

## AGENCY COMMENTS

### Jekyll Island State Park Authority Strategic Plan FY 2024 - 2027

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.

Agency Core Values: (optional)

#### Agency Head Comments on Strategic Plan

Jekyll Island has long remained a place of balance between nature and humankind, providing visitors thoughtful recreation through conservation, preservation and education. Today, the Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) is nearing the end of a decade long revitalization period that has bolstered visitation to more than 3.5 million annually, numbers only previously seen during the early years of state ownership.

The island is once again a desirable destination for tourism, a necessary driver in maintaining self-sustaining operations and successful revenues.

While this level of visitation is recognized as an anticipated, positive result of revitalization, capacity management must remain at the forefront. The 2018 Carrying Capacity & Infrastructure Assessment encouraged the JIA to look for ways to spread visitation around the island. The JIA can continue to accomplish this by improving and enhancing existing amenities and experiences on the island that fall within the legislatively-mandated developed acreage for the island. To continue to affectively manage and maintain this limited development, the JIA must remain innovative in its approach to managing these experiences to ensure they always remain compelling and enjoyable for not just today, but for generations to come.

Agency Head  
Signature



Mark Williams, Executive Director

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Jekyll Island State Park Authority Strategic Plan FY 2024 -2027			
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Agency Core Values: (optional)			
External Scan		Internal Scan	
Elastic Factors	Inelastic Factors	Strengths & Weaknesses	Workforce Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Island Capacity Balance &amp; Management</li> <li>- Convincing regional tourism to experience Jekyll Island</li> <li>- Local &amp; State funding challenges</li> <li>- Adequate financial resources for needed capital improvements/deferred maintenance</li> <li>- Assuring memorable experiences for guests</li> <li>- Need for greater ADA accessibility throughout the Island at all facilities</li> <li>- Political Forces</li> <li>- Misunderstanding of Jekyll Issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hurricanes &amp; Tropical Storms</li> <li>- Sea Level Rise &amp; Coastal Erosion Controls</li> <li>- Threat of economic downturn:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supply Interruptions</li> <li>- Increasing Fuel Prices</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Continued rising costs for construction materials and equipment</li> <li>- Changing Development/Visitation Pressures</li> <li>- Increased competition for tourism dollars</li> <li>- Continued escalation in employee health care costs and retirement benefits</li> <li>- Lack of timely property evaluations completed by Glynn County Assessor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The JIA employee stewardship of Jekyll Island is a strength and transcends all generations, regardless of the type of work being done.</li> <li>- The employees who are successful and stay with the organization all want to be a part of something greater than themselves. We have the opportunity to improve our communication of this in our employer branding.</li> <li>- Stewardship is also prevalent in our JIA-wide culture, in the coming months and years we have the opportunity to examine individual department work cultures and provide guidance and training to ensure those work cultures support the mission of the Jekyll Island Authority.</li> <li>- Institutional knowledge among staff is another strength that we have recognized and continue to work towards a succession of staff and creating systems of knowledge for future employees.</li> <li>- JIA policies are consistently reviewed and updated accordingly when employment landscapes change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing difficulty hiring and retaining part-time employees that primarily work in customer service roles in amenities and gift shops.</li> <li>- The majority of JIA's turnover, 60 – 65%, is generated from part-time employees (non-seasonal).</li> <li>- Overall, employees are satisfied with the work they are performing in support of the stewardship of the island. The majority, 70% of our full-time workforce is currently Generation X and Millennials, it will be increasingly important to examine and adjust department work cultures to attract and retain Generation Z employees.</li> <li>- Recruitment varies depending on the position, JIA experiences the same challenges as other employers in the area, as the number of available workers in the immediate and surrounding areas is decreasing.</li> </ul>

## CRITICAL ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

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#	Critical Issue or Challenge	Description
1	Capacity Management	If capacity management on Jekyll Island is not consistently monitored and addressed through actions such as dynamic pricing, program revisions, and creative management, the guest experience will be negatively impacted and JIA resources could be at risk. To ensure Jekyll Island remains successful financially, we need to ensure visitors have a positive experience that brings them back to the island. We also must ensure that JIA resources, such as staff, and the island's natural resources are not abused and depleted. Jekyll's future needs to be just as much of a priority as its present.
2	Threat of economical downturn	Inflationary pressure and the continued rising costs for construction materials and equipment has impacted several JIA projects including the Public Safety Facility and the Campground expansion project. These factors result in a strain in Jekyll's resources.
3	Shortage of Part-Time Labor	In 2014, JIA averaged 148 part-time employees in these positions, in 2024, that number is 104. In addition to fewer available workers seeking part-time work, the majority of JIA's turnover, 60 – 65%, is generated from part-time employees (non-seasonal). JIA relies on part-time labor for the retail, amenity, and fire department positions. Operating these locations has become increasingly difficult due to the shortage of part-time labor. To ensure operational success and a positive guest experience, JIA Human Resources has been evaluating and shifting some of the historically part-time positions to full-time ones.

