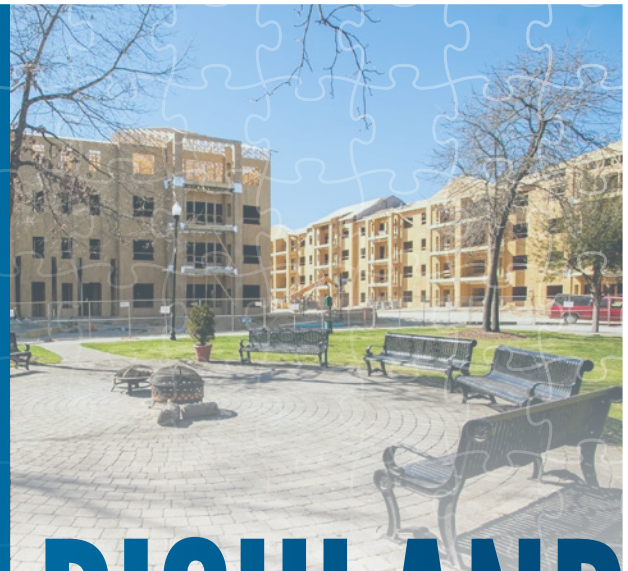


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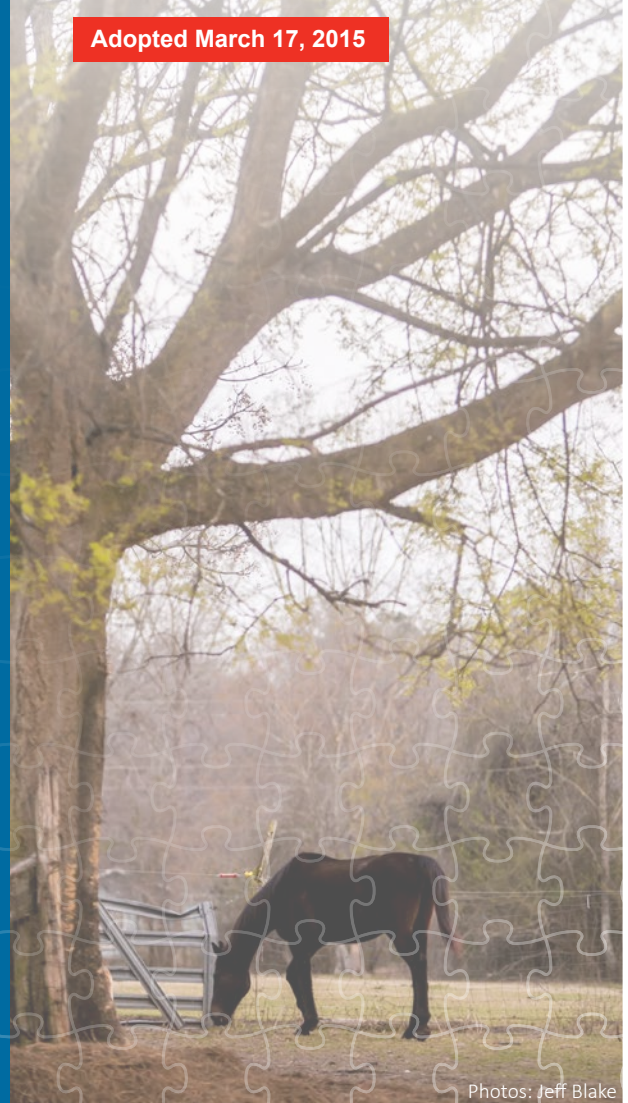
PLAN

putting the pieces in place



RICHLAND COUNTY

Adopted March 17, 2015



Photos: Jeff Blake

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Acknowledgments

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1. Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles guide an organization throughout its life in all circumstances, irrespective of changes to its goals, strategies and management. These guiding principles articulate the planning policy “mission” for Richland County and are listed here in no particular order.

In the future, as it assesses new opportunities and coordinates with local and regional partners, Richland County will...

...BALANCE LAND PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS WITH PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

Upholding the private property rights of landowners in Richland County is just as important as achieving long range planning goals for the County and its municipalities. Opportunities affecting both planning goals and private property rights should be weighed carefully, and decisions should attempt to achieve a balance between the two factors.

...SUPPORT THE MIDLANDS REGIONAL VISION FOR GROWTH WITHIN RICHLAND COUNTY

Community leaders will continue to engage in and support the eight-county Midlands regional planning effort for growth. “Growing by choice and not by chance,” the Midlands Regional Vision supports a growth pattern built around “community centers” that is guided by the need to enhance the region’s economic drivers, to make better use of existing infrastructure, and to promote communities that are greener and more transit friendly.¹

...PROMOTE INVESTMENT IN EXISTING COMMUNITIES AND SUPPORT REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Established neighborhoods and commercial centers are the backbone of Richland County. The success of these communities has a direct impact on the success of the County. To counteract the cycle of disinvestment and decline that can occur in aging communities, the County will promote investment and redevelopment through its land planning and capital investment decisions.

...COORDINATE LAND PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING TO EFFICIENTLY PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES AND TO SUPPORT A PREFERRED GROWTH PATTERN

To achieve its Future Land Use vision and to maximize use of existing resources and infrastructure, Richland County will coordinate with utility partners to support development of efficient and well-defined plans for new facilities and services, such as public water, sewer, roads, and public transportation service.

...COORDINATE LAND PLANNING WITH COLUMBIA AND OTHER JURISDICTIONS, WITH A FOCUS ON AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST

Many communities in Richland County are intersected by jurisdictional lines. To achieve cohesive community character, and to support consistent land planning across jurisdictions, Richland County will work with its municipalities, military installations, school districts, and neighboring communities to plan for areas of common interest.

...SUPPORT THE CONTINUED VIABILITY OF AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL AND FORESTRY OPERATIONS

Richland County has a long “working lands” legacy. Working lands in Richland County today include those used for agriculture, horticulture and forestry activities. The County will support the continued viability of these operations.

...SUPPORT MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND THEIR OPERATIONS THROUGH LAND PLANNING

Fort Jackson, McCrady Training Center, and McEntire Joint National Guard Base are important to our nation’s defense system, and also to our local and regional economy. These military installations are important partners and neighbors. The long-term success of the military operations at these bases can be impacted by land planning in Richland County; therefore, Richland County will consider the military installations when making decisions within areas of common interest surrounding the bases.

¹ For more information on the Midlands Regional Vision for Growth and the Midlands ULI Reality Check Initiative, go to <http://southcarolina.uli.org/midlandsrealitycheck/>

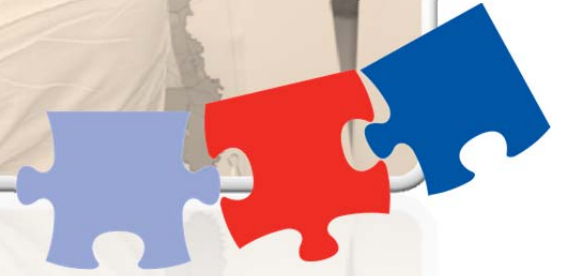


...SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY INVESTING IN TARGETED AREAS

Public investments in infrastructure, facilities, and programs are an important component to economic development strategies. These public investments often are the catalyst for future private investments. To achieve its economic development goals, Richland County will focus public investments in targeted locations as identified by Priority Investment Areas outlined in the Priority Investment Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

...IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE BY FOSTERING DEVELOPMENT OF LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Communities are being designed to reflect the lifestyle preferences of the nation’s changing population. The retirement of the baby boomer generation and the introduction of the millennial generation into the workforce may mark the first time in our nation’s history when older and younger generations are desiring a similar type of lifestyle that is focused on achieving greater accessibility between where people live, work, shop, and recreate. In essence – more people want to be more connected, and they want a lifestyle that makes it easier to be connected. To address these changing needs, Richland County will improve quality of life in the County by fostering development of livable communities. Livable community design is defined as development that supports diverse housing choices, provides access to multiple forms of transportation, offers increased accessibility to services and shopping, promotes the health benefits of open space protection, and provides access to recreational amenities.



2. The Planning Process

This Comprehensive Plan is a “blueprint” that provides guidance as to where and how Richland County will grow in the next 20 years. It provides direction for shaping future decisions so that the County can achieve its vision – one that values its history, environment, and culture, all the while harnessing the new energy and vision for growth in the 21st century.

Purpose of Plan Update

In 2013, the Richland County Council directed the County Planning Department to undertake an update to the Comprehensive Plan with a focus on updating the Land Use and Priority Investment Elements. With new regional focus on land planning in the Midlands, and increases in development activity in the County and the greater region, the time was ripe to take a new look at the land use vision for Richland County.

The objectives are for the plan to provide greater guidance for the type of character that the citizens of the County want to protect and create, to set out specific strategies for creating these uniquely urban, suburban, and rural communities, and to reassess priority areas for capital improvements and public investments. This plan sets out to achieve those objectives.



Public Engagement

The way people experience their environment transcends jurisdictional boundaries. Whether you live in Columbia, Irmo, or Eastover, you are a Richland County citizen. Decisions made on lands in the unincorporated portions of the County have an impact not only on residents of the unincorporated portions of the County, but also on its neighboring jurisdictions.



Plan Together, Put the Pieces in Place was the signature designed for this planning process - a joint effort to update the Comprehensive Plans for both Richland County and the City of Columbia. This year long process is the first opportunity the City and County have had to undertake a joint planning effort. The two jurisdictions coordinated planning efforts at key points during the process.

This resulted in a coordinated Future Land Use map and many strategies to maintain joint planning efforts.

Richland County citizens, business and property owners had four opportunities to voice their aspirations for the future of the County. A series of reports were generated that document the outcomes of each of these sessions, and are available on the County's website.

1. COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Five meetings in each of the County's planning areas were held to learn about the aspirations of the community with respect to land use, development, and conservation. Mapping exercises provided opportunities for participants to identify places to protect from change and the type of development they would prefer to see in the future.

2. CHOICES WORKSHOPS

At five Choices Workshops, community members were given opportunities to respond to initial ideas for amending the Land Use and Priority Investment elements through a series of anonymous polling exercises and mapping activities.

3. PUBLIC REVIEW OF PLAN

Five meetings were held to offer the public the opportunity to review the draft sections of the plan and to provide comment on the goals and strategies that should be priorities for the County.

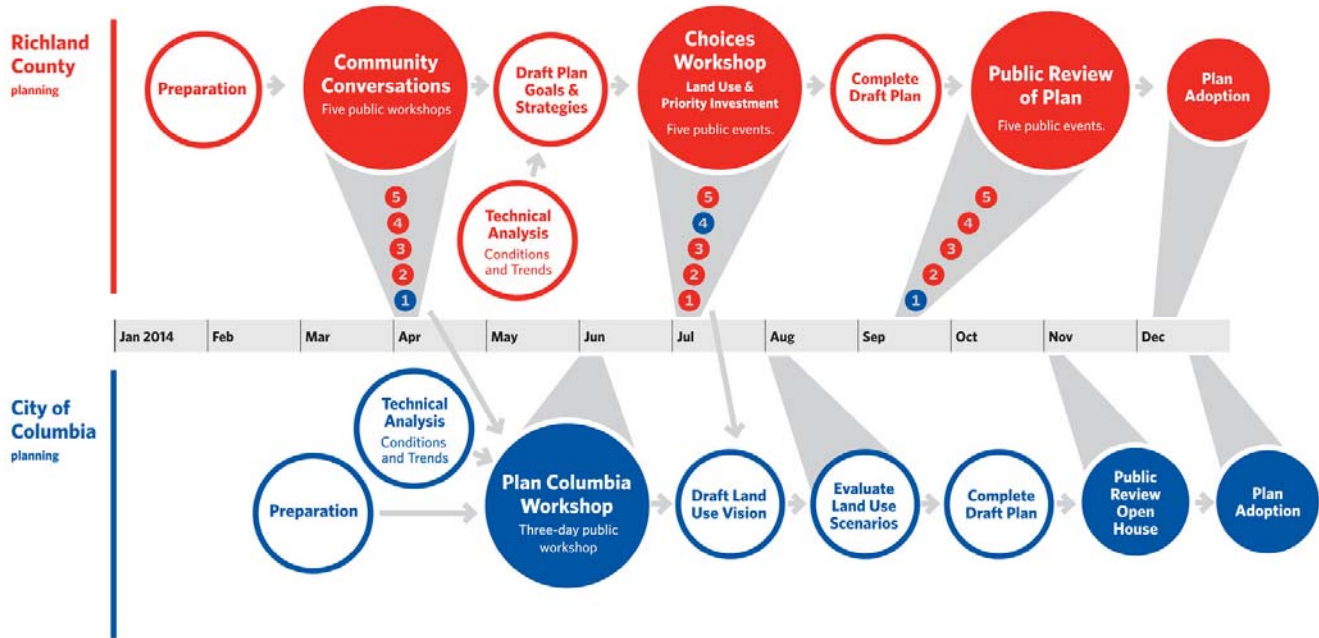
4. PLAN ADOPTION HEARINGS

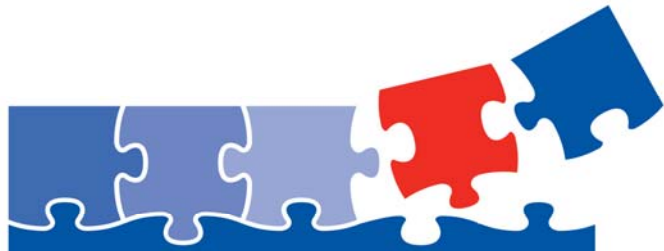
Formal adoption hearings with the Planning Commission and the County Council offered a final opportunity to provide input on the draft Plan.



The Plan Together Process

The following diagram illustrates the year-long coordinated planning approach jointly undertaken by Richland County and the City of Columbia.





PLAN TOGETHER

put the pieces in place

Richland County





3. Regional Context

Richland County lies at the heart of the Midlands Region. Decisions made in Richland County have an impact on surrounding communities and the greater region, just as community decisions made by neighboring jurisdictions have an impact on Richland County. Regional planning initiatives have begun in the Midlands to plan for a prosperous future for all communities in the region.

Position in Region

Richland County lies in the heart of the Midlands Region of South Carolina, at the halfway point between the South Carolina uplands and the coast. Richland County is home to the state's largest city – Columbia – and the center of state government.

Surrounding Richland County are Fairfield, Newberry, Lexington, Calhoun, Kershaw and Sumter Counties. The Midlands Region is defined differently depending on the source. For the purposes of this plan, the region is considered the counties mentioned above.

Reasons for Pursuing Regional Collaboration

One reason for communities in the Midlands Region to collaborate is to achieve economic success. The Midlands is a successful region with a fairly stable economy, the largest state university, an array of rich cultural and arts institutions, and an abundance of natural resources. According to 2010 census data compiled by the Urban Land Institute, the population of the Midlands region is currently 860,000, and within the next 30 years, the region may grow to add 450,000 more people.

The biggest challenges for the region are to (1) remain competitive and successful in an uncertain and ever-changing global and national economy, and (2) to address changes in demographics and lifestyle preferences of future generations. The solutions to these challenges lie in local policies and regional collaboration to make the Midlands a premier region for growth and investment in the 21st century.

Regional Economic Drivers

The Central Midlands Regional Council of Governments defines the Midlands Region as including Fairfield, Newberry, Richland, and Lexington Counties. Over the last three decades, this region was successful at achieving sustained growth. Recent years have seen a slowing of regional growth, including the closing of many manufacturing plants. The Services sector was the largest growth sector between 2000 and 2010. Manufacturing and Government sectors have both declined both in terms of total number of jobs and proportion of employment in the region.

The vast majority of jobs in the region are located in the urbanized areas. However, in comparing job growth between 2000 and 2009, Richland County had the second lowest percentage of job growth, trailed by Fairfield County, which experienced a decline in jobs. Lexington County led job growth during this period.

It will be important for Richland County to develop new opportunities to secure a proportion of expected job growth in the region. Several economic clusters are targets for expanding the regional economy, including insurance, nuclear power, transportation and logistics, and hydrogen fuel cell technology. Maintaining the established military installations in the region is another important goal for capturing regional job growth. Important considerations for attracting new industries to Richland County are the quality of life offered to its residents, including housing choices, transportation options, recreational amenities and healthy lifestyle options, access to cultural events and activities, and access to healthcare.

Importance of Military Installations

Acclaimed as the “most military friendly community in America,” the City of Columbia and the greater Midlands Region are home to five military installations, and three are located in Richland County: Fort Jackson Army Base, McEntire Joint National Guard Base, and the McCrady Training Center at Fort Jackson.

As the U.S. Army’s main production center for Basic Combat Training, Fort Jackson trains 50 percent of the Army’s Basic Combat Training load and 60 percent of the women entering the Army

each year. Accomplishing that mission means training in excess of 36,000 basic training and 8,000 advanced individual training Soldiers every year.



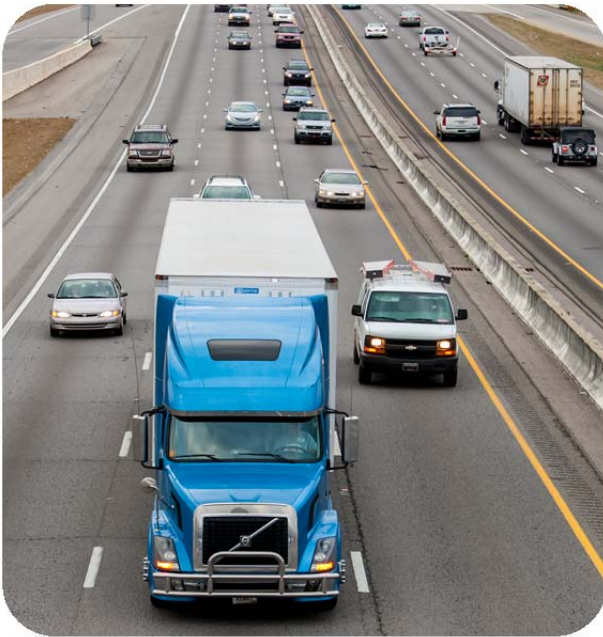
Fort Jackson is not only important to our nation's security but also to the economic health of Richland County and the region.

The Midlands Region recognizes Fort Jackson as a major economic engine and a good community partner. In the 2011 fiscal year, Fort Jackson generated a total of \$2.012 billion in economic activity statewide and supported 19,834 jobs. These jobs earned approximately \$941 million in annual employee compensation. The McEntire Joint National Guard Base generated a total of \$296 million in economic activity and supported 2,303 jobs. These jobs earned approximately \$61 million in annual employee compensation. Economists' estimates suggest that every ten full-time positions on these installations supported approximately 13 full-time, non-Department of Defense civilian positions. The bases are not without challenges. In the past and currently, Fort Jackson has been recommended as a potential base for closing or for a reduction of operations as part of the Department of Defense's approach to make national defense operations more efficient. Strong community sentiment in support of maintaining the base has gone far to counteract these recommendations.

Another challenge to military installations in the region is encroachment of incompatible land uses near base operations. In 2007, the Midlands Area Joint Installation Consortium (MAJIC) was established to educate the regional about the pressing need to protect training resources at Fort Jackson, Shaw Air Force Base, McEntire Joint National Guard Base, Poinsett Bombing Range, and McCrady Training Center. A Joint Land Use Study developed for Fort Jackson, McEntire, and McCrady in 2013 provides several strategic solutions for protecting military operations from impacts of neighboring development.

Regional Commuting

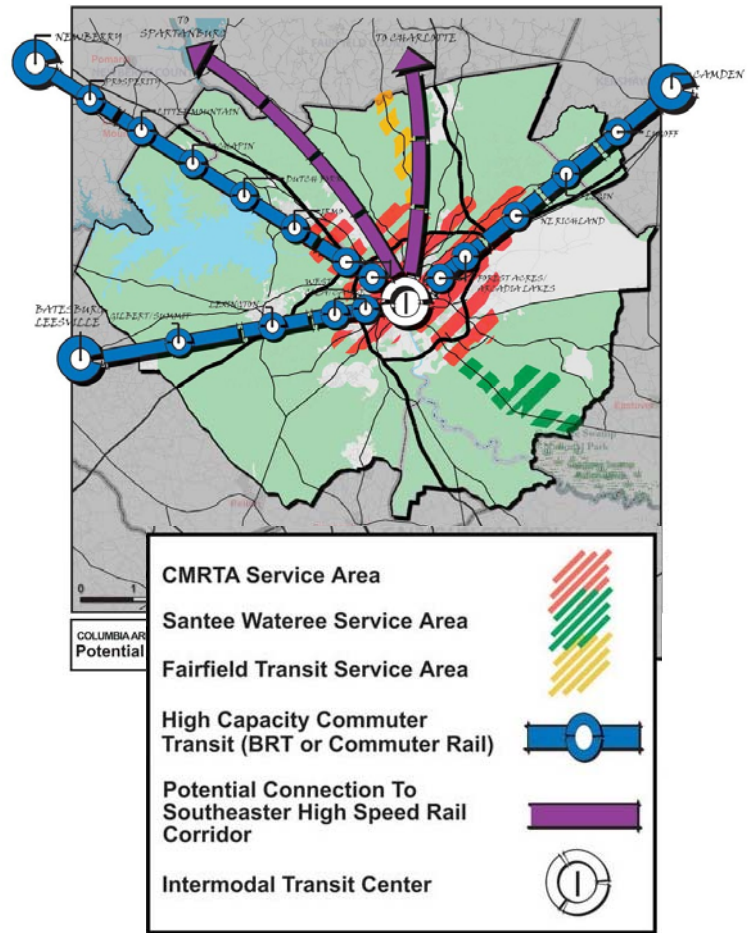
Transportation planning is another opportunity for regional collaboration. In 2011 more than 56 percent of workers employed in Richland County lived outside of the County. During that same period, more than 35 percent of workers that reside in Richland County worked in a neighboring county. As the regional grows, commuting will increase and congestion on regional roadways could have a significant negative impact on air quality through increased vehicle emissions, increased fuel costs, increased road maintenance and improvement costs, and effects on local business productivity because of increased commuting times. Planning efforts are underway to evaluate transportation models that can provide more options for future regional commutes and reduce the negative impacts that traffic congestion can generate.



With increasing regional population growth comes an increase in regional commuting. How the Midlands Region plans for future development and the transportation systems to support that development will have an impact on quality of life in the region.

Commuter rail has been a regional topic for discussion over the last two decades. Advocates have been successful in realizing several recent studies that have considered the feasibility of commuter rail. In 2006, the CMCOG adopted the Commuter Rail Feasibility Study for the Central Midlands Region of South Carolina (2006 Commuter Rail Plan) to espouse a framework for future commuter rail connections, both locally and regionally. The 2006 Commuter Rail Plan highlighted five potential corridors, two for connecting to future high speed rail and three for potential commuter rail service. These corridors are depicted in the graphic to the right.

While these plans are conceptual and no formal plans are being developed at this time, it is important to consider the impact of land use and capital improvement decisions and how they may support or challenge future regional rail efforts.



The Central Midlands Council of Governments has assessed the opportunity and feasibility to develop a regional commuter rail system utilizing existing railroad lines. This map identifies potential opportunities for these commuter corridors and rail stations to serve them.

