

Jekyll Island Authority Strategic Plan FY 2022-FY 2025

Agency Mission: As stewards of Jekyll Island's past, present, and future, we are dedicated to maintaining the delicate balance between nature and humankind.

Agency Vision: Through progressive stewardship and excellent customer service, Jekyll Island will be recognized as a sustainable conservation community that is the choice destination among all who experience its unique environment, service, and amenities.

Environmental Challenges:

Island Capacity Balance & Management	Local & State funding challenges, including passage of Glynn County SPLOST Referendum	Retention of Employees, especially skilled & unskilled	ADA Compliance throughout the Island at all facilities
Continuing to promote convention/group business post pandemic and attracting conventions committed to other locations	Threat of economic downturn: - Supply Interruptions - Inflation Prices - Increasing Fuel Prices	Continued escalation in employee health care costs and retirement benefits	Lack of timely property evaluation completed by Glynn County Assessor
Assure memorable visit and experience for guests	Adequate financial resources for needed capital improvements/deferred maintenance	Understanding Jekyll Island as a unique destination	Development/Visitation Pressures
Completion of Island revitalization	Increased competition for tourism dollars	Hurricane & Tropical Storms	Sea Level Rise & Coastal Erosion Controls
Golf Course Improvements for profitable play and improved maintenance efficiencies	Convincing Georgians to experience Jekyll Island	Conservation of Island's Natural Resources	Preservation of Jekyll's cultural and historical assets

Environmental Scan:

The most prominent challenge that the Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) faces during the next four years is capacity management. After ten years of successful revitalization efforts, the JIA now faces the challenges of maintaining strong visitation while preventing over capacity, promoting a unique visitor experience, and maintaining balance between the natural and developed elements of Jekyll Island.

Visitors are attracted to the unique natural and undeveloped destination that is Jekyll Island. A destination that allows visitors to immerse themselves in nature and truly escape from their busy lives for a day, a week, or longer. A destination that aims to avoid the hustle and bustle of an overly developed beach town. Jekyll is a destination with a laidback character and no traffic lights. The Island must not become a disappointing destination. Even with easy public access, Jekyll Island should not become a remake of Charleston, St. Augustine, Savannah, Hilton Head, or St. Simons. Instead, it should be inspired by destinations like Cumberland Island or Little St. Simons Island, rich in culture, history, and nature.

With the influx of traveling that took place post pandemic, Jekyll Island has been financially successful over the past year. Traffic counts increased by 17% from 2019 to 2021, and they continue to increase through 2022. Revenues for FY22 have exceeded budget expectations every month so far with the year-to-date variance being a favorable 25%. The rise in these numbers has further shown the importance of managing capacity and has led the JIA to investigate how to further implement recommendations of the Jekyll Island Carrying Capacity & Infrastructure Assessment. The JIA will evaluate the best ways to implement dynamic pricing, critique island-wide events, and utilize data collection platforms to determine visitor interest. The JIA's goal is to develop an elevated visitor experience, to reduce participant numbers during events, and to provide more immersive encounters with a stronger focus on conservation, preservation, and education.

