

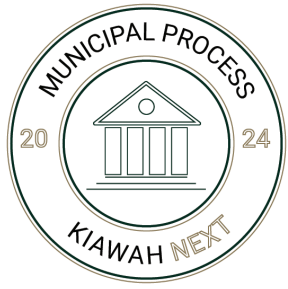
- 01** governance structure
- 02** population
- 03** economic development
- 04** natural resources
- 05** cultural resources
- 06** community facilities
- 07** housing
- 08** land use
- 09** transportation
- 10** priority investments
- 11** resiliency

kiawah**next**

part two: plan elements

01





governance structurenext

Goal: To display and communicate the processes of unique Town and stakeholder governance.

Governance Structure

Unlike the other ten elements, the State does not require this element. It is meant to consider the duties and processes of the town government, apart from the other elements.

Big Ideas

Kiawah Island Alliance (KIA)

Objectives

MP1 - Optimize Communication Channels and Community Engagement.

MP4 - Establish and effectively operate the Kiawah Island Alliance (KIA).

MP5 - Optimize Government Administrative Effectiveness.

Overview

Kiawah Island operates under a unique governance structure. The Town of Kiawah Island (“Town”) is responsible for core municipal functions such as public safety, zoning, and building services. Meanwhile, the Kiawah Island Community Association (“KICA”), the master homeowners association, manages many aspects of daily community life, including maintenance of KICA-owned infrastructure and operation of community amenities.

This governance structure presents both opportunities and challenges. While the Town and KICA have distinct functions and responsibilities, cooperation and collaboration are critical to addressing many of the island’s most important challenges. The two entities work together to ensure efficient island management, impacting community engagement, long-term planning, and overall quality of life.

Understanding this governance model is crucial for the effective implementation of the comprehensive plan, as it influences decision-making, resource allocation, and community development strategies. The success of Kiawah Island’s future initiatives largely depends on the continued coordination between the Town and KICA in serving the community’s needs and aspirations.

TOKI Government Structure

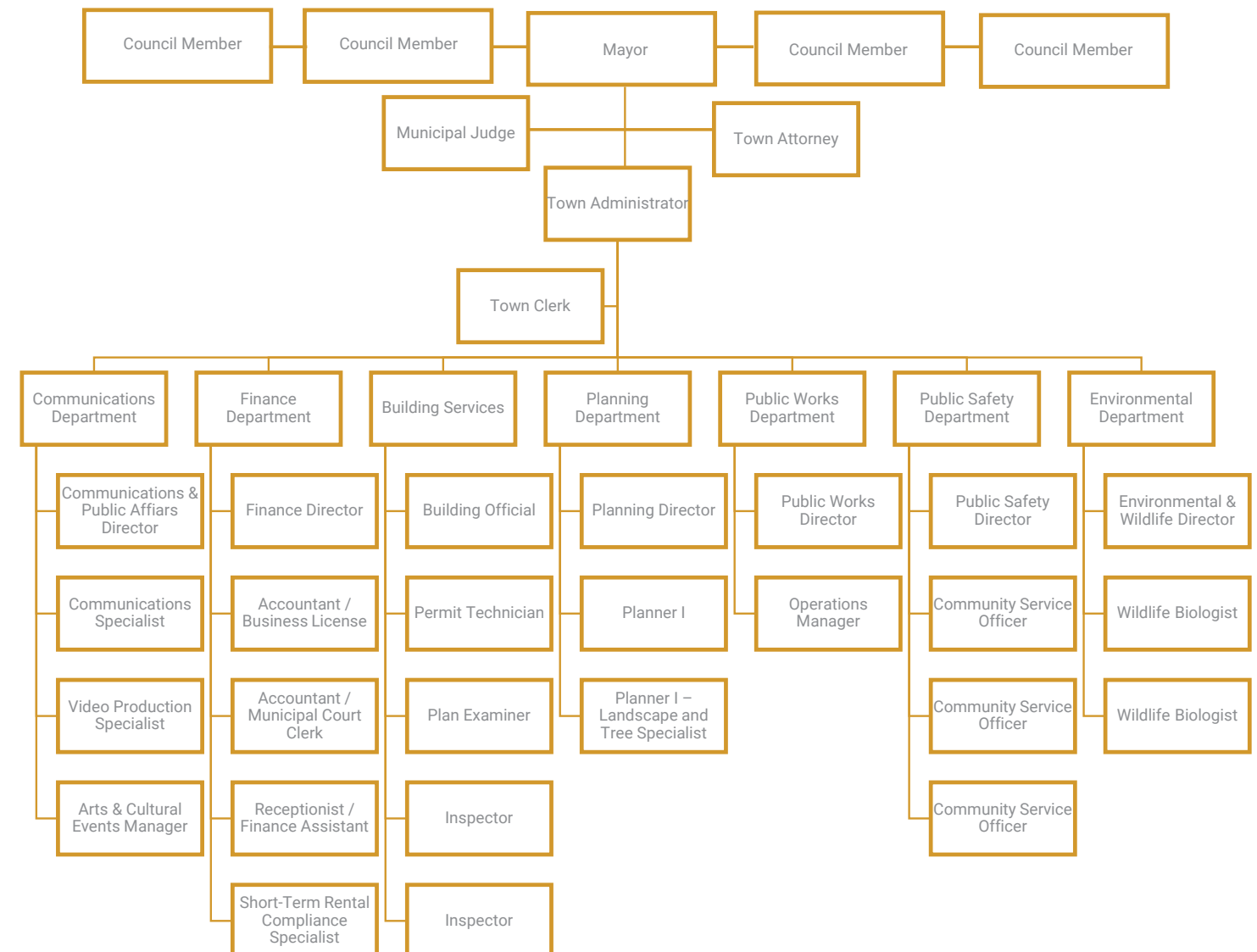
The Town of Kiawah Island operates under a Mayor-Council form of government. The Town Council, comprising a mayor and four council members, sets policies governing Town operations and affairs.