Midlands Regional Planning

Several regional planning efforts set the context for planning in Richland County.

2012-2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Central Midlands Region

Prepared by the Central Midlands Council of Governments in 2012, the 2012-2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Central Midlands Region evaluates important trends and conditions in the region,

including natural assets, transportation and infrastructure, economic trends, and demographic trends. The report documents a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis conducted to help identify the region’s economic development priorities. It includes an action plan and performance measures, as well as strategic projects for each of the four counties in the CMCOG region. Richland County projects include commercial and business revitalization projects, industrial park development, transportation and utility infrastructure improvements, and fostering development of alternative fuel technologies and businesses.

Midlands Region Reality Check

Led by the South Carolina Chapter of the Urban Land Use Institute, a Reality Check “game day” regional visioning exercise was conducted in October 2013 to focus on land use and growth in the Midlands region. Bringing together more than 300 regional leaders including business, government, economic development, and concerned citizen perspectives, this exercise provided a collaborative and multi-disciplinary environment to assess opportunities for how and where projected growth should occur in the region.



The Reality Check “Game Day” brought together leaders from across the Midlands to envision the pattern of future growth in the region.



After analyzing the results of the Reality Check exercises, a set of guiding principles and regional growth concepts were developed to articulate the region’s new approach to growth.

Midlands Reality Check Guiding Principles

- Utilize existing infrastructure
- Protect and enhance the region’s economic drivers
- Promote healthy vibrant neighborhoods

Vision for the Midlands of the Future

- Support mixed use developments where residents can live and work
- Healthy and safe communities
- Facilitate cooperation among regional leaders to create a shared common vision

The implementation of the Midlands Regional vision is underway with a focus on encouraging local governments to incorporate the guiding principles and regional vision into their policies and ordinances.

Green Infrastructure Plan

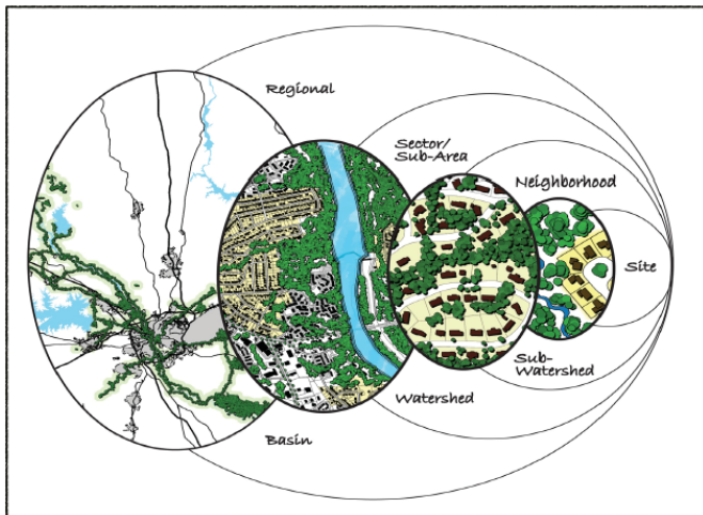
In 2011, the Central Midlands Council of Governments published a Green Infrastructure Plan for the Midlands Region. This plan seeks to create an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural ecosystems and functions and provides associated benefits to human populations.

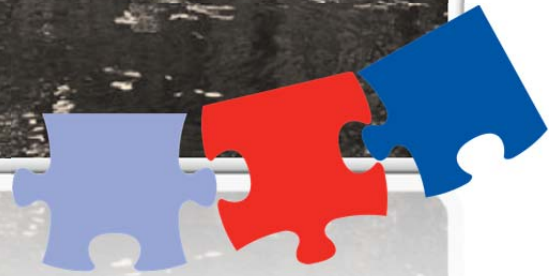
Taking a watershed approach to regional land planning, this plan is ultimately implemented through a combination of land and water

stewardship efforts and local government land planning policies and regulations.

The plan focuses on conserving in their natural state three components: large hubs, smaller sites, and linkages between hubs and sites. This design promotes plant and species preservation and maintenance of ecological processes in order to carry and filter stormwater runoff, store and clean fresh water, clean urban air, and prevent – or ameliorate the effects of – habitat fragmentation.

The Central Midlands Green Infrastructure Plan sets out a strategy for protecting the region's land and water resources in the form of a connected network that can serve as ecologically functional systems and places for people to commune with nature.





4. Population Element

Richland County is home to a growing and diverse population. College students, new professionals, young families, empty nesters, and retirees all work, live, and play in Richland County. Ensuring that future populations of the County have adequate housing options, recreational opportunities, and a good quality of life is an important policy consideration for the County's leaders.

Issues and Opportunities

Richland County is growing and is expected to continue to grow into the future. How the County plans for this future population growth is the key question to address in this Comprehensive Plan update. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

The Largest Increase in Population Growth Has Occurred Recently

Historically, population growth in Richland County has occurred at a reasonably constant rate.

However, in the last two decades, Richland County has seen its fastest population growth to date. This new population growth has generally been concentrated in the Northwest and Northeast Planning areas. Urban areas within the Beltway have experienced population loss, as people move away from the city center, and into new housing provided by the Northwest and Northeast Planning areas.

Population Density is Decreasing

While total population in Richland County has been increasing, the density of the population is generally decreasing. This may be attributed to two major trends: The first is that the American public is generally moving towards smaller household sizes, meaning fewer people per individual house. This is compounded by the prevalence of low density residential development in the County. The end result is fewer people living in houses that are spaced farther apart. The one exception to this trend is the Northeast Planning area, which has seen increased population density due to the existence of higher density residential developments.

Population Growth is Expected to Slow in the Future

The high population growth of recent decades is expected to slow down in the future. Population projections vary by source, but generally show a slowing of population growth back down to pre-1990's levels. However, even with a decreasing rate of growth expected, the County will likely add another 41,000-162,000 additional residents in by the year 2040. See Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan for more information.

Demographics are Changing

National demographic trends are playing out in Richland County. Across the U.S. the aging baby boomers and the millennial (those born between 1980 and 2000) generations are having a large impact on housing markets, retail, technology, and workplace environments. These are the two largest generations alive. These two generations have different lifestyle preferences than previous generations. They are demanding smaller homes, better access to shopping and recreation, opportunities to get around without a personal car, and ways to stay better connected with their communities and the world. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of future retirees aged 45-64 increased from 20 percent to 24 percent. While the percentage of persons aged 20-44 declined between 2000 and 2010, the percent of people age 20-25 increased, largely due to USC student enrollment increases and the millennial demographic trends. Providing choices to the County's changing population is an important policy consideration for the County.



Goals and Implementation Strategies

To address current and projected demographic and population trends, Richland County’s land use goals are...

P Goal #1: To provide a variety of housing choices accommodating increasing household numbers and types

Strategy 1.1: Land Development code updates

Continue enabling a range of housing densities in the Land Development Code.

Strategy 1.2: Support higher densities

Support higher residential densities in priority development areas.

Strategy 1.3: Incentivize land conservation

Provide residential density bonuses for conservation subdivisions.

Strategy 1.4: Promote accessory dwelling units

Continue to permit accessory dwellings in most residential zoning districts.

P Goal #2: To plan for a range of desirable urban, suburban, and rural communities with varied lifestyles and landscapes

Strategy 2.1: Zoning

Reform the zoning maps to facilitate planned future land uses.

Strategy 2.2: Capital Improvements Program

Develop a capital improvements program that aligns community infrastructure investments with planned future land use.

P Goal #3: To encourage mixed use development and redevelopment, especially in priority investment areas

Strategy 3.1: Community centers

Create centers of community with recreational, cultural, and civic opportunities for engaged senior citizens.

Strategy 3.2: Multigenerational housing

Support a variety of nearby housing choices that enable aging in place.

Strategy 3.3: Efficient land use

Increase the proximity of residential, commercial, office, and civic land uses reduce trip distances, automobile travel, and air pollution.

Strategy 3.4: Context-sensitive transportation

Develop a network of pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic-calming streetscapes for active lifestyles and neighborhood interactions.

Strategy 3.5: Public transportation

Improve transit services for reduced automobile dependency.

Strategy 3.6: Encourage infill development

Promote and enable residential infill development and redevelopment and mixed use development over retail.

P Goal #4: To target underserved communities with neighborhood master plans, community infrastructure improvements, affordable housing and neighborhood retail infill and redevelopment, and transportation connections to jobs

Strategy 4.1: Neighborhood Master Plans

Add additional underserved communities to the list of pending Neighborhood Master Plans.



Strategy 4.2: Public-private partnerships

Create public-private partnerships for planned neighborhood revitalization projects.

Strategy 4.3: HUD grants

Maintain eligibility for Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Grant funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Strategy 4.4: Affordable housing

Include affordable housing in Planned Development District rezoning applications.

Strategy 4.5: Expand transit

Expand the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority bus routes and facilities to more transit-dependent neighborhoods.

P Goal #5: To collaborate with school districts strengthening the physical and social connections between schools and their communities

Strategy 5.1: Centralize small schools

Locate, design, renovate and operate schools as centers of community, with limited student population sizes.

Strategy 5.2: Collaborate with SCDOT in the Safe Routes to Schools program

Participate in SCDOT's Safe Routes to School Program to provide safe routes to schools for pedestrians and bicyclists.

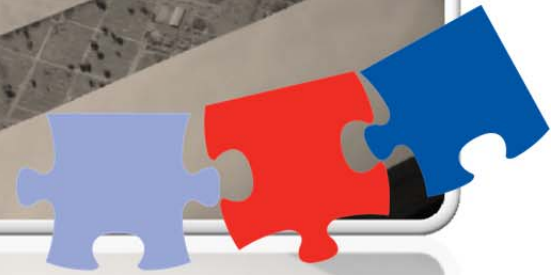
Strategy 5.3: Promote schools as community centers

Foster multiple uses of public school facilities, including after school mentoring programs, and evening and weekend access for continuing education and community activities.

Strategy 5.4: Coordination

Foster an environment of cooperation among local planners and school officials.





5. Land Use Element

Richland County has a wide range of development patterns. As attested by its citizens, the County is a mix of rural, suburban, and urban land uses. This Land Use element sets out a course for maintaining the unique character of Richland County. It also delineates strategies for working with neighboring jurisdictions to “PLAN TOGETHER” for the County’s future.

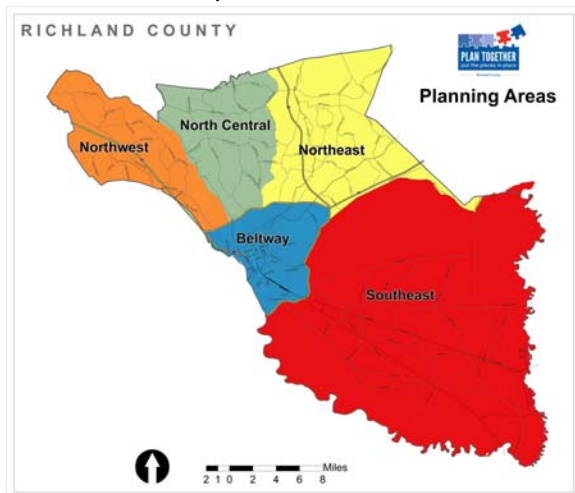
Issues and Opportunities

The Land Use goals and implementation strategies set out in this element are supported by key findings that arose during the planning process. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Large Planning Area that Includes Numerous Planning Jurisdictions

Richland County encompasses more than 770 square miles of land. It is the largest county in the Midlands Region and is home to seven incorporated municipalities (Arcadia Lakes,

Blythewood, Cayce, Columbia, Eastover, Forest Acres, and Irmo) and many suburban and rural communities in the unincorporated areas of the County. Three school districts plan for schools in the County, and multiple utility providers provide services within Richland County. The County is divided into five planning areas to better address the broad range of planning issues that arise: Beltway, North Central, Northeast, Northwest, and Southeast. These planning areas often include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural development, but they are distinctive in terms of how they physically appear in each planning area and the issues they face.



Richland County is divided into five planning areas.

The County has an opportunity to increase coordination between the multiple jurisdictions operating in the County to ensure that planning goals are consistent.

Significant Population Growth is Expected to Continue

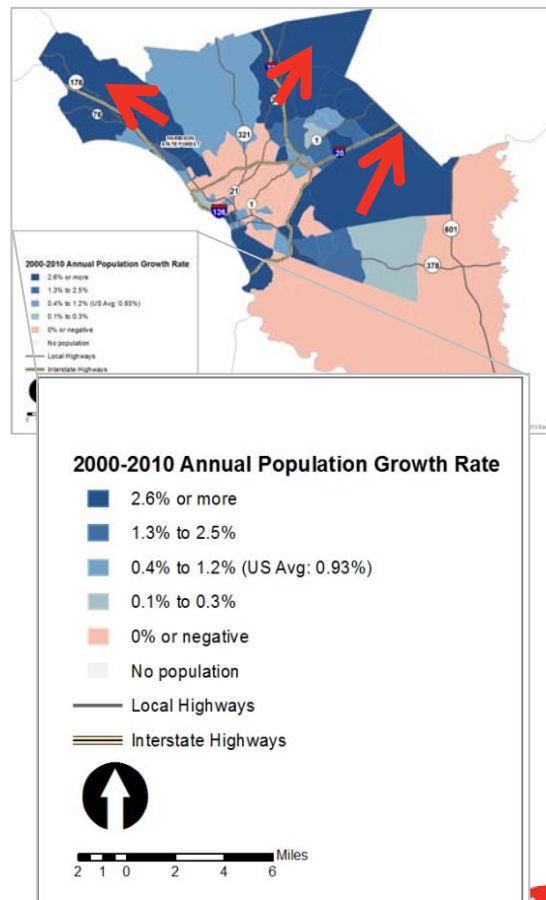
Between 2000 and 2010, Richland County had an annual average compounded population growth rate of 1.83%. This is a very healthy rate of growth, especially considering the time period and the impact of the recession on the region and

the nation. During this time, population grew by nearly 64,000 and 15,400 housing units were added in the County. Estimates for population in 2012 suggest that Richland County was home to 384,596 residents.

Even though the rate of population growth is projected to decrease, future projections show that the County may gain another 41,000 to 162,000 new residents between 2010 and 2040.

History of Expanding Growth Pattern and New Emphasis on Redevelopment

Over the last decade, much of the new development occurred within the unincorporated portions of the County, primarily in the Northeast and Northwest planning areas on formerly undeveloped lands.



This dispersed pattern of growth in the County resulted in a net decrease in population density for most planning areas, except the Northeast. This means that as growth was occurring, it was spreading outward, away from the City of Columbia and into the farther reaches of the County.

While development of vacant lands is expected to continue there is support for the redevelopment of and reinvestment in existing developed County lands. Aging commercial corridors and blighted neighborhoods experiencing disinvestment are critical areas for focusing redevelopment. When asked what the preferred patterns for growth were in the County, residents responded first with a focus on redevelopment (50%), then on infill (25%) and greenfield (25%) development.

When asked what the preferred patterns for growth were in the County, residents responded first with a focus on redevelopment, then on infill and greenfield development.

Citizens Support Protecting Rural Character

As of 2014, nearly 50% of the lands in Richland County are estimated to be in agricultural or other working lands use. This includes farm properties that contain a primary residence. Approximately 18% of the County lands are in a use that is exempt from property taxes, such as the Congaree National Park, Harbison State Forest, Fort Jackson, government buildings, schools, churches, and other similar tax exempt land uses. Residential land uses account for approximately 17% of the

County's land area, and about 10% is in an undeveloped state that is not actively in agricultural use. Only a small proportion of land is dedicated to institutional (2.84%), commercial (1.65%), and industrial (1.6%) uses. See Appendix A for Existing Land Use statistics and maps for the County and its five planning areas.



Photo: Jeff Blake

Residents want to protect the uniquely rural character found in Richland County.

Citizen input suggests strong interest to protect the unique rural character in Richland County, as evidenced by polling feedback provided at the July, 2014 Community Choices workshops. The challenge is to maintain this uniquely rural character in a way that upholds private property interests.

Water Resources Should Be Preserved

Richland County is rich in water resources, including the Broad, Congaree, Saluda, and Wateree Rivers. There is also an abundance of creeks, ponds, and lakes, including Lake Murray. Nearly 9,800 acres (2 percent of the County) is covered by water, including more than 1,100 miles of perennial streams and 400 miles of intermittent streams that hold water during the



wet portions of the year. Gills Creek, Wateree Creek, Rocky Creek and Mill Creek are several creeks that are identified for restoration. Feeding these water bodies are floodplains that absorb stormwater and are prone to rising waters. Over 97,000 acres of 100-year floodplains (nearly 20% of the County’s land area) exist in Richland County.

The protection of water resources and floodplains in the County are critical to maintaining water quality. When asked “what to protect from change” in Richland County, residents resoundingly responded that protection of water resources should be a priority for the County. Watershed protection should also include the ability for residents to gain better access to water bodies for recreational use.

Working Lands Are Valued for Contributing to the Local Economy and for Maintaining Rural Character

Richland County is believed to be named after its abundance of “rich land.” The County has a long agricultural legacy that continues to thrive today.

Between 2007 and 2012, the number of farms and the number of acres in farm production in Richland County increased. Nearly 400 farms operated in Richland County in 2012, up 9% from 2007. The total market value of products sold from Richland County farms increased nearly 200% from \$10,164,000 in 2007 to \$30,038,000 in 2012.



Photo: Jeff Blake

Nearly 50% of the land in Richland County today is in some agricultural or other working lands use.

Citizens want to see locally-owned, agricultural farming operations in Richland County continue to succeed. One of the challenges to maintain active farm operations in the County is that the average age of farmers in Richland County is 59. National trends show that many independent farm operators sell their land for development because their children are not interested in taking over the family business. There are opportunities for the County to play a role in bringing together aging farmers and unrelated, younger generation farmers.

Another challenge to maintaining farming in the County is encroachment by development. As land is developed around the edges of prime agricultural lands, it can become more and more difficult to maintain farming operations. Many new homeowners may be unaware that land is actively farmed near their new home and may see farming as incompatible with their neighborhood. Some don’t like sharing the roads with farm equipment, or being located near farms where heavy farm equipment is in use. These incompatible development issues can be addressed through education of landowners near farming operations, and through land planning.

Market for Suburban Residential Development is Expected to Continue, and is Changing

Over the last two decades, the majority of development occurring in Richland County has occurred in the Northeast, Northwest and Beltway Planning Areas. The Beltway planning area accounts for just over 40% of the County's total housing inventory. The Northwest and Northeast planning areas display suburban housing development patterns and together account for 43% of the County's total housing inventory. While it is likely that these trends will continue, housing markets are changing nationally and regionally which will have an impact on the density and design of new suburban developments. Current real estate trends show a growing market demand for smaller lot single-family housing and multi-family housing. The Richland County housing market reflects these trends.



While suburban development is expected to continue in Richland County, the type and design of new suburban development being demanded by the housing market is changing both locally and nationally.

Development Regulations Primarily Support a Suburban Development Pattern

Richland County's Land Development Code is similar to many municipal codes across the nation, in that it supports a suburban development pattern within its 18 zoning districts and is limited in terms of promoting redevelopment in urbanizing areas, protecting community character in rural areas of the County, and providing a range of suburban development options that support changing demographics. Recent updates to the Richland County Land Development Code include the Open Space Code that provides incentives for conservation subdivision designs that protect important natural areas and farmlands. More can be done to expand the types of development that are encouraged through the ordinance.

Coordinated Land Planning and Transportation Planning is Needed

Transportation Penny

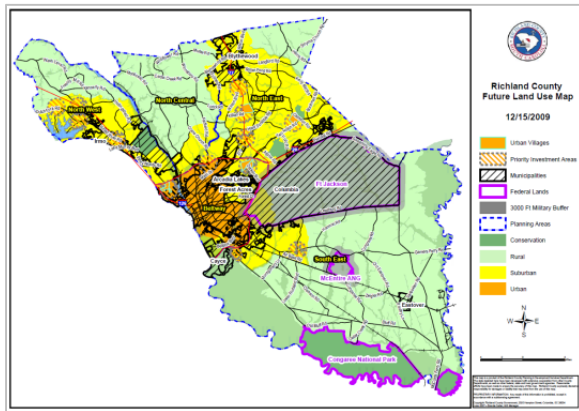
On November 6, 2012, a county-wide one cent on the dollar sales tax was passed that will ultimately generate \$1billion over a 22 year period for transportation improvement throughout Richland County. This includes 14 road widening projects on roads maintained by the South Carolina Department of Transportation. These widening projects are in response to historical and projected traffic volume pressures. They also have the potential to change the land use patterns along widened roadways. As roads get wider, development pressures usually follow. Wider roads encourage more traffic, which attracts more commercial development, which creates more traffic. It is essential to plan for growth along these key improvement corridors.

Potential for Commuter Rail

The County also has an opportunity to plan for future commuter rail service through the County. The Central Midlands Regional Council of Governments has been assessing commuter rail feasibility within the region for more than a decade. In 2006, they identified five corridors for connecting to high speed rail and potential commuter rail service. Station areas were defined in this study and are addressed in this planning effort.

This vision also sets out strategies to protect lands around military installations and to coordinate with the land use plans of municipalities in the County. The development of this update to the County’s Comprehensive Plan occurred concurrently with the update to the City of Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan, providing a unique opportunity to jointly plan for areas of common interest and shared boundaries.

Future Land Use



The 2009 Future Land Use map (shown above) has been updated as part of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan update.

Purpose of Future Land Use Map and Categories

The Future Land Use map and categories are used during rezoning requests to make recommendations and decisions regarding the appropriateness of different aspects of proposed developments. The Future Land Use map and categories provide guidance when making decisions about zoning and infrastructure investments by identifying the type and character of development that should occur in specific areas.

Future Land Use Map – Growth Vision for Community

The following Future Land Use map and categories reflect the current vision for Richland County. The map categories provide a framework for urban redevelopment, for development of neighborhoods, commercial and employment centers, and rural lands, and rural and environmental preservation. The future land use vision for the County has been updated to provide a more refined land use framework that sets out uniquely urban, suburban, and rural areas.

The Future Land Use categories and the Future Land Use map are provided solely with the intention of offering guidance to local decision-makers. This plan does not make formal recommendations to rezone properties to align with these Future Land use designations, but provides support for these Future Land Use designations during a rezoning case evaluation.

Using the Future Land Use Map and Categories

Each rezoning proposal needs to be evaluated using the land use category, goals and implementation strategies outlined in this Comprehensive Plan. Because this is a Comprehensive Plan and not intended to provide



site level guidance with regard to development decisions, discretion should be used when evaluating a proposed rezoning using the Future Land Use Map and related categories.

Future Land Use category lines were developed by considering development character, utility service areas, lines of natural features, and roadways. Particularly for areas near or on the boundaries of Future Land Use categories, discretion by the Richland County Planning Department staff is needed to determine the appropriate Future Land Use category that should be applied based on:

- Existing development context of property
- Environmental context of the property
- Development activity or proposed activity occurring within a sphere of influence of the property
- Future plans to construct utility infrastructure, roadways, or other public facilities

Ultimately, rezoning decisions are legislative decisions made by the County Council. This means that the decisions are a policy choice, and that the Comprehensive Plan helps to inform these choices.

