

# Public Safety Study

## Town of Kiawah Island, SC



Submitted by:

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November 30, 2014

Tumiko Rucker, Town Administrator  
Town of Kiawah Island  
Kiawah Island, SC 29455

Dear Administrator Rucker:

I am pleased to submit with this letter our Report on the Public Safety Study for the Town of Kiawah Island, South Carolina.

The Study Team would like to acknowledge the excellent cooperation that we received from Town and agency officials and members of the various public safety agencies involved in this analysis.

If you have any questions relative to this Kiawah Public Safety Study, please contact my office.

Sincerely,

Leslie D. Adams  
President

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the Executive Summary for our Report resulting from the provision of our services by Public Safety Solutions, Inc., (PSSi), related to the preparation of the detailed analysis of existing effectiveness of the agencies and organizations currently providing fire, emergency medical and police protection services to the Town of Kiawah, South Carolina.

### **THE TOWN OF KIAWAH**

The Town of Kiawah Island is located on a sea or barrier island on the Atlantic Ocean approximately fifteen (15) miles south of the City of Charleston in Charleston County, South Carolina. It is largely a gated beach and golf resort area. It consists of a total area of 13.5 square miles that is comprised of 11.2 square miles of land and 2.4 square miles of water. The Island is long and narrow.

### **Demographics**

The Island has 1,626 residents according to the latest federal census figures<sup>1</sup>. The five-year estimates from the Census Bureau tapers the population to 1,448 residents. The residential population on Kiawah Island is comprised primarily of senior citizens.

The median residential age is 63.6 compared to 37.2 for the state and the nation. Forty percent of the residential population is over age 65. The older age cohorts (55-74) are a large proportion of the population. Since the last Census, the youth population has decreased, while the senior aged groups grew.

### **Governance of the Town**

The Town of Kiawah Island's website states that the town was incorporated by the State of South Carolina on September 13, 1988, and operates as a Mayor-Council form of government. The Town Council is composed of a Mayor and four Council Members. The Mayor is the chief administrative officer of the Town. The Town Administrator provides

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau

support and advice to the Mayor and Council and runs the day-to-day operations of the Town.

### **Public Safety Committee**

The Town's Public Safety Committee is responsible for assisting the Town in meeting its state-mandated responsibilities with regard to maintaining order and law enforcement. The Committee initiates and considers proposals and methods to upgrade and improve public safety on the Island and to manage beach safety.

### **FIRE PROTECTION**

Fire protection services for the Town of Kiawah Island are provided by the St. John's Fire District. The St. John's Fire District is a special purpose district in Charleston County, South Carolina, located just south of the City of Charleston. The St. John's Fire District has been providing fire and rescue services to the district since 1959. A nine-member Board of Commissioners is responsible for the governance and oversight of the Fire District. Three members represent Kiawah Island.

The three most important elements affecting the response capabilities of a fire department are its standards of coverage; department capability, the abilities of the department's members; and resource reliability. The St. Johns Fire District has inadequate resources deployed to the Town of Kiawah Island to meet consensus standards developed by the National Fire Protection Association and set forth in NFPA 1710. There are areas of the Town—Freshfields Village and new development—that fall outside of NFPA 1710's four-minute travel time for the first responding unit. Further STJFD's ability to assemble an effective response force within the 480-second travel time recommendation for any fires occurring on Kiawah Island cannot be accomplished with the current deployment model. Likewise, similar challenges exist for responses to life-threatening medical emergencies.

Although the Study Team was not provided with sufficient information to assess the capabilities of STJFD members, some generalized comments about the capabilities of fire personnel may be helpful to the reader. There is an old axiom in the fire service. The decisions made and actions taken during the first five minutes of an incident will determine what one will do for the next five hours. A highly seasoned, well-trained complement of four firefighters may perform better than four fire companies with

inexperienced, poorly trained, or incompetent personnel. Simply meeting standards for response such as NFPA 1710 and CFIA benchmarks does not guarantee successful outcomes. Additionally, human error will always be a factor that determines results. Sometimes incident commanders make poor decisions. Some readers may remember that the River Course Clubhouse fire resulted in two separate fire department responses. Firefighters thought that they had extinguished the original fire, only to return later to find out that was not the case. They had not extinguished the fire.

While response capabilities are important factors that affect incident outcomes, they are not the only aspects to consider when planning for adequate fire and emergency services protection. Demand for service, expectations of the community, and the willingness to pay for services are factors that must be weighed as well. Compared to communities of similar size, demand for fire and other emergency services is overall similar to the experience of rural communities throughout the United States. However, during the months of July and August, demand for service is at its highest and exceeds those of other rural communities.

Obviously, the expectations of the community's leaders and their willingness to pay for a higher level of service are factors that must be addressed. This Study was initiated because community expectations of its fire and emergency medical services were not being satisfied. Additionally, discussions with Town officials have indicated their willingness to pay for improved services. Recommendations in the next section of this chapter will address these and other factors regarding fire and emergency services.