The mayor is the chief executive, responsible for implementing Council policies and overseeing Town operations. The Town Administrator assists the Mayor on managing. Since its incorporation in 1988, the Town has

expanded from a single employee to a staff of 28 full-time professionals.

The Town utilizes both statutory and special committees to enhance its governance. These committees review and recommend policies, activities, and ordinances, providing valuable input to the Town Council and supporting informed decision-making.

Town of Kiawah Island Organizational Chart



Town Committees

Public Safety Committee

PSC serves as a conduit for all public safety-related matters on the island, facilitating collaboration among all public safety entities.

Planning Commission

Through continuous planning and development, PC promotes the area's physical and social well-being. It prepares and updates the comprehensive plan, recommends zoning and land development regulations, and develops capital improvement programs. The commission ensures all plans are based on thorough studies to benefit public health, safety, and welfare.

Board of Zoning Appeals

BZA oversees administrative review, variances, and special zoning exceptions.

Ways & Means Committee

WM oversees budget and finance, revenue, audits, business licenses, accommodations tax, contracts, and procurement.

Arts & Cultural Events Committee

ACE works to enhance community appreciation and involvement in the performing arts by providing a diversity of planned programs.

Environmental Committee

EC studies and supports environmental issues.

Resilience Committee

Landscape and Tree Preservation Board

LTPB works to preserve Kiawah's natural environment for present and future generations, as outlined by a set of standards.

Infrastructure and Public Works Committee

The committee evaluates and recommends improvements for essential community

systems, including infrastructure maintenance, solid waste management, facility operations, and private utility services.

Kiawah Island Stakeholders

Kiawah Island Community Association (KICA)

Established in 1976, KICA is Kiawah Island's primary property owners' association, serving approximately 12,000 members. The association maintains common properties, operates key amenities, and operates the main security gates on the island.

Kiawah Island Golf Resort (KIGR)

KIGR is renowned for its five championship golf courses: The Ocean Course, Oak Point, Cougar Point, Osprey Point, and Turtle Point. The resort's prestige is highlighted by hosting the PGA Championship in 2012 and 2021, with plans to host again in 2031.

Kiawah Island Conservancy (KIC)

Kiawah Conservancy implements programs to encourage and assist landowners in protecting Kiawah Island's unique natural environment.

Kiawah Partners (KP)

Kiawah Partners, the developer of Kiawah Island, was acquired by South Street Partners in 2013, the developer of Kiawah Island. KP manages Kiawah Island Real Estate and the Kiawah Island Club, which includes two private golf courses, tennis facilities, and dining venues. Ensuring the island's development maintains its natural beauty and high standards.