Relationship to Neighborhood and Community Plans

The Richland County Comprehensive Plan incorporates, by reference, nine adopted neighborhood plans developed for areas in Richland County's jurisdiction, including:

- Broad River Corridor Master Plan
- Broad River Neighborhood Master Plan
- Candlewood Master Plan



- Crane Creek Master Plan
- Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan
- Spring Hill Community Strategic Master Plan
- Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan
- The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard / Woodfield Park Area
- Trenholm Acres/Newcastle Master Plan

These plans are noted in the relevant draft Future Land Use category descriptions and the Planning Areas where they are located. This Comprehensive Plan also acknowledges the Comprehensive Plans of its seven municipalities (Arcadia Lakes, Blythewood, Cayce, Columbia, Eastover, Forest Acres and Irmo), including direct coordination with the City of Columbia during the update to the City's Land Use Plan element.

The County's Future Land Use map also takes into account the recent Midlands Reality Check Regional Visioning Initiative and its support of a community centers-based development framework. This development form focuses on development in and around existing communities and supports opportunities for strengthening connections between those centers. To reinforce that connectivity, the Commuter Rail Feasibility Studies prepared by the Central Midlands Council of Governments was also an important input into the updating of the Future Land Use map.

Relationship to Priority Investment Areas

The 2007 South Carolina Priority Investment Act requires that local Comprehensive Plans include a Priority Investment Element. The element serves as a linkage between long range planning and

plans for public investments by identifying priority projects, key funding sources, and priority investment areas. The intent of the Act is to preserve and enhance the quality of life in South Carolina communities by planning and coordinating public infrastructure decisions and by encouraging the development of affordable housing and traditional neighborhood design.

The Future Land Use map for Richland County includes 11 Priority Investment Areas. These areas consist of key transportation intersections and surrounding development patterns. This approach for identifying key areas for community investment aligns with current regional planning (i.e., Midlands Reality Check Initiative) to create a “centers” based regional network that can better support regional transit, encourage redevelopment of existing developed areas, and better utilize public infrastructure investments to targeted areas. For more information on the Priority Investment Areas, refer to Chapter 12: Priority Investment Element.

Amendments to the Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use text and map may be amended as provided by the Richland County Land Development Code. Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan shall be recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by County Council, and should be internally consistent with the other components of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Map, and the goals and strategies of the plan. Plan amendments are also designed to change goals and strategies in such a way as to maintain internal consistency.

Coordination with City of Columbia’s Future Land Use Map

The County’s Future Land Use map is designed to coordinate with the Future Land Use Map of the City of Columbia. The Mixed Residential Future Land Use category is located around the City’s corporate limits and incorporates the eight Development Types set out in the City’s Future Land Use Map. The intent is to encourage a cohesive development pattern in these areas by coordinating land planning in areas of common interest or shared boundaries. As the County considers future growth patterns in Mixed Residential areas, it can also assess the City’s plans for adjacent areas to ensure that proposed projects are achieving the objectives of both jurisdictions. This coordination also opens up opportunities to make land development regulations more consistent across jurisdictional boundaries, which may help to overcome regulatory conflicts that occur in some neighborhoods.

Future Land Use Categories and Map

The map and table on the following pages summarize the Future Land Use categories and the areas where they apply in Richland County. The color coding of the categories listed in the tables matches the map areas. The Future Land Use map identifies 11 categories:

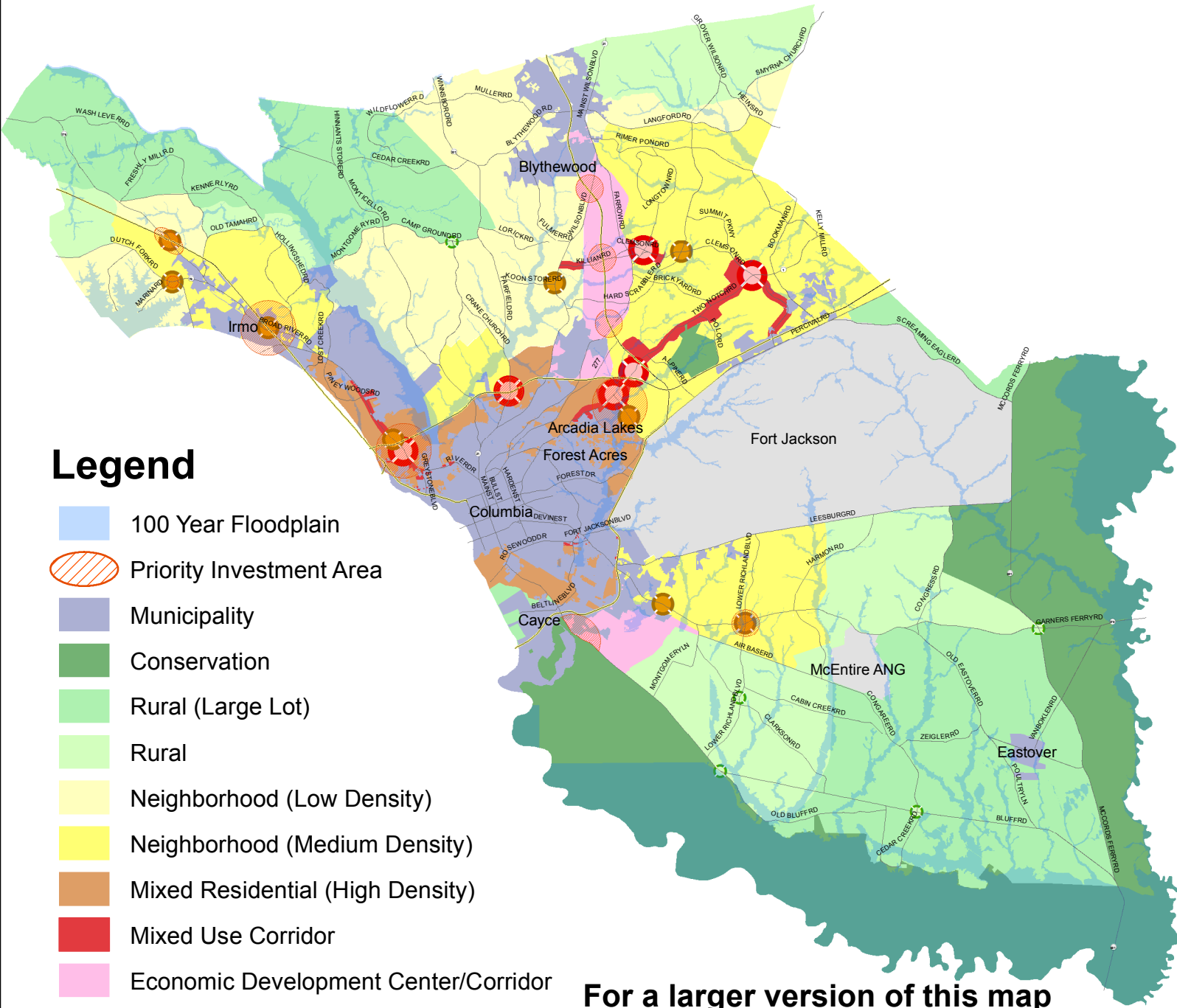
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low-Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium-Density)
- Mixed Residential (High-Density)



- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installations
- Activity Centers (Rural, Neighborhood, and Community)
- Municipality

RICHLAND COUNTY

FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS



Legend

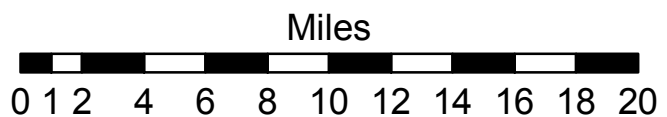
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Priority Investment Area
- Municipality
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium Density)
- Mixed Residential (High Density)
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installation

Activity Center

- Community Activity Center
- Neighborhood Activity Center
- Rural Activity Center

For a larger version of this map refer to Appendix C

For more information on Priority Investment Areas refer to the Priority Investment Area Map in Section 12.



Adopted March 17, 2015

CONSERVATION

Land Use and Character

Environmentally sensitive development that supports agricultural, horticultural, forestry, and related working lands uses, educational and research practices, recreational areas, and natural open spaces. This includes Harbison State Forest, Sesquicentennial State Park, Clemson Extension, and Congaree National Park.



Desired Development Pattern

Limited development using low-impact designs to support environmental preservation, tourism, recreation, research, education, and active working lands uses. Subdivision of land for commercial and residential development is discouraged within these areas.



Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Natural parks, educational and research facilities, agricultural uses, forestry, and related agricultural/forestry support uses.

Transportation

Rural roadways that provide access to public lands and educational centers. Trail and greenway access and on-road biking is the preferred form of alternative transportation.

Policy Guidance

1. Development should incorporate best management practices for protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
2. If the County pursues the development of a Transfer of Development Rights program, Conservation areas should be identified as “sending” areas for transferring out development rights to higher density “receiving” areas.

Relevant Plans

Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan (Cowasee Corridor)

Priority Investment Areas

Portion of the #10 I-77 Bluff Road Interchange (Bluff Road Exit)

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

C, TROS, PR

RURAL (Large Lot)

Land Use and Character

These are areas of mostly active agricultural uses and some scattered large-lot rural residential uses. Limited rural commercial development occurs as Rural Activity Centers located at rural crossroads, and does not require public wastewater utilities. Some light industrial and agricultural support services are located here. These areas are targets for future land conservation efforts, with a focus on prime and active agricultural lands and important natural resources. Historic, cultural, and natural resources are conserved through land use planning and design that upholds these unique attributes of the community.



Desired Development Pattern

Active working lands, such as farms and forests, and large lot rural residential development are the primary forms of development that should occur in Rural (Large Lot) areas. Residential development should occur on very large, individually-owned lots or as family subdivisions. Master planned, smaller lot subdivisions are not an appropriate development type in Rural (Large Lot) areas. These areas are not appropriate for providing public wastewater service, unless landowners are put at risk by failing septic systems. Commercial development is appropriately located within Rural Activity Centers.



Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Crop and animal production uses, forestry, single-family detached houses on individual large lots

Secondary Land Uses: Animal and crop production support services, agritourism uses, produce stands, veterinary services, places of worship, and riding stables.

Transportation

The primary form of transportation is personal vehicles. Greenways and natural foot paths are the preferred form of local recreational access for pedestrians. Bicycle access is made via shared roads or possibly by wide shoulders on main roadways.

Policy Guidance

1. Protect active agricultural operations and other working lands through improved notification and real estate disclosure to surrounding property owners and developers about rural character and working lands operations in area.
2. Rural (Large Lot) areas are targets for conservation easements and purchases of development rights programs undertaken by the Richland County Conservation Commission and the Soil and Water Conservation District.
3. Developments should protect important natural features such as Carolina Bays, wetlands, creek banks, and floodplains to maintain the integrity and natural function of the County's green infrastructure systems, active agricultural lands, prime farmlands, and erodible soils.
4. Improvements to bicycle access are needed.
5. If the County pursues the development of a Transfer of Development Rights program, Rural (Large Lot) areas should be identified as "sending" areas for transferring out development rights to higher density "receiving" areas.

Relevant Plans

Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan (Agriculture) and Spring Hill Community Strategic Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

Opportunity to consider larger Priority Investment Area for working lands in support of agribusinesses and agritourism in Lower Richland. See Additional Priority Investment Opportunities in the Priority Investment Element.

RURAL

Land Use and Character

Areas where rural development and smaller agricultural operations are appropriate. These areas serve as a transition between very low density rural areas and suburban neighborhood developments. The areas could include rural subdivisions and open space subdivisions. These subdivisions would support lots that are smaller than the Rural Large Lot land use, but larger than lots characteristic of neighborhood low density. Rural areas should be designed to maintain large tracts of undisturbed land, particularly areas of prime environmental value. Rural developments should provide natural buffering between adjacent uses. Appropriate roadway buffers should result in creating a natural road corridor with limited visibility into developed areas.



Desired Development Pattern

Rural areas should be designed to accommodate single-family residential developments in a rural setting. This includes master planned, rural subdivisions. Open space developments that set aside open space and recreational areas are an alternative form of Rural development. Open space developments are a land development design tool that provides a means of both preserving open space and allowing development to be directed away from natural and agricultural resources. These designs often allow for the increased density of lot sizes in trade for the protection of surrounding, larger open spaces. Commercial development should be limited to Rural Activity Centers.



Transportation

The primary form of transportation is personal vehicles. Greenways and trails are the preferred form of local recreational access for pedestrians. Bicycle access is made via shared roads or wide shoulders on main roadways.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Single-family detached houses on rural, individual lots

Secondary Land Uses: Produce stands, places of worship, public or private parks, public recreation facilities, schools, and governmental facilities, such as fire stations. If not integrated as part of residential developments, non-residential uses may be considered for location along a main road corridor and within a contextually-appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial road. Commercial development should not promote a strip commercial development pattern or fragmented “leap frog” development pattern along road corridors. Non-residential development should mitigate any noise, light, and traffic impacts on nearby residential areas.

Policy Guidance

1. New developments should be designed to be respectful of existing neighborhoods and proximate farming operations by limiting stormwater runoff to adjacent properties, buffering between adjacent incompatible uses and utilizing designs that uphold the rural character of the area.
2. Consider providing incentives through the County's Land Development Code to encourage new developments to create truly "rural" development, not conventional suburban development placed in a rural setting.
3. Developments should protect important natural features such as Carolina Bays, wetland, creek banks, and floodplains to maintain the integrity and natural function of the County's green infrastructure systems, active agricultural lands, prime farmland, and erodible soils.

Relevant Plans

Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan (Rural Residential)

Priority Investment Areas

None

NEIGHBORHOOD (LOW-DENSITY)

Land Use and Character

Areas where low-density residential is the primary use. These areas serve as a transition between Rural and Neighborhood (Medium-Density) areas, and are opportunities for low-density traditional neighborhood development and open space developments that preserve open spaces and natural features. Commercial development should be located within nearby Neighborhood Activity Centers, and may be considered for location along main road corridors and within a contextually-appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial. Places of worship and parks are appropriate institutional uses, but should be designed to mitigate impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. Industrial development with significant community impacts (i.e., noise, exhaust, odor, heavy truck traffic) is discouraged in these areas.



Desired Development Pattern

Lower-density, single-family neighborhood developments are preferred. Open space developments that provide increased densities in trade for the protection of open spaces and recreational areas are also encouraged (see Desired Pattern for Rural areas for more information on open space developments). Residential developments that incorporate more open spaces and protection of natural areas through the use of natural stormwater management techniques, such as swales, are encouraged. Homes in neighborhoods can be supported by small-scale neighborhood commercial establishments located at primary arterial intersections, preferably within Neighborhood Commercial Activity Centers.



Transportation

The primary form of transportation is personal vehicles. Sidewalks, greenways and trails are the preferred form of local recreational access for pedestrians. Bicycle access is made via shared roads or wide shoulders on main roadways.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Single-family detached houses

Secondary Land Uses: Places of worship, public or private parks, public recreation facilities, small format neighborhood serving commercial (such as small scale drycleaners, professional offices, coffee shops, bakeries and restaurants), schools, and governmental uses, such as a fire station. Neighborhood scale commercial development may be considered for location along main road corridors and within a contextually-appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial. Non-residential development should be integrated to better serve surrounding residential properties through pedestrian access, and mitigation of any noise, light, or traffic impacts on neighborhoods. Commercial development should not promote a strip commercial development pattern or fragmented “leap frog” development pattern along road corridors. High traffic uses such as fast-food restaurants, convenience marts, and gasoline stations should be limited to identified Activity Centers.

Policy Guidance

1. The density of new developments and the design of new subdivisions should uphold and respect the unique rural character of surrounding areas.
2. New residential developments should be served by adequately supplied public water and sanitary sewer service.
3. Buffer developments from adjacent areas, unless the developments are deemed similar in design and density. This includes buffers between adjacent historic and cultural assets to protect the visual experience of these unique places from incompatible development.
4. New residential developments should be buffered from major roadways by tree stands and natural areas to buffer neighborhoods from noise and other impacts.
5. Open space developments that allow for higher density development in trade for permanent protection of open spaces, natural features, and farmlands are encouraged.
6. New developments should provide a variety of housing options to accommodate changing housing preferences.



7. Amenities such as trails, greenways, neighborhood parks and open spaces are encouraged as part of new developments.
8. Redevelopment is encouraged within existing neighborhoods to address properties in need of reinvestment.
9. Commercial developments at primary arterial intersections should limit vehicle access points and utilize access management best practices.
10. Developments should protect natural features such as Carolina Bays, wetlands, creek banks, and floodplains to maintain the natural function of the County's green infrastructure systems, agricultural lands, prime farmlands, and erodible soils.

Relevant Plans

Eastover Comprehensive Plan, Crane Creek Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

Portion of #1 I-26 Broad River Road (north) interchange

Areas of Common Interest

Proposed projects in the Northwest and Northeast Planning areas should be coordinated with adjacent municipalities when located in areas of common interest near jurisdictional lines.

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

RU,RR, RS-E

NEIGHBORHOOD (MEDIUM-DENSITY)

Land Use and Character

Areas include medium-density residential neighborhoods and supporting neighborhood commercial scale development designed in a traditional neighborhood format. These neighborhoods provide a transition from Neighborhood (Low-Density) to more intense Mixed Residential (High-Density) urban environments. Multi-family development should occur near activity centers and within Priority Investment Areas with access to roadways with adequate capacity and multimodal transportation options. Non-residential development may be considered for location along main road corridors and within a contextually-appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial.



Desired Development Pattern

The primary use within this area is medium density residential neighborhoods designed to provide a mix of residential uses and densities within neighborhoods. Neighborhoods should be connected and be designed using traditional grid or modified grid designs. Non-residential uses should be designed to be easily accessible to surrounding neighborhoods via multiple transportation modes.



Transportation

Upgrades to arterial and collector roads should include the full range of transportation options – driving, transit, walking, and biking. Connectivity between adjacent developments is encouraged. Subdivisions should be designed to provide vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access and connectivity throughout, either through conventional sidewalks or through greenway and trail access.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Single-family detached houses, duplexes, townhomes

Secondary Land Uses: Multi-family development, neighborhood serving services, such as small scale drycleaners, professional offices, coffee shops, bakeries and restaurants, drug-stores, and convenience stores should be located within Neighborhood Activity Centers or may be considered for location along main road corridors and within a contextually-appropriate distance from the intersection of a primary arterial. These land uses should not result in strip commercial development or fragmented “leapfrog” development patterns along corridors. Places of worship, public or private parks, and public recreation facilities are also appropriate uses. These uses should be integrated to better serve surrounding residential properties through pedestrian access, and mitigation of any noise, light, or traffic impacts on neighborhoods.

Policy Guidance

1. Neighborhood densities should be based on allowing higher densities that include single-family attached housing near major corridors and activity centers and lower densities that include only single-family detached housing near open space developments, low-density residential, and rural areas.
2. Master planning of neighborhoods is encouraged and should include neighborhood parks and open spaces as part of the development program. A mix of housing types is encouraged within individual developments. Neighborhood scale commercial centers are also an appropriate amenity to include in master planned developments.
3. Traditional neighborhood designs should be facilitated by development of a new zoning district that allows for a mix of housing types and lot sizes within a single development.
4. Developments should connect to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial/employment areas, and be supported by multiple modes of transportation.
5. The protection of mature tree canopy is encouraged for areas surrounding developments and on private residential lots, as feasible.

6. Environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, and lands along creeks and surface waters should be protected or developed using best management practices to maintain the areas green infrastructure system, and to ensure long-term water quality. Providing public recreational access to these features, as feasible, is preferred.

Relevant Plans

Broad River Road Corridor and Neighborhood Master Plan, Candlewood Master Plan, Crane Creek Master Plan, Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan, The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard/Woodfield Park Area

Priority Investment Areas

#2 Ballentine at Dutch Fork Road, Marina, and Broad River Road, Portion of #5 I-20 Fairfield Interchange, Portion of #9 Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road, Portion of #8 I-77 Farrow Road Interchange

Areas of Common Interest

Proposed projects in the Northwest, North Central, Northeast, and Southeast Planning areas should be coordinated with adjacent municipalities when located in areas of common interest near jurisdictional lines.

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

RS-LD, RS-MD, MH, PDD



MIXED RESIDENTIAL

Land Use and Character

Areas include much of the urban and suburban developed areas in the County as well as edge areas adjacent to other jurisdictions in the County. These are densely developed urban and suburban areas, or opportunities for dense suburban development. Mixed residential areas include the full range of uses supportive of neighborhood, community, and regional commercial and employment needs. Residential single-family, multi-family, office and institutional, general and neighborhood commercial, and recreational uses are appropriate for this area. Some light industrial uses are also found today in these areas, but additional industrial development with significant community impacts (i.e., noise, exhaust, odor, heavy truck traffic) is discouraged, unless the area is identified specifically for these uses. Schools, churches, parks, and other institutional uses help support the full service nature of Mixed Residential areas. **See Appendix B for more detailed guidance for this category.**



Desired Development Pattern

Developments should reinforce the guiding principle of making neighborhoods and communities in Richland County more livable. Mixed Residential areas should provide a mix of housing opportunities within individual developments, preferably organized around a neighborhood center or public space. To the extent possible, commercial and office development should be located in Activity Centers and in Mixed Use Corridors. High density residential uses should be located proximate to or incorporated within Activity Centers, increasing existing and future opportunities for transit service to these locations. Grid and modified grid development patterns are preferred over curvilinear and cul-de-sac designs to support connectivity.



Transportation

Upgrades to roads should include the full range of transportation options – driving, transit, walking, and biking. Connectivity between adjacent developments is encouraged. New neighborhoods should include the full range of transportation options, including recreational sidewalks, trails and greenways, as possible.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Land Uses: See Appendix B for the map and Handbook that identify recommended Development Types and Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Uses that are encouraged for these areas.

Policy Guidance

1. See Appendix B for the map that identifies the recommended Development Types for Mixed Residential areas, and references specific design guidance for each Development Type.

Relevant Plans

Broad River Neighborhood Master Plan, Broad River Corridor and Community Master Plan, Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan, Trenholm Acres/Newcastle Master Plan, Arcadia Lakes Comprehensive Plan, Blythewood Comprehensive Plan, Cayce Comprehensive Plan, Columbia Comprehensive Plan, Forest Acres Comprehensive Plan

Priority Investment Areas

1 I-26 Broad River Road interchange (south), Portion of #5 I-20 Fairfield Interchange, Most of #9 Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road, Portion of #10 I-77 Bluff Road Interchange (Bluff Road Exit)

Areas of Common Interest

Proposed projects in the Northwest, North Central, Northeast, Beltway, and Southeast Planning areas should be coordinated with adjacent municipalities when located in areas of common interest near jurisdictional lines.

MIXED-USE CORRIDOR

Land Use and Character

Areas include established commercial, office, and medium-density residential developments located along principal arterial roads, and exclude established single-family residential subdivisions that may be located in the corridor. Mixed-use corridor areas should provide a vertical and horizontal mix of suburban scale retail, commercial, office, high-density residential, and institutional land uses. Open spaces and parks are also important uses within Mixed-Use Corridors. These corridors are punctuated by higher intensity development located at “nodes” called Activity Centers where the highest density and integration of mixed uses occurs.