The fire protection options and recommendations include:

1. The STJFD considering a deployment strategy for the Town of Kiawah that includes staffing for its current apparatus and two quick response vehicles (QRV) with fast fire attack and basic life support capabilities
2. The STJFD should train on an adopt standard operating guidelines for safe structural firefighting that incorporates the tactical firefighting recommendations for modern building construction.
3. The Town of Kiawah Island should consider requiring residential sprinkler systems in all new construction of one- and two-family dwellings. In the absence of fire sprinklers, all properties in the Town should be equipped with monitored fire and/or smoke alarm systems.
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of fire sprinklers, all properties in the Town should be equipped with monitored fire and/or smoke alarm systems.

5. Kiawah Island Utility should paint the bonnets of its fire hydrants in accordance with NFPA 291 to identify their rated water capacities.
6. STJFD and the Town should implement a public fire safety education program to inform owners of single family dwelling, about the dangers of heavy vegetation around their homes.
7. The Study Team strongly supports the current arrangement between the Town and STJFD for fire protection. However, if STJFD is unwilling to consider future service level improvements for the Town of Kiawah Island, then Town officials should consider alternative fire service delivery models, such as forming a municipal fire department or contracting for service with another agency such as the City of Charleston.

### **Emergency Medical Services**

The Charleston County EMS Department is the primary 911 pre-hospital ground-level provider of urgent medical and trauma services for the entire 919 land square miles that include 372,803<sup>2</sup> residents, including the Town of Kiawah. The Department responds to over 57,000 calls countywide.

EMS demand in the Town of Kiawah Island is a fraction of the countywide demand for these services in more populated areas such as the City of Charleston and the Town of North Charleston. The award-winning county department of EMS is deeply concerned with reaching all emergent medical and trauma incidents in an acceptable response time with their first responder partners and the local fire services. One hundred percent compliance to a response-time goal is unrealistic for any emergency service, but Charleston County EMS has adopted a relatively high standard at 90%. However, the department has not been able to meet that objective countywide and certainly not with incidents on Kiawah Island. With a finite amount of resources potentially growing with an increased budget, they are shifted around by their deployment software in an effort to serve the most potential incidents with the resources available/not on an assignment. Areas with lower potential volume can suffer under this efficiency system. The system is focused on incident volume, usually driven by population levels that generate. The system lacks the recognition of other risk factors. The poor, the elderly, the chronically ill, and minority

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<sup>2</sup> 2012 Estimate, U.S. Census Bureau

groups historically are the most frequent users of ambulance services. Aside from the age demographic that, by and large, fits Kiawah residents, other factors such as affluence, ethnic homogeneity, and relative health conditions, which do not erode monetary assets, contribute to its low incident volume.

Despite being a government agency, Charleston County EMS operates not only on tax revenue, but also on user fees, usually paid by health insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid. Kiawah Island being an affluent community contributes greatly to the county through property tax assessments, and its residents likely have health insurance that pays a large share of the bill for ambulance service, rather than fractional from social entities. The residents and visitors of the island deserve at least the promised high quality services in the response performance adopted by the County Department and its Medical Director that other more populated and, therefore, higher EMS incident volume areas receive. In its State Charter, Kiawah Island, as a municipality, is responsible for adequate public safety services; the lack thereof could become an action for a lawsuit wherein the Town could be found negligent in its provision of critical services. Therefore, it is imperative that the Town ensure that whoever is the provider of public safety, that the Town is reasonably shielded from liability.

A number of options for EMS delivery for Kiawah Island are suggested.

The emergency medical services options and recommendations include:

1. The Town of Kiawah Island should encourage its Fire District Commission representatives to encourage STJFD to continue the full deployment of EMT-B trained personnel within its ranks.
2. A single centrally located facility suggested at Governor's Drive and Flyway is optimally inadequate to reach all areas of the island within industry suggested response parameters. Any adopted concept should include more than one station or units for positioning.
3. The Town of Kiawah Island should use alternate destinations of care for EMS units, where appropriate.
4. The Town of Kiawah Island should encourage its EMS providers to evaluate the feasibility of Community Para-medicine.
5. The Town of Kiawah ought to keep in the forefront of discussion two critical elements of timely paramedic care include clinical skill and transportation capability.
6. The Town of Kiawah Island could elect to maintain the status quo. This will not solve the issues related to paramedic level care delay nor transportation delay.

7. The Town of Kiawah Island could fund a county ambulance stationed on Kiawah Island.
8. The Town of Kiawah Island could fund a county EMS QRV.
9. The Town of Kiawah Island could encourage STJFD to pursue paramedic level training and service.
10. The Town of Kiawah Island could inquire if the Security organization has an interest in becoming first responders.
11. The Town of Kiawah Island could also utilize its Beach Patrol as first responders for off beach incidents with proper training and equipment.

