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April 26, 2018

Ms. Alison Simmons
Planning & Zoning Director
P.O. Box 6122
Moncks Corner, SC

Re: Ordinance 18-04-11, to adopt the 5-Year (2017) review of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Ms. Simmons:

You will find enclosed a certified copy of the above referenced Ordinance adopted by Berkeley County Council at a Regular Meeting of Council on April 23, 2018.

If any additional information is required, please do not hesitate to give our office a call.

With kind regards,


Catherine R. Windham
Clerk to Council

Enclosure: as stated

Les Blankenship, Deputy Supervisor Operations
John O. Williams, II, County Attorney
Wilson Baggett, Assessor
Mary P. Brown – for filing

ORDINANCE NO. 18-04-11

BILL NO. 17-70, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 5-YEAR (2017) REVIEW OF THE 2010 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE COUNTY OF BERKELEY PURSUANT TO THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ENABLING ACT OF 1994.

WHEREAS, the Berkeley County Council adopted a Comprehensive Plan for Berkeley County in 1999, and a subsequent ten-year update in 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document that is responsive and relevant to changing conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley County Planning Commission found it necessary and appropriate, in accord with the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994, to conduct a five-year review of the Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan as updated in 2010 with particular focus on the Transportation and Land Use Elements; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley County Planning Commission convened in a series of workshops over the course of a year, engaging multiple stakeholder groups and consulting with various County departments and agencies to ensure consistency with other adopted or ongoing plans and studies; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley County Planning Commission reviewed all elements of the 2010 Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan and consequently resolved on August 22, 2017 to recommend to County Council amendments to the Future Land Use Map and Sections 1 and 2 of the text; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley County Council convened in a workshop on February 5, 2018 to obtain public input and discuss with staff trends in growth, recommended amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and growth management strategies; and

WHEREAS, with support from the Berkeley County Planning Commission, the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG), and the Berkeley County Planning and Zoning Department, Berkeley County Council identified appropriate future land use map and policy recommendations that seek to better align growth and development with existing and planned capacities of infrastructure and community facilities; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by Berkeley County Council that, having met the requirements of Chapter 29 of the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 for a five-year review of the 2010 Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan, does hereby adopt the *Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan 5-Year Review* recommended amendments.

Certified True and Correct Copy of Original Record

Catherine R. Lindstrom

Clerk to Council
County Council Berkeley County SC

18-04-11

ADOPTED this 23rd day of April, 2018.

BERKELEY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA



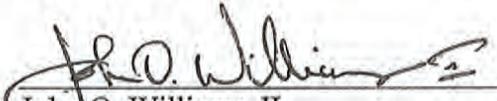
William W. Peagler, III, Chairman
Berkeley County Council

ATTEST:



Catherine R. Windham
Clerk to County Council

Approved as to form:



John O. Williams, II
County Attorney

First Reading:	November 27, 2017
Second Reading	December 11, 2017
Public Hearing:	April 23, 2018
Third Reading:	April 23, 2018

2010 Berkeley County Comprehensive Plan 5-year Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

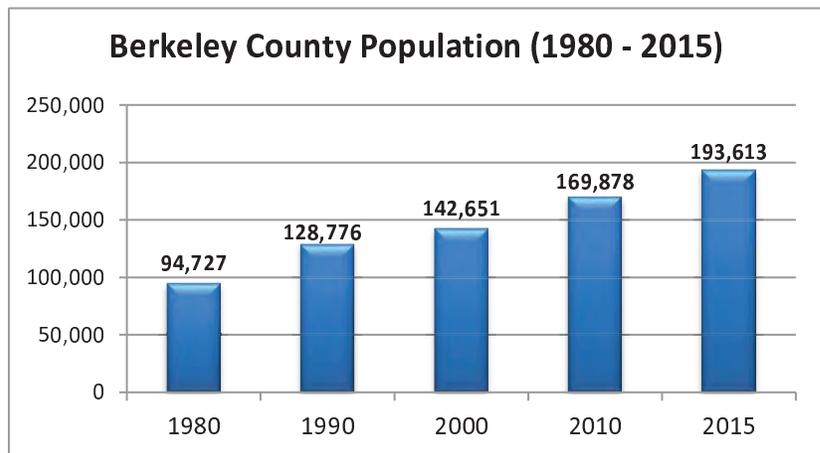
SC Code Section 6-292-510(E), mandates that the Planning Commission review its adopted County Comprehensive Plan or elements thereof not less than once every five years to determine whether changes in the amount, kind, or direction of development or other reasons make it desirable to make additions or amendments to the plan. In 2015, the Planning Commission determined that while most of the adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan elements are still applicable, announcement of the planned Volvo manufacturing facility on a mega-industrial site outside the Principal Growth Area merited deeper consideration of how future development patterns might be impacted and place additional demands on community facilities and public infrastructure. As a result, the County Planning Commission met several times during 2016 and 2017 to consider current and future plans for growth, the County's transportation, water, and sewer systems, and whether changes in the adopted Land Use policies and/or the Future Land Use Map were needed.

After adoption of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, not only did housing construction in the County accelerate as the nation recovered from the Great Recession, but Berkeley County announced that future economic investments totaling more than \$1 billion had been committed by new corporate arrivals. In anticipation of more than 4,100 new jobs by these companies, it is expected that there will be even greater demand for housing and services in the near future. As a result, the updated data presented in this addendum establishes a more recent picture of the County's growth and justification for the proposed updates to policies and strategies in the County's Land Use Element.

A Snapshot of Growth

Population and Housing

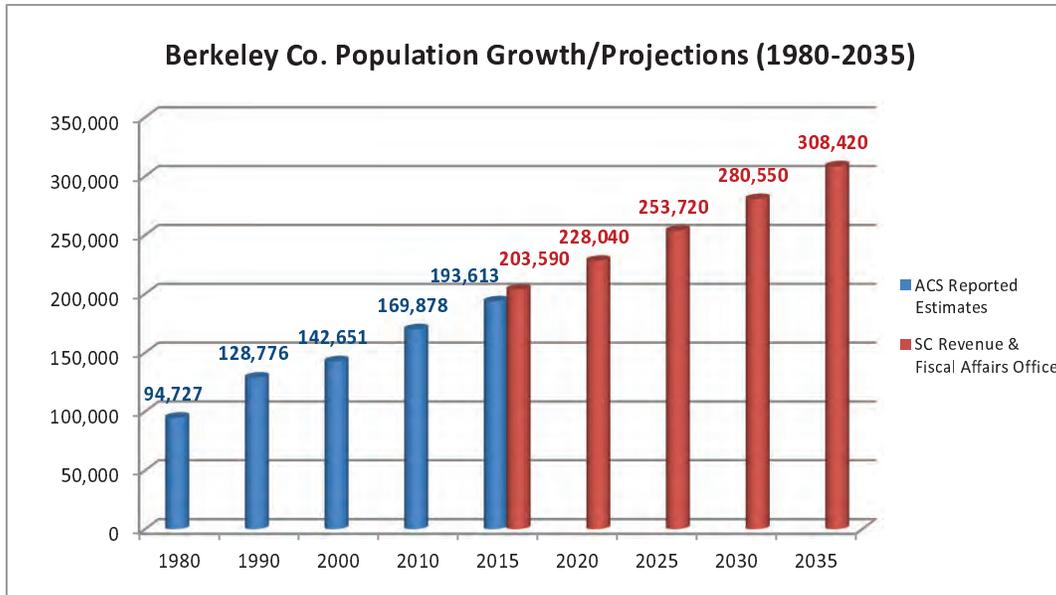
In the first five years of this decade (2010-2015), Berkeley County experienced significant growth, with a 13.9% increase in population. This growth rate was even higher, by about one-third, than that of the previous decade (2000-2010) when a 19% increase occurred over ten years. In 2010, the SC Office of Research and Statistics projected the County's population would reach 194,000 around the year 2025. However, the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) has estimated that projected population



Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

has already been reached. As a result, the SC Office of Research and Statistics has projected an even greater growth rate into the future, such that it is anticipated the County's population will continue to reach or exceed previous projections at least 10 years ahead of time.

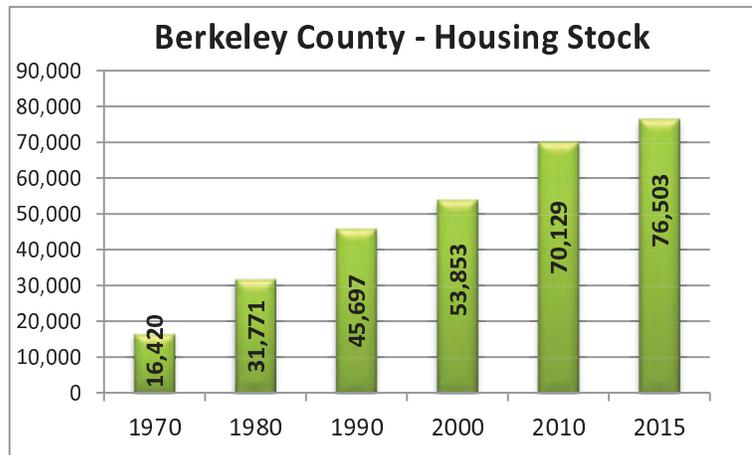
Berkeley County is now expected to have the highest population growth rate in the region over the next two decades, 24.6%, reaching over 250,000 people by 2025 and over 300,000 residents by 2035.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey; SC Revenue & Fiscal Affairs Office

As population estimates have continually increased in the County, it would be assumed that the number of households rose proportionately. However, from 2000 to 2010, the number of households grew 31.0% (from 49,922 households to 65,419). Currently, the US Census bureau estimates that the number of households in the past five years increased only 13.4% (from 65,419 to 74,167). Given the relative population increase, this indicates that household sizes are increasing to accommodate the discrepancy.