Desired Development Pattern

Suburban commercial corridors should be transformed over time from traditional strip commercial development to Mixed-Use Corridors connecting Activity Centers. Between Activity Centers, corridors should be redeveloped to convert single story, single use developments on individual lots to multi-story, mixed use formats that organize uses in a pedestrian-friendly format.



Transportation

Developments are encouraged to be planned as larger master planned developments to increase access management opportunities and reduce the number of driveways on serving roads. Internal connectivity between commercial, office, and residential developments should occur. As feasible, new road improvements and suburban commercial centers should provide safe and easy access to travelers riding the bus and walking from adjacent developments. Long term strategies should be developed to assess necessary adjustments to accommodate future rail transit.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Multi-family housing, professional offices, restaurants and bars, financial institutions, medical offices, personal services, drug stores, smaller-scale retail shopping, parks and recreational facilities are appropriate along the corridor, and are preferably developed within mixed-use centers.

Secondary Land Uses: Other commercial uses such as drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations, and other more intensive commercial uses are more appropriate proximate to and within Activity Centers.

Policy Guidance

1. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
2. To increase the vitality of corridors and their adjacent Activity Centers, new development should be sited with fronts facing the road or other site orientations to create a “main street” pattern of development.
3. Vertical mixing of uses (“stacking”) is the preferred form of development along the corridor and generally should range from 2-5 stories, with the tallest buildings in transition areas outside of activity centers and lower heights along the central portions of the corridor.
4. New development and redevelopment within aging commercial corridors should improve visual character along the corridor through site orientation, tree plantings and landscaping, architectural features, location of parking, and signage.
5. Larger master-planned developments are encouraged to use consistent design themes throughout, including architectural features and signage.
6. The location of parking to the side or rear of developments is encouraged. Consideration should be given to reduce parking requirements to facilitate redevelopment of underutilized properties.
7. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.

MIXED-USE CORRIDOR

8. Public-private partnerships should be undertaken on catalyst projects to trigger the redevelopment process in underutilized commercial corridors. Public investments may include the sale or conveyance of lands and public infrastructure improvements.

Relevant Plans

Broad River Road Corridor Master Plan, Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan, Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan, The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard/Woodfield Park Area, Trenholm Acres Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

#9 Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road

Areas of Common Interest

Proposed projects in the Northwest, Northeast, Beltway, and Southeast Planning areas should be coordinated with adjacent municipalities when located in areas of common interest near jurisdictional lines.

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

OI, NC, GC, RS-HS, RM-MD, RM-HD, PDD, RD, CRD, DBWP

Community Activity Center

Land Use and Design

Community Activity Centers provide the goods, services, and facilities which are possible only with the critical mass of population provided by a larger community-scale marketshed. These centers supply anchor and junior retailers, smaller retail establishments, office space, and high-density residential uses. Mixed-use developments that integrate higher-density residential uses with nonresidential uses, such as developments that place dwellings over shops, are encouraged. The integration of public spaces within these centers is encouraged. A Community Activity Center may also include uses typical of both neighborhood and community centers, since it may also serve these functions for the surrounding neighborhood or community. Centers should be master-planned and designed in a manner that provides a vertical (multi-story) or horizontal (multiple-uses on a site) mix of uses.



Transportation

Developments are encouraged to be planned as larger master planned developments to increase access management opportunities, reduce the number of driveways on serving roads, and support use of bus transit. Internal connectivity between commercial, office, and residential developments is encouraged. As feasible, new road improvements and suburban commercial centers should use the “complete streets” approach to provide safe and easy access to travelers riding the bus and walking from adjacent developments. Long term strategies should be developed to assess necessary adjustments to accommodate future rail transit.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Large and small format retail centers and shops, grocery stores, restaurants, bars, personal services, multifamily housing located above non-residential uses on ground floor, and public gathering spaces such as plazas.

Secondary Land Uses: Stand-alone multi-family housing, professional offices, and other commercial uses such as drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations.

Policy Guidance

1. Development or redevelopment of existing commercial corridors should promote the modern “centers” based pattern of development to make them accessible by car, bike, and foot, to make them more visually appealing from the road, and to make corridors safer and less stressful to navigate.
2. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
3. To increase the vitality of Community Activity Centers, these developments should be sited with fronts facing the major road corridor or other site orientations to create more of a “main street” form of development.
4. New development and redevelopment within aging commercial corridors should improve visual character along the corridor through site orientation, tree plantings and landscaping, architectural features, location of parking, and signage.
5. Larger master-planned developments are encouraged to use consistent design themes throughout, including architectural features and signage.
6. The location of parking to the side or rear of developments, or through structured parking, is encouraged.
7. Density bonuses and reduced development standards, such as parking, should be considered to encourage focused development within Community Activity Centers.
8. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.
9. Public-private partnerships should be undertaken on catalyst projects to trigger the redevelopment process in underutilized commercial corridors. Public investments may include the sale or conveyance of lands and public infrastructure improvements.
10. Centers should use context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential neighborhoods and protect adjacent residential properties from negative impacts such as light, sound, and traffic.

Relevant Plans

Broad River Road Corridor Master Plan, The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard/Woodfield Park Area, Trenholm Acres Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

#4 at Broad River and Bush River and #9 at Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

OI, NC, GC, RS-HS, RM-MD, RM-HD, PDD



Neighborhood Activity Center

Land Use and Design

A Neighborhood Activity Center should provide the commercial and institutional uses necessary to support the common day-to-day demands of the surrounding neighborhood for goods and services. The Neighborhood Activity Center should also supply limited local office space demanded by neighborhood businesses, and may provide medium-density housing for the neighborhood, conveniently located near the center’s shopping and employment. A grocery store or drug store will normally be the principal establishment in neighborhood activity centers, but could also include restaurants, coffee shops, dry cleaners, small banking facilities, and other convenience retail.



Transportation

Developments are encouraged to be planned as cohesive planned developments to increase access management opportunities and reduce the number of driveways on serving roads. Internal connectivity between uses is encouraged. As feasible, new road improvements should use the “complete streets” approach to provide safe and easy access to travelers riding the bus and walking from adjacent developments.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Grocery store, restaurant, bar, personal service, professional office, financial institution, small format medical office, personal service, drug store, and smaller-scale retail shopping are appropriate within Neighborhood Activity Centers.

Secondary Land Uses: Multi-family housing and commercial uses such as drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations.

Policy Guidance

1. Neighborhood Activity Centers should be designed to integrate with adjacent neighborhoods, providing safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access, as well as accessibility to automobiles.
2. Neighborhood Activity Centers should use context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential neighborhoods and protect adjacent residential properties from negative impacts such as light, sound, and traffic.
3. Access management techniques that consolidate methods of ingress and egress as a means to preserve transportation system capacity are encouraged.
4. To increase the vitality of Neighborhood Activity Center, these nodes should be oriented to face the fronting road corridor, and provide a “face” to neighboring developments.
5. Density bonuses and reduced development standards should be considered to encourage focused development within Neighborhood Activity Centers.
6. New development and redevelopment within aging commercial corridors should improve visual character along the corridor through tree plantings and landscaping, architectural features, location of parking, and signage.
7. Internal circulation for vehicles and pedestrians should be provided between uses, and connectivity with adjacent developments is preferred.

Relevant Plans

Broad River Road Corridor Master Plan, Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

#1 I-26 Broad River Road (north) Interchange, #2 Ballentine at Dutch Fork Road, Marina Road, and Broad River Road, #4 Broad River and Bush River, #11 Lower Richland Boulevard and Garners Ferry

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

OI, NC, RS-HD, RM-MD, RM-HD, PDD

Rural Activity Center

Land Use and Design

A Rural Activity Center provides opportunities at rural crossroad locations for commercial development to serve the surrounding rural community. This can include small feed stores, restaurants, convenience grocery markets, and similar smaller scale retail uses. These are not mixed-use developments and should not include residential development; however, small bed and breakfasts, or other smaller scale tourism operations are appropriate.



Transportation

The primary form of transportation is personal vehicles. Greenways and natural foot paths are the preferred form of local recreational access for pedestrians. Bicycle access is made via shared roads or possibly by wide shoulders on main roadways.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Small feed stores, restaurants, convenience grocery marts, gasoline and automobile service stations, and produce stands.

Policy Guidance

1. Development should be limited to one or two story commercial establishments on individual lots. Large scale commercial development that requires significant road capacity and other public facilities are not appropriate.
2. Rural Activity Centers should incorporate context sensitive designs that locate more intensive uses away from adjacent residential properties, and protect these residential properties from negative impacts, such as light, sound, and traffic.
3. Developments should be designed to reflect the unique rural character of the area.
4. To the extent possible, siting and orientation of buildings should maximize road frontage, while also protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
5. Developments will not likely receive water and wastewater service from private or public utilities.

Relevant Plans

Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan

Priority Investment Areas

None

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

RC

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER/CORRIDOR

Land Use and Character

Concentrated areas of high quality employment facilities, integrated with or adjacent to complementary retail and commercial uses and/or medium-and high-density residential uses. This category encourages development of manufacturing, industrial, flex space, and office uses in locations that will minimally affect surrounding properties. Commercial and residential uses are secondary to employment uses



Desired Development Pattern

Master planned industrial and business parks should include a mix of uses within single developments, including employment, convenience commercial and dining, and housing. These mixed-use employment “campuses” provide opportunities for employees to conveniently shop and dine during normal business hours. Smaller scale, single-use employment developments located along major roads should be designed to appropriately buffer manufacturing and industrial uses from adjacent properties. Secondary commercial and residential uses should be located along primary road corridors proximate to employment centers.



Transportation

Maintaining vehicular access and capacity is the primary goal within these areas to ensure that trucks and industrial vehicles have adequate road capacity to and from employment centers.

Recommended Land Uses

Primary Land Uses: Manufacturing, warehousing and logistics centers, light and heavy industrial, research and development facilities, business parks, and other employment uses.

Secondary Land Uses: Multi-family housing, restaurant, bar, personal service, financial institution, small format medical office, personal service, drug store, smaller-scale retail shopping, parks and recreational facilities are appropriate within Employment Centers/Corridors. Commercial uses such as drive-through restaurants, convenience stores and gasoline stations, are more appropriate near highway interchanges.

Policy Guidance

1. Industrial and business park uses are the preferred land use for these areas. Other developments should be adequately buffered from industrial uses to eliminate incompatibility issues.
2. To the extent possible, employment centers should be designed to function as “campuses” with integrated pedestrian facilities and transitions to adjacent, less intensive uses.
3. Light and heavy industrial and manufacturing uses should be designed to mitigate impacts on adjoining lower intensity uses, such as business parks.

Relevant Plans

Blythewood Comprehensive Plan

Priority Investment Areas

I-77 Wilson Road Interchange, I-77 Killian Road Interchange, I-77 Farrow Road, Portions of Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road

Areas of Common Interest

Proposed projects in the Northeast, North Central, and Southeast Planning areas should be coordinated with adjacent municipalities when located in areas of common interest near jurisdictional lines.

Existing Zoning Districts of Similar Character

OI, GC, LI, HI, RS-MD, RS-HD, RM-MD, RM-HD, PDD

MILITARY INSTALLATION

Land Use and Character

Areas where established military installations exist. These include Fort Jackson and the McCrady Training Center located at Fort Jackson, and the McEntire Joint National Guard Station. Uses on these sites include flight and artillery training facilities, military housing, commercial and public service uses, and other uses necessary to support military operations.



Desired Development Pattern

Traditional military complex of uses organized to best serve the mission of the installation.



Transportation

Controlled access onto military installations is designated at identified gateways. Transportation improvements will be identified as necessary to improve mobility and accessibility of base operations.

Policy Guidance

1. Support the compatibility of land uses near military installations and reduce the operational impacts and hazards of incompatible land uses through implementation of the 2013 Joint Land Use Study.
2. Establish a formal multi-jurisdictional land use coordinating body, such as the Regional Land Use Advisory Commission established by Fort Bragg, focused on land compatibility issues that cross jurisdictional lines. Consider preparing formal agreements for information sharing and review on proposed projects within areas of common interest and along shared borders.
3. Consider a process to evaluate and update the County's zoning ordinance to ensure compatible development within the Military Activity Zones identified in the Joint Land Use Study.
4. Explore opportunities for incentive-based programs that support land use strategies encouraged by the 2013 Joint Land Use Study.
5. Protect active military operations through improved notification and real estate disclosure to surrounding property owners and developers about impacts of proximate military operations.

Relevant Plans

Joint Land Use Study (2013)

Priority Investment Areas

None

MUNICIPALITY

Jurisdiction

The Municipality Future Land Use category identifies the locations of incorporated municipalities in Richland County. These incorporated communities control planning and zoning decisions within their jurisdiction. The County will work to coordinate with these communities to plan in areas of common interest along the edges of jurisdictional lines.

Goals and Implementation Strategies

To support the implementation of the Future Land Use framework for the County, Richland County's land use goals are...

LU Goal #1: To reduce challenges to redevelopment efforts in urban and suburban communities

To maintain and to improve the quality of life in Richland County's developed communities and to efficiently use existing infrastructure in developed areas, the County will reduce challenges to redevelopment efforts in urban and suburban communities.

LU Strategy 1.1: Comprehensive development incentives

The County will work with developers to identify barriers to redevelopment, such as parking requirements, and to develop a comprehensive, incentives-based approach for encouraging redevelopment that addresses all aspects of the development review and approval process.

LU Strategy 1.2: Historic preservation tax incentives

When working with property owners and developers of historic structures, the County should educate and encourage the use of historic preservation tax credits that promote the reuse of existing buildings and the preservation of the historic character in the County.

LU Strategy 1.3: Land Development Code updates

Following work on LU Strategy 1.1, the County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to remove barriers and to create incentives that will support redevelopment of existing properties.

LU Strategy 1.4: Priority Investment targets in redevelopment areas

There are several opportunities for redevelopment of aging commercial centers/corridors and blighted neighborhoods. For example (but not limited to), Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road are included within Priority Investment Areas identified in the Priority Investment Element of this Comprehensive Plan. The County should look for opportunities to improve these areas and others when assessing capital improvement priorities.

LU Goal #2: To increase the number of successful urban and suburban infill development projects

To maximize the use of existing infrastructure and to create a more cohesive development framework in urbanizing areas, the County will support the development of infill properties. These are undeveloped properties surrounded by development that are served by infrastructure and do not have any significant open space, recreational, or natural resource value.

LU Strategy 2.1: Assess infrastructure capacity to infill sites

The County should develop a property list of infill sites in and around Priority Investment Areas, and assess the infrastructure capacity to serve these sites. If infrastructure is not available to serve these sites, this should be brought to the attention of the appropriate departments/ utility providers to discuss options for increasing capacity that can encourage appropriate infill development.

LU Strategy 2.2: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to remove barriers and to create incentives that will support infill development, particularly in Priority Investment Areas.



LU Strategy 2.3: Capital improvement planning

When updating the County’s Capital Improvement Plan, consideration should be given to capital projects, such as transportation improvements, water, sewer, and other utilities needed to support development at infill locations, particularly in Priority Investment Areas.

LU Goal #3: For new neighborhood developments to include a mix of housing types and commercial and recreational amenities

New residential developments in Neighborhood (medium-density) and Mixed Residential Future Land Use categories should be encouraged to include a mix of housing types, recreational amenities, and neighborhood scale shopping.

LU Strategy 3.1: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to remove barriers and to create incentives that will support mixed-use residential developments in Neighborhood (medium-density) and Mixed Residential Future Land Use categories. This should include the addition of new zoning districts that are designed to encourage mixed-use developments and traditional neighborhood development designs. Coordination should occur with the City of Columbia for creating development standards that may apply to lands in areas of common interest.

LU Goal #4: To have higher density residential and commercial uses within a walkable distance of current and future transit stations

To foster development that will support future commuter rail and bus transit service and to encourage higher-density development to occur in locations where infrastructure already exists, the County supports a “community centers-based” development pattern that focuses higher density

residential and commercial uses within a walkable distance of future transit stations.

LU Strategy 4.1: Capital Improvement planning

When updating the County’s Capital Improvement Plan, consideration should be given to capital projects, such as transportation improvements, water, sewer, and other utilities, needed to support development at targeted commuter rail station areas identified within Priority Investment Areas.

LU Strategy 4.2: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to remove barriers and to create incentives that will support higher-density, transit-oriented development. This includes housing, commercial, and office development in and around future transit stations. New zoning districts should be developed in coordination with the City of Columbia and Forest Acres to support future transit-oriented development near identified transit station sites.

LU Goal #5: For rural communities to maintain true rural character

As the County grows, rural areas designated on the Future Land Use map can be developed, but the rural character of these areas should be maintained.

LU Strategy 5.1: Evaluate the Potential for a Transfer of Development Rights Program

The County should conduct a real estate market analysis to determine the feasibility of implementing a transfer of development rights program in Richland County. This is a voluntary market based program that allows property owners to sell development rights in “sending areas” typically located in rural area, for use in



“receiving areas” or areas where urban development opportunities exist. The County should collaborate with Columbia and other jurisdictions to assess the development of a true county-wide program.

LU Strategy 5.2: Increase funding for purchase of development rights

The County should evaluate opportunities to increase funding for purchases of development rights by the Richland County Conservation Commission within Rural and Conservation Future Land Use categories. This is a tool that allows landowners to maintain ownership of their property and sell property development rights to the County for land conservation purposes. The benefit is that land can be maintained in an “undeveloped” state and also provide economic value to the landowner. This is a voluntary and incentive-based tool.

LU Strategy 5.3: Increase efforts to establish conservation easements

The County should consider increasing capacity of the Conservation Commission to work with landowners to establish conservation easements on priority conservation areas in Conservation and Rural Future Land Use categories. This is a tool that allows landowners to maintain ownership of their property and sell an easement on their land that reduces development rights and in trade provides tax incentives for land conservation purposes. This is a voluntary and incentive-based tool.

LU Strategy 5.4: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to develop true rural zoning districts and development standards that can be applied to lands in Conservation and Rural Future Land Use categories. This should include incentives for developing very low density

development, conservation subdivisions under the existing Open Space Code, and low-impact development that utilizes natural means for managing stormwater and protects environmentally sensitive lands.

LU Strategy 5.5: Coordination with utility providers

The County will work with utility providers to steer infrastructure investments that will generate development pressures away from rural areas. The development of public water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater should be discouraged in rural areas, except when this infrastructure is needed to ensure public health and safety.

LU Goal #6: To protect areas surrounding military installations from encroachment by development that could hinder military operations

Richland County supports the implementation of the Joint Land Use Study developed for Fort Jackson and McEntire Joint National Guard Base to protect lands surrounding these bases from development that could hinder military operations.

LU Strategy 6.1: Share information affecting areas of common interest

The County should continue to share information with military installations on rezoning cases and development and capital improvement projects proposed in areas of common interest as defined on the Future Land Use map.

LU Strategy 6.2: Incorporate military activity zones into Land Development Code

The County will work with Fort Jackson and McEntire Air National Guard bases, and residents in areas surrounding the bases to evaluate opportunities to implement the Land Development Code recommendations of the Joint Land Use Study (2013).



LU Strategy 6.3: Support MAJIC²

Richland County will support the efforts of the Midlands Area Joint Installation Consortium (MAJIC) to prevent increasing development encroachment that could result in complaints about noise, dust, and smoke from military training exercises through LU Strategies 6.1 and 6.2.

LU Goal #7: To maintain active working lands uses, such as agriculture, horticulture, and forestry

Richland County will support the continued viability of working lands uses, such as agriculture, horticulture, and forestry, to maintain a positive local economic impact, local foods production, and to protect the inherent natural resource value these uses provide to the County.

LU Strategy 7.1: Educate landowners about nearby working lands operations

The County will work to establish programs to better educate landowners about nearby farming operations. This could include a neighbor relation packet for newcomers and realtors, required notification about location of nearby farming or forestry operations as part of the sale of land in rural areas, or perhaps other means of outreach.

LU Strategy 7.2: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to support working lands operations through zoning districts and development standards that can be applied to lands in Conservation and Rural Future Land Use categories. This should include incentives for developing very low density development, and standards that could help avoid land use conflicts,

² For more information on the Midlands Area Joint Installation Consortium (MAJIC), go to <http://www.denix.osd.mil/sri/upload/MidlandsAreaJointInstallationConsortium-UPDATED.pdf>

such as fencing, buffers between uses, and location of well taps. It could also address barriers to agricultural supportive operations such as farmstands, feed stores, processing centers, distribution centers, heavy equipment sales and service businesses, and veterinary clinics.

LU Strategy 7.3: Targeted land conservation

The County should consider increasing capacity of the Conservation Commission to work with landowners to establish conservation easements on priority working lands areas in Conservation and Rural Future Land Use categories. This is a tool that allows landowners to maintain ownership of their property and sell an easement on their land that reduces development rights and in trade provides tax incentives for land conservation purposes. This is a voluntary and incentive-based tool. The Conservation Commission should also consider short-term “generational” conservation easements that allow landowners to reduce development rights for a certain period of time as an alternative to full conservation into perpetuity.

LU Strategy 7.4: Establish a program to link aging farmers with young farmers without land

The County should work with partners, such as the Soil and Water Conservation District and the Midlands Local Food Collaborative, to develop a program to link aging farmers with budding farmers in need of training on a full-fledged farm. The intent is to create opportunities to maintain farming operations that will not continue as a family business, but that could be sold/leased to other interested farmers.

LU Strategy 7.5: Consider development of a working lands property tax incentive

The County should consider assessing property taxes on working lands at a lower rate than other



undeveloped lands. The intent is to provide an incentive for agriculture, horticulture, and forestry uses that likely generate minimal public costs for County services.

LU Strategy 7.6: Priority Investment Area

The County should consider the addition of a Priority Investment Area within the Southeast Planning Area to invest in and support working lands businesses, such as agritourism, processing centers and kitchens for value-added products, agricultural business incubators for start-up businesses, distribution centers, and other supporting land uses.

LU Goal #8: To maintain water quality and protect water resources while providing new recreational access opportunities to public waterways

Richland County will protect critical watersheds, surface waters, and floodplains from the intrusion of development and development impacts that have a detrimental effect on water quality.

LU Strategy 8.1: Land Development Code Updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to support the protection of critical watersheds, surface waters, and floodplains. This could include enhanced buffers and setbacks in impaired watersheds, increasing standards for development in the floodplains, and incentives for low-impact development designs in these areas. Incentives for or requirement of conservation subdivisions and other environmentally sensitive designs within impaired watersheds, and near greenway corridors should be considered.

LU Strategy 8.2: Protection of lands along impacted watersheds and in floodplains

The County should consider increasing capacity of the Conservation Commission to work with landowners to establish conservation easements or to purchase development rights in environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains and creek banks. These are voluntary and incentive-based tools that allow landowners to maintain their land and receive financial benefit from the sale of development rights.

LU Strategy 8.3: Recreational investments

When updating plans for future recreational amenities, the County should assess opportunities to increase public access along the County's waterways through greenways and trails, boat ramps, parks, and similar recreational assets. Opportunities to create a connected system of trails and greenways should be encouraged.