**Note**

\* Three rows for Critical Issues are provided, but agencies are not required to utilize all three. Additionally, agencies may insert more rows if they identify more than three critical issues.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

Jekyll Island State Park Authority Strategic Plan FY 2024-2027							
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Objective		Action Plan					
	#	Action Items/Tasks	Measurable Outcomes	Resources/Responsibilities	Associated Funding	Completion Dates	Progress Updates from Previous Year
1	Continue and Complete Island Revitalization	1a Improve Public Safety on Jekyll Island through the construction of 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.	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.	JIA Deputy Executive Director is overseeing the construction and ensuring the project remains on schedule.	State FY22 Amended Budget approved in April of CY22 and State FY23 Amended Budget approved in April of CY23	August CY2024	The Public Safety Complex is 77% completed and is in stages of finish construction such as cabinetry and tile work. The completion date of August 2024 remains on track.
		1b Design and build a new 2,400 SF 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.	Improve accessibility of airport terminal. Increase based aircraft from six to 10, allowing for the JIA to receive \$150,000 FAA funding per year.	JIA Deputy Executive Director is overseeing project. He continues to coordinate with the terminal design firm and GDOT to ensure funding remains allocated to this project.	JIA funding of 250,000 for site work at hangar location and GDOT matching funds of \$690,000 for construction of new terminal building.	Fiscal Year 2027	An ADA accessible airport terminal was designed and put out for bid in April 2023. However, due to higher than estimated costs submitted by bidders, the design will be modified and re-bid in CY2026 and built in FY27.
		1c Oversee development of Former Buccaneer Site, which is the final original revitalization parcel. Due to development pressures resulting from successful revitalization, all proposals are required to be 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.	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.	LNWA Developers, LLC are responsible for developing the parcel. JIA Deputy Executive Director and the Design Review Committee will continue reviewing design development plans for the project.	Private Sector Development responsible for all site infrastructure improvements and housing units. Final costs yet to be determined.	Timeline is based on developer's schedule, but infrastructure and Civil construction has begun on the site.	This project is currently underway. As drawn and approved by the JIA Board, 25 homes will be built on the site. Staff is ensuring compliance with ordinances and construction regulations as the infrastructure improves.
		2a Implementing the 2022 Golf Course Improvement Plan will be vital to sustainably operating the Jekyll Island Golf Course, ensuring positive experiences for guests. The overall condition of the golf courses on Jekyll Island has been declining for several years. To thoroughly 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 significant 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 consist of restoring Great Dunes to its Walter Travis design and combining nine holes of Oleander to create a new 18-hole course. The acreage remaining from elimination of nine holes of golf from the Oleander Course will be converted to Conservation. Additional improvements and redesigns will be made due to continued assessments of rounds played and financial conditions.	Improved course playing conditions, and elimination of aged infrastructure. Additional revenues generated from Jekyll Island Golf Courses. Attraction of additional players/increased rounds of golf. Creation conservation corridor for wildlife and additional conservation areas for public enjoyment.	JIA Administration, Conservation Department, and Golf Course senior staff will continue to work together to ensure each recommended action item is completed as scheduled.	FY 23 & FY24 Capital Budget along with Golf fees & Tourism Improvement Fund. Working with the Golden Isles Development Authority, a \$20M bond was secured for funding. The potential for a limited number of additional retail components remains under consideration to create additional repayment funds.	Improvements to continue over the next four years. On going through FY23 to FY28.	Improvements to Pine Lakes Golf Course are 85% completed. Great Dunes/Oleander course consolidation design and an Ecological Consultant were awarded in June 2023 and will begin construction in October of CY2024 and completed in September CY2025.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