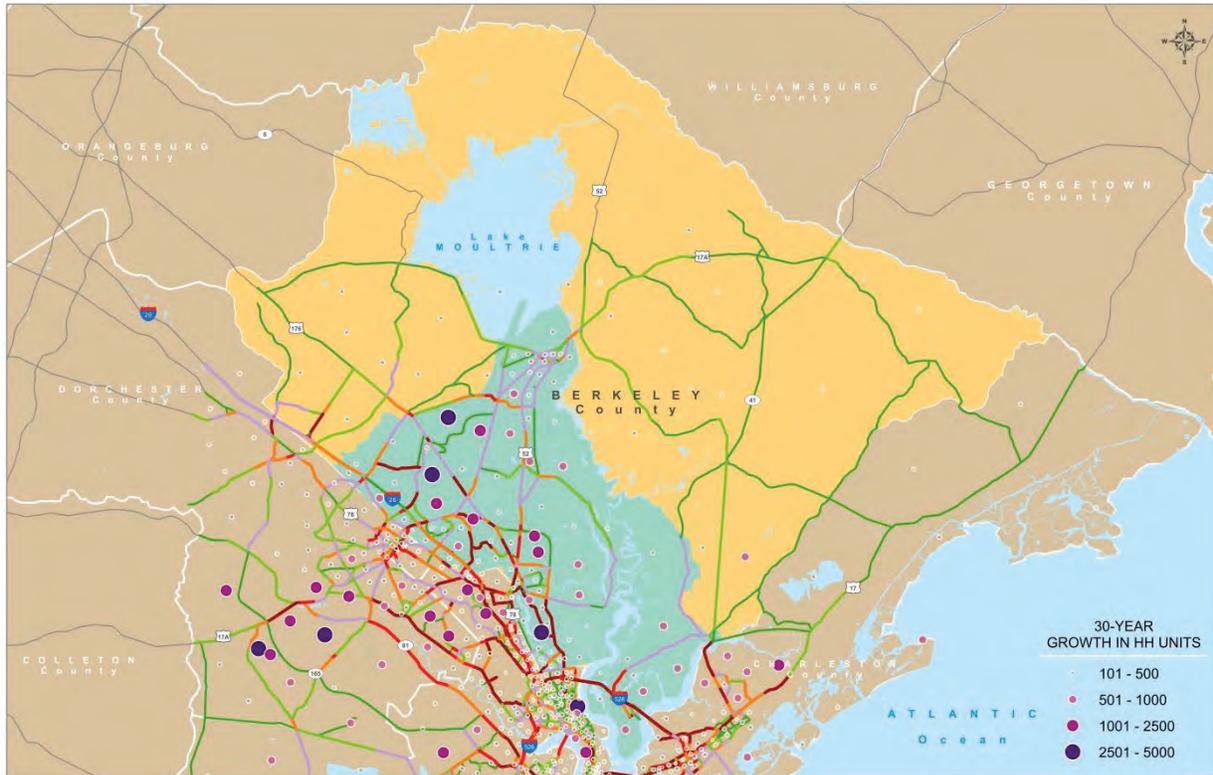
While the number of households has been increasing, so has the housing stock. A significant portion of the County’s housing stock was built between 2000 and 2010 causing an increase in the total number of housing units of just over 30%. Since 2010, the number of housing units has increased at a slower rate, with an estimated increase of only 9.1% units, much less than half of growth in the previous decade, yielding a total housing stock estimated at 76,503 units in 2015.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

Building permit data for all of Berkeley County shows that 1,373 housing units

were permitted for construction in 2016, including 58 multifamily units. This 1.79% increase in housing units for the one year is comparable to the rate of increase experienced between 2010 and 2015.

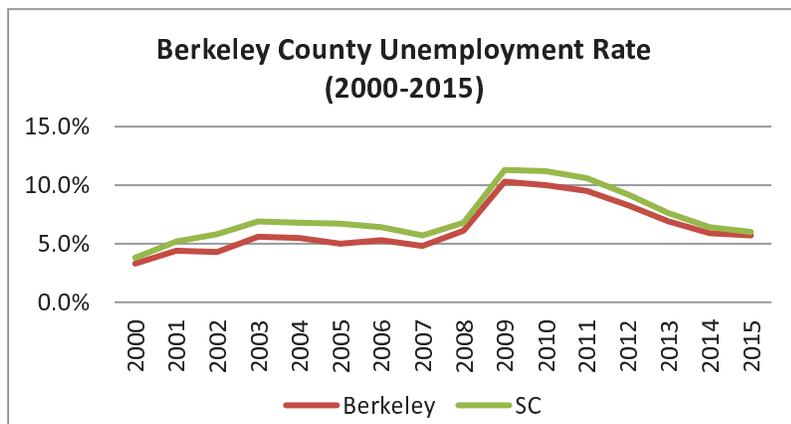


The regional travel demand model, maintained by the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments, demonstrates where growth in household units will occur over the next thirty years so the County can plan accordingly.

Jobs and Incomes:

A slightly lower percentage (65.2%) of the County’s potential labor force (residents 16 years of age and older) are actively employed or seeking employment than were participating in the labor force in 2010 (68.3%). Given improvements in the job market since 2010, this drop could be an indication that more retirees are moving to the County.

Unemployment rates spiked in 2009-2010 during the Great Recession, yet Berkeley County consistently had a slightly lower unemployment rate than that for the state. Since the County’s unemployment rate peaked in 2009 at approximately 10%, unemployment rates have continued a downward progression, reaching slightly



Source:

below 6% as of 2015.

Employment by Industry

As seen in the table below, very little has changed in the type of industries that employ the County’s labor force. In the first five years of the decade, employment in the Construction industry actually decreased as well as employment in Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities.

The largest increases of employment in special industry sectors over the past five years were in the Professional, Scientific and Management as well as Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance industries. Employment in manufacturing has increased only slightly. Should Volvo and the anticipated spin-off industries employ Berkeley County residents or bring in employees that chose to live in Berkeley County, the distribution of industries employing the County’s labor force could change dramatically as those facilities are completed.

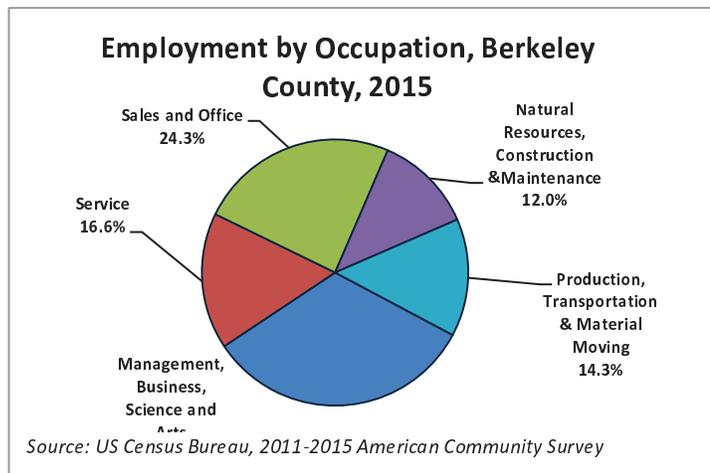
Employment Industries of Berkeley County’s Labor Force	2010	2015
<i>Agriculture, Forestry, etc.</i>	0.4%	0.4%
<i>Construction</i>	10.4%	8.0%
<i>Manufacturing</i>	12.0%	12.8%
<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	2.5%	2.4%
<i>Retail Trade</i>	11.9%	12.8%
<i>Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities</i>	7.3%	6.0%
<i>Information</i>	2.0%	2.3%
<i>Finance, Insurance & Real estate</i>	5.4%	4.5%
<i>Professional, Scientific & Management</i>	10.8%	12.1%
<i>Educational Services, Health Care & Social Assistance</i>	17.6%	19.3%
<i>Arts, Entertainment, Accommodation, etc.</i>	8.8%	7.6%
<i>Other Services</i>	5.0%	5.1%
<i>Public Administration</i>	5.9%	6.7%

Note: **Red** indicates decreases, **bold black** are increases

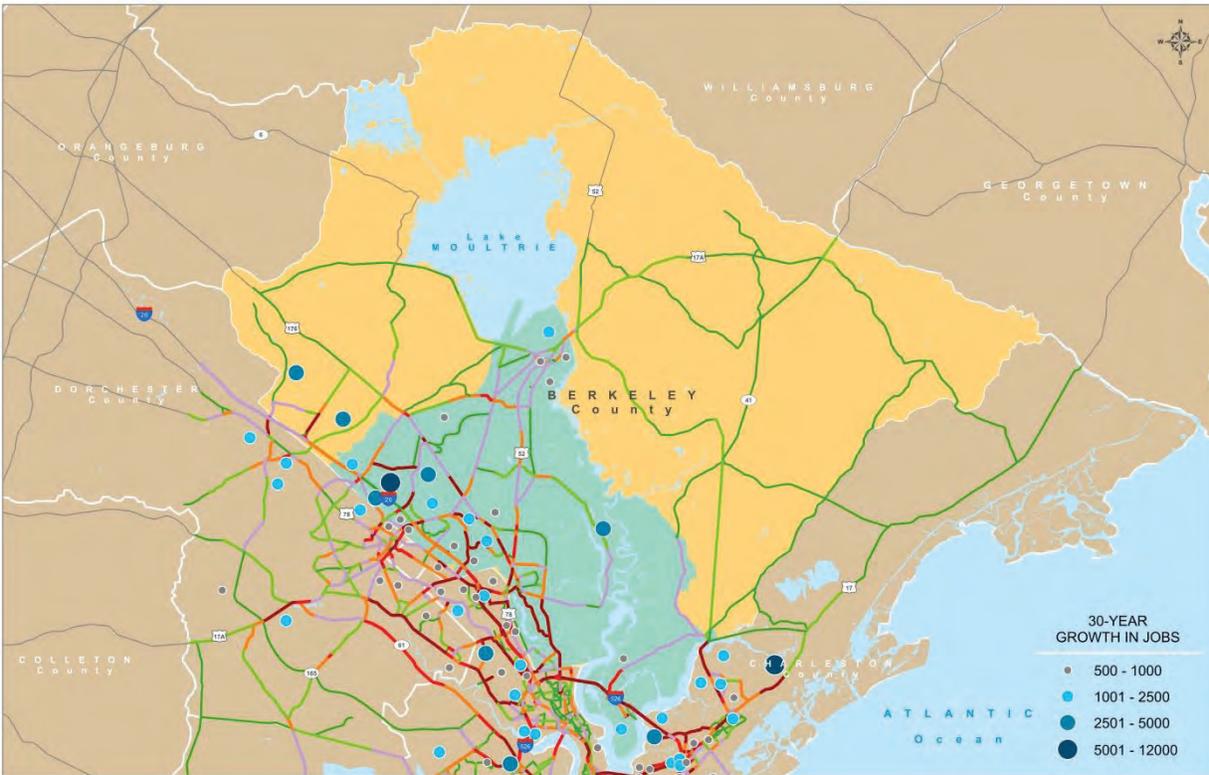
Employment by Occupation

Approximately one-third, of the County’s labor force work in Management, Business, Science and Arts occupations (32.9%). Much of this can be attributed to the growth of information and technology companies in the County, as well as expansions in distribution facilities. Some of these companies include Fruit of the Loom, Gildan, AGRO and Blackbaud. As these occupations have increased, employment in other occupations have decreased slightly.

Despite increases in employment opportunities, almost half of the County’s labor force still commutes outside the county for employment, with an average commute of about 26 minutes each way. The County has been successful increasing employment opportunities within the County itself, however recent assessments of the County’s economic status concur with the regionally recognized challenge of ensuring that the demands for workforce development and career preparation are met. As a result, there are a number of initiatives, either



ongoing or being planned, to ensure that the County’s future labor force is educated and trained to meet the needs of future industries.

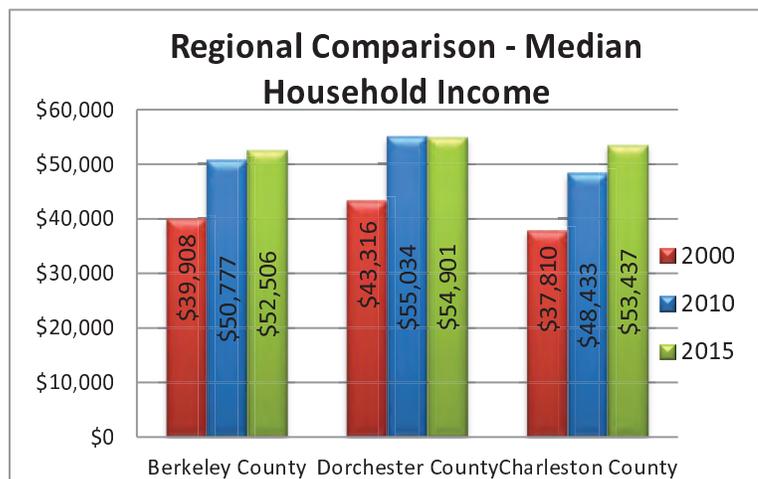


As with households, the BCDCOG regional travel demand mode demonstrates where employment growth is projected to occur over the next thirty years. Berkeley County is poised to provide more employment opportunities for its residents.