Kiawah Island's Unique Governance Model

The Town of Kiawah Island operates under a distinctive governance structure that sets it apart from traditional communities. Unlike most towns, Kiawah Island's governance is shared between two primary entities: the Town and KICA. The Town functions as a conventional municipal government, responsible for core public services and policymaking.

KICA operates as the primary homeowners' association, managing some aspects of daily community life that typically fall under municipal purview in other towns. KICA maintains roads and bridges behind the gates, drainage systems (ponds), and common areas, operates key amenities, and provides HOA security services.

This structure allows for specialized focus and expertise in both municipal affairs and community management. The Town handles overarching governance issues, zoning, building services, beach management and public safety coordination, while KICA maintains infrastructure behind the gate, operates amenities, and provides essential services like security and landscape maintenance of KICA's common areas.

Other stakeholders play a critical role in shaping and developing on Kiawah Island, such as Kiawah Partners and Kiawah Island Golf Resort. As a developer, KP influences the island's growth, while KIGR contributes significantly to tourism and recreation.

This governance structure requires collaboration among these entities to enable Kiawah Island to maintain its high living standards, preserve its natural environment, and address the unique needs of full-time and part-time residents and visitors more

than a traditional municipal structure alone could achieve. It allows for more tailored services, community-driven decision-making, and a balanced approach to development and conservation.

The structure also provides multiple avenues for resident involvement on the Town and KICA board, commissions and committees, fostering a strong sense of community engagement. This multifaceted approach to governance requires balancing public administration with private community oversight to achieve a well-managed, environmentally conscious, and desirable place to live and visit.

KICA Roles and Responsibilities

Key staff, including a Chief Operating Officer (COO) and a Director of Operations, oversee KICA's daily Operations. These professionals manage association activities and implement policies the Board of Directors established.

To support its governance, KICA employs various committees and task forces. These groups, composed of community members, board members, and staff, offer ongoing advice on specific areas and address projects as needed.

This governance structure actively involves KICA members in community decision-making, promoting transparency and engagement in the association's management.

Kiawah Island Alliance

The Town of Kiawah Island should establish the Kiawah Island Alliance (KIA) to enhance collaboration and cross-jurisdictional dialogue in support of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. This group, convened quarterly by the Mayor, would bring together key stakeholders and decision-makers from across Kiawah Island’s major organizations and interests.

The KIA would serve as a high-level forum for:

1. Facilitating long-term strategic discussions about Kiawah’s future
2. Identifying opportunities for policy alignment and collaboration
3. Addressing emerging issues that impact multiple stakeholders
4. Promoting open dialogue and understanding among diverse island entities

The composition of the KIA may include representatives from:

- Town Council
- Kiawah Island Community Association
- Kiawah Partners
- Kiawah Island Golf Resort
- Land Conservancy Organizations
- EDENS (Freshfields Village)
- County or state agency liaisons (as needed)

The KIA would operate as an advisory body, generating ideas and recommendations for the appropriate governing entities to consider. It will not have decision-making authority but

will inform and support the work of the Town Council, Planning Commission, and other boards and committees.

Summaries of KIA discussions and any resulting recommendations would be made public to ensure transparency. The KIA would complement existing governance structures and public engagement processes, providing a unique platform for collaborative, forward-thinking dialogue among Kiawah’s leaders.

While the KIA is the proposed approach for enhancing strategic collaboration, the Town remains open to refining this concept based on community feedback and practical experience.



governance structure objectives and strategies

GOAL:

Enhance communication and engagement with full-time and part-time residents, property owners and visitors.

Objective MP1

Optimize communication channels and community engagement

Strategy MP1.1

- Implement AI Chatbot providing 24/7 access to essential town information and services.
- Redesign weekly e-newsletters with compelling content, visual elements, and actionable insights.

GOAL:

Improve Island-wide Collaboration and Governance Effectiveness.

Objective MP1

Establish and effectively operate the Kiawah Island Alliance (KIA).

Strategy MP1.1

- Convene quarterly KIA meetings with key stakeholders.
- Develop annual strategic agenda focusing on cross-jurisdictional issues and long-term planning.
- Implement formal system to document, share, and track progress on KIA initiatives with Town Council and

broader community.

Objective MP2

Optimize government administrative effectiveness.

Strategy MP2.1

- Deploy comprehensive project management system for capital improvements with:
 - Real-time milestone tracking
 - Public-facing dashboards displaying project status, timelines, and outcomes
 - Integrated feedback mechanisms for community input