LU Goal #9: To develop formal agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to coordinate planning in areas of common interest

To support a cohesive development pattern across jurisdictional lines, Richland County will work with its municipalities to share information with and consider the impacts of development proposals on the edges of these jurisdictions.

LU Strategy 9.1: Share information affecting areas of common interest

The County should develop formal memoranda of understanding with Columbia, and potentially other jurisdictions to share information on development proposals that occur within areas of common interest along jurisdictional lines. This could also include a formal opportunity for the County and the City to provide comments during public review of developments in these areas. It could also include the application of the other



jurisdiction’s development standards where appropriate.

LU Strategy 9.2: Assembly of Governments

The County could take a leadership role in developing an “Assembly of Governments” that meet quarterly to discuss issues of common interest to jurisdictions in Richland County. Members could include the elected officials and management staff of Richland County, Arcadia Lakes, Blythewood, Cayce, Columbia, Eastover, Forest Acres, Irmo, School District 5 of Richland and Lexington Counties, Richland County School District One, Richland County School District Two, and directors from the many utilities operating in the County.

LU Strategy 9.3: Land Development Code updates

When updating zoning districts and development standards in areas of common interest along the edges of jurisdictional boundaries, coordinate with the City of Columbia and other municipalities to make development regulations more consistent, particularly in Priority Investment Areas.

LU Strategy 9.4: Joint planning of South Assembly Street corridor

Work with the City of Columbia to develop a small area plan for the South Assembly Street Corridor near the Olympia, Granby Village, and Whaley Mills neighborhoods.

LU Goal #10: To establish a formal mechanism with Columbia and other utility providers to better coordinate development of new infrastructure with the County’s Future Land Use Plan

Richland County will seek to establish strong working relationships with local utility providers to plan together for future utility infrastructure

improvements, particularly public water and wastewater service.

LU Strategy 10.1: Assembly of Governments

As referred to in Land Use Strategy 9.2, the County should take leadership in establishing an Assembly of Governments that could bring together elected officials, management staff, and directors of all jurisdictions and utility providers operating in the region to coordinate long-range planning and infrastructure projects.

LU Goal #11: To evaluate the benefits and costs of future capital investment projects

To make efficient use of public resources, the County will establish a process for evaluating the fiscal and economic impacts of future capital projects as a factor for determining priorities to include in the Capital Improvement Plan.

LU Strategy 11.1: Fiscal impact analysis

The County will develop a model for evaluating the fiscal and economic impacts of public infrastructure projects as one input into development of the County’s Capital Improvement Plan. Fiscal analyses should compare both expected revenue generation and public costs to develop and maintain infrastructure over time.

LU Goal #12: To improve the energy footprint of Richland County

Richland County seeks to attain and maintain a state of leadership in South Carolina as an environmental steward that strives to proactively and effectively manage its impact on energy, water, natural resources, and local air quality. Therefore, it is the policy of Richland County Council that institutions, and affiliated entities, shall establish sustainable development



and resource management, or “sustainability” as a core value of County operations, planning, capital construction, and purchasing practices. To this end, the Regional Sustainability Energy Plan, adopted by Richland Council in 2013, will be referenced in land use planning decisions.

LU Strategy 12.1: Land Development Code Updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to encourage low impact development and/or Smart Growth Principles. Zoning should also be updated to encourage denser development.

LU Strategy 12.2: Best Practices in Land Management

The County will identify undeveloped land where growth and development should be managed or discouraged. The County will also identify potential ribbons of undeveloped land that could serve as corridors and/or greenways with bicycling, jogging and walking paths for recreation and commuting.

LU Strategy 12.3: Curb Sprawl

The County will encourage denser development along the County’s commuter corridors using policies such as density bonuses, cluster development, purchase of development rights and transfer of development rights.

LU Strategy 12.4: Master Plans

The County will incorporate sustainable principles related to infrastructure, natural resources, site development, and community impact into Master Plans.

LU Strategy 12.5: Incentives for energy conservation

The County will research and offer incentives for commercial and residential developers to build greener structures, even working towards LEED

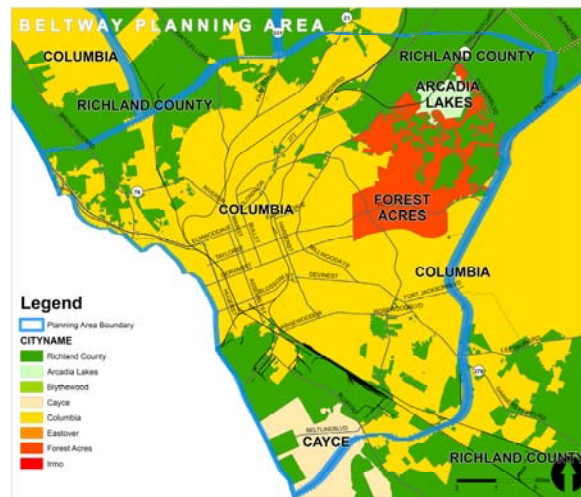
levels. Incentives will also be developed to encourage redevelopment and infill development over greenfield. The County will promote redevelopment, repurposing of buildings and infill development where existing utilities and other services exist to foster sustainable growth patterns.

LU Strategy 12.6: Landfills

The County will continue to implement the Solid Waste Management Plan to provide for adequate collection, processing, and disposal of solid waste and recycling efforts in an environmentally sound and economically feasible manner to meet the needs of present and future residents. Plan for new and expanded solid waste management facilities and changing technologies including coordination with adjacent counties.



Beltway Planning Area



The Beltway Planning Area is comprised mostly of land in the Cities surrounded by unincorporated lands in Richland County's jurisdiction.

The Beltway Planning Area is bounded by I-77 and I-20. A majority of the Beltway Planning Area is comprised of the Cities of Arcadia Lakes, Cayce, Columbia, and Forest Acres. The unincorporated portions of the County surround these communities, and in some instances are located within these communities. The municipalities plan and zone for the land within their jurisdiction. Coordination with these communities to plan for areas of common interest along jurisdictional borders is a priority for the County.

Recent years have seen an increase in the development activity in the Beltway Planning Area. Changes in housing preferences, a resurgence in downtown Columbia, and the expansion of the University of South Carolina and the Vista area have made many areas in the Beltway attractive for new development.

RELEVANT PLANS

The County and its municipalities have adopted several plans that are applicable to lands in the Beltway Planning area:

- The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard/Woodfield Park Area
- Broad River Neighborhood Master Plan
- Broad River Corridor Master Plan
- Trenholm Acres/Newcastle Master Plan
- City of Columbia Comprehensive Plan
- Comprehensive Plan for Arcadia Lakes
- City of Forest Acres Comprehensive Plan

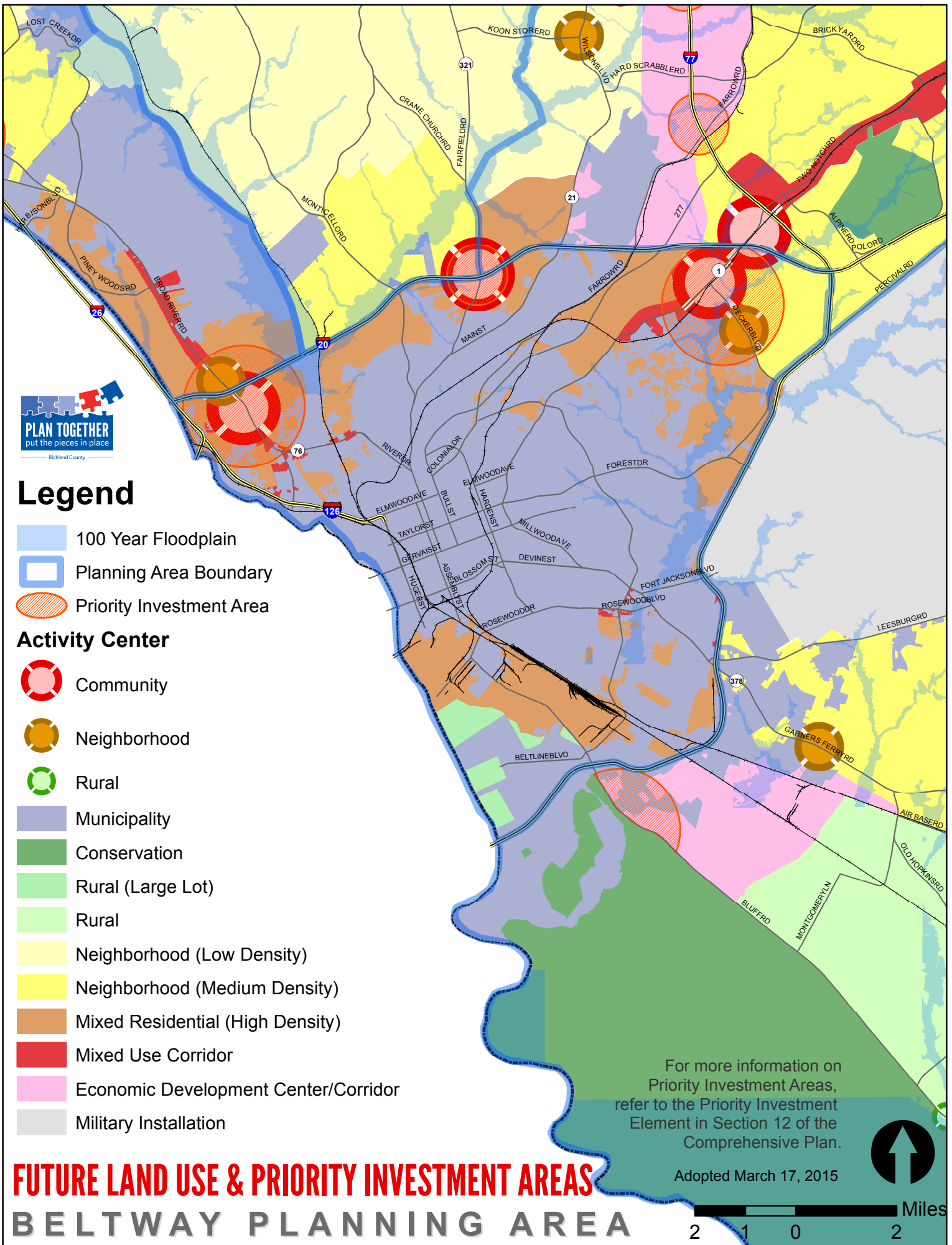
PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS

Planned capital improvements in the Beltway Planning Area include:

- Emergency Medical Services headquarter facility on Cushman Drive
- Coroner's Facility storage space on Shakespeare Road
- Decker Center on Decker Boulevard that will house County Sheriff's offices and judicial offices

FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of lands in the Beltway Planning Area are proposed for Mixed Residential, Activity Center/Corridor, and Economic Development Center/Corridor uses. Richland County should coordinate with the City of Columbia, and other jurisdictions to plan for areas of common interested on the edges of jurisdictional lines. For more defined guidance for land planning in Mixed Residential areas, refer to the City of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan Development Types located in Appendix B of this Comprehensive Plan.



Legend

- 100 Year Floodplain
- Planning Area Boundary
- Priority Investment Area
- Activity Center**
- Community
- Neighborhood
- Rural
- Municipality
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium Density)
- Mixed Residential (High Density)
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installation

For more information on Priority Investment Areas, refer to the Priority Investment Element in Section 12 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted March 17, 2015



FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS

BELTWAY PLANNING AREA

Northwest Planning Area



The Northwest Planning Area consists of lands north and west of the Broad River up to the Lexington County line.

The Northwest Planning Area covers the Irmo/Dutch Fork portion of the County, between Lexington County and the Broad River. This area includes the City of Irmo and portions of the City of Columbia. These communities plan and zone for the land within their jurisdictions.

Lake Murray is a highly desirable area to live in Richland County. This has resulted in the conversion of rural and environmentally sensitive lands into new residential and commercial development - a major concern for many in the Northwest. There are competing factors at play in this planning area. The Northwest holds both a strong market for new residential development near the lake, and community support for maintaining rural character and low-density development patterns and for protecting environmentally sensitive areas, such as the Wateree Creek watershed. The Future Land Use Map sets out a growth framework that attempts

to achieve a balance between these competing factors.

RELEVANT PLANS

The County and its municipalities have adopted several plans that are applicable to lands in the Northwest Planning Area:

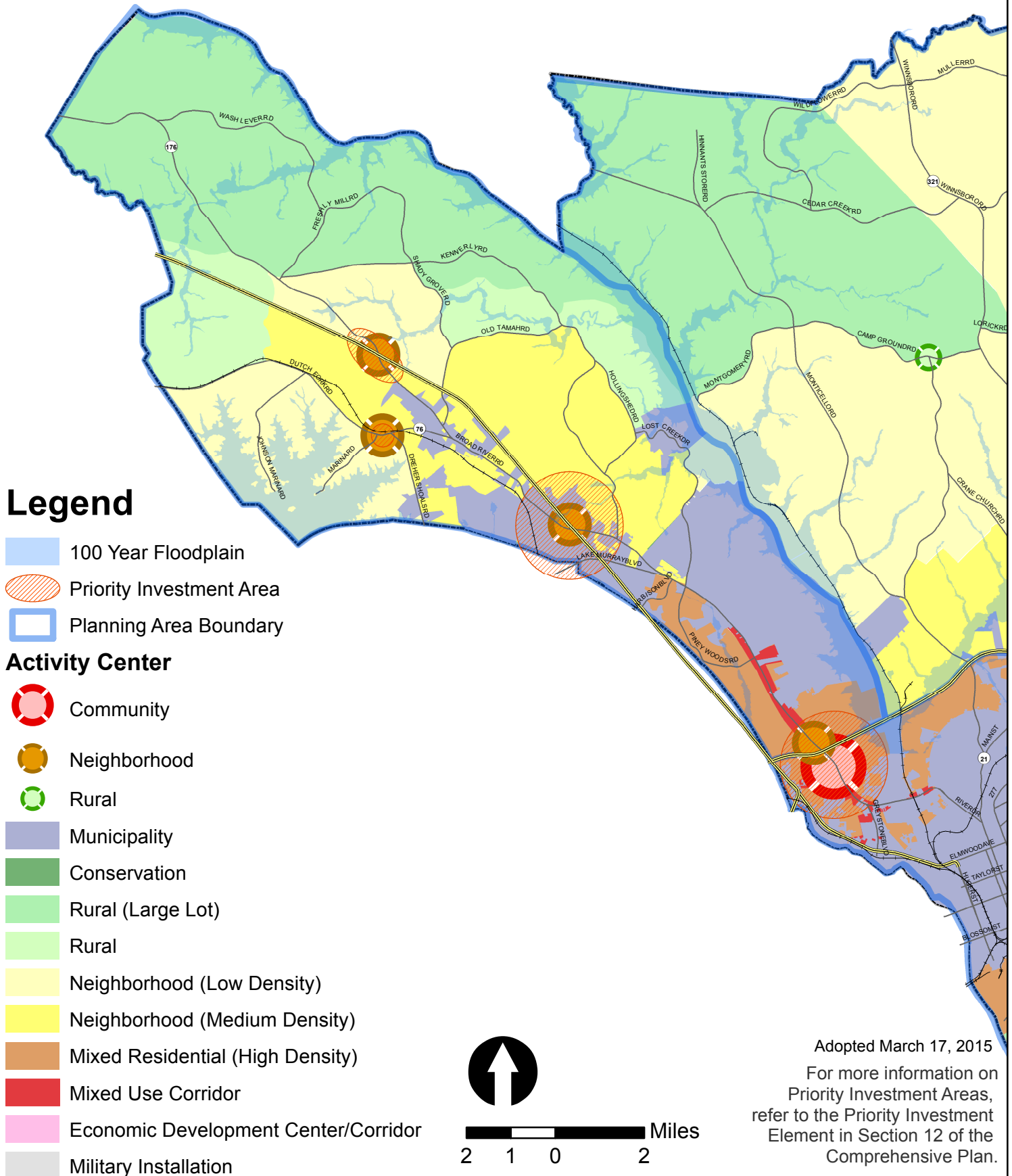
- Spring Hill Community Master Plan
- Broad River Corridor Master Plan
- Town of Irmo Comprehensive Plan

FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of lands in the Northwest Planning Area are proposed for Rural (Large Lot), Rural, Neighborhood (Low-Density), Neighborhood (Medium-Density), and Mixed Residential uses. Richland County should coordinate with the Cities of Columbia and Irmo to plan for areas of common interest on the edges of jurisdictional lines. For more defined guidance for land planning in Mixed Residential areas, refer to the City of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan Development Types located in Appendix B of this Comprehensive Plan.

NORTHWEST PLANNING AREA

FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS



North Central Planning Area



The North Central Planning Area extends from the Broad River east toward Blythewood and ends west of I-77.

The North Central Planning Area is located between the Broad River and Blythewood. The majority of land in this planning area is in the unincorporated portions of the County, but also includes portions of the City of Columbia and Blythewood. These communities plan and zone for land within their jurisdictions.

While some higher density suburban development has occurred at the south end of the planning area, the majority of the area is primarily rural, low-density residential, or in active agricultural use with no plans for providing infrastructure that would support higher density development. The Future Land Use vision for this area is to maintain the rural character, and to reinvest in aging commercial corridors and neighborhoods at the south end of the planning area.

RELEVANT PLANS

The County and its municipalities have adopted two plans that are applicable to lands in the North Central Planning Area:

- Crane Creek Master Plan
- Town of Blythewood Comprehensive Plan

FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of lands in the North Central Planning Area are proposed for Rural (Large Lot), Neighborhood (Low-Density), Neighborhood (Medium-Density), Mixed Residential, and Economic Development Center/Corridor uses. Richland County should coordinate with the Cities of Blythewood and Columbia to plan for areas of common interest on the edges of jurisdictional lines. For more defined guidance for land planning in Mixed Residential areas, refer to the City of Columbia's Comprehensive Plan Development Types located in Appendix B of this Comprehensive Plan.

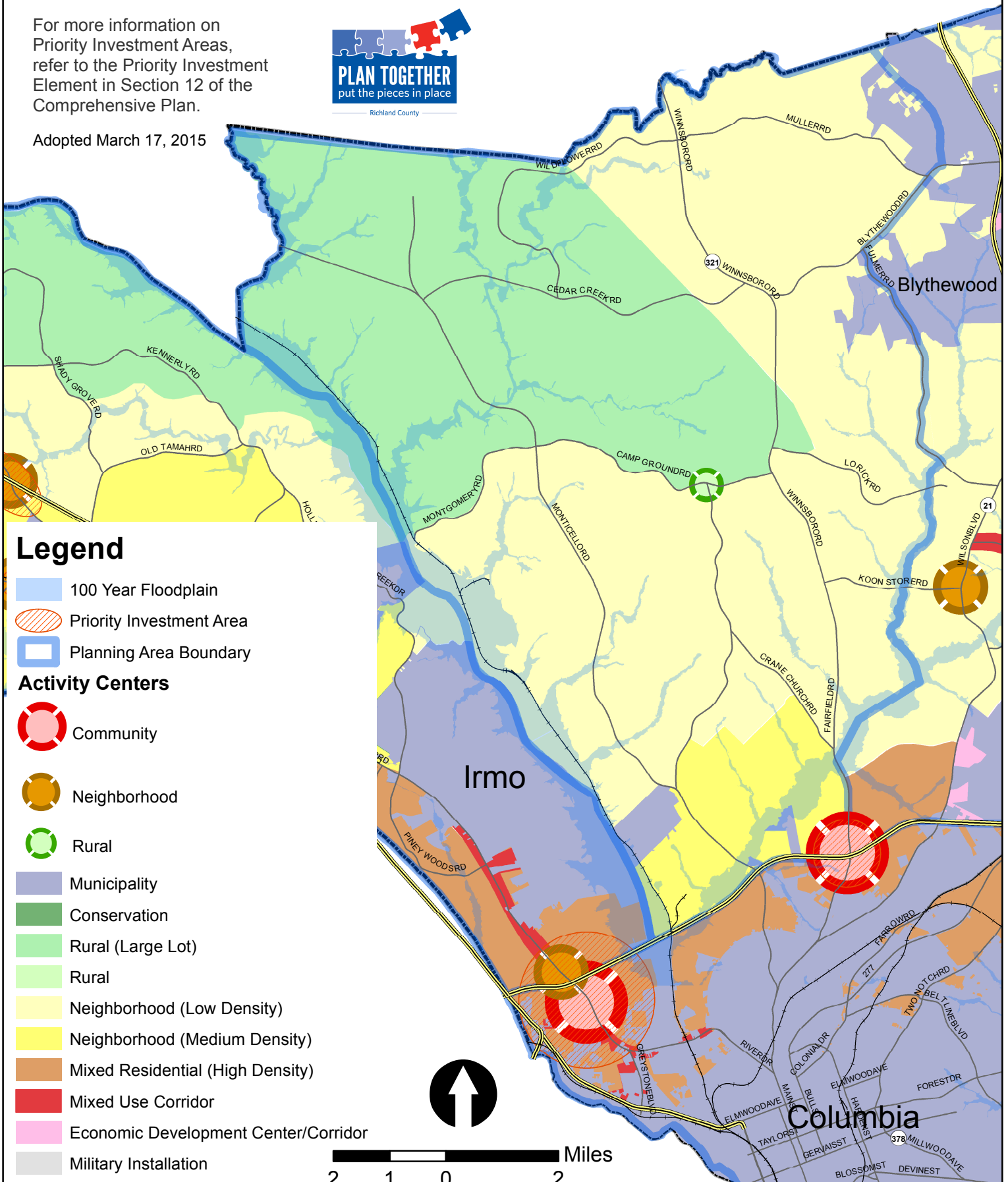
NORTH CENTRAL PLANNING AREA

FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS

For more information on Priority Investment Areas, refer to the Priority Investment Element in Section 12 of the Comprehensive Plan.



Adopted March 17, 2015



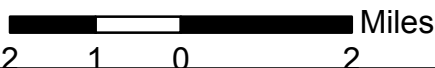
Legend

- 100 Year Floodplain
- Priority Investment Area
- Planning Area Boundary

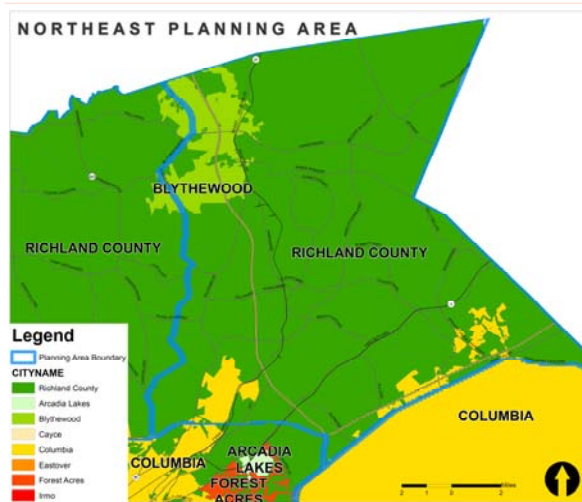
Activity Centers

- Community
- Neighborhood
- Rural

- Municipality
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium Density)
- Mixed Residential (High Density)
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installation



Northeast Planning Area



The Northeast Planning Area primarily consists of lands in Richland County’s jurisdiction, but also includes Blythewood and Columbia.