Keeping Pace

Median Household Income

In 2015, the median household income (MHI) in Berkeley County was \$52,506, 7.6% less than the national MHI of \$56,500 for that year. Although the County’s MHI is still the lowest in the Tri-County region, it has increased 3% since 2010. By comparison, Dorchester County’s MHI income has consistently been the region’s highest since 2000, albeit decreased slightly during the first same period (2010-2015), while Charleston County’s MHI increased by slightly more than 10%. As a result, for the first time in this century, the MHI for all three counties is relatively similar.

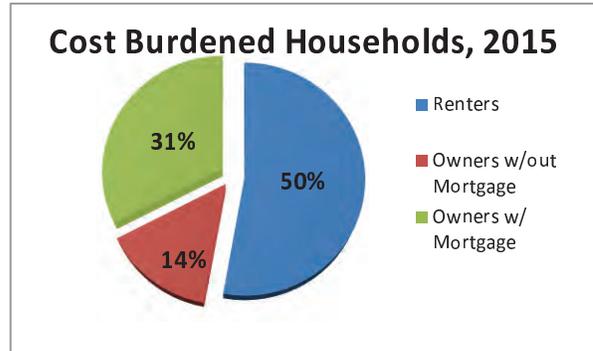


Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

Should all committed economic investments prove to be successful, the County’s median household income should continue to rise. However, whether or not incomes can keep pace with relative changes in the affordability of housing is of great concern as a lack of housing affordable to employees can be a deterrent to the location of new industries.

Housing Costs

Housing is considered to be “affordable” when its cost is no more than 30% of a household’s income. Despite the fact that many newcomers to the region have chosen to live in some of Berkeley County’s developing subdivisions even if not near the region’s employment centers, the proportion of households paying more than 30% of their income on housing is still significant. Similar to other counties in the region, Berkeley County households that are renting are more “cost-burdened” (paying more than 30% of the household income on housing) than homeowners.

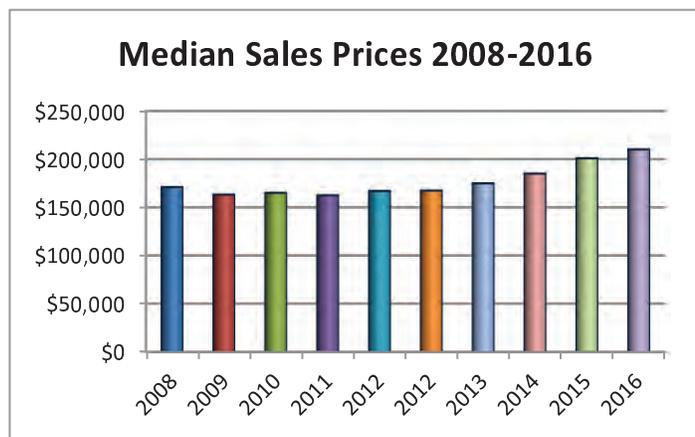


Source: US Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey

Although the median household income increased slightly more for renters (8.0%) than owners (7.3%) between 2010 and 2015, the average cost of rent increased by 16.2% while the monthly housing costs for homeowners remained relatively stable. Indications are that there was a higher demand for rental units regionally during this period as the proportion of units that were owner occupied decreased. This could be a result of the recession when many homeowners were foreclosed upon or forced to sell and to rent housing. Reports of lower vacancy rates in rental units support the notion that higher demand may be justifying higher rents for landlords.

Overall, housing prices in Berkeley County have been relatively stable over the past decade. During the period from 2008-2012, prices were almost flat with an actual decline countywide of 2.3% from \$171,010 to \$165,000. As shown on the follow page, Rural Berkeley sales took the largest hit of the recession, decreasing over 44% while Daniel Island prices increased slightly (4.2%).

However, the post-recession recovery in median sales prices was less diverse from area to area. Across the county, median sales prices regained the loss and more, increasing 25.5% between 2012 and 2016 from \$167,413 to \$210,143. During this period, not only did median sales prices on Daniel Island increase 43%, but prices in Hanahan increased by 34%, in Goose Creek/Moncks Corner by 28.1%, and in Rural Berkeley by 46%.



Source: Charleston Trident Association of Realtors, 2016 Annual Report



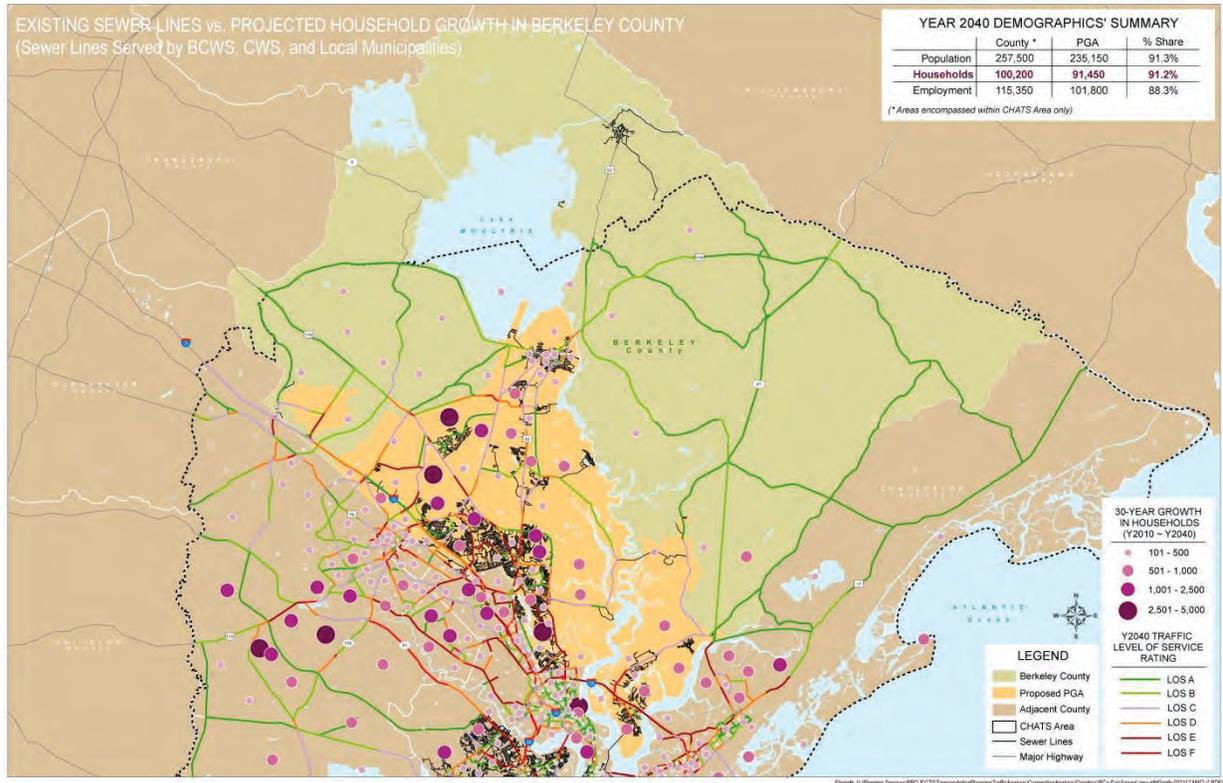
Source: Charleston Trident Association of Realtors Annual Report, 2016

Considering the median income of households in the county only increased by 3.4% between 2010 and 2015, home prices are increasingly less affordable for current residents. For example, a household had to earn \$55,000 or 108% of the median household income to afford the median priced home in 2010. By comparison, a household had to earn \$66,960 or 128% of the county’s median household income to afford the median priced home in 2015. Looking at the trend in household numbers compared to changes in housing stock, this discrepancy appears to result from a delay in construction of developments approved prior to the Great Recession. Efforts should continue to bring those units into the market, increasing the supply of housing that is needed to keep pace with the demand expected to accompany new employment and overall regional growth.

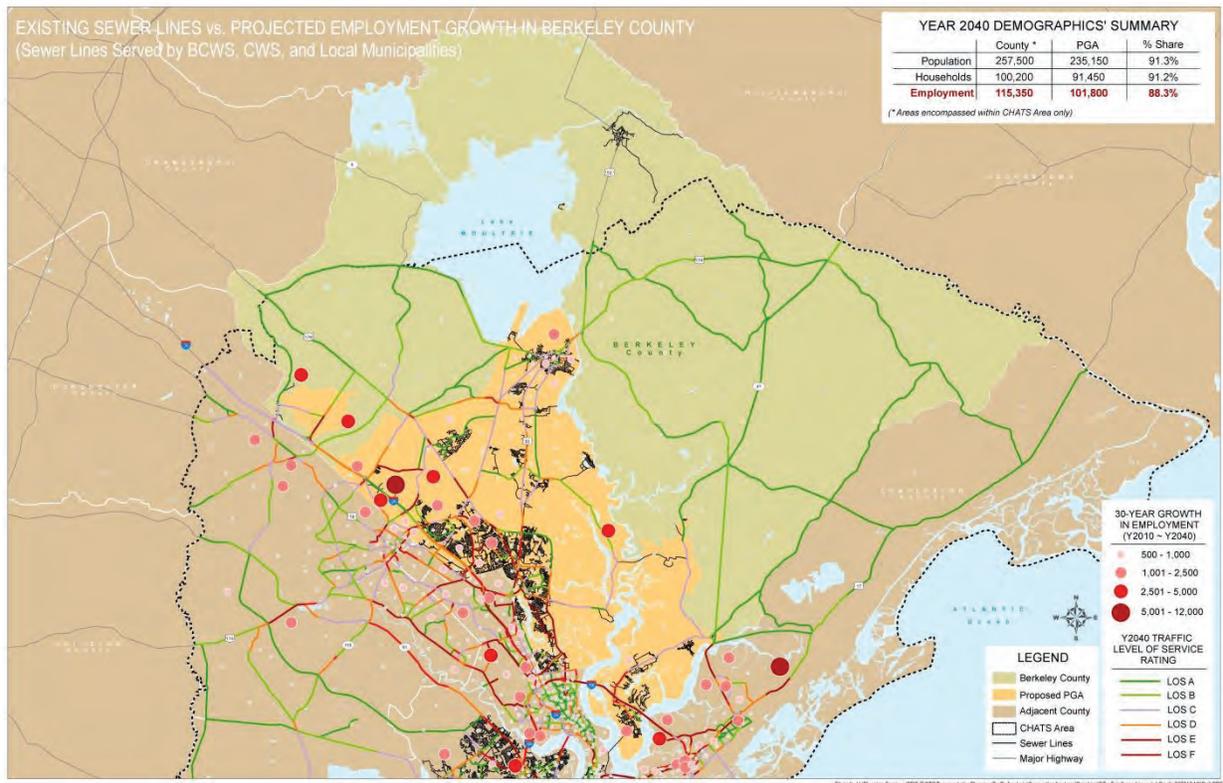
Infrastructure

Employment locations and a supply of affordable housing are directly related to the provision of adequate infrastructure. Ensuring the provision of adequate community facilities through a Capital Improvements Program, including the transportation system, balanced with preservation of the County’s rural areas and natural resources through strategic land use plan implementation remain priorities for investments in the County. During review of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, the Commission was presented with information on the state of transportation infrastructure and planned improvements. Likewise, the Commission considered the County’s master planning for its public water and sewer systems and coordination with school facilities planning.