2	Balance and Manage Island Resources	2b	Preserve the history of Jekyll Island through 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, continuation of Oral Histories Project, and further investigate options for collections/archives storage facility.	Understanding and appreciation of Jekyll's unique history will be nurtured and preserved.	JIA Historic Resources Department	JIA FY23 & Capital Budget	On-going through CY25	DuBignon Cottage, the Museum, and the Bookkeeper's Cottage have been completely repainted and the Infirmary was touched up for the 31'81' rehabilitation project. Moss Cottage received an interior refurbishment along with updated exhibits. The Chicota Ruins and Oral History Projects are essentially complete. The Oral History Project had nearly thirty individuals recorded and may be amended as opportunities and resources become available. The 2nd phase of Hollybourne is underway with completion expected in the summer of 2025. New frames were commissioned for the Lost Buildings interpretive panel project and work continues to progress with their design. Work has begun to secure funding for the restoration of the Gould Casino exterior.
		2c	Continuing implementation of Capacity Management strategies which are 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 utilize analytics 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. Staff will also plan for a Capacity Management Study update during FY2025	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, fees for the future, and consideration of additional visitation limits.	JIA Administrative and Marketing Departments in with input from all JIA Departments	Most of these evaluations will be completed internally with JIA staff. However, funds are included in FY23 for data analytics platforms.	On-going FY24 & Beyond	Internal analysis proved that dynamic pricing that was implemented during the 2023 Holly Jolly Jekyll Season worked well to assist in leveling of capacity and will be continued in CY24 and on-going. The format of Shrimp & Grits was revised to address capacity and avoid overexerting Island resources, this new Friday/Saturday only format will continue. This eliminates extended efforts and capacity issues into Sunday.
		3a	Continue preservation and enhancement of the visual landscape throughout Jekyll Island through the development of landscape planting plans centered around the Historic District. Other areas consist of Great Dunes Golf Course renovation within the natural buffers at strategic locations, Pier Road and the lost buildings trail in the Historic District. Additionally, we will focus on reforestation at Riverview Park as well as other target specific locations across the Island to replace Live Oak trees which are special to the character of Jekyll Island.	Enhance natural resources for Jekyll Island Wildlife and elevate visual experience for guests.	JIA Special Projects Department & Landscape Department	JIA Tree Mitigation Fund, and Jekyll Island Foundation	Throughout FY25 & beyond	Focus in this effort has shifted to the Historic District and that will continue through FY25.
		3b	Plan for enhanced shoreline resilience along Jekyll Island's northern beachfront. 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.	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.	JIA Conservation Department	Federal, US Army Corps of Engineers, \$225,000	Throughout FY25	Collaboration is ongoing. Data analytics and model creation is underway. Partner agency collaboration discussions have been productive and are continuing.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

3	Sustain and Highlight Natural Resources	3c	In collaboration with Birds Georgia, 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.	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.	JIA Conservation Department	Birds Georgia administering grant National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), \$50,000	Winter 2024/2025	This portion of the project has been completed and expanded beyond the original footprint. 7.28 acres of muhly grass have been planted. An additional 5.17 acres is to be prepped and plants are being grown out targeting a planting date during winter 2024/2025
		3d	To aid 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, the JIA and GSTC 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 programming and outreach initiatives, and begin the capital campaign for the GSTC expansion.	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.	Georgia Sea Turtle Center Staff in collaboration with the Jekyll Island Foundation	JIA FY24 Budget	Throughout FY25 and Capital Campaign will extend through CY26	Needs assessment and collection for Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Network (SERSTM) specimen loan program is ongoing. GSTC and SERSTN continued partnering from afar in outreach efforts held in Atlanta in November 2023 and through the Education Alliance of Georgia (EEA) conference in March 2024 held on Jekyll Island. Recruitment and resource development will continue into FY25 as opportunities become available and/or through budgeting. A new associate vet has been hired, and the GSTC Expansion plan design has been completed. The capital campaign will kick off in fiscal year 2025.
		3e	Promote and prioritize native plant species on Jekyll Island. The JIA Conservation Department will lead the efforts to eradicate priority invasive species from priority habitats and the Jekyll Island Causeway as well as promoting the use of more native plants in JIA and lessee projects. This will include expanding the propagation of native species by collecting local ecotypes from Jekyll and surrounding areas.	Improve the ecological health of Jekyll Island	JIA Conservation, Landscaping, & Park Ranger staff.	JIA Budget	Throughout FY25 and onward.	
		4a	Implement a more efficient system for sales and online booking web reservations.	Improve guest experience with online booking and easier use of in-store POS systems for employees.	JIA Accounting and Marketing Departments	JIA Capital Budget.	Implementation anticipated for September or October 2024	Implementation is almost complete. We are working out a few details with the payments and the staff is setting up the ticket options for each location.
		4b	To continue bike path revitalization, JIA 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.	Improve transportation and recreational opportunities as well as provide a safer community connectivity avenue for recreational bikers.	JIA Administrative and Operations Department	Funds supplied through GDOT grant.	FY24 through FY28	The path from Jekyll to the Guest Information Center is completed using JIA funds. Task Order 2 for Preliminary Engineering with GDOT was approved at the January 2023 Board Meeting. This agreement will eventually lead to the completion of the causeway bike path from Guest Information to HWY 17 and construction is slated to begin in January of 2026 according to GDOT.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

