



**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND,  
SOUTH CAROLINA  
PLANNING DIRECTOR**

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**MGT**

# TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC – PLANNING DIRECTOR



Hilton Head Island, SC (pop. 38,097) The Town of Hilton Head Island, one of the most visited tourist destinations in the southeastern United States, is seeking an experienced, innovative and strategic leader to serve as its next Planning Director continuing Hilton Head's commitment to best-in-class community planning initiatives, development services, and environmental stewardship.

Hilton Head Island is a close-knit community with a year-round population of approximately 38,097, although during the peak of summer vacation season the population can swell to over 150,000. The island features 12 miles of beachfront on the Atlantic Ocean and offers more than 70 miles of multi-use pathways. Hilton Head Island is the largest barrier island in the southeastern United States. Located in the Lowcountry, at the southern boundary of South Carolina, the island has a beautiful natural environment and rich cultural history stretching back from Native American habitation and through the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. This history is visible today in the many protected archaeological and cultural sites on the Island, and preserved in the living, native Gullah community.

Hilton Head Island is home to more than 20 top-tier golf courses, making the island a haven for enthusiasts and pros alike, hosting many prestigious tournaments throughout the year. Along with the many sporting opportunities, Hilton Head is a philanthropic leader. Over 150 non-profit organizations call the Island home. Beyond the resorts and hospitality, the Island offers a robust economic environment with numerous businesses, real estate opportunities, and a growing health care sector. Despite its global recognition as a top tourist destination, Hilton Head Island retains its small-town charm, offering a strong sense of community and connectivity. This beautiful Island community provides a balance of work-life opportunities with recreation, culture and personal fulfillment.

## HILTON HEAD ISLAND GOVERNMENT & POSITION BACKGROUND

The Town of Hilton Head Island is governed by a Council-Manager form of government, with a Mayor elected at large and six council members representing each of the 6 wards of the Town. The Town Manager is appointed to serve as the executive leader and directs the day-to-day activities of staff.

This is an important moment for Hilton Head Island. We are experiencing new pressures and anticipating fast-moving changes over the next decade. We are focused on Hilton Head Island's preferred future. The Town is currently undertaking four major planning initiatives, including a Land Management Ordinance amendment, corridor improvements, district planning, and resilience planning.

## THE POSITION IN BRIEF

The Planning Director leads and directs the Town's Planning Department with oversight for community planning, housing, development services, and building permitting and inspection. The Director provides strategic vision and leadership in the areas of current and long-range planning, workforce housing, zoning and land use policy, natural resources protection, economic development, and redevelopment. The Director supervises their assigned staff allowing for an effective working relationship with Town employees, community members, elected officials and other community leaders. The Planning Director reports to the Assistant Town Manager in charge of Operations.

The responsibilities of the Planning Director include:

- Provides strategic direction and executive leadership for all planning and development services, including long-range planning, urban design, zoning administration, permitting and inspections, housing, natural resource protection, and redevelopment.
- Leads development, implementation, and provides continual updates of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, Workforce Housing Framework, and Council goals.
- Supervises, coaches, and mentors senior management team including Assistant Planning Director, Community Planning Manager, and Chief Housing Officer by establishing performance goals, ensuring development of staff, and promotes a culture of innovation, excellence, and accountability.
- Develops and manages department budgets, capital improvement initiatives, and staffing strategies. Ensures fiscal responsibility and efficient use of resources; oversees contracts, grants, and consultant services.
- Shapes and directs town-wide land use and policy decisions that balance economic growth, natural resource protection, and quality of life for a diverse population.
- Leads efforts related to zoning, Land Management Ordinance (LMO) amendments, housing finance strategies, and regional planning collaboration.
- Serves as the Land Management Ordinance (LMO) Official.
- Represents the Planning Department before Town Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and other stakeholders with professionalism and authority.
- Serves as a principal liaison to regional, state, and federal agencies on planning, community and economic development, and housing initiatives. Cultivates partnerships with peer jurisdictions, educational institutions, and the private sector.
- Directs response and recovery planning for disasters and ensures integration of post-disaster redevelopment strategies.
- Oversees internal operations to promote innovation, efficient processes, customer service, and community engagement.
- Supports staff and consultants in the preparation of technical studies, ordinances, policies, plans, and public outreach materials.
- Ensures regulatory compliance with federal, state, and local laws, policies, and guidelines.





## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in urban planning, public administration, architecture, landscape architecture or related field is required. Master's Degree is preferred.
- A minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible planning experience, with at least 7 years in a senior leadership role, preferably in a coastal or tourism-driven municipality or region.
- Demonstrated experience managing complex planning and development projects.
- American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification preferred.
- Valid driver's license.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE WILL BE

- Knowledgeable of contemporary planning principles, including smart growth, climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, form-based codes, and urban resilience.
- Knowledgeable of local government administration and municipal finance, particularly as it relates to planning and development processes.
- Possess a thorough understanding of principles, practices, methods, and strategies in urban and regional planning, including fundamental development codes, ordinances, code enforcement, and building inspection.
- Understand and be familiar with the basic principles of architecture, landscape architecture, land management concepts, traffic engineering, civil engineering, and Geographic Information Systems.
- Skilled in data-driven decision-making and the use of spatial analysis tools (e.g., GIS).
- Effectively communicate in public and through written communication with executive presence in presentations to elected officials, boards, and the public.
- An effective negotiator, building consensus, and managing politically sensitive issues through cross-sector collaboration and community-based planning.
- Competence in staff supervision, mentoring, performance management, and developing a high-performing, accountable team.
- Ability to lead strategic and long-range planning initiatives aligned with Town goals and community priorities.



- Proficiency to objectively analyze data and interpret complex land use policies and regulations.
- Be adept at developing and facilitating effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including community members, elected officials, and partner organizations.
- Ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, both orally and in writing, using technical and non-technical language.
- Expertise in preparing and presenting accurate and reliable reports and recommendations.
- Manage multiple priorities and projects under time-sensitive deadlines while ensuring accuracy and quality.
- Possess skills to operate a personal computer and use standard or customized planning-related software applications.

## BENEFITS

Residency is not required. This is a full-time position. The salary range is \$150,000 - \$170,000+/-DOQ. The Town of Hilton Head Island offers an excellent benefit package which includes health, dental, vision, life insurance, short and long-term disability, vacation, and sick leave, paid holidays, tuition reimbursement, a healthcare reimbursement arrangement, and a generous matching 401(k) plan. \$750 monthly vehicle allowance. Relocation assistance equal to one month's salary is available for candidates relocating to the area.

## HOW TO APPLY

Apply online at [www.GovHRjobs.com](http://www.GovHRjobs.com) with a resume, cover letter and contact information for five professional references by May 16, 2025. Confidential inquiries may be directed to Riccardo (Rick) Ginex, MGT Approved Independent Executive Recruiter, at Tel: 847-380-3240, ext. 160.

Additional information about the Town of Hilton Head can be found on the Town's website: <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov>.

The Town of Hilton Head is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.



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