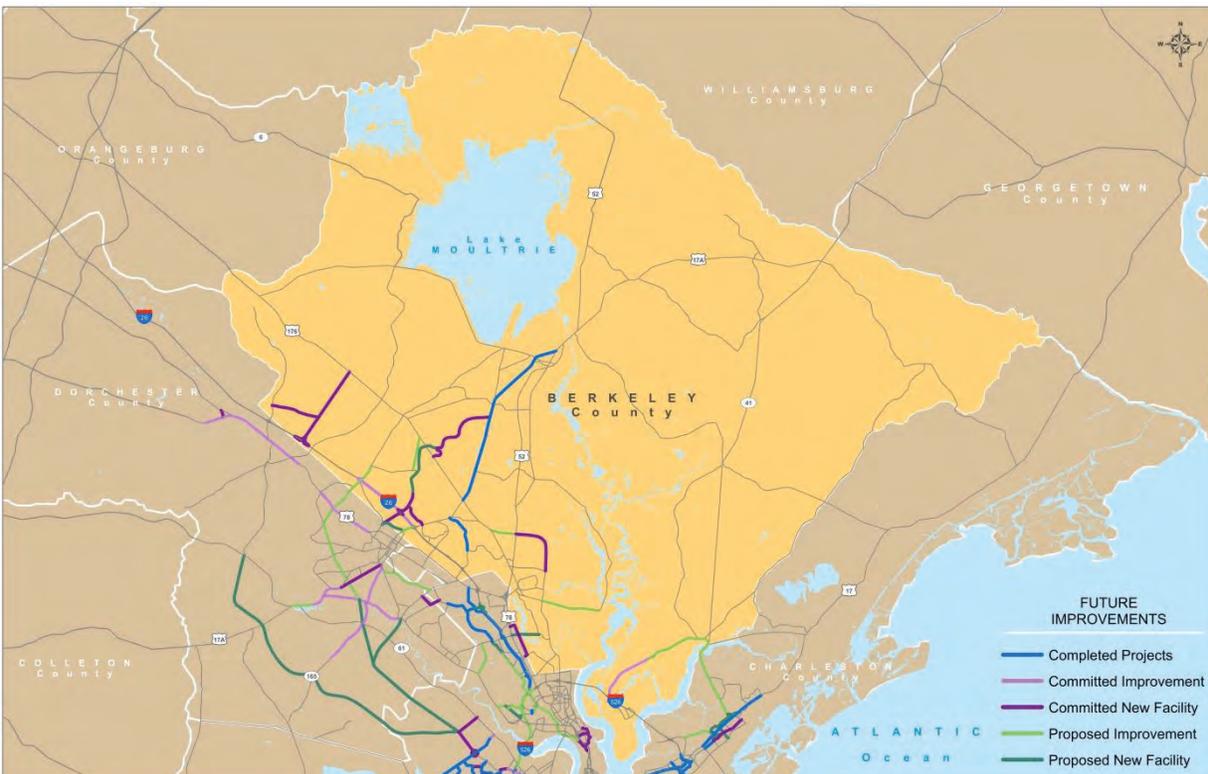
Berkeley County has recognized a need to increase its capacity to provide water and sewer for development approved and not yet constructed, in addition to future development approvals. In order to ensure adequate water and sewer service capacities to accommodate the County's projected growth, Berkeley County Water and Sewer (BCWS) is conducting studies on and has budgeted for necessary upgrades to the Lower Berkeley and Center Berkeley Wastewater Treatment Plants. Moreover, the water treatment plant is being upgraded to provide an additional capacity of approximately 4 MGD to our system when completed. BCWS is planning additional water transmission mains, flow control valves, and redundant mains to ensure service area coverage and service reliability.



Projected growth in housing units and households dictate the need for expansion of the County's sewer system. Maintaining current development intensities outside the Principal Growth Area will enable the County to serve new developments already approved within the PGA, as well as new employment areas.



Berkeley County uses a comprehensive transportation planning process to identify and plan needed network improvements in a Capital Improvements Program that is annually presented to Council. The County's one-cent transportation sales tax and CTC funds support a number of transportation projects to accommodate increased demands on the network. These projects are coordinated both with the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or CHATS to leverage investment of federal funding for major transportation improvements in the urbanized area and SCDOT's program for maintenance and safety improvements of the rural road system. The Transportation Sales Tax program was renewed in 2014 for a period of seven (7) years or until \$230 billion are collected. Many of the projects to be funded will alleviate increased demands resulting from developments approved since 2000. The County continues to agree that careful consideration must be given to whether the transportation system can accommodate additional land developments or new capacity improvements will be needed as it evaluates future land development proposals.



Significant capacity improvements to Clements Ferry Road, the Henry Brown Boulevard extension, construction of the Sheep Island Parkway/I-26 interchange in conjunction with Nexton Parkway as well as widenings of I-26 and US176 are being funded to accommodate new developments approved in the past 15 years.

Berkeley County's School District is a separate entity that relies on the County's comprehensive plan to provide guidance where to anticipate future needs for additional school facilities. A study by the Strom Thurmond Institute, completed in 2015, identified a need for up to 22 additional school facilities by 2035. A presentation by the School District on its master plan process confirmed that new school facilities and facility expansions are currently planned where population and enrollment projections indicate a deficit in existing or future capacity. The School District passed a referendum in 2012 to build five new schools and add to two of its high schools as a means of relieving capacity deficits from the Cainhoy peninsula to Moncks Corner. Discussions by the Commission and the School District identified the need for continuous coordination on the review of future land development proposals and planning processes.

Adjusting to Changes

The primary objective of the 5-year review process was to consider whether policies in the adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan remain valid and sufficient to support goals for the County's future. Early in the review process, it was determined that the County remains committed to the Guiding Principles adopted in the 2010 Plan; to:

1. *Protect and promote the existence of distinctive and diverse, sustainable communities within its boundaries;*
2. *Manage development and expansion of infrastructure systems efficiently in order to effectively serve residents and employees within the County;*
3. *Respect and enhance historic, cultural and natural resources, while providing expanded public access to them;*
4. *Ensure that both active and passive recreational opportunities are available to residents countywide;*
5. *Have an adopted plan that is clear, fair and can be implemented through simplified costs and streamlined processes.*

Significant consideration was given during a 15-month series of monthly workshops as to how the existing policies and processes within the County align with the second guiding principle, ensuring that adequate infrastructure systems are provided in an efficient manner to serve residents and industries. As previously discussed, the Planning Commission gave careful consideration to the County's plans for economic development, planned improvements to its transportation, water and sewer systems, and the Berkeley County School District's plans for school facilities. All workshops were open to the public, several being designated for stakeholder input on consideration of changes to the goals and strategies implementing Guiding Principal #2 above.

Since the County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1999, the adopted Future Land Use Map and Land Use Goals have included a Principal Growth Area, where the County foresees an intensity of development and land uses that will necessitate public water and sewer as well as a more robust transportation network. However it was found that there is ambiguity within the existing policies as to whether and how consideration might be given to adjusting the extent of this area outside the process for updating the Plan every ten years. As a result, the bulk of the 5-year review discussions were focused on considering two elements of the Plan: (1) Adjustments to the future land use map and (2) Amendments to the policies in the Section 1: Issues and Opportunities, Guiding Principle 2, Goal G2.1.

Careful consideration of recent development approvals and coordination with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) were made particularly in designating the area of anticipated development at the Camp Hall Tract as a major Employment Center, clarifying designations of Village Centers and Rural Crossroads to be consistent with location and infrastructure considerations, ensuring that employment areas align with the County's economic development plan, and expanding policies to help ensure that infrastructure and public facilities needs keep pace with new development. A summary of modifications proposed for the adopted Future Land Use Map is provided on subsequent pages, followed by a Future Land Use Map that has been revised to illustrate these modifications and is proposed for adoption.

Revisions to Section 2: Land Use and Development Principles of the adopted plan are proposed as clarifications to be consistent with revisions proposed to the Future Land Use Map in Attachment A.

Future Land Use Map Summary of Modifications

1. The *Constrained Residential Growth* area has been renamed *Constrained Growth*.
2. The *Village Center* designation has been applied to the incorporated towns outside the Principal Growth Area where public water and/or sewer service exists.
3. *Neighborhood and/or Village Centers* previously designated within the Constrained Growth area that are not incorporated have been re-designated as *Rural Crossroads* in order to reflect context and suitability for nonresidential development. Specifically:
 - a. The Highway 27/Interstate 26 *Neighborhood Center* is now designated as a *Rural Crossroad*.
 - b. The *Village Center* designation at the Diversion Canal in Cross is now designated as a *Rural Crossroad*
4. With the exception of the incorporated municipalities within the Constrained Growth area, all other *Village Centers* and *Neighborhood Centers* are now contained within the PGA (Suburban Area). Please note that a few of the *Neighborhood Center* designations were shifted to more accurately align with nonresidential intersections.
5. All *Rural Crossroads* are designated outside the PGA or Suburban Area with the exception of those in Cainhoy and Wando, neither of which have public systems.
6. *Commercial Corridors* were removed in order to emphasize the goal of focusing commercial development at highly-visible intersection nodes (as designated) and to discourage strip-commercial development, which, with the proliferation of curb-cuts, can impede vehicular flow/level of service over time.
7. A *Town Center* designation was added to Highway 176 at Cane Bay Marketplace and Nexton frontage. The two *Neighborhood Centers* along this corridor were consolidated into the *Town Center*, overlaying a Moderate Density Suburban area.
8. A *Town Center* designation, overlaying an employment area, was placed at the future Sheep Isle Road interchange as there is commercial office and employment uses proposed for this location in the Nexton PD.
9. Highway 78 in the Ladson Community was designated as an *Employment Corridor* as there are many existing industrial and commercial uses and zoning designations. An aside, Charleston County reached out to Berkeley County to collaborate on a more in-depth assessment of this corridor through a joint small area planning effort.
10. The *Employment Center* designation that encompasses Camp Hall was expanded to align with the property boundaries for the Camp Hall assemblage. The PGA was modified to encompass the Camp Hall assemblage property boundaries as well.
11. A gradient was applied to all land use designations in order to establish fluidity for reasonable transition of land uses and flexibility in interpretation. This flexibility will be reflected in the written policies and strategies as well.
12. Inclusion of a Rural Crossroads designation at Highway 27 and 176 in the Holly Hill vicinity.
13. Modified delineation of the PGA to exclude the Nucor/Hagen Plantation Conservation Easement assemblage AND include existing suburban residential zoned/developed areas along the Charity Church Road corridor that are already served by existing water and sewer services (e.g. Brightwood Subdivision).
14. The I-26/Jedburg Road Interstate Interchange Employment Center designation has been trimmed so to remove existing residential uses south of Old Dairy Road/Woodpatch Hill Lane based on community feedback at the July 26 Regular Planning Commission meeting.