### **POLICE AND SECURITY SERVICES**

Law enforcement services are provided to Kiawah Island by the Charleston County Sheriff's Department, a state-of-the-art police services delivery agency that is nationally accredited by the Commission for Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The Sheriff's Department has responsibility to patrol and provide law enforcement to the Town of Kiawah Island. The Town has contracted with the Charleston County Sheriff's Department to provide two off-duty Deputy Sheriffs for four six-hour shifts per day in addition to the regular patrol for the area.

There are a number of organizations providing various types of security-related services on Kiawah Island, including:

- Town of Kiawah Island Wildlife
- Town of Kiawah Island Beach Patrol (Island Beach Services, LLC)
- Kiawah Island Community Association, Inc., Security Department
- Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Department of Safety and Security
- Freshfields' Security Department

The police and security services options and recommendations include:

1. The Town Council is encouraged to refrain from pursuing the creation of its own stand-alone police department since doing so would reduce police services delivered to the Town and would cost substantially more.
2. The Town Council should consider creating a paid position of Public Safety Director as also recommended by the PERF study of the 1990's.

3. The Town Council is encouraged to have the proposed Public Safety Director report to the Town Administrator and serve as the chairperson of the Public Safety Committee.
4. The Council is encouraged to continue contracting for Off Duty Charleston County Deputies.
5. The Town Council should also consider contracting with the Charleston County Sheriff for an **On Duty** Deputy to be assigned to Kiawah Island primarily during the day, in addition to the Off Duty Deputies, with the goal of having two deputies on duty at all times on Kiawah Island.
6. The Town Council should continue the Beach Patrol contract.
7. The Town Council should consider taking action to substantially reduce false alarms that require a disproportionate allocation of resources by requiring that law enforcement respond to alarms if a crime is in progress.
8. The creation of a Town Ordinance by the Council requiring commercial and residential alarms to be licensed to reduce unnecessary expenditure of law enforcement manpower. The ordinance would include alarm systems for burglar, intrusion, fire, and panic.
9. The KICA Security Department should come under the jurisdiction of the Town by contract or direct assumption of control.

### **CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDY DECISIONS**

There are many varied considerations that, either directly or indirectly, enter into any analysis and resulting plan involving a determination of the total number of fire, emergency medical and police/security services providers needed to staff a services department. These may include:

1. The public's services delivery expectations, as determined by municipal or other decision makers;
2. Geographic layout of the services area;
3. Geographic barriers to services response, e.g., bays, lakes, rivers and creeks;
4. Age of the community and building stock;
5. Density of population and development;
6. Level of consistency with national standards/guidelines and accepted practices;
7. Number of stations in the service area;
8. Distance between stations;

9. Roadways and their design;
10. Type and age of vehicular apparatus;
11. General fiscal condition of the municipality;
12. Community water supply;
13. Type of staffing approach;
14. Actual and projected response times of services providers;
15. Availability of mutual aid response;
16. Unique aspects of the service area, e.g., waterfront, island services delivery;
17. Current and projected call workload;
18. Quality of dispatch agency;
19. Relative level of training of personnel;
20. Is the department to provide unique services, e.g., boat service; and,
21. Is the fire department to provide a level of fire prevention services, e.g., building inspections, fire investigations, building plans review and public fire education.

The reader will come to understand, as this Report is reviewed, how these and other considerations enter into the determination of a services providers staffing levels. Further, the reader will come to understand that decisions regarding the overall staffing are driven by many factors and considerations that are largely based on the nature of the service area; the type and quality of services to be delivered; and relative cost of services delivery. For these reasons, it should be understood there is no single factor in determining the appropriate overall staffing of a services provider and that decision makers have a complex job to perform in determining the appropriate level of staffing for their emergency services providers.

### **Annual Updates**

The Town is encouraged to assign Town staff along with services provider staff to update this Study on an annual basis.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a brief overview of the Charleston County municipality participating in the development of this Study of the fire, emergency medical services (EMS) and police and security services. The participating municipality is the Town of Kiawah Island, South Carolina.

This Chapter also provides basic information regarding the Town of Kiawah, its setting, demographics and organization. Additionally, information regarding the participating public safety and security services is reviewed, including that of the St. John's Fire District, Charleston County Emergency Medical Services, Charleston County Sheriff's Office and the various security services serving the Town of Kiawah.

#### **THE SETTING**

Kiawah Island is a sea or barrier island located on the Atlantic Ocean approximately fifteen (15) miles south of the City of Charleston in Charleston County, South Carolina. It is largely a gated beach and golf resort area. It consists of a total area of 13.5 square miles that is comprised of 11.2 square miles of land and 2.4 square miles of water. It is long and narrow.

#### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The Island has 1,626 residents according to the latest federal census figures<sup>1</sup>. The five-year estimates from the Census Bureau tapers the population to 1,448 residents. The residential population on Kiawah Island is comprised primarily of senior citizens.