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 Agency Head/Signature

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Objective	Action Plan	Associated Funding	Resource/Responsibility	Completion Date	Outcomes
1. Continue and Complete Island Revitalization A. Build new ADA compliant airport terminal and hangars B. Improve Public Safety on Jekyll Island C. Oversee development of Former Buccaneer Site/Final original revitalization parcel	A. Design and build a new 2,400 SF ADA compliant airport terminal leveraging GDOT intermodal matching funds. Use JIA funding to perform site work allowing a public/private partnership to fund and build hangars. This would allow Jekyll Island Airport to once again reach the required 10 based aircraft to receive FAA annual funds of \$150,000. B. Design and construct a combined public safety complex to house Jekyll Island Fire/EMS and Georgia State Patrol Post 35. Currently they are located in two separate locations, GSP Post being situated off Island. Colocation would foster improved public safety by reducing response times and availability while encouraging better cooperation by all public safety staff. C. Due to development pressures resulting from successful revitalization, all potential proposals are required to be critically reviewed and fully vetted. Residential design was recommended through a JIA required Market Analysis/Strategic Development Study. Residential design should be better able to cater to site environmental concerns and restraints. Residential design should impact fewer trees and contribute to less overall human activity at the site as compared to a lodging facility which would be more heavily occupied and higher-density. Once received, development plans will be carefully reviewed and Board recommendations made by the Design Review Group.	A. JIA funding of 250,000 for site work at hangar location and GDOT matching funds of \$690,000 for construction of new terminal building. B. State FY22 Amended Budget approved in April of CY2022. C. Private Sector Development responsible for all site infrastructure improvements and housing units. Final costs yet to be determined.	A. JIA Administration and Operation Departments B. A. JIA Administration and Operation Departments C. LNWA Developers, LLC	A. 3rd Quarter FY24 B. November CY2023 C. 3 Years after construction commencement	A. Raise standard of noncompliant airport terminal to ADA compliant. Increase based aircraft from six to 10, allowing for the JIA to receive \$150,000 FAA funding per year. B. Decrease response time by 20% for public safety calls. Improve insurance rates on Jekyll Island by 10% and receive an ISO rating of Class 2. C. Limited number of new single family housing units. Completed original revitalization plans with low impact on parcel. Additional rental and service revenue for JIA operational budget.
2. Balance and Manage Island Resources A. Implement Golf Course Improvement Plan. B. Preserve the history of Jekyll Island. C. Continue implementing Capacity Management Strategies	A. The overall condition of the golf courses on Jekyll Island has been declining for several years. To fully examine all issues and to recommend options, the JIA has retained various consultants over the past five years including the National Golf Foundation Consulting, Inc. Age, deferred maintenance, decline in golf rounds played, and overall number of holes are reasons major corrective actions are needed. The first phase of improvements will include irrigation enhancement and tree removal on the Pine Lakes Course. The next improvement phase will include the elimination of nine holes of golf from the Oleander Course. This acreage will become a natural/conservation area. Additional improvements and/or redesigns will be made as a result of continued assessments of rounds played and financial conditions. B. We will provide on-going maintenance and facility improvements to historic buildings, continue preservation work on the Chicota Ruins, implement the second phase of the Hollybourne Cottage project, and initiate the Oral Histories Project. C. Guided by the Jekyll Island Carrying Capacity and Infrastructure Assessment, we will develop and implement various principles and strategies that enhance the standard for an elevated visitor experience. We will assess the future of large island-wide events that are no longer aligning with the Authority's goals and maintain brand awareness without exceeding capacity thresholds. We will implement new data collection platforms to further understand visitor interest. Platforms will focus on visitor movement and behavior to better evaluate more appropriate marketing promotions that shift focus to reduced capacity days and to amenities and experiences with less visitor traffic during peak seasons. We will also consistently conduct internal analyses of the habits of visitors to determine if dynamic pricing is needed to influence behaviors and manage capacity.	A. FY22 and FY 23 Capital Budget. Golf fees, Tourism Improvement Fund. If a golf lodge, assisted living facility, and retail components are built, additional monies will be generated for golf course improvements. B. JIA FY23 Budget C. Most of these evaluations will be completed internally. However, funds are included in FY23 for data collection platforms.	A. JIA Administration, Conservation Department, and Golf Course senior staff. B. JIA Historic Resources Department C. JIA Administrative and Marketing Departments in with input from all JIA Departments	A. On going throughout FY23. Improvements to continue over the next five years. B. On-going throughout FY23, until completion C. On-going FY23-FY25	A. Improved course playing conditions. Additional revenues generated from Jekyll Island Golf Courses. Attraction of additional players/increased rounds of golf. B. Understanding and appreciation of Jekyll's unique history will be nurtured and preserved. C. Principles will guide the development of a higher quality visitor experience, to include reduced participant numbers, more immersive experiences and a stronger focus on conservation, preservation and education goals for future events on Jekyll Island. Availability of enhanced insights about visitor behavior and sentiment and evaluations of high-traffic days to determine how capacity may impact parking fees, event participation, and fees for the future.