15. In order to direct and cluster commercial development at designated intersection nodes that boast high-visibility and easy accessibility for motorists and pedestrians, staff defined the following radii:
- a. Town Center Designation: 1-Mile Radii (Page 2-7)
 - b. Rural Crossroads Designation: ¼-Mile Radii (Page 2-9)
 - c. Village Center Designation: ½-Mile Radii (page 2-2; 2-6)
 - d. Neighborhood Center Designation: ½-Mile Radii (Page 2-6)

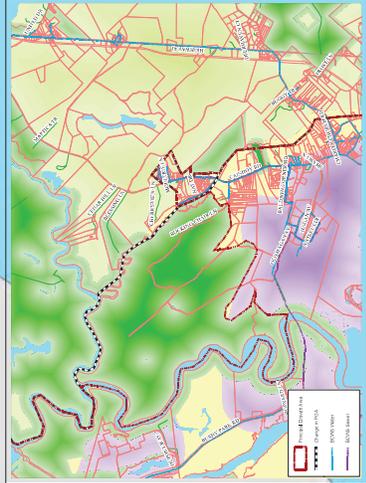
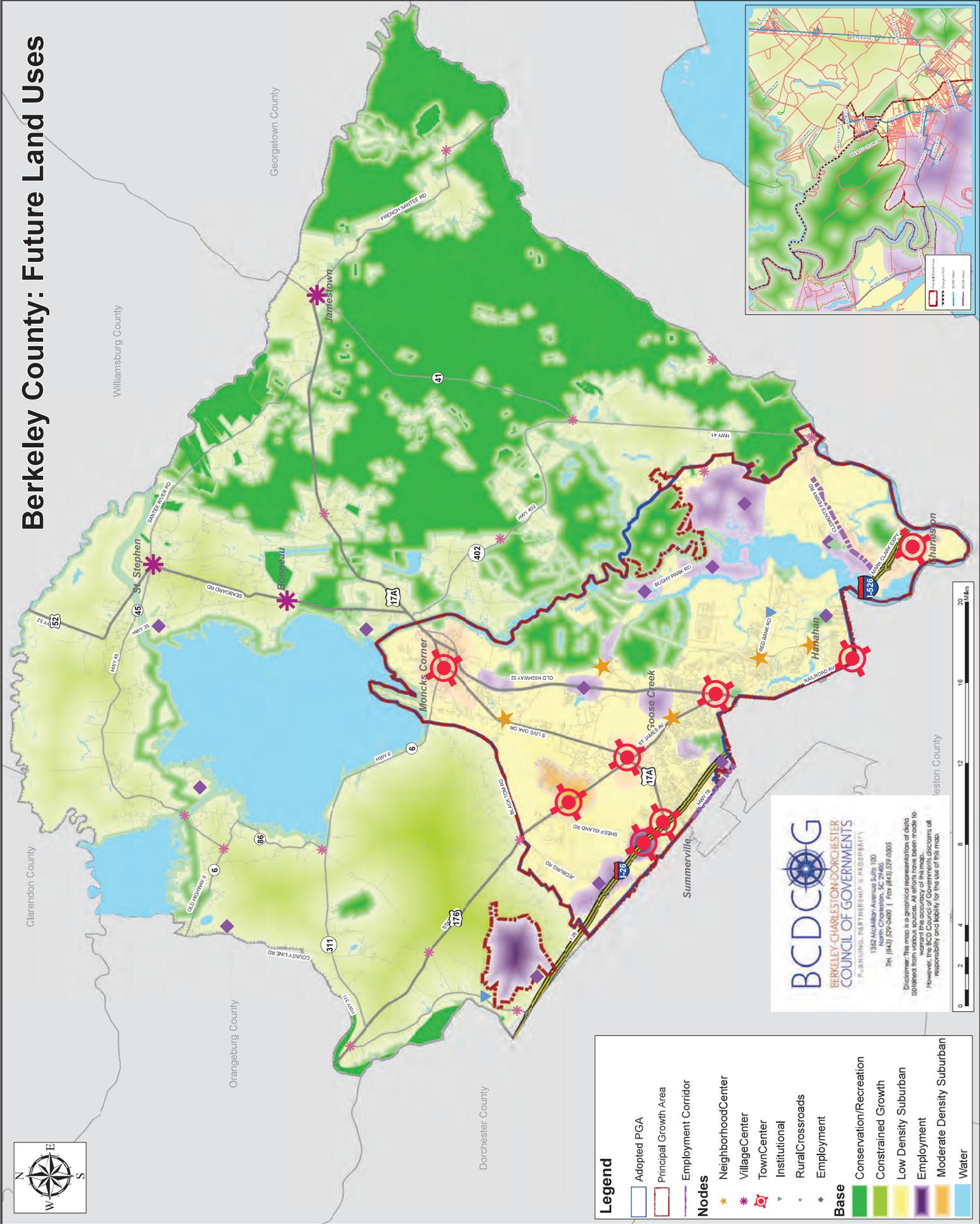
Section 1: Issues and Opportunities of the adopted 2010 Plan sets forth goals and strategies for implementation of the Guiding Principles. While some minor edits have been proposed to provide a more updated explanation of current issues and opportunities, substantive revisions are proposed to reflect the County's desire to continue aligning development of land with the availability of infrastructure. Section 1: Issues and Opportunities has been revised in Attachment B to include the proposed revisions to these goals and strategies.

As previously stated, at the onset of its 5-year review, the Planning Commission determined that it would focus discussions on whether the Land Use and/or Transportation elements of the adopted Plan warranted reconsideration. While these elements have not been rewritten, proposed revisions to Section 1: Issues and Opportunities and Section 2: Land Use and Development Principles reflect the County's desire to strengthen its coordination with other planning processes and agencies with the objective of better aligning growth and development with existing and planned capacities of infrastructure and community facilities.

Attachments:

- A: Section 2: Land Use and Development Principles
B: Section 1: Issues and Opportunities

Berkeley County: Future Land Uses



Legend

- Adopted PGA
- Principal Growth Area
- Employment Corridor

Nodes

- Neighborhood Center
- Village Center
- Town Center
- Institutional
- Rural/Crossroads
- Employment

Base

- Conservation/Recreation
- Constrained Growth
- Low Density Suburban
- Employment
- Moderate Density Suburban
- Water

BCDCOG
 BERKELEY-CHARLESTON-DORCHESTER
 COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
 PLANNING PARTNERSHIP IN PROSPERITY
 1362 McMillan Avenue, Suite 100
 North Charleston, SC 29405
 Tel: (843) 559-0400 | Fax: (843) 559-0905

Disclaimer: This map is a graphical representation of data provided for informational purposes only. It does not warrant the accuracy of the map. However, the BCD Council of Governments disclaims all responsibility and liability for the use of this map.

Berkeley County strives for a greater overall balance of housing and employment opportunities within areas where infrastructure exists or is planned while rural and natural areas are conserved. The Plan, therefore, designates a defined Principal Growth Area (PGA) within Berkeley County. The Principal Growth Area is the area within which more intense development of various uses should occur, to be served by existing, and efficiently expanded infrastructure and other public facilities and services. Remaining portions of the County remain designated for limited development and land uses that complement the County's abundant natural and agricultural lands. This Plan places emphasis on goals and strategies that will ensure future development of any land uses throughout the County will occur such that sensitive cultural and natural resources will not be adversely impacted.

Principal Growth Area

The Principal Growth Area (PGA) includes the County's more urbanized area including larger incorporated towns, as well as limited abutting rural areas already experiencing some transitional development west of Highway 17A, where infrastructure has become available and some intensification might occur. Development within the PGA is encouraged to focus around existing and identified town and neighborhood centers. The goals and objectives herein emphasize infill and redevelopment of land within the PGA to promote more accessible environments with centers that have connections to nearby neighborhoods. A mix of housing types within these centers will better serve the diverse population growth, providing attainable housing and a variety of other needs. By placing community services within designated neighborhood centers, close to where people live and work, residents have greater mobility options, including cycling and walking, between destinations. Development outside the PGA in areas designated for constrained growth and conservation/recreation should also be concentrated in and around existing Village Centers and Rural Crossroads identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Land Use Categories

The County seeks to preserve a unique composite of natural and man-made environments. Development objectives seek to maintain a visual and spatial distinction between suburban development and designated conservation areas within the rural areas of the County. The Berkeley County Future Land Use map shows the anticipated distribution of conservation, residential, non-residential, mixed-use, employment, and institutional land uses. The following sections describe the land use categories depicted on the Future Land Uses map. Each category described below includes a description of the general characteristics and location of each land use type, a listing of primary uses, and development objectives.

Conservation/Recreation

Characteristics and Location:

Conservation/Recreation areas are prioritized for greater protection from development activities in order to maintain natural habitats, provide flood protection, and protect water quality. These areas are also prioritized to provide for recreational opportunities, water access and water-oriented commercial activities. Any development in these areas should be constrained to disturb only highlands and to minimize impacts to these natural features and assets that are environmentally sensitive.

Primary Uses:

Active recreation, passive recreation, eco-tourism establishments, wildlife refuges, water-oriented commercial, community and neighborhood parks.

Development Objectives:

1. The County will consider establishment of a conservation zoning designation for application to properties within these areas that incorporates a combination of regulations and incentives to ensure development adequately mitigates any impacts to areas of significant cultural and natural resources. Such techniques may include low impact development standards, minimum buffer requirements along riparian zones, wetlands, and/or floodplains, and wildlife management areas.
2. Limited development of individual properties within designated conservation areas in conjunction with placement of conservation easements will be encouraged.
3. Potential linkages between designated conservation areas and cultural resources with existing trail systems to establish a natural recreation corridor will be identified and encouraged for development by both the public and private sector in accord with the County's Green Infrastructure Plan.
4. Establishment of recreational facilities and accommodations in these areas will be limited to low-impact uses at an appropriate scale.
5. Scenic byway and historic designations will be pursued for identified roads of significance.

Constrained Growth*Characteristics and Location:*

Areas outside the PGA are designated for Constrained Growth where agricultural lands and low density residential development are integrated with Conservation/Recreation lands. The Constrained Growth areas will remain rural in character and developed at densities that can be served by onsite water and wastewater systems except where public infrastructure can be extended by the municipality to abutting parcels. Land owners may develop large lot single-family rural residential neighborhoods with high proportions of open space (typically 50-70%) or cluster the residential units on smaller lots to conserve comparable open space, agricultural land, historically significant areas, and other natural features. More intense development of residential and nonresidential uses will be preferably focused in or adjacent to the incorporated towns, designated as Village Centers, and/or Rural Crossroads.

Primary Uses:

Traditional land practices such as forestry and agriculture, rural residential/detached single-family residences, supporting and complementary uses, including open space and recreation, equestrian uses, schools, places of worship, and other public uses.

Development Objectives:

1. Public sewer should not be extended to serve development in Constrained Growth areas except where an employment use is proposed within the ½ mile radius of a designated Village Center. Individual well and septic systems may be replaced with communal well and septic systems where justified and approved by SCDHEC.
2. Rural road standards for a network compatible with low density development and the rural character will be supported by the County.
3. New development will fully integrate the elements of green infrastructure and establish natural open spaces as predominant visual elements and enhance the area's natural environment.
4. Green infrastructure elements provided in each development will link with that in adjacent developments to facilitate connectivity and access to conservation areas.

5. The County will encourage clustering of residential lots through a density bonus approach. Clustering should occur near the edges of parcels, close to principal access roads to minimize need for driveways and maximize the amount of land left undeveloped.
6. Larger scale residential developments (greater than 10 lots) will develop in clusters as conservation subdivisions.