The Northeast includes both sides of the I-77 corridor, as well as the I-20 corridor above Fort Jackson. The majority of land in this planning area is in the unincorporated portions of the County, but also include portions of the City of Columbia and Blythewood. These communities plan and zone for land within their jurisdictions.

This area has been the location for much of the County’s growth over the last decade and this trend is expected to continue. This development is being led by residential growth and followed by commercial and service oriented uses. While the rest of the County achieved a lower population density over the last decade, this area actually increased in population density because of the significant amount of growth in the Northeast and the higher densities that were developed in this area.

The Future Land Use vision for this area includes continued suburban low and medium density

growth that takes advantage of interstate access and existing infrastructure lines. This area is also a primary focus for economic development efforts around I-77 interchanges. Infrastructure investments needed to realize this future land use vision should be considered, especially in priority investment areas.

RELEVANT PLANS

The County and its municipalities have adopted two plans that are applicable to lands in the Northeast Planning Area:

- Candlewood Master Plan
- Town of Blythewood Comprehensive Plan

PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS

Planned capital improvements in the Northeast Planning Area include:

- Water park located near the I-77 Interchange at Farrow Road

FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of lands in the Northeast Planning Area are proposed for Neighborhood (Low-Density), Neighborhood (Medium-Density), Mixed Residential, Activity Center/Corridor, and Economic Development Center/Corridor uses. There is also a small portion of Rural (Large Lot) designated lands to the east of Fort Jackson. Richland County should coordinate with the Cities of Blythewood and Columbia to plan for areas of common interest on the edges of jurisdictional lines. For more defined guidance for land planning in Mixed Residential areas, refer to the City of Columbia’s Comprehensive Plan Development Types located in Appendix B of this Comprehensive Plan.



NORTHEAST PLANNING AREA

FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS

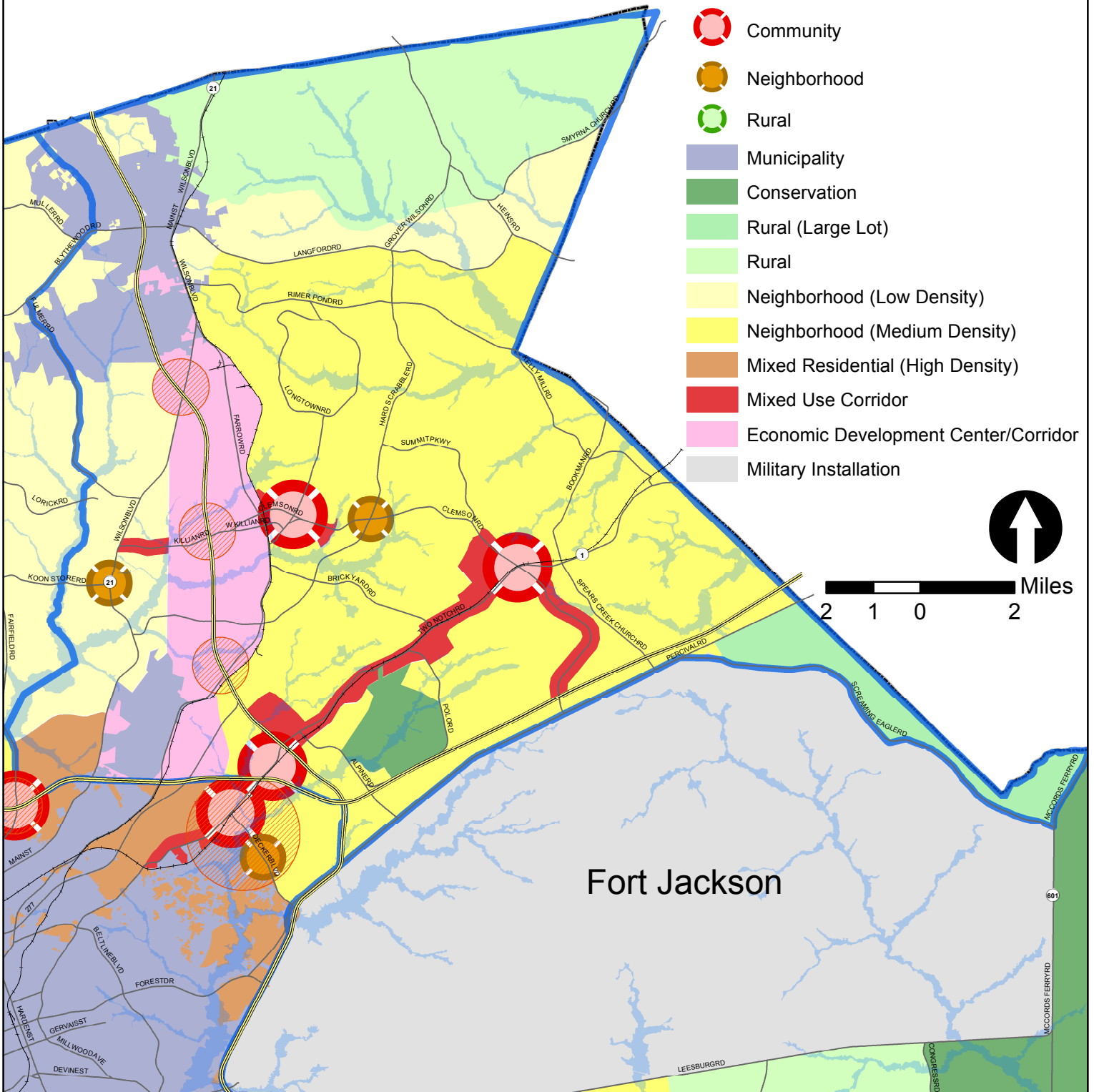


For more information on Priority Investment Areas, refer to the Priority Investment Element in Section 12 of the Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted March 17, 2015

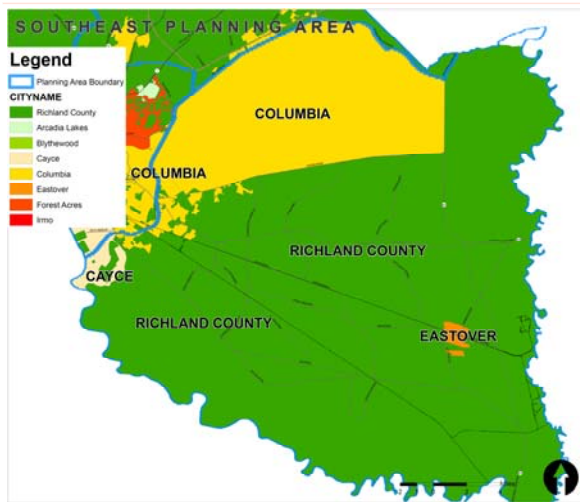
Legend

- 100 Year Floodplain
- Priority Investment Area
- Planning Area Boundary
- Activity Center**
- Community
- Neighborhood
- Rural
- Municipality
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium Density)
- Mixed Residential (High Density)
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installation



Fort Jackson

Southeast Planning Area



The Southeast Planning Area covers the lower southern half of Richland County and includes the City of Eastover and portions of the Cities of Cayce and Columbia, including Fort Jackson.

The Southeast Planning Area covers Lower Richland, including Fort Jackson, McEntire Joint Air National Guard Base, and the Congaree National Park. It includes the City of Eastover and portions of Cayce and Columbia. This planning area covers more than half of the land within the County’s jurisdiction. These areas are primarily rural and agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive lands and water bodies.

Development pressures from the Beltway area are beginning to move down into the Southeast portions of the County. The community supports managed growth in this area that controls growth and maintains true rural character. To this end, the majority of lands in this area will continue in a rural development pattern, with higher intensity development focused near the edges of Columbia and Fort Jackson. While not envisioned to have intensive suburban and urban development, this

area is still a priority for future capital improvements. Opportunities, such as redevelopment of commercial sites in downtown Eastover are priorities for public investment.

RELEVANT PLANS

The County and its municipalities have adopted two plans that are applicable to lands in the Southeast Planning Area:

- Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan
- Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan

PLANNED CAPITAL PROJECTS

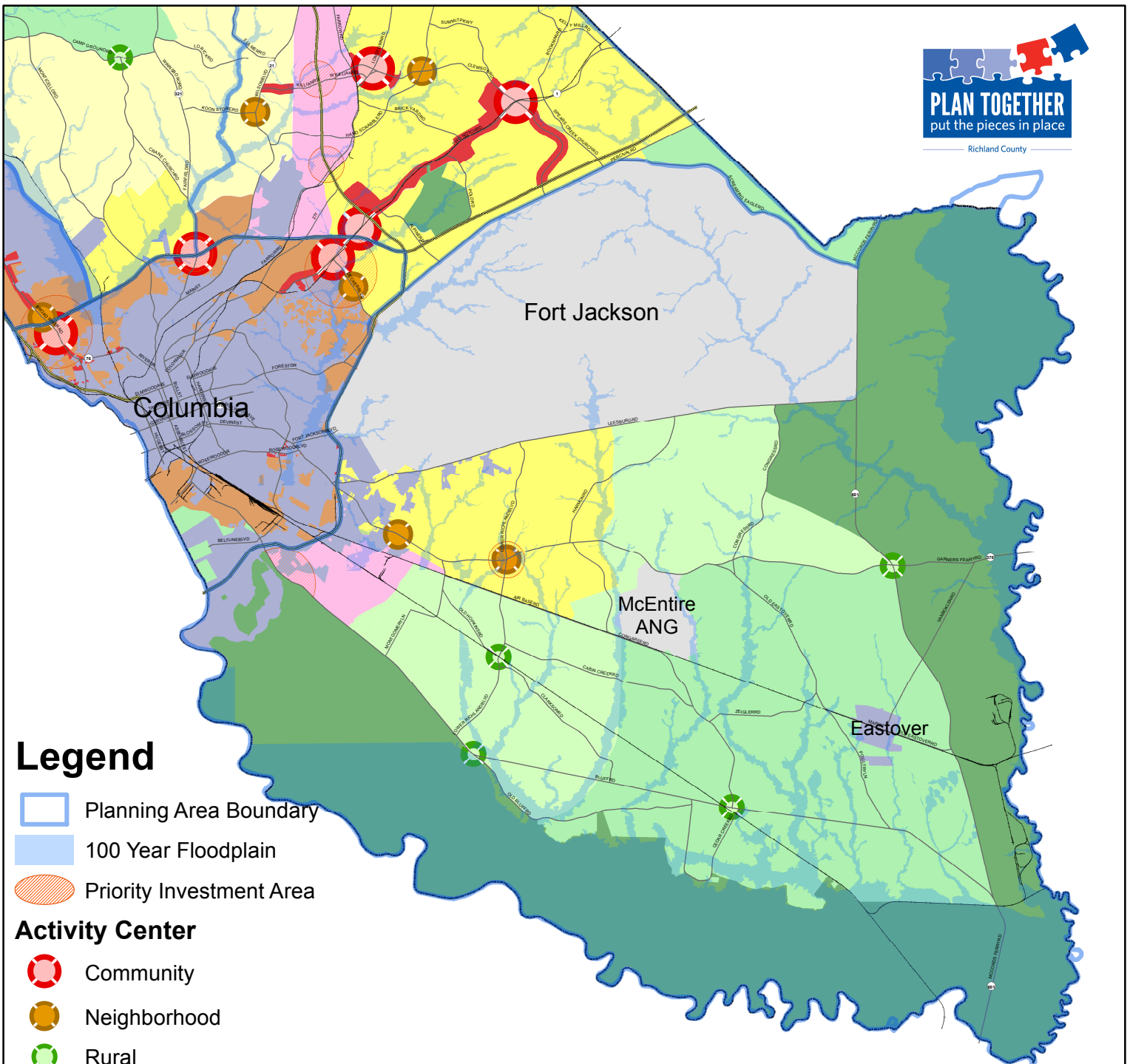
Planned capital improvements in the Southeast Planning Area include:

- Sports Arena off of Old Bluff Road
- Caughman Pond Park located near Old Eastover Road
- New sewerage collection system providing public wastewater service to landowners of failing septic systems and other landowners that voluntarily elect to “tap on” to the service

FUTURE LAND USE

The majority of lands in the Southeast Planning Area are proposed for Conservation, Rural (Large Lot), Rural, and Neighborhood (Medium-Density), with a few areas designated as Activity Center/Corridor and Economic Development Center/Corridor uses. Richland County should coordinate with the Cities of Columbia and Eastover to plan for areas of common interest on the edges of jurisdictional lines.





Legend

- Planning Area Boundary
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Priority Investment Area
- Activity Center**
- Community
- Neighborhood
- Rural
- Municipality
- Conservation
- Rural (Large Lot)
- Rural
- Neighborhood (Low Density)
- Neighborhood (Medium Density)
- Mixed Residential (High Density)
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Economic Development Center/Corridor
- Military Installation

For more information on Priority Investment Areas, refer to the Priority Investment Element in Section 12 of the Comprehensive Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE & PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS

SOUTHEAST PLANNING AREA



Adopted March 17, 2015

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6. Housing Element

Richland County's housing market fared the national recession well. However, vacancy rates of homes in the County have increased over the last decade. In addition to increasing vacancy rates, national housing trends are starting to be experienced in the County that reflect demand for new housing types and development formats. These housing trends are important policy considerations for Richland County leaders.

Issues and Opportunities

Housing Inventory is Increasing Steadily, but Changing Form

Over 50,000 housing units have been built since 1990, representing a 48 percent increase in housing stock over the last 32 years. The Northeast planning area has seen the most growth, with a nearly 200 percent increase in the number of housing units since 1990. These newly constructed houses have generally been smaller, following national trends in housing size.

While a majority of the housing in Richland County remains single-family detached, multi-family and duplex style homes have increased their relative share of the housing stock since 1990.

Vacancy Rates have Increased

The vacancy rate for Richland County has increased from 7.5 percent to 11 percent between 2000 and 2012. The Southeast and Beltway have the highest vacancy rates, at 16 percent and 13 percent respectively. This is likely due to home foreclosures brought on by the national recession that began in 2008.

Renter Occupancy Rates are Increasing and Household Sizes are Decreasing

Since 2000, renter occupancy rates have increased in all planning areas except the Northwest. This trend is likely a result of the economic recession's impact on home buying and generational shifts in housing preference. Housing demand is expected to shift away from ownership of large, single family houses, and towards the rental of smaller units as millennials and empty nesters make up a larger portion of household heads. That Richland County falls slightly below the state's average ownership rate is likely due to the fact that Richland County is one of the more urbanized counties in South Carolina.

Richland County's average household size decreased from 2.6 to 2.48 persons between 1990 and 2012. This is consistent with the national trend of declining household size.

Housing Supply Will Need to Meet Expected Population Growth

Depending on population projections, it is expected that Richland County will need to provide 30,000 to 85,000 new housing units by 2040. Where and how these new housing units will be built will depend on market conditions, land availability, and access to services. Future land use plans should address these considerations when determining where to concentrate new housing developments.

Use Consolidated Housing Plan to Assess Future Housing Needs

The Richland County Community Development Department completed a "Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development" in 2012. The plan compiled extensive socioeconomic and geographic analysis of the County's population in order to assess future housing need. The plan will be updated every five years and represents an informative outlet for housing information pertinent to planning.



Goals and Implementation Strategies

To address diverse and dynamic demographics, income levels, and housing preferences, Richland County’s housing goals are...

H Goal #1: To create a balance between employment and jobs and to provide efficient housing opportunities meeting the employment base of the community

Strategy 1.1: Coordinated growth

Concentrate residential growth near employment centers.

Strategy 1.2: Efficient development

Create development regulations that encourage efficient development.

H Goal #2: To focus neighborhood revitalization efforts in areas that are in need

Strategy 2.1: Focused revitalization effort

Focus revitalization area in neighborhoods with reduced housing value.

H Goal #3: To create housing choices for all household types, sizes, and incomes; To allow employees the opportunity to live and work in the same area, reducing personal costs (commuting to work) and societal costs (traffic, reduced air quality)

Strategy 3.1: Community land trust

Create a community land trust program, providing a mechanism to mitigate the increasing cost of land and its impact on the cost of affordable housing.

Strategy 3.2: Joint development of affordable housing

Develop affordable housing on appropriate County-owned land by seeking joint development opportunities with the private sector.

Strategy 3.3: Other incentives

Provide incentives to developers for including affordable housing in subdivision design.

Strategy 3.4: Zoning for Senior Housing

Provide proper zoning allowing construction of housing for seniors in communities providing convenient access to transit, goods, and services.

H Goal #4: To adjust the County Land Development Code requiring upkeep of abandoned buildings

Strategy 4.1: Housing rehabilitation

Encourage housing funds for buying abandoned and vacant homes.

Strategy 4.2: Rental properties

Create codes for rental properties requiring proper maintenance.

H Goal #5: To focus infill development in existing neighborhoods providing housing for a growing population, maximizing use of infrastructure and creating alternatives for sprawl

Strategy 5.1: Incentivize revitalization with Neighborhood Master Plans

Use Neighborhood Master Plans to create incentives for revitalization and an array of housing choices.

Strategy 5.2: Target infill development areas

Identify areas in the County that are prime areas for infill development.

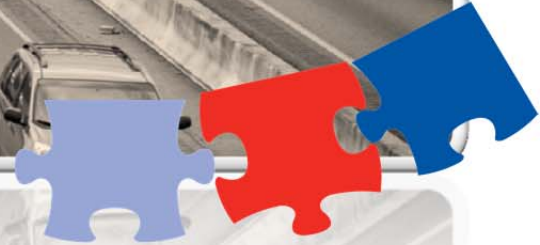


Strategy 5.3: Infill housing program

Develop an Infill Housing program including the compilation of a comprehensive list of all vacant lots within the County suitable for housing.



Photo: Jeff Blake



7. Transportation Element

Richland County is undertaking one of the largest transportation improvement programs in its history through the Transportation Penny sales tax levied through a referendum. This tax will raise revenues for improvements to the full transportation network: roads, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Coordinating land use plans along new and improved transportation facilities is a critical component to making the most of these investments.

Issues and Opportunities

Regional and local growth has stressed transportation systems to the point that significant improvements are needed and underway. The issues and opportunities identified here set out the critical transportation planning topics that have risen to the top during this planning process. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

The Transportation Penny Tax will Provide Funds for Transportation Improvements

Over the next 20 years, the Transportation Penny sales tax will provide \$1 billion dollars for transportation improvements across Richland County. Additionally, the referendum enables Richland County to bond \$450 million dollars upfront to jumpstart improvement projects in the near-term. With initial funding, a County Transportation Department has been established, which will streamline coordination of the program.

Project Prioritization Will Determine Order and Phasing of Improvements

A key factor in moving Penny Tax projects forward is the development of a project prioritization or ranking methodology. While all projects were identified prior to the sales tax referendum, the order and phasing of their completion must still be established. The County Transportation Department and its selected program development team will develop a Council approved ranking criteria to prioritize projects. This ranking will produce a County Transportation Improvement Program (CTIP) similar to the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

Land Use Will Undergo Changes Due to Penny Tax Programs

The Penny Tax will provide funds for multiple new projects across Richland County. These projects have the potential to significantly change the land use structure of the area. As roads see

improvements such as additional travel lanes, closed drainage, bike lanes, and sidewalks, development pressures generally follow.

Improved roads encourage more traffic, which attracts more commercial development, which creates more traffic, and so on. Development regulations should be put in place to ensure that the desired character of the County is created and maintained. Master plans created for neighborhoods should be consulted to ensure local transportation desires are being addressed by Penny Tax programs. Previous to the creation of the County Transportation Department, roadway construction solely involved SCDOT and private developers. Richland County has now become an active participant in road design and construction. It will be important for Richland County to determine balance between increasing dirt road paving and resurfacing to maintain the rural character of the County.

Protection of Right-of-Way Is Needed

Once a prioritized list of Penny Tax projects has been established, it will be very important to protect right-of-way along corridors that are programmed further down the list. Protection of right-of-way should occur through the planning and permitting process, with appropriate departments, to ensure that new developments are not built too close to the existing road to only have to be modified when widening occurs.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Are Needed

Currently less than 10 miles of on-road bike lanes exist in Richland County. For many residents, walking, biking, and public transit are the only means of transportation. The Transportation



Penny program will generate nearly \$81 million for improving bicycle and pedestrian environments. These facilities will aim to meet demand expressed by a growing number of residents that desire to live in areas with well supported bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Complete Streets Will Be Considered for All Roadway Improvements

In addition to monies specifically earmarked for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, the Transportation Penny program has adopted a Complete Streets philosophy for all projects. Implementation of this policy will increase the walkability and bikeability of Richland County; all projects will be designed and implemented with the service and accommodation of all modes in mind.

Transit Now Has a Consistent Funding Stream and Will Undergo Significant Expansion

Over \$300 million has been specifically allotted for transit in the Penny Tax, providing a long-term, stable funding source for an organization that historically struggled to find consistent funding. These funds have already allowed the transit system in Richland County to begin significant upgrades, with long-term planning now supported by guaranteed funding. The transit system will continue to undergo significant expansion as more funds become available.

Land Use Will Influence Transit Success

Based on the findings of several commuter rail studies performed to date, the success of the

existing SmartRide express bus service in both the Camden to Columbia and Newberry to Columbia corridors, and The Comet’s resurgence through the Transportation Penny program, it is anticipated that public transit will gain more momentum in Richland County than it has in the past. While commuter rail may be a distant hope, in the shorter term, it is likely that some type of high capacity transit will be realized, potentially bus rapid transit (BRT). No matter the type of high capacity transit that does occur, Richland County should be cognizant that land use patterns will be a strong determinate in how transportation is viewed. With higher densities and more compact development, it is more likely that high capacity transit can be successful, while lower densities and the continuation of automobile oriented development patterns will be less supportive of high capacity transit in the future.



Goals and Implementation Strategies

To address increasingly congested automobile traffic and expand accessibility, and to promote a more complete and sustainable transportation system for all modes, Richland County’s transportation goals are...

T Goal #1: To strengthen long-term transportation planning

Strategy 1.1: Increase communication and coordination between internal departments and external agencies

Ensure that all relevant departments and agencies are communicating and coordinating planning efforts on a regular basis.

Strategy 1.2: Maintain adequate staffing

Establish necessary support staff from appropriate departments.

Strategy 1.3: Incorporate completed transportation projects

Transportation Projects that are completed as part of the Transportation Penny program and others should be considered in land use decisions and policy. This should include recommended transportation improvements from neighborhood plans as they are completed.

T Goal #2: To expand transportation choices

Strategy 2.1: Explore Transportation Alternatives Program funding

Apply for Transportation Alternatives Program funds through SCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration’s Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21).

Strategy 2.2: Promote Complete Streets

Establish a Complete Streets Program and appoint members to a Complete Streets Commission as called for by the Richland County Complete Streets Resolution adopted in 2009.

Strategy 2.3: Incorporate neighborhood master plans

Include bicycle and pedestrian facility recommendations from neighborhood master plans in transportation planning efforts.

