of the A-Tax Oversight Committee at the state level. The committee would have "powers and duties" to oversee and assure accommodations taxes are being collected and expanded as the law prescribes. The committee would be given the power and authority to carry out its duties.

Planning and Development

Exceptional planning and development leads to positive, quality growth and ultimately increased property values and a great quality of life. The North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce is committed to supporting these factors at the local level.

We support:

- The joint development by the North Myrtle Beach and Horry County Planning Departments for the creation of a long-range transitional overlay land use plan for the North Strand and the

projected high growth area of SC 22, 31, and 9. It is recommended that these corridors be designated as commercial growth areas limited to light industrial, medical, retail (PUD), and tourism services including tourism destination resorts and attractions, and regional and national headquarters, including areas planned for commercial office parks. Such overlay planning will help guide the county as some of the unincorporated areas might become a part of the City of North Myrtle Beach.

- More business input on the city's 10-year comprehensive Master Plan.
- A partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in collaboration with the City of North Myrtle Beach, to lend their on-site expertise in recommending a design and implementation plan for Main Street, NMB, from Highway 17 to the ocean.
- The initiation of a master plan for the Main Street / central business district of North Myrtle Beach.

Sustainable Development

A growth strategy that is neither environmentally nor economically self-limiting, which can be sustained over time, resulting in a closer balance between the economy, the environment, and social equity.

We support:

- The creation and development of an integrated Local and Regional Sustainable Development Plan, by working together with a Sustainable Development Alliance including local and regional partners from the public and private sectors.
- The North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce commits to playing a leadership role in this initiative while identifying and nurturing regional stewardship, partnerships, and collaboratives.

Transportation / Infrastructure

Meeting the transportation and infrastructure needs at the local level provides a community the opportunity to achieve a diverse economy and a strong quality of life.

We support:

- Horry County's Ride 3 initiative approved by voters, in particular the completion of SC 31 connecting to the Carolina Bays Parkway extension, I-74, Highway 17 North, and I-40.
- Funding and development of I-73 and I-74 as part of the local transportation plan and expanding SC Highway 9 to four lanes and extended to Interstate 95.
- Continued planning and funding participation in beach renourishment to protect investment as a visitor destination, both long and short term, including local permitting allowing NMB to dredge and pump sand or dig sand within South Carolina waters off the 9 mile stretch of NMB. The permit would also include Federal Corp of Engineers approval and the permit would supplement the existing COE federally funded beach renourishment. The NMB Chamber should also support measures to get local funding of beach renourishment that would allow the city of NMB to buy its own dredge and hopper dredges to deliver sand to beaches on an ongoing yearly or as needed basis, again to supplement the 10-year federal beach renourishment project.
- Propose state legislation establishing State Beach Renourishment Infrastructure Bank to support local beach renourishment efforts.
- Continued planning and funding participation in channel dredging to protect investment as visitor destination, both long and short term.
- Offshore storm water discharge improvements, in addition to addressing the flooding issues on Main Street and Ocean Boulevard as part of the city's water outfall plan, under the auspices of public safety, environment and health with funding support from state and federal governments.
- Protection and development of Intracoastal waterways to maintain a navigable depth and insure viability as a commercial and recreational waterway.

Continued support of Grand Strand Airport located in North Myrtle Beach while assuring the continual operations of this general aviation airport which is ranked as one of the top general aviation airports in the state of South Carolina.

Education / Workforce

The chamber supports a quality public school system and higher education system which will provide our students and citizens the opportunity to compete in the world for family sustaining jobs.

We support:

- Creating an Education Council of the chamber to engage business in the support of education in particular K-12 in our public and private schools.
- Horry County Public Schools, Horry-Georgetown Technical College and Coastal Carolina University.
- Working with the hospitality community including area hotels and restaurants, to identify key issues, including identification of workforce needs and development of training and education programs to address the need.
- No change in school closings at local level which would open schools any earlier than at present. If new legislation is proposed at state level, "Home Rule" should prevail.

Economic Development

To sustain and grow our community over the next several decades will require a shared vision to grow our visitor and destination market along with a diversified economy built around the positive factors of the "green / clean economy" further enhancing our quality of life.

We support:

- The "Building North Myrtle Beach 2.0" initiative's strategies to grow and expand our visitor destination market, and to help diversify our economy through the creation and attraction of sustainable jobs to our community.
- The creation and development of a community vision for economic and community development in partnership with the city of North Myrtle Beach and other strategic partners including Horry County and the Myrtle Beach Regional Economic Development Corporation (MBREDC). Such a plan would include a community needs assessment and the identification of strategic goals for the future sustainable growth and development of our city.
- The development, marketing, and promoting, in partnership with the city's Parks and Recreation Department, of our city's state-of-the-art sports complex to meet local needs as well as attract visitors and families to our community to engage in youth and adult sports tournaments as part of a sports tourism initiative in collaboration with the City of North Myrtle Beach.
- The completion of the Product Development Plan for the North Myrtle Beach area, to include identifying and assembling adequate acreage with needed infrastructure for a "certified" commercial / light industrial park.
- The North Strand Coastal Wind Team, as an economic development initiative in partnership with the City of North Myrtle Beach and other strategic partners in establishing a community-based wind energy program and sustainable energy plan for the city.
- An Off-shore Wind Farm off the coast of North Myrtle Beach, as described in the city's and chamber's resolution adopted in November, 2012.
- A review of the city's business license and fee structure to assure we are business friendly and competitive in the cost of doing business here. [consistent with proposed state legislation]
- Standardization of local permitting and licensing statewide as proposed by the SC Chamber of Commerce.

Efficiency of Government

The North Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce encourages government to perform as efficiently as possible at all levels. We advocate efficiency studies on a regular basis as a normal process of operation and delivering services to the public and private sectors.

We support:

- The lending of private sector expertise to local government to assist in efficient operations.
- Policies at the local level to require reduction of expenditures prior to any consideration for a tax increase.

Good Government

Many of the problems faced at the local, state, and federal levels, stem from a lack of qualified, experienced, and/or committed candidates willing to seek public office. We believe, as a premier chamber of commerce, that we have a responsibility to help change this by providing non-partisan educational and training opportunities to identify and support qualified candidates at all levels. We also believe in our right and duty to advocate responsibly on behalf of our business members and the community we serve.

We support:

- Aggressive role in candidate recruitment to attract pro-business candidates with general election appeal.
- Opposition towards any attempt to limit business community engagement in the electoral and policymaking arenas at the local, federal and state levels.

Health / Environment

Healthcare and the availability of a state-of-the art hospital and associated medical services are essential to a growing community's quality of life and competitiveness towards attracting and growing new jobs. We are fortunate to have such facilities in our community and strongly favor continued support.

As another major factor in our community's and region's sustainable development, the chamber encourages policies and regulations to ensure that environmental and health regulations and policies support a growing economy while balancing and protecting the community's and region's quality of life. Environmental legislation and regulations should not necessarily increase the administrative burden resulting in unnecessary rules, regulations, or project delays becoming cost prohibitive to business.

We support:

- Expansion plans for McLeod Loris Seacoast to better serve our area.
- Coastal Carolina University research and development of wind and tidal energy resources.
- State and local guidelines and regulations to support and provide incentives for the North Myrtle Beach community based wind energy program and sustainable energy plan including offshore wind farms.