Low Density Suburban

Characteristics and Location:

Low Density Suburban areas will be developed with diverse housing choices, in neighborhoods that promote a sense of community, providing an aesthetically pleasing transition from Constrained Growth Areas to higher-density residential, nonresidential and mixed-use nodes. Development will be approved for densities in locations where it can be served efficiently by existing infrastructure, facilities and services, and transportation networks. All development activity will be designed to mitigate adverse impacts on any cultural and/or natural resources.

Primary Uses:

Single-family residential detached housing, continuation of agricultural uses, open space, civic and recreation, and mixed-uses where appropriate.

Development Objectives:

1. New developments will provide or complement a mix of land uses and project designs to ensure the long-term sustainability, or economic and environmental health, of both the individual and broader community in which it is located.
2. Communities will be developed as efficient, compact, pedestrian oriented communities with a range of residential lot sizes and measurable standards of open space.
3. Connections to key centers of employment, commerce, service and other developments will be provided for, and between, communities.
4. New developments must be served by or demonstrate the ability to be served by existing or extensions of existing public water and sewer systems.
5. Interconnectivity between adjacent communities will be fostered to minimize overloading of single access/entrance points onto principal access roads for each development.
6. Significant areas of sensitive natural resources and protective buffers will be designated for use as passive recreation or conservation areas, while reallocating development potential of those areas back to privately developed lots within each community.
7. Residential communities will provide a mix of open spaces, including active and passive and/or natural open spaces as appropriate to the scale and location of the site. At least 60% of any required open space should be useable and accessible land, with the majority of it located within the interior of the community. Required buffer areas and outparcels should not account for more than 25% of the total open space required.
8. Density bonus incentives will be considered for developments that conserve open space areas and/or provide buffer areas in excess of ordinance requirements.
9. Development densities of individual communities may average up to 4.0 dwelling units per acre, depending on the adequacy of roads, utilities, and full complement of public services and facilities.

Moderate Density Suburban

Characteristics and Location:

Moderate Density Suburban areas are designated within the Principal Growth Area in locations where such development can provide a transition from low-density suburban to, and infrastructure can support more concentrated developments of, residential and commercial uses.

These areas identified are already proposed for development with various new communities that should strive to include walkable neighborhood units within the community. To the extent possible, future communities developed at moderate densities should be co-located with neighborhood centers of nonresidential development or within 1 mile of a designated Town Center. New neighborhoods/neighborhood units should each include a system of interconnected trails or sidewalks that will provide access to parks, recreation, and open space areas focused near and in between residential communities.

Primary Uses:

Single-family residential detached housing, single-family attached and multi-family housing, neighborhood-oriented commercial and/or mixed-uses, civic and recreation facilities.

Development Objectives:

Development Objectives (1) through (8) for Low Density Suburban communities should apply **in addition** to the following:

1. Principal accessibility to moderate density developments will be coordinated with regional transportation systems. Communities shall each provide for a hierarchy of internal facilities for vehicular, cycling and pedestrian use.
2. New development proposals within these designated areas will demonstrate linkages, or potential linkages, to public transportation facilities.
3. Performance standards will foster integration of compatible use groups. Application of form-based codes will be encouraged.
4. Development densities of individual communities may average up to 12.0 dwelling units per acre, depending on the adequacy of roads, utilities, and full complement of public services and facilities.

Employment Centers/Corridors

Characteristics and Location:

Locations designated for Employment within the Principal Growth Area as identified on the Future Land Use Map are intended for development of large scale office and light-industrial uses by a major employer or a cluster of multiple employers with a mix of supporting or ancillary uses, such as restaurants, hotels, and limited service retail. Future employment developments within designated centers and corridors will feature high visual quality site design and accommodate uses of high traffic generation. Clustering of buildings within these centers is preferred to preserve open space within the development site. Site plans, building design and landscaping will be sensitive to the natural features of the site, including views. Smaller employment centers may be located adjacent to or in conjunction with Town Centers and/or planned communities. Specific industrial/employment nodes for heavier industrial uses are designated within employment areas on the Future Land Uses Map (FLUM).

Primary Uses:

Office, light industry, and ancillary retail/services for employees, some commercial services, accommodations and public/institutional uses.

Development Objectives:

1. Employment centers will be located with indirect access to primary highways and arterials as shown on the FLUM.
2. Access to employment areas will be provided via internal collector roads to provide safe and efficient movement of traffic, including trucks, without impeding movement on adjacent roadways.
3. Employment uses within the PGA will be served by public water and sewer facilities.
4. Development plans will meet established performance standards that foster environmentally sensitive design to complement existing natural features and reduce potential visual impacts on adjacent residential communities.
5. Employment developments will possess adequate on-site parking, storage and loading areas, as well as landscaped screening of these functions from surrounding neighborhoods.
6. Light industrial uses will be limited to those that do not require outdoor storage and have negligible externalities (i.e., noise, odor, vibration).
7. Provision of safe, convenient and attractive pedestrian access to nearby residential areas and local businesses with ancillary retail services and goods will be evaluated for individual proposals.

Industrial/Employment Nodes

Characteristics and Location:

A limited number of Industrial/Employment Nodes are designated throughout the County to accommodate large labor intensive industrial and heavy commercial uses that produce noxious externalities. Parcels developed with these uses will be large enough to include land and buffers that ensure that negative impacts on adjacent properties are mitigated. These areas are not conducive to mixed use development, however in some cases, less intensive industrial uses may be co-located within these nodes to provide the transition between the industrial use and adjacent communities and/or natural areas of environmental sensitivity.

Primary Uses:

Industrial, supporting office, commercial, wholesale, and warehousing.

Development Objectives:

1. Heavy industry will be located along major roadway corridors that provide direct access to interstates and other major transportation facilities, including existing rail lines.
2. Employment nodes within the PGA will be served by public water and sewer facilities.
3. Performance standards will be applied to new industrial development to ensure adequate land for separation and buffering from incompatible/lower intensity land uses, including nearby residential and business uses.
4. Proposals for less intense uses within these nodes will be evaluated for potential incompatibility to ensure development does not jeopardize the viability and functional mobility of existing industries.

Institutional Facilities

Characteristics and Location:

Institutional areas designated on the Future Land Use Map are intended to accommodate single uses and activities that already exist and are not compatible with other land use designations both within and outside the PGA. The characteristics and locational requirements of institutional needs will vary on an individual basis. All new institutional facilities of the same magnitude should be co-located with existing areas whenever possible.

Primary Uses:

Public institutional uses such as prison, military, and other regional public facilities.

Development Objectives:

1. Institutional uses will be located along major roadway corridors that provide direct access to communities and other major transportation facilities.
2. Future development of institutional areas within the PGA will be served by public water and/or sewer facilities.
3. Development of new institutional uses outside the PGA will be located within or abutting Village Centers within ½ mile of the municipal boundary or Rural Crossroads.
4. Performance standards will be applied to ensure adequate land for separation and buffering from incompatible/lower intensity land uses, including nearby residential and business uses.

Neighborhood Centers

Characteristics and Location:

Neighborhood Centers are areas of community-oriented commercial uses that serve needs of nearby neighborhoods and shall be established in locations designated on the future land use map. Neighborhood Centers are an integral part of the residential communities they serve, particularly when established as part of a planned development or through a development agreement. The size and scale should relate to the size of the communities it intends to serve or its market area. Neighborhood Centers, which are much smaller in size than Town Centers, will host a variety of uses, including retail and service options that are accessible to the neighborhoods they serve via various forms of transportation.

Primary Uses:

Community institutional and/or gathering places (e.g. schools, parks, churches, community centers, etc.) along with convenience retail, personal and professional service establishments that serve residents of the immediate vicinity.

Development Objectives:

1. Neighborhood centers will be located within the Principal Growth Area adjacent to or within walking distance of established or planned residential developments on major or minor collector roads.
2. Site development will be compact in form and within ½-mile radii of the designated intersection, designed to accommodate pedestrian and vehicular traffic with a full complement of services and amenities.

3. Application of form based codes will be encouraged.
4. The overall concept for design of a community center will complement the character of surrounding communities, so the interrelationship of its parts (commercial, office, civic, public open space, etc.) is evident.
5. Adequate buffering and landscaping will be provided to minimize impacts on natural resources.

Town Centers

Characteristics and Location:

The County will promote development, infill and redevelopment, of areas designated as Town Centers. These centers serve as the “downtowns” of unincorporated communities within the County and will be the primary location for future development of mixed land uses that accommodate commerce, employment and civic activities. Nonresidential, supported by higher density residential uses, will be focused within these centers to foster creation of balanced communities.

Primary Uses:

Infill development, mixed-uses, retail, commercial, office, high density residential, cultural, and institutional.

Development Objectives:

1. Town Centers will be located only at nodes designated on the Future Land Uses Map (FLUM), where developments are accessed directly from major collector and/or arterial roads.
2. Town Centers may range up to 50 acres in size yet will be compact development(s), within a one-mile radius of the designated intersection, to encourage pedestrian mobility within the centers, while still accommodating vehicular accessibility, with a full complement of services and amenities, including access to future transit services.
3. The County will consider adoption of Access Management Policies or plans to manage the placement and frequency of curb cuts and require shared access points along arterial and major collector roads to foster maximum mobility along the corridors feeding Town Centers.
4. Development applications will demonstrate a configuration of streets and public/landmark parcels, along with the pedestrian network, preferably through the use of a grid street pattern.
5. On street parking and centralized parking facilities will be interspersed within the development to facilitate mobility within the Town Center without vehicles.
6. Parking, loading and outdoor storage areas will be restricted and screened between buildings and public accessways.
7. Large setbacks will be provided (100 foot minimum) along arterials and major collectors, with minimum setbacks between similar uses and local travelways.
8. Open space areas within each Town Center will be provided to foster natural management of stormwater and impacts on air quality.

Village Centers

Characteristics and Location:

Village Centers are envisioned as mixed-use communities with residential and nonresidential uses integrated to create pedestrian friendly self-sustaining developments with a mix of housing options outside the Principal Growth Area. Village Centers are designated where incorporated communities exist with a range of complementary uses within distinct neighborhoods. These Centers are distinct physical settlements surrounded by protected or constrained growth areas used for agriculture or conservation purposes. Variations in parcel sizes and base densities within designated Village Centers will provide opportunities for innovative blends of new development. Additional Village Centers may be developed outside the Principal Growth Area provided they have public water and sewer systems and the County approves an amendment to the adopted FLUM.

Primary Uses:

Medium density rural residential, civic, institutional, social/cultural, small neighborhood commercial and retail services, home businesses or local offices.

Development Objectives:

1. Densities and open space requirements for development within Village Centers beyond boundaries of the incorporated towns will vary from center to center, ranging up to two dwelling units per acre where public or communal water/wastewater systems are available.
2. Defined edges of Village Centers will be compatible with the surrounding rural area and should provide identity and a sense of place to the surrounding countryside.
3. Nonresidential uses will be organized around a compact community core to serve individual communities or combinations of neighborhood developments. The community core may vary in scale, design and use depending on the size of the community it serves.
4. The County will support establishment of larger employment uses around the periphery of a Village Center provided they can be served by adequate facilities.
5. New civic uses will be located at prominent locations within the core, at a scale compatible with the residential nature of the Village Center. Large-scale civic or institutional uses will be located on the periphery of an individual neighborhood or the village.
6. Open spaces associated with Village Centers will be dispersed as to be conveniently located to residents. These areas will serve both a recreational and design function.
7. Village Centers will accommodate and promote pedestrian travel, with interconnected (and generally rectilinear) street patterns.