The median residential age is 63.6 compared to 37.2 for the state and the nation. Forty percent of the residential population is over age 65. The older age cohorts (55-74) are a large proportion of the population. Since the last Census, the youth population has decreased, while the senior aged groups grew.

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau

## **THE TOWN OF KIAWAH ISLAND**

The Town of Kiawah Island's website states that the town was incorporated by the State of South Carolina on September 13, 1988, and operates as a Mayor–Council form of government. The Town Council is composed of a Mayor and four Council Members. The Mayor is the chief administrative officer of the Town. The Town Administrator provides support and advice to the Mayor and Council and runs the day-to-day operations of the Town.

The Town provides services to its property owners and visitors including, but not limited to: public safety; street and drainage maintenance; solid waste disposal; planning and zoning administration; municipal court administration; beach maintenance and safety; communications and wildlife management. Business license revenue, franchise fees, aid to subdivisions, accommodation taxes, solid waste fees and other miscellaneous revenues fund the Town's operations. The Town of Kiawah Island does not levy property taxes to its residents.

### **Public Safety Committee**

The Town's Public Safety Committee is responsible for assisting the Town in meeting its state-mandated responsibilities with regard to maintaining order and law enforcement. The Committee initiates and considers proposals and methods to upgrade and improve public safety on the Island and to manage beach safety.

## **PROVISION OF PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES**

The subject of this Report is a review of the fire, pre-hospital emergency medical, police and security services provided to the Town of Kiawah Island. These critical services are provided by the following agencies.

### **Fire Services**

Fire protection services for the Town of Kiawah Island are provided by the St. John's Fire District. The St. John's Fire District is a special purpose district in Charleston County, South Carolina, located just south of the City of Charleston. The district consists of four barrier island communities: John's Island, Kiawah Island, Seabrook Island, and

Wadmalaw Island. The islands are separated from the mainland by rivers. The fire district borders the Atlantic Ocean to its east. The St. John's Fire District has been providing fire and rescue services to the district since 1959.

The Fire District is comprised of approximately 146 sq. mi. and is home to about 22,000 residents.

A nine-member Board of Commissioners is responsible for the governance and oversight of the Fire District. The Governor of South Carolina appoints each commissioner member. Four commission members represent Johns Island. Three members represent Kiawah Island. Seabrook Island and Wadmalaw Island are each represented by one commissioner.

According to the District's bylaws, under limited supervision of the Board of Commissioners, the district's fire chief is responsible for leading, managing, planning, organizing, and directing all aspects of the Fire District. The fire chief is the sole authority regarding the selection of all Fire District personnel and is solely responsible for the daily administration of the Fire District.

Through the 137 employees, the Fire District provides fire prevention; public fire and life safety education; fire suppression; hazardous material response; technical rescue; marine rescue; and medical first response services to the district's communities.

### **Emergency Medical Services**

The Charleston County EMS Department is the primary 911 pre-hospital ground-level provider of urgent medical and trauma services for the entire 919 land square miles that include 372,803.<sup>2</sup> residents, including the cities of Charleston, North Charleston, and Mount Pleasant along with several other smaller municipalities. This service received the Large System of the Year award in 2002 from the SC DHEC and more recently in 2010; it was awarded the EMS System of the Year by a national organization. This department does not perform any non-emergency transportation services, nor does it provide aeromedical helicopter service.

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<sup>2</sup> 2012 Estimate, U.S. Census Bureau

The Department responds to over 57,000 calls countywide, the intensity of EMS demand typically correlates with human population level and activity.

### **Police and Security Services**

Law enforcement services are provided to Kiawah Island by the Charleston County Sheriff's Department, a state-of-the-art police services delivery agency that is nationally accredited by the Commission for Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The Sheriff's Department has responsibility to patrol and provide law enforcement to the Town of Kiawah Island. The Town has contracted with the Charleston County Sheriff's Department to provide two off-duty Deputy Sheriffs for four six-hour shifts per day in addition to the regular patrol for the area.

There are a number of organizations providing various types of security-related services on Kiawah Island, including:

- Town of Kiawah Island Wildlife
- Town of Kiawah Island Beach Patrol (Island Beach Services, LLC)
- Kiawah Island Community Association, Inc., Security Department
- Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Department of Safety and Security
- Freshfields' Security Department

### **Emergency 9-1-1 Dispatch Services**

The new state-of-the-art Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 Center currently provides emergency 9-1-1, fire, EMS and police dispatch services for fifteen public safety agencies, including Kiawah Island's public safety services.

### **STUDY FRAMEWORK**

The Study Team utilized a number of key guides and criteria in the conduct of this Study and in the development of the conclusions, options and recommendations contained in this Report, including the following.

## **Fire Services**

The framework for this analysis incorporated the model developed by the Accreditation Committee of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC); now the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.

The Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) previously developed a police department accreditation process for use by police departments and also incorporated. The Commission on Fire Accreditation International developed a similar analysis model for fire department use on a voluntary basis. Inclusion of this model as a framework for this analysis helped assure that the “latest thinking” was considered in the preparation of this Study.