Strategy 2.4: Provide planning support for Transportation Penny projects

Support bicycle and pedestrian-related projects on the Transportation Penny project list.

T Goal #3: To support public transit service improvements and expand accessibility for County residents

Strategy 3.1: Maintain communication between The Comet, SCDOT, and County Transportation Department

Representatives from The Comet, SCDOT and County Planning and Transportation Departments should maintain communication regarding transit improvements made through Penny Sales Tax funding.

Strategy 3.2: Distribute transit information

Work with local businesses, social service departments, and YMCAs to distribute transit information at their locations and better dispense transit information to the target market.

Strategy 3.3: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to support higher-density, mixed-use development along existing transit corridors and in Priority Investment Areas.



Strategy 3.4: Coordinate agencies to expand express bus service

County Transportation Department, SCDOT and The Comet should coordinate on expansion of express bus service options such as Park-And-Ride.

Strategy 3.5: Improve transit facility

Work with the City of Columbia to improve the CMRTA transit facility.

T Goal #4: Coordinate with SCDOT to improve overall traffic conditions

Strategy 4.1: Explore Transportation Demand Management Techniques

Partner with SCDOT to study the feasibility of introducing Transportation Demand Management Techniques such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in the County.

Strategy 4.2: Traffic count program

Establish a traffic count program, for County-maintained roads, to supplement the SCDOT Traffic Count program.

Strategy 4.3: Coordinate with SCDOT on traffic management plans (TMP's)

Increase communication between SCDOT and the County Planning Department regarding traffic management plans for proposed developments and expectations for necessary mitigation.

T Goal #5: Balance local road re-surfacing and dirt road paving with maintaining rural character of the County

Strategy 5.1: Provide safe, accessible roads for citizens

Prioritize re-surfacing and dirt road paving projects under the Penny Tax program based on safety and accessibility needs.

T Goal #6: Link land use planning and sustainable transportation

Strategy 6.1: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to promote development patterns which support sustainable transportation modes such as walking, biking and public transit.

Strategy 6.2: Coordinate with the City of Columbia

Coordinate with the City of Columbia during the development of its Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan to capitalize on stakeholder and citizen momentum and consider input when assessing needs within the County.

T Goal #7: Include land use planning initiatives in implementation of approved Penny Tax projects

Strategy 7.1: Protect rights-of-way

Ensure rights-of-way needed for future road improvement projects are preserved during review of proposed developments on these roads.

Strategy 7.2: Encourage Complete Streets Initiatives

Building on the Complete Streets Program from Strategy 2.2, work with the County Transportation Department and SCDOT to encourage Complete Streets initiatives be used during construction and implementation of Penny Tax projects.

Strategy 7.3: Establish a county-wide corridor improvement plan

Initiate a county-wide corridor improvement plan that will incorporate transportation projects from the Transportation Penny and in neighborhood master plans, as well as transportation improvement opportunities in Priority Investment Areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan.



Strategy 7.4: Land Development Code updates

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to support land use planning initiatives such as mixed-use development, higher densities in areas with existing infrastructure, transit-oriented development, and traditional neighborhood development.

Strategy 7.5: Promote Redevelopment and Infill

Promote redevelopment and urban infill as sustainable growth patterns and support with applicable regulations in the land development code.





8. Economic Development Element

Richland County has a history of having a healthy local economy as revealed by income trends and commuting patterns – more than double the number of workers commuted into Richland County in 2010 than commuted out. Critical to recruiting new employers to the County is maintaining a quality of life that new employees desire, workplace offerings that new businesses need, and improving the transportation system to support expanding commerce.

Issues and Opportunities

The Economic Development goals and implementation strategies set out in this element are supported by several key findings that arose during the planning process, and are outlined here. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Richland County Economic Indicators are Generally Above State Averages

Richland County maintains higher per capita income, higher median household income and lower poverty rates when compared to state averages. However, care should be taken to ensure that Richland County continues being an

economically prosperous area. Comprehensive planning efforts that identify and address the needs of the public will be instrumental in maintaining economic prosperity.

Military Installations Provide Economic Opportunity

Richland County is home to three military installations: Fort Jackson, McCrady Training Center, and McEntire Joint National Guard Station. Fort Jackson has recently been designated as the home of the Army's only Drill Sergeant School, Department of Defense Joint Center of Excellence for Military Chaplaincy, and the site of one of four new Regional Readiness Sustainment Commands. McEntire Joint National Guard Station is a 2,400-acre base that is home to 1,500 members that train at the base. Fort Jackson trains in excess of 36,000 soldiers each year. 41 basic training graduations per year bring in over 100,000 family members who engage in local commerce.

University of South Carolina

The University of South Carolina is located within the City of Columbia and has significant economic impacts. Over 31,000 students are enrolled, along with 5,000 employees. Research initiatives in nanotechnology, health sciences, fuel, and information technologies will attract additional investment. A research district, "Innovista," will draw a mix of University and private research buildings, parking garages, and commercial and residential units.

Regional Economic Drivers

Important to the County's local economy is its position within the larger regional market. Both the region and Richland County have experienced a slowing of job growth in the last decade. Efforts to remain competitive in a highly dynamic and ever-changing marketplace is a key challenge for the County. Chapter 3: Regional Context outlines several key economic opportunities for the region, including targeting the following industries:

- Insurance
- Nuclear power
- Transportation and logistics
- Hydrogen fuel cell technology



Goals and Implementation Strategies

To provide new jobs and a stable economy, Richland County’s economic development goals are...

ED Goal #1: To develop and maintain a balanced economy ensuring a sustainable quality of life for all Richland County residents

Strategy 1.1: Technical and financial support

Provide technical and financial assistance for existing industry, where needed, helping adapt to a changing world economy.

Strategy 1.2: Coordination with infrastructure and utilities

Coordinate economic development activities with infrastructure and service providers, and County planning proposals.

Strategy 1.3: Foster entrepreneurialism

Foster an entrepreneurial environment that encourages economic development.

ED Goal #2: To promote Richland County as an attractive location for economic development

Strategy 2.1: Promote labor force

Publicize the high quality of the County’s labor force as an inducement for prospective new businesses.

Strategy 2.2: Telecommunications facilities

Support the development of state-of-the-art telecommunications facilities.

Strategy 2.3: Coordinate regional strategies

Actively work with regional entities, colleges, and universities developing and promoting regional

strategies and plans benefiting the economic well-being of the County.

Strategy 2.4: Maintain positive business relations

Foster communication and cooperation between the County and its business community.

Strategy 2.5: Use land for economic development

Pursue the conversion of surplus state and federal lands for economic development.

Strategy 2.6: Utilize superfund sites

Two superfund sites are located within unincorporated Richland County. The County should work with landowners and interested developers to seek out opportunities to repurpose these sites.

ED Goal #3: To expand job opportunities for Richland County’s high school and technical school graduates

Strategy 3.1: Foster cooperation between businesses and schools

Promote and support linkages between the secondary and higher education systems and business and industry ensuring that the needs of both employers and potential employees are being addressed.

ED Goal #4: To diversify Richland County’s economic base attracting manufacturing and industry

Strategy 4.1: Ensure inventory of developable land

Ensure sufficient inventory of available land for economic development.

Strategy 4.2: Promote strategic location

Actively promote the County as a transportation crossroads for highways and rail service.



Strategy 4.3: Promote education and quality of life

Publicize education opportunities and quality of life information.

ED Goal #5: Maintain coordination between Economic Development, Planning and Transportation within the County

Strategy 5.1: Increase communication between Planning and Economic Development Office

Increase communication regarding proposed projects for development as well as land subdivision and rezoning activity.

Strategy 5.2: Increase communication between SCDOT and Transportation Departments and Economic Development Office

Ensure that information regarding infrastructure and transit system improvements is communicated to the Economic Development Office for use in recruitment efforts.

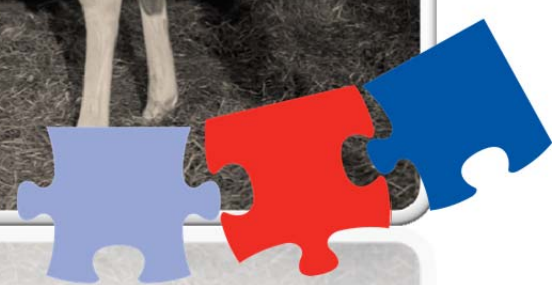
Strategy 5.3: Use link to promote redevelopment and infill

Build on increased communication between departments to identify opportunities for redevelopment and infill.





Photo: Jeff Blake



9. Natural Resources Element

The County's "rich lands" serve the citizens in multiple ways. Often called the "triple bottom line," natural land and water resources provide communities with economic benefits and the potential for expanding local natural resource based businesses. They provide citizens with functioning natural systems that reduce the need for manmade infrastructure. Finally, they provide the community with quality natural amenities that provide people a place to connect with nature close to home.

Issues and Opportunities

Protection of Richland County's natural resources is paramount to maintaining all three components of the "triple bottom line." The County seeks to balance protection of natural resources with a respect and understanding of the value of private property rights. The Natural Resources goals and implementation strategies set out in this element are supported by several key findings that arose during the planning process. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Richland County is Natural Resource Rich

Richland County has an abundance of both land and water natural resources. The Broad, Congaree, Saluda and Wateree Rivers flow through the County. Along with lakes and 1,534 miles of creeks and streams, these rivers cover nearly two percent of the County's area or more than 9,700 acres.

The County is home to the Congaree National Park – the largest old-growth floodplain forest remaining on the continent – as well as the Sesquicentennial State Park, Harbison State Forest, Clemson Research Center, and Cook's Mountain. There are many other important naturally and environmentally significant lands, some that are protected from development, and others that are not. These lands provide habitat to 90 rare, threatened or endangered species, including the bald eagle, Carolina bugleweed, red cockaded woodpecker, and the black bear. There is strong support by the citizens of the County to protect these critical land and water resources.

Agricultural Industries are Growing

Richland County has an agricultural legacy that continues to grow today. Between 2007 and 2012, the number of farms and the number of acres in farm production in Richland County increased. Nearly 400 farms operated in Richland County in 2012, up nine percent from 2007. The total market value of products sold from Richland County farms increased nearly 200 percent from \$10,164,000 in 2007 to \$30,038,000 in 2012. Today, approximately 50 percent of the County is in some form of agricultural use.

Natural Resource Industries at Risk of Encroaching Development

As land is developed into residential neighborhoods and centers for commerce near the edges of prime agricultural lands, it can become more and more difficult to maintain farming operations. Many new homeowners may be unaware that land is actively farmed near their new home and may see farming as incompatible with their neighborhood. Some don't like sharing the roads with farm equipment, or being located near farms where heavy farm equipment is in use. These incompatible development issues can be addressed through education of landowners near farming operations, and through land planning efforts.

Protection of Watersheds, Aquifers, and Flood Prone Areas is Critical

Richland County has three major watershed basins: the Broad River Basin, the Catawba River Basin, and the Saluda River Basin. The surface waters in these basins replenish groundwater supplies (aquifers), provide drainage throughout the County, and influence water quality for wildlife, recreation, and potable water. When asked "what to protect from change" in Richland County, residents resoundingly responded that protection of water resources should be a priority for the County. And that watershed protection should include the ability for residents to gain better access to water bodies for recreational use.

Several creeks, including Gills Creek, Wateree Creek, Rocky Creek and Mill Creek are identified for restoration to improve water quality. Feeding these water bodies are floodplains that absorb stormwater and are prone to rising waters. Over

97,000 acres of 100-year floodplains (nearly 20 percent of the County’s land area) exist in Richland County. The County has an opportunity through land use planning to protect these watersheds and the ecosystems they support, including the source water for the County’s population.

Goals and Implementation Strategies

To protect the County’s rich and abundant land and water resources, Richland County’s natural resources goals are...

NR Goal #1: To establish an atmosphere of awareness and importance of natural resources

Strategy 1.1: Inventory key natural and scenic resources

Inventory all key natural and scenic resources in the County. Share this information with developers in the County.

NR Goal #2: To protect natural resources, including prime farmland, while shaping the future development of Richland County

Strategy 2.1: Development review proposals

Review new development proposals for impacts to natural resources. Establish a staff person to consider the impact of new developments upon natural resources and natural conditions, including scenic areas, unique plant and animal habitats, wetlands, and prime agricultural and forest lands.

NR Goal #3: To protect natural resources near neighborhoods and provide citizens with access to nature

Strategy 3.1: Incentivize conservation

Create incentives protecting resources while allowing beneficial economic development.

Strategy 3.2: Implement growth management strategies

Consider innovative land use mechanisms, such as open space developments, density bonuses, wetland and stream mitigation, low impact development Best management Practices, and conservation easements as tools to protect sensitive lands.

NR Goal #4: To protect trees throughout the County

Strategy 4.1: Scenic vistas

Seek to maintain and establish scenic vistas along rural highways.

NR Goal #5: To protect watersheds throughout the County

Strategy 5.1: Collaborate with State

Collaborate with the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) State Laws and Regulations and create local regulations with an emphasis on improving environmental conditions.

Strategy 5.2: Public education and involvement

Assist existing Watershed Stewardship programs/Watershed Associations in educating and involving the public.



Strategy 5.3: Watershed Protection Overlay District

Establish a Watershed Protection Overlay District limiting land use activities that increase the risk of water pollution.

NR Goal #6: To increase open and green space throughout the County by creating incentives to preserve land

Strategy 6.1: Existing tools in Land Development Code

Encourage the use of conservation easements and the Open Space provision as defined by the County Land Development Code.

NR Goal #7: To establish and maintain parks and greenways

Strategy 7.1: Greenway trail system

Establish a protected greenway corridor/trail system.

Strategy 7.2: Parks and trails

Connect existing parks and trails.

Strategy 7.3: Partnerships

Construct partnerships between governmental and non-governmental agencies maintaining existing programs while developing new ones.

Strategy 7.4: Private and public investment

Encourage private and public investment.

Strategy 7.5: Support volunteer programs

Create or assist existing civic volunteer programs maintaining current parks and greenways.

NR Goal #8: To improve air quality throughout the County

Strategy 8.1: Public awareness

Raise public awareness of environmentally friendly practices such as carpooling, biking to work, and public transportation.

Strategy 8.2: Clean air programs

Encourage innovative clean air programs promoted by the Central Midlands Council of Governments, our local Clean Air advocates.

Strategy 8.3: Limit sprawl

Prevent sprawl which requires longer commutes affecting air quality; create incentives for environmentally friendly land use patterns.





10. Cultural Resources Element

Richland County's history is brought to life through many historic and culturally significant structures and districts. Protection of these unique places is important to maintaining a sense of place and a connection to the County's past. While progress and new development will continue on into the future, the value and importance of maintaining historic places and spaces will be an important policy consideration.

Issues and Opportunities

The Cultural Resources goals and implementation strategies set out in this element are supported by several key findings that arose during the planning process. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Historic Structures and Districts

Richland County has an abundance of structures with historical significance including churches, landmarks, monuments, and historic homes. Consolidated areas of these structures have been combined into a number of historic districts recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. Historic districts have been shown to

increase local property value, attract tourism, and help maintain unique city character.

Archeological Sites

Located along the fall line of the Broad River, the Nipper Creek Heritage Preserve is an archeological preserve that was historically occupied by early humans. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it provides insight into the diet, technology, mobility, and social organizations of early human civilization in the Richland County area.

Goals and Implementation Strategies

To honor the irreplaceable value of cultural assets and historic places, Richland County’s cultural resources goals are...

CR Goal #1: To encourage the preservation of historic structures and sites

Strategy 1.1: Certified Local Government

Maintain a current comprehensive list of historic structures and sites in the County. Apply for the status of a Certified Local Government (CLG), which is a partnership at the local, state, and federal levels to promote historic preservation. A benefit to becoming a CLG is eligibility for grants to preserve, protect, and enhance historic structures.

CR Goal #2: To continue the process of nominating historic properties for listing on the National Registry

Strategy 2.1: National Register of Historic Places

Inform citizens of the process of having a structure nominated for the National Register of Historic Places. County officials should assist with and participate in this process.

CR Goal #3: To encourage regional communication and coordination on cultural issues

Strategy 3.1: Regional historical commissions

Collaborate with regional historical commissions and boards remaining current on all cultural issues in the Midlands.

CR Goal #4: To continue to develop and enhance parks and open space recreation areas within the County

Strategy 4.1: Park level of service

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends 6.25 to 10.5 acres of parks and open space per 1,000 people. In accordance with national standards, the County should focus on the development of new parks and open space recreation facilities in areas where there are currently none, specifically on the outer edges of the County.

CR Goal #5: To support policies and incentives that encourage preservation of cultural resource opportunities

Strategy 5.1: Preservation programs

Use conservation easements and comparable preservation programs while working with local and regional conservation organizations to educate local governments on cultural resource preservation opportunities and policies.



11. Community Facilities & Services Element

Richland County provides an excellent level of public services and facilities to the citizens of Richland County. From public libraries, to community centers, to public parks and recreational areas, the County seeks to provide a quality of life that will retain current residents and attract newcomers to the area.

Issues and Opportunities

This section includes several key findings that arose during the planning process. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Ensuring Facilities and Services Keep Pace with Growth

Richland County is expected to continue have healthy population growth for the next 25 years. Ensuring that future residents of the County receive the same quality of life provided through public facilities and services is an important goal

for the County. One approach to doing this, is to direct growth in the form of redevelopment and infill development to existing developed areas that are already served by the County. New growth on the outer reaches will require new services and facilities, and this growth approach should be managed to better utilize public funds.

Goals and Implementation Strategies

To address increasing demand for and the cost to provide services and facilities, Richland County’s community facilities and services goals are...

CF&SE Goal #1: To ensure the equitable distribution of community services and resources among all areas of the County

Strategy 1.1: Implement capital improvements for public library system

Consider implementing capital improvements that complement the Ten Year Capital Needs Plan prepared by the Public Library System to serve anticipated population growth.

Strategy 1.2: Coordinate growth management

New initiatives for managing and directing growth introduced in the Comprehensive Plan should be coordinated with officials for the following departments: sheriff, fire protection, emergency medical services, public schools, and the public library system.

Strategy 1.3: Coordinate public facilities

Effectively coordinate with public, quasi-public, private, and non-profit entities responsible for providing public facilities and services within the planning jurisdiction

Strategy 1.4: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Partner with law enforcement officials and evaluate best management practices using the principles of Crime Prevention through Environment Design (CPTED) for improving public safety.



Strategy 1.5: Consider ISO rating

Maintain or improve the ISO rating for unincorporated areas of the County, especially related to programming new fire stations in areas experiencing rapid urbanization.

Strategy 1.6: Mutual-aid agreements

Maintain mutual-aid agreements with nearby service providers ensuring quality response to all areas of the unincorporated County.

Strategy 1.7: Consider consolidation

Consider the need and feasibility for consolidating fire, police, and emergency medical services in public safety buildings throughout the County.

Strategy 1.8: Coordinate with school districts

Actively coordinate with the three local school districts to implement improvements recommended in their respective long range strategic plans or capital improvements plans.

Strategy 1.9: Implement capital improvements

Implement capital projects in accordance with the Ten-Year Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

CF&SE Goal #2: To coordinate with the City of Columbia and other utility districts to ensure an adequate quantity and quality of potable water is available supporting the land uses and development patterns depicted in the Future Land Use Map

Strategy 2.1: Encourage development in service areas

Encourage future development and redevelopment in unincorporated areas of the County already served, or programmed to be served, inside the service area for the City of Columbia Water Utility Company.

Strategy 2.2: Water Service Master Plan

Implement feasibility studies, capital improvements, and interlocal agreements identified in the Richland County Water Service Master Plan expanding the notion and presence of a County water system.

Strategy 2.3: Coordinate water capacity and future land use

Coordinate with the City of Columbia Water Utility ensuring adequate capacity is reserved serving the magnitude and timing of anticipated development in the Future Land Use Map.

Strategy 2.4: Central Midlands Region Water Quality Management Plan

Continue coordinating with partners in the region implementing the recommendations from the Central Midlands Region Water Quality Management Plan.

Strategy 2.5: Improve decision-making process

Partner with the City of Columbia and other water service utility providers serving unincorporated areas of the County to improve the decision-making process for system expansion that is reasonable, cost-efficient, and supportive of the land uses and development patterns depicted in the Future Land Use Map.

CF&SE Goal #3: To implement a strategy for providing sanitary sewer service in the County that manages growth, consolidates sewer service providers, and reduces the number of individuals on private septic systems

Strategy 3.1: Water Service Master Plan

Implement feasibility studies, capital improvements, and interlocal agreements identified in the Richland County Sewer Service Master Plan expanding the presence of the County's sewer service system.



Strategy 3.2: Coordinate new development

Execute interlocal agreements with nearby service providers ensuring adequate capacity is reserved to serve the magnitude and timing of anticipated development in the Future Land Use map.

Strategy 3.3: Central Midlands Region Water Quality Management Plan

Continue coordinating with partners in the region to implement the recommendations from the Central Midlands Region Water Quality Management Plan.

Strategy 3.4: Expand sewer service

Reduce the number of residents relying on private septic systems in close proximity to existing, or programmed, sewer service.

CF&SE Goal #4: To provide a wide variety of leisure activities and facilities that improve quality-of-life and meet the recreational needs and desires of all County residents

Strategy 4.1: RCRC Master Plan

Coordinate with the Richland County Recreation Commission implementing the plans, programs, and capital improvements recommended in the RCRC Master Plan.

Strategy 4.2: Debt service

Consider initiatives by the RCRC-regarding new facilities and/or improvements at existing facilities identified in the RCRC Master Plan.

Strategy 4.3: Shared use recreation facilities

Coordinate with the RCRC and local schools districts advocating for more opportunities co-locating shared use recreation facilities serving neighboring County residents.

Strategy 4.4: Park and greenway dedication

Evaluate and revise (as necessary) rules and requirements in the Richland County Land Development Code; require permanent dedication of land for parks and/or greenways in large-scale developments.

CF&SE Goal #5: To implement plans, programs, and best management practices for new development minimizing the negative effects of storm water run-off on local streams, lakes, and wetlands

Strategy 5.1: Storm Water Master Plan

Implement the goals and action plan in the Richland County Storm Water Master Plan and supporting Corrective Action Plan maintaining the NPDES Phase I and II permit.

Strategy 5.2: Promote Low Impact Development

Evaluate and revise (as necessary) rules and requirements in the Richland County Land Development Code promoting Low Impact Development for on-site storm water retention and detention.



12. Priority Investment Element

The Priority Investment Element is a comprehensive plan element created by the Priority Investment Act (“Act”), a 2007 amendment to the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act. The priority investment element is intended to identify available public funding for public infrastructure and facilities over the next ten years and prioritize projects that should be funded. It also requires the coordination of most adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies with regard to public infrastructure plans and projects.

Developing the Priority Investment Element

This Priority Investment Element is coordinated with the County’s FY 2015-2024 Capital Improvement Program, the 2013-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Annual Budget Report, and the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. For additional data and information on the following topics, please refer to the Comprehensive Plan Appendix A.

Planning Jurisdiction

Plans, programs, policies, and capital projects recommended in this Priority Investment Element address needs highlighted throughout the Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated areas of



the County, as well as County departments delivering services to all residents of Richland County (i.e., both City and County residents).