3. Sustain and Highlight Natural Resources A. Continue reforestation and enhance the visual landscape throughout Jekyll Island. B. Plan for enhanced shoreline resilience along Jekyll Island's northern beachfront. C. Restore upland beachfront natural areas. D. Aide in advancing the knowledge to improve and expand wildlife veterinary medicine regionally and globally, enhance conservation education, rehabilitation, and research programs, and assess all education initiatives.	A. We will develop a landscape planting plans for Riverview Park, the new Campground entrance, the new Public Safety Facility, and Tortuga Jack's parking lot. Additionally, we will focus on reforestation on Captain Wylly Lane as well as other miscellaneous locations across the island. B. In collaboration with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), we will examine the effectiveness of the sand motor nourishment technique to deliver sediment to an erosive and degraded area of beach on Jekyll Island, adjoining the other end of the revetment that was recently repaired. JIA staff will actively engage in collaboration with the USACE and Georgia DNR Coastal Resources Division to build stakeholder support and Resource Agency support for implementable solutions. C. In collaboration with Georgia Audubon, we will restore the imperiled maritime grassland plant community across 3.5 acres of Conservation Priority Area bordering N. Beachview Road and Ocean Beach Park on Jekyll Island. D. We will strengthen and expand the existing vet extern program to collaborate with accredited veterinary university, develop a wildlife veterinary technician program, advance the clinical medicine and quality care knowledge for wildlife rehabilitation in the medical community, further develop partnership with the Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Network with programing and outreach initiatives, and begin the capital campaign for the GSTC expansion.	A. JIA FY23 Budget, Tree Fund, and Jekyll Island Foundation B. Federal, US Army Corps of Engineers, \$225,000 C. Georgia Audubon administering grant National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), \$50,000 D. JIA FY23 Budget	A. JIA Landscaping Department B. JIA Conservation Department C. JIA Conservation Department D. GSTC	A. Throughout FY 23 B. Throughout FY23 and FY24 C. FY23 3rd Quarter D. Throughout FY23 and Capital Campaign will extend through CY25	A. Enhance natural resources for Jekyll Island Wildlife and elevate visual experience for guests. B. When planning is complete, federal and state partners will have the benefit of a fully vetted design for a sand motor project to enhance shoreline resilience. C. 3.5 acres of iconic coastal back dune habitat will be restored with native grasses. This will allow the general public to be immersed in a rare ecosystem. D. Increase number of trained and mentored veterinary students as well as published advancements in the wildlife medical field and increase education and awareness of wildlife conservation and rehabilitation through Jekyll Island visitors and local youth.
4. Enhance Visitor Experience A. Implement a more efficient system for sales and online booking web reservations. B. Continue bike path revitalization. C. Attract and educate visitors.	A. Complete the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for a new Point of Sale (POS) system, and select a software company to develop the action plan for implementation. B. We will continue making repairs to existing bike paths on Jekyll, and continue working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) consultants, participating in monthly meetings, as we work towards completion of the Jekyll Island Causeway Bike Path. C. We will collaborate between departments to develop high quality, high interest educational and entertainment programs that appeal to a wide variety of interests.	A. Portion of funding is in the FY23 Capital Budget. Additional funding will be needed once a firm is selected and price negotiated. B. \$386,000 included in JIA's FY23 budget. Additional funds supplied through GDOT grant. C. JIA Budget	A. JIA Accounting and Marketing Departments B. JIA Administrative and Operations Department C. JIA Historic Resource and Marketing Departments	A. RFP will be issued and company selected during 1st Quarter FY23 B. FY23 through FY28 C. Throughout FY23	A. Improve guest experience with online booking and easier use of in-store POS systems for employees. B. Improve transportation and recreational opportunities as well provide a safer community connectivity avenue for the residents and visitors of Jekyll Island. C. Improve guest satisfaction and increase revenue by 10%.
5. Continue and Improve Sustainable Operation Practices A. Attract and retain qualified employees and improve employee safety. B. Implement audits for hotel partners C. Continuation of succession planning for director/manager positions D. Assess hotel room inventory to support balanced demand for both leisure and group business visitation success.	A. We will continue to monitor the employment market and employee compensation. We will implement more training to enhance employees' skills, with a focus on customer service. We will improve employees' knowledge of work environment and provide safety trainings, including active shooter and hurricane preparedness training. B. We will audit capital reserves and verification of expenditures for our hotel partners to ensure JIA lessees are adequately planning for the sustainability and longevity of their properties. C. We will continue to hire and train individuals to learn from current directors the intricate operations of their department, and we will continuously update existing standard operating procedures across departments. D. In partnership with a consultant, we will evaluate a new approach to managing future convention and meeting demand so that Jekyll Island can remain competitive in the broader convention marketplace, by determining how group business demand can be accommodated alongside a heightened leisure demand which drives higher average daily rates for hotel rooms.	A. JIA Budget (Personnel) B. JIA Budget C. JIA Budget (Personnel) D. JIA Budget	A. JIA Human Resources and Public Safety Departments B. JIA Administrative Offices and Legal Counsel C. All JIA Departments D. JIA Marketing Department, with support from the Jekyll Island Convention Center's operations contractor, ASM Global, and hotel partners.	A. Throughout FY23 and onward. B. Throughout FY23 and onward. C. Throughout FY23 and onward. D. Assessment - 2nd Quarter Implementation - 4th Quarter of FY23	A. Reduce employee turnover by 5%, reduce workers' compensation claims to or below DOAS assigned claim goal, and improve safety culture throughout each department. B. Hotels on Jekyll Island will be fiscally sustainable, with reserves that are cultivated, maintained, and used appropriately. C. Professional leadership succession with an understanding and appreciation for preserving and enhancing the uniqueness of Jekyll Island, and assurance that every critical position is occupied by an employee with the right skills, experience, and institutional knowledge. D. Develop new operational procedures that will pre-determine new booking guidelines, rates and expectations with the Convention Center and island hotels to ensure that hotel partners and the Convention Center can cohesively serve both visitor bases successfully and remain activated effectively.