The analysis categories included in this CFAI accreditation model are as follows:

1. Governance and Administration,
2. Assessment and Planning,
3. Goals and Objectives,
4. Financial Resources,
5. Programs,
6. Physical Resources,
7. Human Resource,
8. Training and Competency,
9. Essential Resources
10. External Systems Relations.

Within each of these categories, there were specific criteria and considerations weighed by the Study Team.

## **Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

The framework for the EMS analysis contained in this Report included various nationally recognized EMS standards and principles and practices and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control as regulated by Regulation 61-7 (latest update 2006) under SC State Code section 44-61-30 (2004) and 44-78-65 (2002).

### **Law Enforcement Services**

The law enforcement analysis considered selected standards taken from a full complement of Commission on Law Enforcement Accreditation (CALEA) standards which include:

1. Role, responsibilities, and relationships with other agencies;
2. Organization, management and administration;
3. Personnel administration;
4. Law enforcement operations, support, and traffic law enforcement; and,
5. Auxiliary and technical services.

### **Standards and Accepted Practices**

The Study Team also utilized published fire, pre-hospital and police services standards and information on accepted principles and practices for the operations and public safety management as background and guidelines for the conduct of this Study.

## **CHAPTER TWO DEMOGRAPHICS AND DEVELOPMENT**

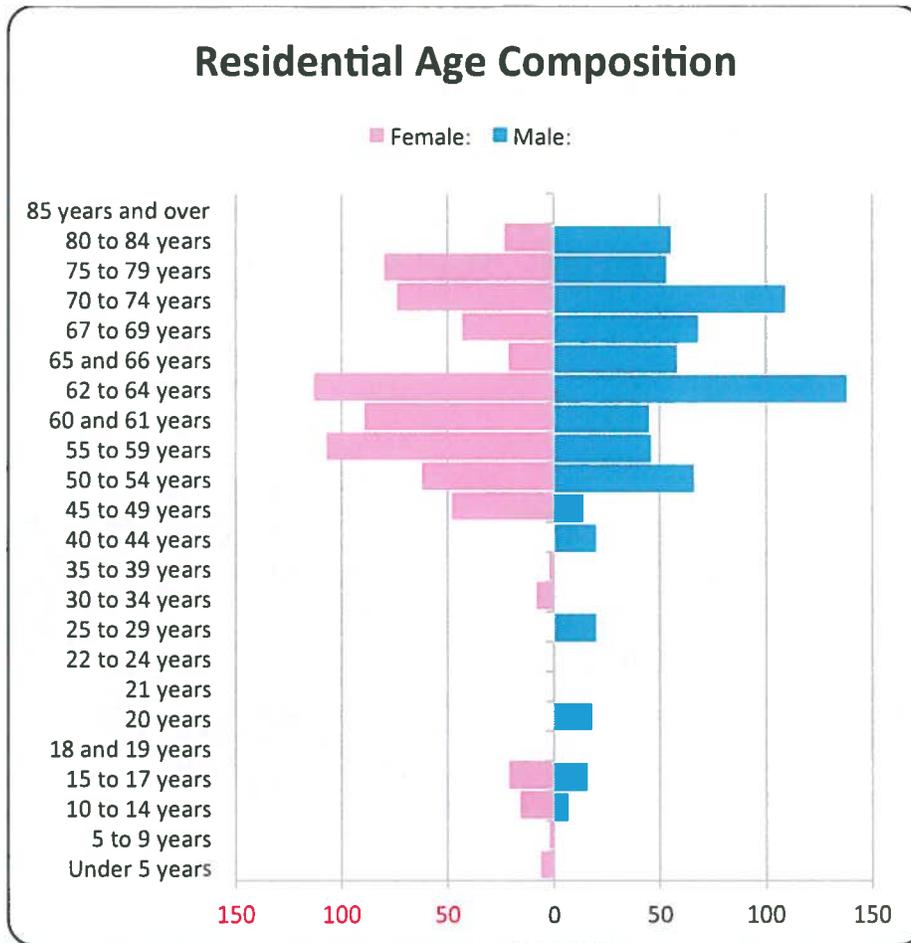
### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The Town of Kiawah Island is a coastal resort community along the South Carolina seaboard approximately 15 miles south of the City of Charleston. Although the town limits extend off the island to include a shopping center, there is only one two-lane road access to the island. Being a resort community, numerous pedestrians and cyclists traverse the narrow, tree-canopied streets. This combination can be a challenge for first responders. Additionally, many driveway accesses are designed for privacy and, in some cases, are extremely narrow, curvy, and humped. It's long and narrow 11-square-mile area is home to 1,626 residents according to the latest federal census figures<sup>1</sup>. This equates to an annualized growth rate of 4% since the 2000 decennial census that tabulated the residential population to be 1,163. The five-year estimates from the Census Bureau tapers the population to 1,448 residents. The residential population on Kiawah Island is comprised primarily of senior citizens. This can be discerned easily from the graph in Figure 2.1. Although general population levels play a role in the geographic distribution of the demand for fire and medical services, it is important to examine the composition of the population since the aged and pediatric populations are more prone to serious medical emergencies and succumbing to smoke and fire due to their behavioral tendencies during a fire. While children often hide making an interior search by firefighters more difficult, mobility issues limit the ability of the aged to escape.