4	Enhance Visitor Experience		4c JIA staff will collaborate between departments to develop high quality, high interest educational and entertainment programs that appeal to a wide variety of interests with the purpose of attracting and educating visitors.	Improve guest satisfaction and increase revenue by 10%.	JIA Historic Resource and Marketing Departments	JIA Budget	Throughout FY24 and onward.	Programming of our historic resources has improved to provide richer experiences for guests that includes interpretation of Jekyll's music history, colonial era history, and Club era history. Millionaire Motorcar tours were added to compliment the popular Landmark Tolley Tours. Landmark Tours are offered more often and the option of entering a cottage is provided with each tour. This has resulted in record revenue this year, especially during the Spring season. Research into building more experience-based programs is underway as well as preparation of events to offer once Pier Road is reestablished.
			4d The JIA Marketing team will take the lead on implementing digital kiosks in the Jekyll Island Beach Village, creating a biking-specific map for navigating around the island, and implementing cohesive wayfinding to replace inconsistent and unnecessary directional signage.	Improve the guest experience and increase guest knowledge of all Jekyll Island amenities and activities.	JIA Marketing Department	JIA Marketing Budget	FY24 through FY26	The first kiosk is going to be located in Beach Village and is planned to be operational by late fall of CY24.
			5a To attract and retain qualified employees and improve employee safety, JIA 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.	Reduce employee turnover by 5%, reduce workers' compensation claims to or below DOAS assigned claim goal, and improve safety culture throughout each department.	JIA Human Resources and Public Safety Departments	JIA Budget (Personnel)	Throughout FY25 and onward.	Human Resources staff is constantly monitoring the employment market. Implementation and integration of Learning Management System is completed and in use. All employees participate in monthly safety trainings that are ongoing.  The Fire Department offers CPR/Stop the Bleeding training yearly. HR has identified certain segments of employees that are required to attend and some that are voluntary.  In addition the Fire Department will continue to teach Active Threat training to JIA Staff as directed by HR.  Hurricane Preparedness training is yearly. It will continue.
			5b Complete audit of hotel partners and other lessees, evaluating 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	Hotels on Jekyll Island will be fiscally sustainable, with reserves that are cultivated, maintained, and used appropriately.	JIA Administrative Offices and Legal Counsel R.M. Woodworth & Associates	JIA Budget	On-going through December 2024	Initial round of audits successfully completed with hotels generally on track with capital expenditures

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS

5	Continue and Improve Sustainable Operation Practices	5c	Continuation of succession planning for director/manager positions. JIA 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.	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.	All JIA Departments	JIA Budget (Personnel)	Throughout FY25 and onward.	Succession planning actions continue to be executed as opportunities become available and/or through budgeting.  <i>Note: Marjorie has hired someone to train for filling her position when she retires and the training is going very well. The Fire Department has implemented a Deputy Chief position for succession planning and continuity of operations.</i>
		5d	To assess hotel room inventory, JIA will partner with a consultant, to 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.	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.	JIA Marketing Department, with support from the Jekyll Island Convention Center's operations contractor, ASM Global, and hotel partners.	JIA Budget	Assessment - 2nd Quarter Implementation - 4th Quarter of FY23 - <b>Assessment Complete and Execution will Continue</b>	An assessment was completed by KB Advisory Group and Key Advisors and a task force of hoteliers has been established to execute the recommendations throughout FY24 and beyond.
		5e	JIA will hire a consultant to revise the current Design Guidelines and update specific Design Review Group processes for development requests, creating a more streamline, comprehensive, and consistent guideline for both lessees and JIA staff to use.	Streamline the design review process to reduce excessive staff time needed to review proposed development plans by 10% and allow stakeholders to receive feedback in a more timely manner.	JIA Deputy Executive Director, Code Compliance Officer, and Legal Counsel	JIA Budget	FY25-26	JIA staff implemented a more streamlined DRG process in FY23-FY24 as part of Code of Ordinance revisions in order to improve responsiveness. Estimated FY25-FY26 soliciting proposals for drafting new design guidelines.

### Notes

\* Objectives and action plans should be based on the critical issues identified from the environmental scan.

\*\* Three action item rows are provided for each objective, but agencies are not required to use all three. Agencies may also insert more rows if an objective has more than three action items.