Rural Crossroads *

Characteristics and Location:

Rural Crossroads are nodal and/or village developments at secondary road intersections, with commercial and community/civic uses clustered within one-quarter mile of an intersection identified on the Future Land Use Map in the constrained growth areas. Development of crossroads is limited in scale, compatible with the surrounding rural area and should provide identity and a sense of place to the surrounding countryside.

Primary Uses:

Rural Residential, social/cultural and neighborhood commercial, personal service establishments, and institutional uses

Development Objectives:

1. Rural Crossroad areas are limited in land area, with commercial uses located within ¼ mile of the actual intersection.
2. Standards for development in Rural Crossroad areas will ensure that turning movements at the intersection are not interrupted by access to/from individual lots.
3. Limited parking in Rural Crossroad areas will be sited to the side and rear of commercial, civic and/or social uses.
4. Pedestrian linkages from nonresidential uses will be provided to surrounding residences, and between commercial and social uses.

Overview

This updated section continues to organize the various issues and opportunities discussed during a comprehensive review of the adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan, in relationship to existing conditions in Berkeley County, the future vision and adopted Guiding Principles of this Plan. Along with a summary of these issues and opportunities, are goals, policies and implementation strategies related to each Guiding Principle. These issues and goals were identified as part of the comprehensive planning process during the public participation phase, which included discussions of existing conditions and future scenarios. They have been updated to reflect changes in the County that have occurred since adoption of the plan in 2012 and discussions during the 5-year review. The goals are intended to attain an ultimate vision for the County, one that achieves a balance between managing growth while protecting and preserving the character and quality of life for Berkeley County residents.

Following goals and policies are tables of implementation strategies for achieving each guiding principle, along with a suggested time frame and a list of agencies responsible for implementation. Short term projects are to be completed in one to five years, while long term projects are to be completed in five to ten years. Ongoing projects are either already occurring or should be occurring on a regular basis.

Guiding Principle 1

Berkeley County will protect and promote the existence of distinctive and diverse, sustainable communities within its boundaries.

Summary of Issues

Experiencing significant growth over the past sixty years, Berkeley County has more than doubled its population since 1980. To accommodate this growth, large tracts of land in areas previously considered rural have been developed mostly by large planned communities in the urbanized area. However, this growth has also been accommodated by development of single family residences on large lots outside the urbanized area by those seeking to live in a rural area. While the County is open to new residences in its rural areas, it is cognizant that increasing demands will not only quickly consume the County's agricultural and forested land but will also place demand for additional infrastructure beyond existing service areas and increase congestion on the rural road network.

It is also important that as the population becomes more prevalent and diverse, the County strives to find the balance between continued growth while maintaining the level of quality of life for its residents. This includes continuing to provide diverse housing options and businesses in order to meet various needs of its population.

In addition, protection of rural Berkeley County's historic communities, such as Pringletown, Cross, Lebanon and Honey Hill, along with its natural resources, including the Cooper River and Lake Moultrie, is becoming increasingly important due to these development pressures. By planning for growth pressures, these communities are more likely to retain their individual characteristics.

During the public participation phase of the planning process, participants repeatedly expressed their concerns regarding the loss of character and quality of life of their communities. In addition, preservation of community character and quality of life was one of their greatest hopes for the future of Berkeley County. Growth or density of development was also of great concern to participants, meaning they were concerned about the **type** of development taking place throughout the County.

Goals and Policies

G1.1 Berkeley County will support the provision of community services, essential for all population groups.

1. The County will promote land use regulations that provide appropriate locations for quality health care, day and elderly care, and other services.
2. The County will encourage the establishment of social services by institutions or community groups.
3. The County will encourage allocation and efficient management of educational facilities that provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the same, or better, standard of living.
4. The County will ensure residents in new development are provided with adequate public safety services and facilities.

G1.2 Berkeley County will support the development of affordable housing and diverse housing types.

1. The County will encourage the provision of diverse housing types within planned developments.
2. The County will provide incentives for creative housing developments that provide affordable housing or workforce housing in close proximity to existing and future employment centers.
3. The County will promote housing availability for low to moderate income households and special needs populations.

G1.3 Berkeley County will plan and implement mitigation strategies to protect existing communities and neighborhoods from physical deterioration due to natural hazards and/or neglect.

1. The County will protect the quality of existing communities and neighborhoods through increased code enforcement and regulations.
2. The County will support redevelopment or enhancement of existing communities and neighborhoods that have suffered from physical deterioration.

G1.4 Berkeley County will promote the development of complete communities within the Principal Growth Area (PGA) as designated on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

1. The County will make decisions on new development based on their contribution to the community's character and sense of place.
2. The County will support creation of walkable, safe and attractive neighborhoods with a mix of uses, where appropriate, throughout the Principal Growth Area in accord with Section 2: Land Use and Development Principles.

GP 1 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Serve existing communities and support the location of accessible institutions, including appropriate school and social services siting.	County Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing
Work to identify and reduce regulatory barriers to affordable housing.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Lowcountry Housing Trust	Short-Term
Consider developing an affordable/workforce housing master plan.	County Council, Planning Commission, HUD, BCDCOG	Short-Term
Promote community housing partnerships and home buyer education programs.	County Council, Planning Commission, Lowcountry Housing Trust	Ongoing
Enforce standard building codes and FEMA flood hazard regulations.	County Building and Code Enforcement Department	Ongoing
Provide incentives for maintenance and renovation of older structures.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Lowcountry Housing Trust, Berkeley County Historic Society	Ongoing
Work with private, non-profit and other government organizations to offer housing options.	County Council, Planning Commission, Lowcountry Housing Trust, Developers	Ongoing
Coordinate with or establish a County housing agency to serve as central point of contact for assistance in the rehabilitation of substandard housing units.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Lowcountry Housing Trust	Short-Term
Explore ways to educate citizens regarding vulnerability to natural hazards so that the community may be more resilient should a disaster occur.	Berkeley County Emergency Preparedness Division	Ongoing
Ensure County's DMP addresses mitigation of development in known areas of unstable soils or geologic features.	County Building and Code Enforcement Department	Short-Term
Ensure new developments are complete and integrated communities with a mix of uses, ample open space, and network of mobility options.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Developers	Ongoing
Ensure implementation of strategies in its DMP to assure the resiliency of all communities in the County.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Developers	Ongoing

Guiding Principle 2

Berkeley County will manage development and expansion of infrastructure systems efficiently in order to effectively serve residents and employees within Berkeley County.

Summary of Issues

As growth and development pressures continue, Berkeley County must consider the cost of providing facilities and services for new developments, particularly as it relates to gaps in service provision. Inadequate public facilities, longer response times for emergency services, lack of local employment opportunities, potential impact on existing communities, and longer travel and commuting times for residents are all issues to consider when evaluating the feasibility of a new project or development.

One of the greatest concerns coming out of the visioning process for the adopted plan, and again during the five-year review workshops, was the lack of infrastructure “concurrency,” meaning that the capacity and availability of roads, sewer and water lines, schools, and other public facilities should be available to keep pace with demand for services that accompany new development in order to maintain the County’s quality of life.

Quality of life often requires economic prosperity; therefore, there is a need to promote economic well-being within the County and to provide diverse employment opportunities. By doing so, residents have employment options within the County rather than commuting to neighboring jurisdictions for employment purposes. This leads to decreased mobility and less traffic congestion on the roadways.

The creation of wealth is important not only for individuals and households, but also for the community as a whole, in terms of quality and range of facilities and services available, and for the maintenance of the built and natural environment.

Goals and Policies

G2.1 Berkeley County will guide population growth to areas where supporting infrastructure exists or can efficiently be expanded.

1. The County will make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities in order to minimize the need for costly new/expanded facilities and services.
2. The County will plan infrastructure ahead of growth in identified growth areas, and direct intense land uses to areas where infrastructure and carrying capacity already exist.
3. The County has identified a Principal Growth Area on the Future Land Use Map where existing infrastructure exists and/or is planned and will not support the extension of infrastructure to areas that are outside of the Principal Growth Area (PGA) and areas specified for resource protection.
4. The County will establish a process to evaluate the adequacy of infrastructure and public facilities with rezoning applications within and outside of the PGA.
5. The County will evaluate the growth capacity and projected demand for developable land within the PGA every five years and amend if necessary in order to continue to focus development within areas that are served by efficient extension of existing utilities as consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Plan, Water and Sewer Master Plans, and other infrastructure or capital improvements plans.

G2.2 Berkeley County will encourage the provision of infrastructure as needed to support economic and workforce development initiatives.

1. The County will consider impacts on infrastructure, including rail access, and natural resources when making locational decisions on economic and workforce development projects.
2. The County will identify and promote development of manufacturing/industrial corridors and employment/technology corridors where infrastructure exists.
3. The County will increase recruitment efforts and support the establishment of industries that generate economic development.
4. The County will support workforce development programs that provide skilled labor for existing and recruited industries from County population base.
5. The County will promote establishment and expansion of port-related industries.
6. The County will support the local agricultural industry.
7. The County will support development of employment uses in the constrained growth area when adjacent to rural towns where such uses may be supported by infrastructure extensions from the municipalities.

G2.3 Berkeley County will improve the operation and efficiency of its transportation network to serve residents and employers.

1. The County will prioritize transportation improvements that support desired development patterns, better serve residents and employers, and promote connectivity while accommodating multiple functions.
2. The County will continue to support a strategic transportation plan for system improvements addressing existing and projected demand for all modes of transportation countywide.
3. The County will encourage connectivity by expanding the number of alternative routes and the provision of multimodal corridors throughout the County road network for local traffic.

GP 2 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Develop and adopt a process for amending the Principal Growth Area where new development adjacent to its boundaries can be served by efficient extension of infrastructure.	Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Ongoing
Identify potential linkages between housing and jobs during development review process.	Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Ongoing
Require developers to provide, or provide access to, public amenities.	Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Developers	Ongoing
Participate in regional efforts to strengthen economic impact of the port and related industries.	County Council, Planning Commission, South Carolina Ports, Berkeley Chamber, Charleston Metro Chamber	Ongoing
Continue development of Clements Ferry Road as a manufacturing corridor.	Planning Commission, Berkeley Economic Development Department, SCDOT	Ongoing
Develop US 52 as a technology corridor.	Planning Commission, Berkeley Economic Development Department, SCDOT	Short-Term
Build a permanent farmers market.	Berkeley Economic Development Department, Berkeley Chamber	Short-Term
Encourage the County school district to serve student lunches comprised of products grown locally and/or regionally.	County Council, Berkeley County School District	Short-Term

GP 2 STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Improve the effectiveness of existing major collector roads by conducting corridor studies and through adoption and implementation of a complete streets policy, addition of sidewalks and/or bike lanes.	Planning Commission, Berkeley County Engineering, Roads and Bridges, SCDOT	Ongoing
Study the existing sidewalk network and develop an overall sidewalk improvement plan based on gaps.	Planning Commission, Berkeley County Engineering	Short-Term
Participate in regional efforts to establish commuter rail, including a line from Moncks Corner to Charleston	Planning Commission, CHATS, CARTA	Long-Term
Adopt consistent standards for provision of various community facilities for each new development.	County Council, Various Public Agencies	Short-Term
Consider using public transit as a development incentive to organize the arrangement of higher density land uses, such as multi-family housing, and to provide equitable access to jobs and amenities.	County Council, Planning Commission	Long-Term

Guiding Principle 3

Berkeley County will respect and enhance historic, cultural and natural resources, while providing expanded public access to them.