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<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau

**Figure 2.1**  
**RESIDENTIAL AGE COMPOSITION**



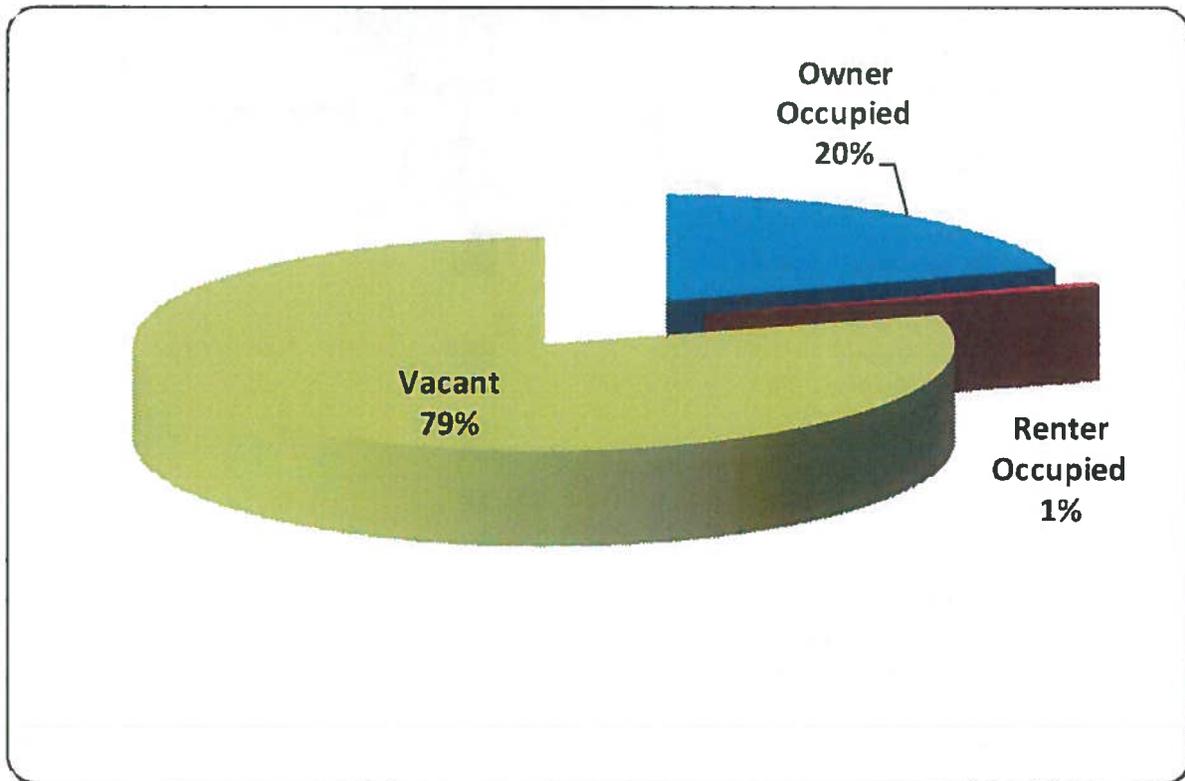
The median residential age is 63.6 compared to 37.2 for the state and the nation. Forty percent of the residential population is over age 65. The older age cohorts (55-74) are a large proportion of the population. Since the last Census, the youth population has decreased, while growth in the senior aged groups grew as shown in the Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2**  
**POPULATION CHANGE**

Demographic Change- 2000 to 2012								
	Total Pop	Age <5	5 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 and up
2012 est.	1,448	6	80	50	190	538	373	211
2000	1,163	12	76	74	216	351	326	108
change	25%	-50%	5%	-32%	-12%	53%	14%	95%

In Figure 2.3, housing is examined by occupancy types. Typically, areas with lower vacancy and rental properties are reflective of better economic means that correlate with lower demand for emergency services. However, Kiawah Island is a resort community and many of the properties are second homes to people who live elsewhere. These properties may be subleased at times to other vacationers for short periods of time.

**Figure 2.3**  
**HOUSING BY OCCUPANCY**



The amount of all types of properties has increased since the last Census despite the housing crisis that spurred the recession that began in 2009.

