

MOU BETWEEN
OAK ISLAND
AND UNCW

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT, (hereinafter the "Agreement") is made and entered into on the date executed by all parties by and between the Oak Island, North Carolina (hereinafter called "TOWN"), a municipal Corporation located in Brunswick County, North Carolina; and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington (hereinafter called "RECIPIENT" or "UNCW"), a North Carolina state university.

1. Purpose of Agreement

Pursuant to General Statutes, Chapter 160A, the TOWN has the authority to provide assistance to RECIPIENT for the benefit of its citizens and not solely for the benefit of particular persons or interests. Accordingly, the TOWN has the authority to provide assistance to the RECIPIENT and has agreed to make public funds available to RECIPIENT up to the amount of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) per fiscal year of this Agreement, for a total of Ninety Thousand Dollars (\$90,000), in order that the RECIPIENT may render public services to citizens of Oak Island and/or Brunswick County area regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or familial status. The RECIPIENT agrees to use said funds strictly in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement.

2. Use of Funds

The funds paid by the TOWN to the RECIPIENT shall be used in the following manner only: Support activities related to oyster projects/living shorelines at Veterans Park and May Moore Park in Oak Island; Support students' research in the field of sediment research, particularly experimenting with erosion techniques; Host a speaker series to educate citizen scientists, volunteers and residents on the functions of living shorelines, the ecosystem services provided by living shorelines composed of bagged oyster shells, other sustainable materials and marsh grasses and on the utility of the non-hardened structures to mitigate erosion; Assist through its UNCW's Benthic Ecology Lab with the design, creation, implementation, and education on the ecosystem services provided by living shoreline approaches. The Benthic Ecology Lab has decades of experience working with living shorelines, conducting studies of living shoreline function, educating and engaging communities on coastal issues.

3. Term of Agreement

The term of this Agreement shall be from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. In the event that any matter contemplated within the Agreement was provided by the parties to each other prior to the execution of this Agreement, then the terms of this Agreement shall also govern all aspects of provision of that matter unless it was governed by a previously written, valid, and executed Agreement between the Parties.

4. Compliance With Applicable Laws

4.1 The RECIPIENT agrees that in carrying out activities of any kind funded with the moneys made available under the provisions of this Agreement, it shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

4.2 Prior to the receipt of any funds under this Agreement, the RECIPIENT shall report any potential conflict of interest transactions to the TOWN.

5. Conflict of Interest

No paid employee of the TOWN shall have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, as a party or otherwise, in the performance of this Agreement.

6. Entire Agreement

This Agreement, including the attached Exhibit A, constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and no warranties, inducements, considerations, promises or other inferences shall be implied or impressed upon this agreement that are not set forth herein.

7. Notice

All communications relating to this Agreement shall be through the parties' representatives. The parties may change representatives by written notice as provided herein. All notices under this Agreement must be in writing and given by certified mail, return receipt requested addressed as follows:

If to TOWN: Town of Oak Island, 4601 E. Oak Island Drive, Oak Island, NC 28475

If to RECIPIENT: UNCW Office of General, 601 South College Road Wilmington, NC 28403-5662

8. Counterparts

This Agreement may be executed in several counterparts, including separate counterparts. Each shall be an original, but all of them together constitute the same instrument.

9. Immunity Not Waived

This Agreement is governmental in nature, for the benefit of the public, and is not intended to be for private profit or gain. No Party intends to waive its sovereign immunity by reason of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the TOWN has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and behalf and the RECIPIENT has caused this agreement to be duly executed in its name and behalf.

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Dr. Ron Vetter
Dean of the College of Science and Engineering

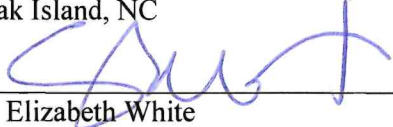
Date: _____

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Eddie Stuart
Vice Chancellor University Advancement

Date: _____

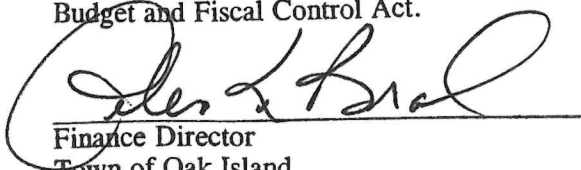
Oak Island, NC



S. Elizabeth White
Mayor

Date: 7/10/2025

This instrument has been pre-audited in the manner required by The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.



Finance Director
Town of Oak Island

Exhibit A

Potential living shoreline work along the waterway in the Town of Oak Island

This proposal provides some examples of potential projects that could be conducted at Oak Island that involve community engagement as well as hands-on applied learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students working with the UNCW Benthic Ecology Lab. This proposal is intended to provide a framework for discussion and to promote constructive exchanges on potential multi-year projects that incorporate community engagement, environmental education and citizen scientist approaches to address issues of interest to the Town of Oak Island and generally to marsh shoreline erosion.

The term living shorelines is used to describe a series of approaches to mitigating shoreline erosions using biogenic (e.g. oyster and/or marsh plantings) and other sustainable materials along the shoreline at various tidal heights to interrupt wave energy and/or currents. These structures promote the development of natural communities such as marsh grasses and oyster reefs.

One of the original living shoreline approaches used to mitigate erosion along waterways is the placement of oyster shells in bags combined with planting marsh grass seedlings. Oyster larvae settle on the shells of adult oysters. As successive years of oysters settle, the height and live oyster density increases leading to further reef development. Likewise healthy marsh grasses trap sediments such that over time the height of the marsh surface also increases (accretes).

Oak Island has a series of town owned properties that may serve as excellent locations to create demonstration sites to engage the community and illustrate the use of living shoreline approaches and provide educational opportunities to enhance resident and visitor understanding of ecosystem services provided by coastal habitats.

UNCW's Benthic Ecology Lab will assist with the design, creation, implementation, and education on the ecosystem services provided by living shoreline approaches. The Benthic Ecology Lab has decades of experience working with living shorelines, conducting studies of living shoreline function, educating and engaging communities on coastal issues.

The Benthic Ecology Lab utilizes bagged oyster shells as an initial approach to demonstrate how living shorelines develop and function. This approach most easily supports community involvement and engagement by providing hands-on opportunities for construction and for follow-up monitoring to assess reef/habitat development. The healthy development of living shorelines takes multiple years, providing many opportunities for community involvement and education. The Benthic Ecology Lab has also worked with other living shoreline approaches and can provide an introduction to alternative methods. Though, specific activities will be fully developed through further discussion with town representatives and community members; some examples of potential projects that could be conducted at Oak Island include:

- Establishment of demonstration living shoreline approaches (e.g. oyster reef and salt marsh planting)

- Assessment of the success of living shoreline structures, including sediment trapping and marsh development landward of a living shoreline structure

- Assessment of the ecosystem enhancement associated with a living shoreline, including oyster growth and settlement, assessment of associated faunal such as mussels and crabs, assessment of nekton (finfish, crabs and shrimp) utilization of the developing living shoreline community, and overall community development and growth / stability over time.

- General educational activities such as community presentations related not only to living shorelines but also other topics of interest to the residents of the Town of Oak Island within the expertise of UNCW researchers.