Summary of Issues

Berkeley County has an abundance of cultural and natural resources that provide many benefits to the community. These identify the County's unique character, help to foster civic pride, offer economic opportunities by helping attract new residents, businesses and visitors, and contribute to the overall quality of life for residents.

Many of the concerns expressed during citizen input revolved around the impact development has had or will have on the County's historic and cultural resources, as well as its agricultural lands. More specifically, citizens want to ensure: development is occurring in areas where suitable soil and geologic features exist; where impacts on the quality of wetlands and other water resources and natural habitats of site development, infrastructure, and/or structures can be mitigated; and such that air quality standards are maintained and industrial noise reduced or mitigated.

Sites that exemplify Berkeley County's character and landscape include, but are not limited to, the Francis Marion National Forest, Lakes Marion and Moultrie, Medway Plantation, and Cypress Gardens. Sites such as these provide scenic value, cultural and recreational opportunities, and natural habitats to be protected and enjoyed. Because these resources play such an important role, they should be protected and, where possible, shared with the greater community.

Goals and Policies

G3.1 Berkeley County will support local agricultural and forestry practices through the preservation of its rural areas.

1. The County will support the protection of agriculture and farmlands, including timberlands, from development pressures, recognizing the contributions of farming and the rural character of the community.
2. The County will support policies and programs that provide opportunities for agricultural activities to remain an integral part of the community.
3. The County will promote agri-tourism opportunities.
4. The County will support the aquaculture industry through preservation of water quality.

G3.2 Berkeley County will develop and market heritage and eco-tourism opportunities based on its cultural and natural resources.

1. Protection and conservation of the County’s cultural and natural resources will play a vital role in the decision-making process.
2. The County will promote and support the protection and enhancement of the County’s unique historic resources.

G3.3 Berkeley County will adopt and apply land use principles and development practices which ensure development works in harmony with cultural and natural resources.

1. The County will encourage new development to locate in suitable locations in accord with Section 2: Land Use and Development Objectives in order to protect and preserve natural resources, environmentally-sensitive areas, or valuable historic or cultural resources from encroachment.
2. The County will adopt and implement policies and standards that minimize impacts of site development, including land disturbance, infrastructure and structures, on the quality of wetlands and other nonrenewable natural resources.

GP 3 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Increase local agricultural production and education programs by encouraging local farming cooperatives through Berkeley County Schools.	Berkeley County School District	Short-Term
Enhance the value and capacity of the aquaculture industry.	Berkeley Economic Development Department	Ongoing
Develop a plan to promote agri-tourism opportunities through educational programs, special events, festivals, farm tours, etc.	Planning Commission, Berkeley Economic Development Department, Berkeley Chamber	Short-Term
Consider provisions for voluntary establishment of agricultural preservation districts with special tax assessments.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Short-Term
Designate areas of sensitive natural and/or scenic and/or historic resources for conservation or resource protection.	County Council, Planning Commission, SCDNR, SCDHEC	Ongoing
Support promotion of the Blueways Trail System.	Planning Commission, Lowcountry Paddlers, SCDHEC-OCRM, SCDNR, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium	Ongoing
Work with SCDAH to identify funding and professional resources to update existing inventory of historic and archaeological resources.	County Council, Planning Commission, SCDAH, Berkeley County Historical Society	Short-Term

GP 3 STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Promote and support enhancement of Cypress Gardens.	County Council, Berkeley Chamber	Ongoing
Market the County as a travel destination through the establishment of an interpretive center for the County's resources in conjunction with a visitor's center at a County Gateway Welcome/Visitor's Center.	County Council, Berkeley Economic Development Department, Berkeley Chamber	Long-Term
Designate Cainhoy Road and Highway 402 as scenic highway heritage corridors.	County Council, Planning Commission, SCDOT	Short-Term
Endorse efforts of preservation, civic and tourism groups to protect and interpret resources, such as the Cooper River Historic District.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Ongoing
Establish a heritage loop or corridor that provides accessibility to identified significant sites as a basis for ecotourism.	County Council, Planning Commission, SCDOT, Berkeley Chamber	Long-Term
Coordinate with community groups and private industries/property owners to establish managed public accessibility to resources under private ownership.	County Council, Planning Commission, Private Property Owners	Ongoing
Limit land uses or development patterns in conservation areas to low-impact residential and environmentally compatible recreational uses.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Developers	Short-Term
Consider density bonus incentives to developers in return for conservation of open spaces meeting specific criteria.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Developers	Short-Term
Evaluate establishment of a Transfer of Development Right (TDR) program to channel development into priority development areas and away from resources to be conserved.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, SCDHEC	Short-Term
Support the establishment of collaborative partnership between private property owners and conservation nonprofits to promote placement of easements through tax incentives.	County Council, Planning Commission, Private Property Owners, Nonprofits, Lord Berkeley Land Trust	Ongoing
Review effectiveness of existing special area permit requirements in evaluating existence of sensitive resources prior to land development approvals.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Short-Term
Require BMP's for all developments to mitigate negative impacts of stormwater on the quality of the County's water resources.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Ongoing

Guiding Principle 4

Berkeley County will make sure that both active and passive recreational opportunities are available to its residents countywide.

Summary of Issues

Berkeley County has many recreational resources, most of which are commonly found in association with the area's natural and cultural resources. Examples of these include: recreational boating at Lions Beach on the shore of Lake Moultrie; recreational boating on Lake Marion; Richardson Landing boat-launching facility at Bonneau Beach; boating and fishing on the upper Cooper River and Santee River; and the Berkeley County Blueways paddling trail system.

Despite these resources, citizens who participated in the public workshops expressed concern over the lack of public recreation facilities, playgrounds, and ballparks, particularly in rural areas of the County. Berkeley County has many opportunities to enhance and promote existing facilities while developing new ones to meet the needs of the community.

An exercise conducted at the public workshops asked participants to review photographs of various community components and choose what they felt would be an appropriate addition to their communities. One of the most popular images chosen was that of a neighborhood playground. While these facilities may be provided within a planned community, they are not easily accessed by most rural residents. The need for these types of facilities was concentrated in two rural areas on maps at the community planning workshops: Wando-Huger and New Hope-Longridge.

Community recreation was also desired around Lake Moultrie, often near boat launches; on the west side of Moncks Corner, near existing public schools; and in or near the communities of Pringletown, Sangaree, Oakley, and Macedonia. Participants also expressed a need for access to water on the southwest side of Lake Moultrie, the Goose Creek Reservoir, the upper reaches of the Cooper River, the Wando River, and Four Holes Swamp. There were comments expressing a need for upgrades to existing facilities on the Lake as well.

Goals and Policies

G4.1 Berkeley County is committed to providing pleasant, accessible public gathering places and parks throughout the community.

1. The County will support initiation of a countywide park planning program, to include trails and blueways networks.
2. The County will promote a balance of recreation opportunities between identified growth areas and existing communities.
3. The County will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

G4.2 Berkeley County will increase public accessibility to recreation areas within the County.

1. The County will promote connectivity between existing recreational sites and cultural/scenic resources, and communities, using its Green Infrastructure Plan as a guide.
2. The County will explore opportunities for increased and enhanced public access to waterways.
3. The County will seek to establish public beach areas along lake shores to better serve residents.

GP 4 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Consider inclusion of open space protection in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).	County Council, Planning Commission, County Finance Department	Short-Term
Work with state and federal agencies to establish linkages with existing trail facilities.	County Council, Planning Staff, SCPRT	Short-Term

GP 4 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Coordinate connectivity of parks with cultural and scenic resources.	Berkeley County Municipalities, County Council, Planning Commission	Long-Term
Develop a master recreational plan.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff	Short-Term
Consider establishment of County parks and recreation department to manage implementation of the developed plan.	County Council, Planning Staff	Short-Term
Establish a beach on the shore of Lake Moultrie (particularly southwest side).	County Council, Santee Cooper, MWV	Long-Term
Collaborate with nonprofits and private property owners to develop better accessibility to facilities and resources.	County Council, Planning Commission, Planning Staff, Private Property Owners, Nonprofits	Ongoing
Formalize relationships between the County and boat landings to better serve residents.	County Council, County Public Works	Ongoing

Guiding Principle 5

Berkeley County will adopt a clear, fair plan that can be implemented through simplified costs and streamlined processes.

Summary of Issues

One of the best ways to strengthen a community is to create opportunities for citizens to work collaboratively on the challenges that shape their community. The same applies to the development of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan must be created from diverse public input in order to be successfully implemented.

It is through this public participation that the County was able to adequately define its vision for the future and identify goals and strategies for achieving that vision.

It is even more important for citizens to understand that the comprehensive plan is a document intended to guide all development, regardless of size or scope. Therefore, the County has created a comprehensive plan that establishes a clear intent and policy base which can be used to develop and interpret local regulations. The Plan should be used to assist local elected and appointed officials in making land use decisions that are fair, consistent, and impartial.

This means that all development proposals and requests for changes in land use and zoning should be considered consistently and processed in a timely and fair manner.

It is also vital that as growth does occur, the County strive towards improved service delivery at all levels of public service. During the public workshops citizens expressed concern over the growth taking place and the burden on taxpayers to build the infrastructure to service this new growth. The County will need to explore new ways of funding these additional facilities and infrastructure in order to mitigate a decline in current levels of service.

Goals and Policies

G5.1 Berkeley County will encourage public participation in achieving goals to ensure that all communities have a voice.

1. The County will seek opportunities to share information and engage the public regarding issues that are likely to have an impact on the community.
2. The County will explore ways to increase public awareness with regards to public meetings and hearings.

G5.2 Berkeley County will make improvements to its service delivery.

1. The County will ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of service for the community's residents and employers.
2. The County will support sequential, phased extension of utilities and services to encourage rational expansion of development to areas immediately contiguous to already developed areas of the community.
3. The community will use planned infrastructure expansion to promote development in areas identified (in the comprehensive plan) as ready for development.
4. The County will explore ways in which infrastructure for new development does not cause a burden on current residents.

GP 5 STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION	
	PARTNERS	TIMELINE
Encourage attendance at public meetings and hearings through various outreach avenues.	County Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing
Provide opportunities for meaningful public involvement in the decision-making process.	County Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing
Launch public education and outreach programs that serve to better engage residents and stakeholders.	County Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing
Coordinate with the City of Charleston on annexation of "donut holes" and establishment of municipal boundaries.	Berkeley County, City of Charleston	Short-Term
Ensure fair and equitable funding of public transportation improvements.	County Council, SCDOT, County Engineering Staff	Ongoing
Coordinate major public investments with proposed development patterns.	County Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing
Utilize Residential Improvement Districts (RID's) to help pay for new infrastructure.	County Council, Planning Commission	Short-Term

MEMBERS OF COUNTY COUNCIL

C. Kevin Cox

C. KEVIN COX

Voting YES

excused

DENNIS L. FISH

Voting _____

Joshua S. Whitley

JOSHUA S. WHITLEY

Voting YES

Jack H. Schurlknight

JACK H. SCHURLKNIGHT

Voting YES

Kenneth E. Gunn, Jr.

KENNETH E. GUNN, JR.

Voting YES

Caldwell Pinckney, Jr.

CALDWELL PINCKNEY, JR.

Voting YES

Joe T. Newell

JOE T. NEWELL

Voting YES

Steve C. Davis

STEVE C. DAVIS

Voting YES