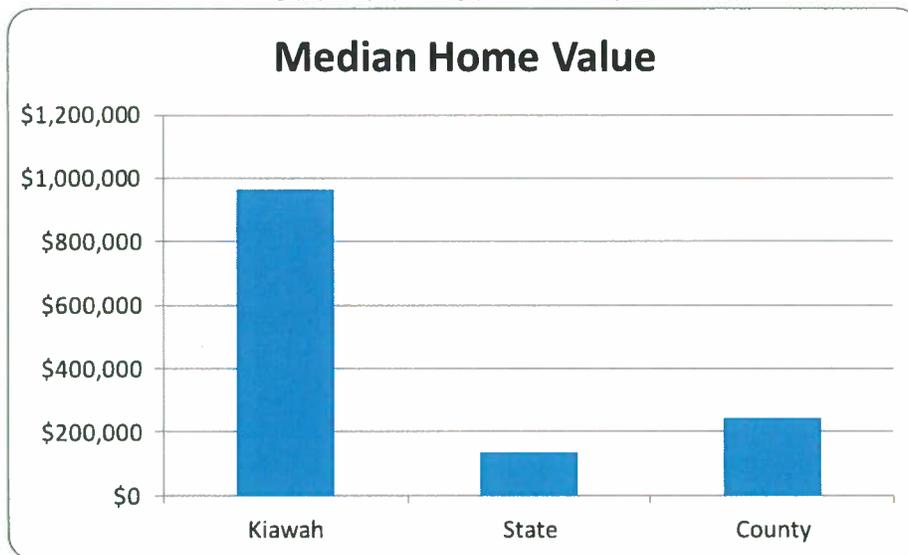
Figure 2.4 details the housing changes in Kiawah since 2000.

**Figure 2.4**  
**HOUSING OCCUPANCY CHANGES**

Housing Information- 2000 to 2012				
	Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant
2012 est.	3,486	694	22	2,770
2000	3,070	538	19	2,513
change	14%	29%	16%	10%

Property values for the Town of Kiawah Island are relatively high in comparison with the median home values for the Charleston County and the State as seen in the Figure 2.5.

**Figure 2.5**  
**MEDIAN HOME VALUE**



Many of the hotels, resort, and condominium properties that are often subleased are located between the entrance gate and the second gate (V-gate) near the beach on the west side of the island. It is estimated that the seasonal summer population of Kiawah Island explodes to approximately 10,000 people during the peak times. The composition of this population has not been tabulated, but a casual observation during site visits reveal that persons of all ages come with their families to vacation in Kiawah.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

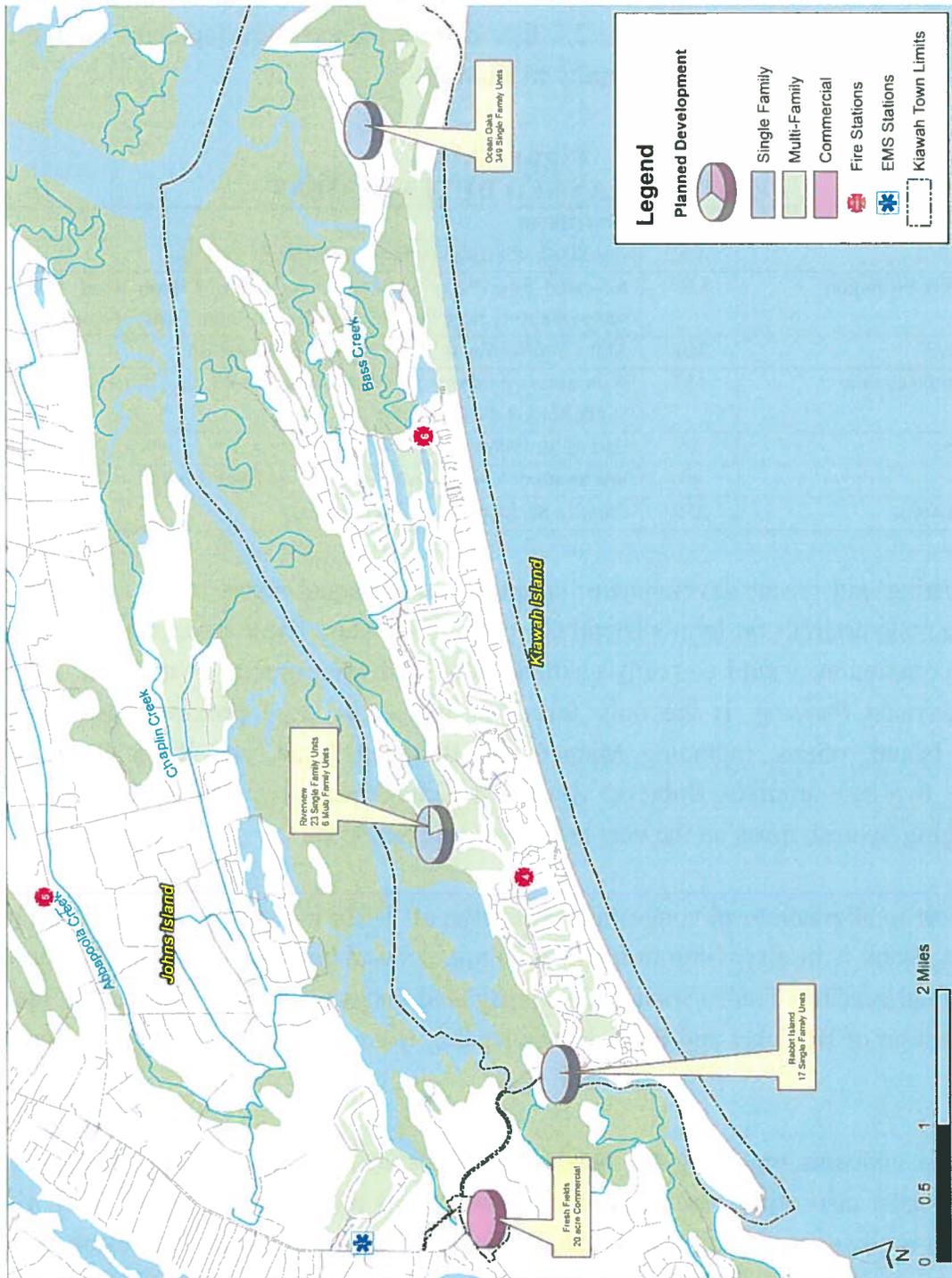
Future land-use planning in the Town of Kiawah Island is based on its current zoning ordinances and reflected in the relative risk map in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.13). However,, zoning constraints can be modified by variances and with cooperation of the Kiawah Partners Group.