Funding and Revenue Sources

Several revenue sources and funding mechanisms are available to Richland County for financing the planning, purchase, construction, and maintenance of recommended projects. Sources of funding are identified in Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan in the Priority Investment Chapter. These sources of funding include both general fund and special revenue funds. These monies may be in existence at the time of project implementation or sought through appropriate processes regulated by the South Carolina Code of Laws.

Capital and Operating Expenses

Capital Improvement Needs

The Capital Improvement Plan Table in Appendix A identifies the capital projects included in the County’s FY 2015-2024 Capital Improvement Plan that address future capital needs for public facilities and/or services the County operates and has maintenance responsibility. These projects, plus improvements by other governmental entities charged with operation and maintenance of certain infrastructure within the County, are being undertaken to better meet the expected needs of future residents of Richland County.

Linkage to CIP & Annual Capital Budget

The Priority Investment Element is an organizing document that should be referenced by the County when creating the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The PIE provides the “wish list” of candidate capital projects identified by County departments as necessary for maintaining or improving current levels of service.

Planning level cost estimates are provided for each identified project. The CIP includes estimated costs for projects through completion of project implementation. Projects are prioritized and revenue sources are identified. While the ten year schedule of capital projects must be updated at a minimum of every five years, the CIP may be updated much more frequently to reflect progress.

Recommended Plans, Programs, and Studies

The focus of the Priority Investment Element is capital improvements. However, several plans, programs, and studies were recommended in the comprehensive plan in addition to the list of capital projects. The importance of these planning initiatives is highlighted because they may precede future capital projects. Below is a list of plans, programs, and studies recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.

- Conduct a real estate market analysis to determine the feasibility of implementing a transfer of development rights program in Richland County.



- Apply for the status of a Certified Local Government (CLG), which is a partnership of local, state, and federal promoting historic preservation as part of local planning and policies.
- Create a community land trust program, providing a mechanism for mitigating the increasing cost and its impact on the cost of affordable housing.
- Develop an Infill Housing program including the compilation of a comprehensive list of all vacant lots within Priority Investment Areas.
- Inventory all key natural and scenic resources in the County.
- Create (or assist existing) civic volunteer programs maintaining current parks and greenways.

The Planning Department should coordinate with other County departments ensuring these plans, programs, and studies are completed in a timely manner.

Priority Investment Areas

The Priority Investment Act (ACT) allows local governments to develop market-based incentives and to reduce unnecessary housing regulatory requirements to encourage development of traditional neighborhood designs and affordable housing in priority investment areas. Priority investment areas in Richland County also include priorities for community redevelopment and future economic development targets.

Richland County has addressed this aspect of the Act by designating 11 priority investment areas in the Future Land Use Map (see Land Use Element). These areas indicate where priority public investments should be focused in future years, and where private investments are encouraged. The map and table on the following pages provide more information on these priority investment areas.

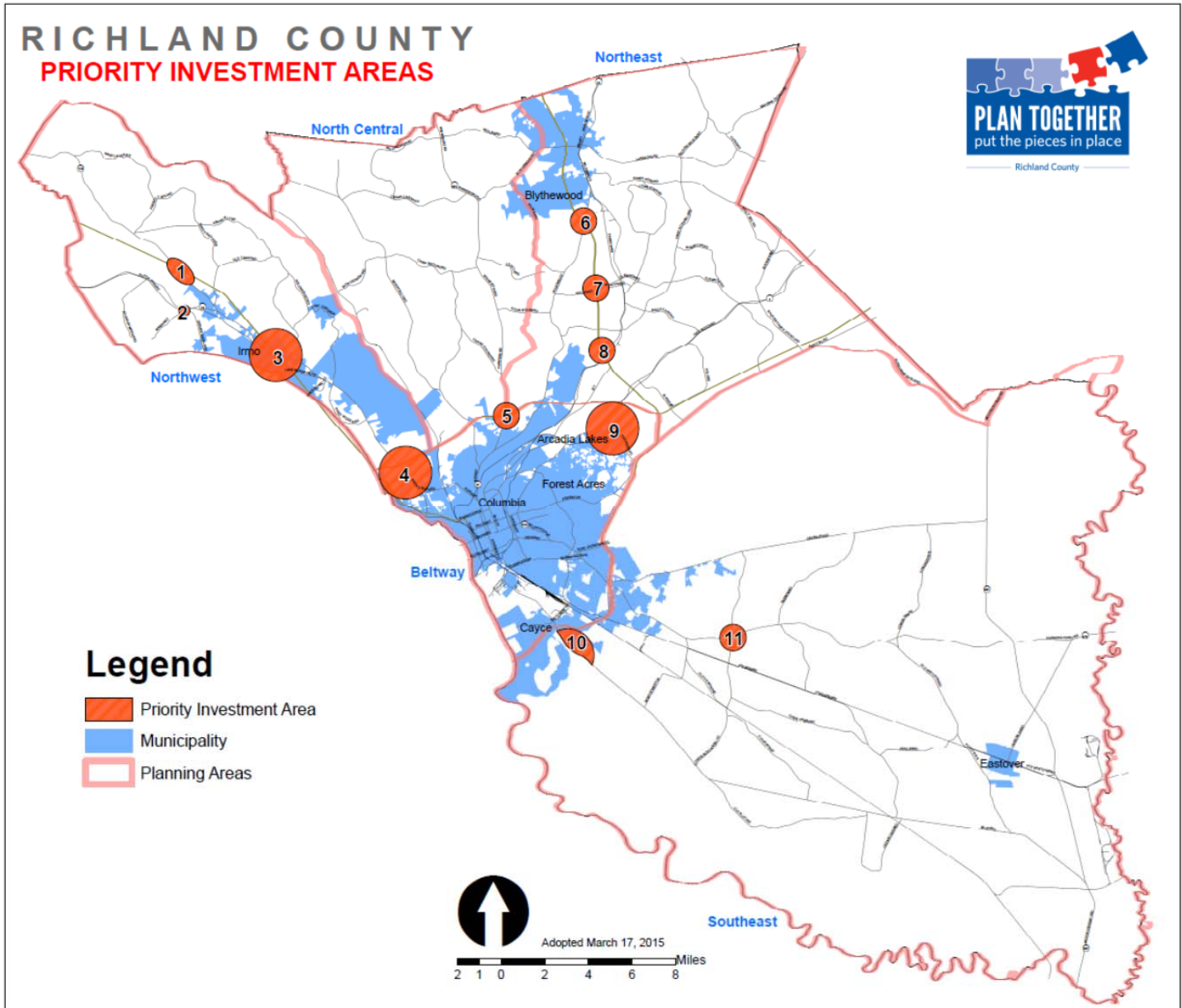


Table 1. Priority Investment Areas

PIA Number Shown on Previous Map	Name and Description	PIA Intent
1	<p>I-26 Broad River Road (north) Interchange. Small commercial node in Northwestern Richland County.</p>	<p>This area presents opportunities to provide neighborhood scale commercial for surrounding residences to reduce vehicle miles traveled and provide convenient access to daily needed goods and services. A Neighborhood Activity Center is located in this area. Investments could include necessary infrastructure, streetscape improvements, signage, and lighting.</p>
2	<p>Ballentine at Dutch Fork Road, Marina Road, and Broad River Road. Commercial node in Northwestern Richland County.</p>	<p>Area has existing commercial development, and is identified as a Neighborhood Activity Center. The intent is to provide neighborhood serving commercial uses, but to limit development to neighborhood serving uses to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow from surrounding neighborhoods. Investments could include necessary infrastructure, streetscape improvements, signage, and lighting.</p>
3	<p>I-26 Broad River Road (south) Interchange. Commercial node that is planned to be the location of a future regional transit station.</p>	<p>This area has been identified as the potential location for a future transit station. Opportunities to create transit-oriented developments through the redevelopment of aging commercial centers is encouraged. Investment opportunities include partnering with the City of Irmo to foster redevelopment within the corridor, and to develop master plans for future transit station development.</p>
4	<p>Broad River and Bush River. Larger commercial corridor with opportunities for redevelopment. Future regional transit station planned for just south of PIA.</p>	<p>This is a high activity area with many opportunities to redevelop aging commercial centers and revitalize surrounding neighborhoods. It is identified as a Community Activity Center. The Broad River Neighborhood and Corridor Master Plans should help guide these efforts in the future. Investments include partnerships with the City of Columbia to plan for redevelopment of Dutch Square Mall and St. Andrews areas, and to provide necessary infrastructure investments to foster redevelopment.</p>

PIA Number Shown on Previous Map	Name and Description	PIA Intent
5	<p>I-20 Fairfield Road Interchange. Commercial and industrial node.</p>	<p>This interchange is identified as a Community Activity Center. The area is currently a mix of commercial and industrial uses, and could be redeveloped to include a broader array of uses within a mixed use environment. Investments opportunities include partnering with the City of Columbia to plan for redevelopment of this area, with a focus on the Community Activity Center, and to provide necessary infrastructure to foster redevelopment.</p>
6	<p>I-77 Wilson Boulevard Interchange. Industrial node located within an Economic Development Corridor.</p>	<p>The I-77 corridor is a regional corridor that offers a prime location for future industrial and business park users. Investments include ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support employment development.</p>
7	<p>I-77 Killian Road Interchange. Commercial and industrial node located within an Economic Development Corridor.</p>	<p>The I-77 corridor is a regional corridor that offers a prime location for future industrial and business park users, as well as for visiting tourists. This is the location of the planned Richland County water park. Investments include ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support future economic development efforts.</p>
8	<p>I-77 Farrow Road Interchange. Commercial node and located within an Economic Development Corridor with opportunities for redevelopment.</p>	<p>This area is currently developed with a broad range of commercial and industrial uses. Opportunities existing for redeveloping this node to take advantage of the I-77 regional corridor. Investments include ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support employment development, and to develop redevelopment strategies specific to the area.</p>
9	<p>Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road. Regional commercial node with significant redevelopment opportunities. Future regional transit station planned within this area.</p>	<p>This is a high activity area with many opportunities to redevelop aging commercial centers and revitalize surrounding neighborhoods. It is identified as a Community Activity Center. The Renaissance Plan: Decker Boulevard /Woodfield Park Area Master Plan should help guide these efforts in the future. Investments include partnerships with the City of Columbia to plan for redevelopment of Columbia Place and surrounding commercial areas, and to provide necessary infrastructure investments to foster redevelopment.</p>

PIA Number Shown on Previous Map	Name and Description	PIA Intent
10	<p>I-77 Bluff Road Near Interchange. Industrial node located within an Economic Development Corridor.</p>	<p>Located at the southern border of the City of Columbia and Cayce, this area is identified as strategic economic opportunity. Current activities include planning for development of a Richland County Sports Arena. Investments include ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support future economic development efforts.</p>
11	<p>Lower Richland Boulevard and Garners Ferry Road. Southeast Richland Neighborhood Master Plan area carried forward in recently adopted Lower Richland Community Strategic Master Plan.</p>	<p>Located within Lower Richland County, this site is an important crossroads in the community. Prior planning efforts identified opportunities to redevelop this area using a Village Center approach. County investments include ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support future redevelopment efforts.</p>

Additional Priority Investment Opportunities

Beyond the Priority Investment Areas listed on the map, there are other strategic investment opportunities that the County should consider when developing annual Capital Improvement Plans. These include:

Farm to Market Facility in Lower Richland

Identification of an appropriate area in Lower Richland for developing a “Farm to Market” center that can assist local farmers in preparing and selling their products to the residents of the County is an important opportunity. This is a business investment and a workforce development opportunity that could bring much exposure and focus on the benefits of farming in the community.

Redevelopment of Downtown Eastover

The heart of Lower Richland County is the small

town of Eastover. This community struggles to maintain vibrancy as the focus for new development occurs several miles away to the north. However the community is rich with opportunities for economic development. This community is the closest town to the Congaree National Park that serves thousands of visitors annually. Richland County has an opportunity to partner with leaders in Lower Richland and Eastover to identify opportunities to assist with efforts to redevelop and revitalize downtown Eastover. A unique opportunity underway is redevelopment of an original bank building, shown in the image below. Investment opportunities could include façade grants, infrastructure and streetscape improvements, and signage.



Intergovernmental Coordination

Through this Comprehensive Plan update, Richland County has taken great strides to manage growth and development in the County over the next 20 years. For these goals to reach fruition, however, it is important for the County to recognize many other stakeholders influence and are influenced by the growth and development decisions made in Richland County.

Many partnerships have already been forged ensuring that adequate capacity is available to serve future development. Richland County has interlocal agreements in place with public and private providers for the provision of water and sewer. The County also has a unified fire service agreement with the City of Columbia for fire protection.

Going forward, the County will strengthen coordination among County departments as well as between the County and outside agencies and jurisdictions. One of the County's goals, listed in the Community Facilities Element, is ensuring equitable distribution of community services and resources among all areas. Many of the strategies for achieving this goal involve strengthening intergovernmental coordination among partnering agencies and jurisdictions.

Under the new Priority Investment Act (ACT), the County must coordinate with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies before recommending projects for public expenditure. Below is a list of those jurisdictions and agencies that will be coordinated with, many of which were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan.

CITIES/TOWNS

- City of Columbia
- City of West Columbia
- Town of Irmo
- Town of Blythewood
- Town of Forest Acres
- Town of Eastover
- Town of Cayce
- Town of Arcadia Lakes

TOWN OF ARCADIA LAKESCOUNTIES

- Newberry County
- Fairfield County
- Kershaw County
- Sumter County
- Lexington County
- Calhoun County

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- Richland County School District One
- Richland County School District Two



- School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties

UTILITY PROVIDERS

- East Richland Public Sewer District
- Alpine Utilities
- Bush River Utilities, Inc.
- Carolina Water Service
- Palmetto Utilities
- City of Columbia Public Works Department
- Richland County Public Works Department

MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

- Fort Jackson
- McCrady Training Center
- McEntire Air National Guard

OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

- Richland County Recreation Commission
- Richland County Sheriff's Department
- Richland County Finance Department
- Richland County Fire Department

STATE AGENCIES

- S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)
- S.C. Department of Transportation (SC DOT)

REGIONAL AGENCIES

- Central Midlands Council of Government
- Central Midlands Transit (The COMET)

These agencies and jurisdictions were provided draft copies of the Richland County Comprehensive Plan for review and comment. All comments were taken into consideration before finalizing the Priority Investment Element.



Goals and Implementation Strategies

To achieve maximum efficiency of service delivery, Richland County’s priority investment goals are...

PI Goal #1: To strengthen intergovernmental coordination and to improve the quality and timeliness of information shared between jurisdictions, reducing duplication and improving efficiency

PI Strategy 1.1: Distribute updated comprehensive plan

Provide a copy of the updated comprehensive plan to all partner agencies and jurisdictions operating in the Midlands region.

PI Strategy 1.2: Review plans

Request that all relevant agencies and jurisdictions make their strategic plans available for review and comment by the Planning Department.

PI Strategy 1.3: Share information affecting areas of common interest

The County should develop formal memoranda of understanding with Columbia, and potentially other jurisdictions to share information on development proposals that occur within areas of common interest along jurisdictional lines. This could also include a formal opportunity for the County and the City to provide comments during public review of developments in these areas. It could also include the application of the other jurisdiction’s development standards where appropriate.

PI Strategy 1.4: Develop program initiatives

Each department shall develop a future service plan and program initiatives reflecting current

policy directives, projected resources, and future service requirements.

PI Strategy 1.5: Assembly of Governments

As referred to in Land Use Strategy 9.2, the County should take leadership in establishing an Assembly of Governments that could bring together elected officials, management staff, and directors of all jurisdictions and utility providers operating in the region to coordinate long-range economic development, land use planning, and infrastructure projects.

PI Goal #2: To manage the County’s debt efficiently ensuring the long-term financial health of the County

PI Strategy 2.1: Financial policies

The Finance Department will review financial policies annually and recommend any appropriate changes during the budget process.

PI Strategy 2.2: Bond rating

Maintain, and if possible, improve the County’s current bond rating.

PI Strategy 2.3: Future operating costs

Require every project proposed for financing through General Obligation debt be accompanied by a full analysis of the future operating costs associated with the project.

PI Strategy 2.4: County debt policies

Require every future bond issue proposal include an analysis that shows how the new issue combined with current debt impacts the County’s debt capacity and conformance with County debt policies.



PI Strategy 2.5: Debt financing

Ensure that debt financing does not exceed the useful life of the infrastructure improvement with the average (weighted) bond maturities at or below ten years.

PI Strategy 2.6: Debt payments

Debt payments shall not extend beyond the estimated useful life of the project being financed.

PI Strategy 2.7: Use of long-term debt

The County should not use long-term debt to finance current operations. Long-term debt will be confined to capital improvements or similar projects with an extended life when it is not practical to finance from current revenues.

PI Strategy 2.8: Debt service fund balance

All County debt service fund balances shall maintain a level covering 18 months of required expenditures to service debt.

PI Strategy 2.9: Ratio of assets to liabilities

Maintain a ratio of current assets to current liabilities of at least 2/1 ensuring the County's ability to pay short-term obligations.

PI Strategy 2.10: Schedule of funds

Prepare a schedule of funds required meeting bond principal and interest requirements for the ensuing year and including the schedule in the budget process.

PI Goal #3: To provide adequate public facilities and services in a fiscally prudent manner

PI Strategy 3.1: Capital Improvement Plan

Provide capital improvements in accordance with the Ten-Year Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

PI Strategy 3.2: Annual update to the CIP

Review and update the CIP annually.

PI Strategy 3.3: Public facilities expenditures

Concentrate County public facilities expenditures in Priority Investment Areas identified on the County's Future Land Use Map.

PI Strategy 3.4: Prioritize capital projects

Designate a cross-departmental team for review and prioritizing proposed capital projects ensuring accurate costing estimates and overall consistency with County goals and objectives.

PI Strategy 3.5: Additional financing

Investigate additional financing mechanisms available to the County, focusing on mechanisms requiring future growth and development to pay its proportionate share of the costs of providing facilities and services.

PI Strategy 3.6: Process for reviewing candidate projects

Establish a formal process (completed annually) to identify and review candidate capital projects and capital improvement needs for inclusion in the CIP.

PI Strategy 3.7: Review programs

Undertake a review of County programs to determine if they meet intended program objectives and are allocating funding efficiently.

PI Strategy 3.8: General funds for capital projects

Establish a policy requiring a certain percentage of the General Fund be spent on capital projects.

PI Strategy 3.9: Bond Review Committee

Require all capital projects go before the Bond Review Committee before approval.



PI Strategy 3.10: CIP Process

Strengthen CIP process by requiring departments, agencies, and jurisdictions submit and defend a list of project needs and associated costs (capital and operating) during a specified time. Any projects submitted outside this timeframe shall not be brought before Council for budgeting consideration.

PI Strategy 3.11: Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Work with local developers and utility providers to develop and adopt an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

PI Strategy 3.12: Development Agreement Ordinance

Adopt a Development Agreement Ordinance in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 6-31-10, et. seq., SC Code of Laws.

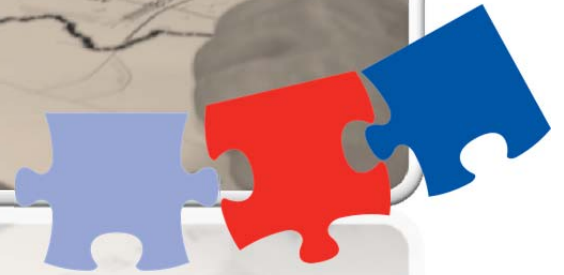
PI Strategy 3.13: Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance

Work with local developers and the South Carolina Department of Transportation to adopt a transportation impact fee ordinance, if feasible, in compliance with Chapter 6-1-910, et. seq., SC Code of Laws.

PI Strategy 3.14: Annexation agreements

Actively pursue state legislation encouraging annexation agreements with the County’s municipalities to the purpose of planning for future growth and improving delivery of future public services.





13. Strategic Implementation Plan

Every good plan has a strategic plan for action. This Plan sets out implementation in a tiered system identifying primary and secondary action items for achievement.

Primary Action Items

The following primary action items were identified as critical implementation actions by citizens of Richland County participating in the PLAN TOGETHER effort. These action items should be initiated within the next five years, with the intent of having active implementation over the next ten years. The primary action items are as follows.

LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATES

The County will assess ways to amend its Land Development Code to align with the policy guidance included in the Comprehensive Plan:



- Remove barriers and to create incentives that will support mixed-use residential developments in Neighborhood (Medium-Density) and Mixed Residential Future Land Use categories
- Remove barriers and create incentives for redevelopment of aging commercial corridors and neighborhoods
- Protection of rural lands through establishment of new “truly rural” zoning districts
- Protection of 303 (d) designated impaired watersheds and floodplains through increased development standards
- Removing barriers and creating incentives to encourage development within Priority Investment Areas and Activity Centers

PROTECTION OF LANDS ALONG IMPACTED WATERSHEDS AND IN FLOODPLAINS

The County should consider increasing capacity of the Conservation Commission to work with landowners to establish conservation easements or to purchase development rights in environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains and creek banks. These are voluntary and incentive-based tools that allow landowners to maintain their land and receive financial benefit from the sale of development rights.

COORDINATION WITH UTILITY PROVIDERS

The County will work with utility providers to steer infrastructure investments that will generate development pressures away from Rural areas.

The development of public water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater should be discouraged in Rural areas, except when this infrastructure is needed to ensure public health and safety.

PRIORITY INVESTMENT TARGETS IN REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

There are several opportunities for redevelopment of aging commercial centers/corridors and blighted neighborhoods. For example (but not limited to), Decker Boulevard and Two Notch Road, the heart of Lower Richland in downtown Eastover, Broad River Road Corridor, and Dutch Square and St. Andrews areas are included within Priority Investment Areas identified in the Priority Investment Element of this Comprehensive Plan. The County should look for opportunities to improve these areas in partnership with neighboring jurisdictions when assessing capital improvement priorities.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

When updating the County’s Capital Improvement Plan, consideration should be given to capital projects, such as transportation improvements, water, sewer, and other utilities, needed to support development at targeted commuter rail station areas identified within Priority Investment Areas.

ESTABLISH A PROGRAM TO LINK AGING FARMERS WITH YOUNG FARMERS WITHOUT LAND

The County should work with partners, such as the Soil and Water Conservation District and the Midlands Local Food Collaborative, to develop a program to link aging farmers with budding farmers in need of training on a full-fledged farm. The intent is to create opportunities to maintain



farming operations that will not continue as a family business, but that could be sold/leased to other interested farmers.

RECREATIONAL INVESTMENTS

When updating plans for future recreational amenities, the County should assess opportunities to increase public access along the County's waterways through greenways and trails, boat ramps, parks, and similar recreational assets. Building off the development of future Penny Tax greenways, opportunities to create a connected system of trails and greenways should be encouraged.

Secondary Action Items

Strategies included in the elements of this plan that are not included as priority action items are considered as secondary action items. As the County undertakes future updates to the Comprehensive Plan, completed primary action items should be removed from the strategic implementation plan, and a new set of primary action items should be developed using the secondary action item list, as well as any new action items.