Continued and future development on Kiawah Island is not necessarily correlated with the rest of the county as a whole. Though the recent great recession has lingering effects, the Charleston Metro has benefited from major new employers such as Boeing and the growth of the port. Kiawah is primarily an upscale resort and retirement community and, as such, has been somewhat buffered from the economic downturn nationwide. To that end, development and plans for further growth are ongoing in the Town of Kiawah. The following map (Figure 2.6) illustrates the known development on the island.

There is also preliminary discussion of commercial development in the west beach area, but the details are not currently available.

The provision of emergency services on Kiawah Island, since they are currently regional sources, is affect by demographic and developmental changes off Kiawah Island. The city of Charleston has been annexing areas on John's Island for several years. This annexation activity spurred both Kiawah and Seabrook Islands to incorporate as municipalities. The city of Charleston has built a fire station on John's Island that is not far from St. John's Fire District headquarters and its Station 1.

**Figure 2.6**  
**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**



The annexations of parcels on John’s Island by the city of Charleston have been spurred by the ongoing residential development due to the improved employment climate and the influx of workers to the area. Figure 2.7 lists current planned developments on John’s Island listed, which are in close proximity to Kiawah.

**Figure 2.7  
KNOWN PLANNED DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Description</b>
Cassique	150	Just South of Fresh Fields accessed off KI Parkway
Kiawah River Plantation	1285	Accessed from Betsy Kerrison Pkwy south of River Road. Mainly across the river from the west Beach area of the Town of Kiawah.
South Market	101	At the intersection of River Rd. and Bohicket Rd
Orange Hill Plantation	181	With access on River Road and Bohicket Rd, this is northeast of the South Market development.
Bryan Dairy	16	East of St. John Fire Station 5
Hoopstick	10	Just South of Charleston Fire Stn. 17 on Bohicket Rd
Brickman Farms	270	Close to St. John’s Fire Headquarters

With existing and recent development, coupled with seasonal resort traffic, congestion along the main arterials on John’s Island has become an issue. These developments, when nearing completion, would certainly challenge the roadway capacity in the area. While Betsy Kerrison Parkway is the only four-lane arterial in close proximity leading to Kiawah Island, others, including Main Road, Bohicket Road, and River Road, are currently two-lane arterials. Bohicket Road is a picturesque narrow two-lane road with overhanging Spanish moss on the way to Kiawah and Seabrook.

In an effort to alleviate local congestion, extension of I-526 across the northeast portion of John’s Island is in discussion to facilitate commuter and beach-goer traffic heading to James Island beaches. Traffic studies have postulated that it would have little effect upon the congestion of Bohicket and River Roads leading from the interstate extension access points.

One of the concerns regarding the current traffic capacity is that regional emergency apparatus must also utilize the already congested roads requiring drivers to yield with little room to give way. Additionally, return trips from the hospitals in Charleston along these busy roadways takes an amount of time that strains the overall system. Some of these issues could be alleviated with the consideration of the proposed Sea Island Parkway. This four-lane, limited-access throughway from the I-526 extension stretches

southeast toward the junction of River Road where the two-lane Bohicket Road becomes the four-lane Betsy Kerrison Parkway. The advantage of this road within the context of emergency services would be that responding fire apparatus and returning ambulances from the northwest direction of Charleston would have a clearer and faster ingress into the Kiawah/Seabrook area. It may likely alleviate seasonal congestion on Bohicket to allow for other apparatus to more quickly to reach Kiawah and Seabrook from the north side of John's Island.

