

# THE 10 ELEMENTS IN THE CHARLESTON COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN THAT WILL BE AMENDED/UPDATED.

## Element 1. LAND USE -

### 3.1.1 OVERVIEW/GOAL/PURPOSE AND INTENT:

#### Element Goal

**Accommodate** Protect our cultural, and natural resources, ADD: and rural residential and agricultural communities while accommodating smart growth that respects the unique character of the County, promotes sustainable economic opportunity, fosters resilience, respects private property rights, and is tightly coordinated with transportation infrastructure planning and with the provision of other community facilities, but protects cultural and natural resources. **ADD:** This should be accomplished through the use of zoning, subdivision, historic preservation ordinances, and overall sound planning principles that promote appropriate growth and preservation, recognizing the need to support individual and community values within the parameters of existing development regulations.

### 3.1.2 EXISTING LAND USE (No comments)

### 3.1.3 GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES - LU 1-20

#### Land Use Element Strategies and Time Frames

The following strategic actions should be undertaken by the County in support of the purpose and intent of the Land Use Element. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

LU1 -Continue to pProtect and enhance the environmental quality of natural resources and continue to require restrictive development standards along the OCRM Critical Line to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic vistas.

LU2-Continue to tImplement design character that enhances the quality of development along commercial corridors, and establish scenic corridors and areas of environmental and cultural significance. Provide vegetated buffers of fifty feet or more between roads and structures where development occurs along or near designated scenic roads. **ADD: Clarify allowed uses and prohibited uses within scenic corridor areas.**

LU3-Continue to Ffoster the rural character of land **ADD: and land adjacent to waterways** outside the Urban Growth Boundary by:

- Encouraging lower density development;
- Establishing a pattern of roads and buildings which portrays a traditional rural quality of life with large areas dedicated to agriculture or silviculture, or protected in a natural state to provide habitat for native species;
- Maintaining or enhancing the visual identity of existing scenic roads; **ADD: Support the promotion of additional scenic highway designations where appropriate.**
- Maintaining rural and agriculturally-oriented commercial uses in a dispersed pattern or in low concentrations in nodes at major intersections **ADD: where existing zoning districts would allow such commercial uses**, to support and contribute to the rural quality of life; and
- Maintaining the overall pattern of very low levels of human influence.

LU4-Continue to cCoordinate land use patterns with transportation, housing, employment and retail development to encourage compact growth in already developed areas, **ADD: that are not flood-proned**, and infill existing vacant sites inside the Urban Growth Boundary requiring pedestrian connectivity between communities and local amenities, and ensuring that the infrastructure required to support development, including public transportation systems, is in place prior to development approvals.

LU5-Reinforce **ADD: through codification** the location of the Urban Growth Boundary and establish criteria to change its location through coordination with the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston, the Town of Mount Pleasant, and service providers, **ADD: and community groups located adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary.**

LU6- Continue the Comprehensive Plan implementation initiatives adopted by County Council.

LU7- Ensure developers contribute a fair share to the costs of services associated with development, **ADD: through impact fee assessments, and implementation, consistent with SC Code 6-1-910 et seq, the Development Impact Fee**

LU8-Require that any application affecting County resources **ADD: (eg., List examples)** be reviewed by the County for consistency with the adopted Future Land Use Plan.

LU9-Continue innovative planning and zoning techniques such as Clustering or Conservation Design and Form-based Zoning District regulations.

LU10- Continue to Aallow density bonuses beyond the maximum density of the recommended future land use designation when affordable and/or workforce housing units are included in proposed developments, especially within the Urban/LU4 Suburban Area, provided there is no negative effect on the existing community.

LU11- Near the outer edge of the Urban/Suburban Area, provide transitional areas consisting of lower intensity uses to gradually progress into the adjacent Rural Area.

LU12-Ensure development transitions appropriately from residential uses to non-residential uses through similar scale of buildings, architectural styles, and orientation of buildings and parking lots.

LU13-Continue to Wwork with historic African American communities and adjacent jurisdictions, when applicable, to create zoning regulations that preserve the unique development patterns and cultural history.

LU14-Continue to work with residents, stakeholders, and adjacent jurisdictions, when applicable, to implement community plans and corridor management plans adopted as part of this Plan. **ADD: (add relevant sections of the Comprehensive Plan that discuss community plans and corridor management plans)**

LU15-Continue to Eencourage and support pedestrian and bikeway linkages, **ADD: with special emphasis in underserved areas with residents who are walking/biking dependent.**

LU16-Continue to Rrequire approval of a *Comprehensive Plan* amendment for the purposes of amending the Community Facilities Element and the County's 208 Wastewater Service Areas Map and a *208 Water Quality Management Plan* amendment to allow any wastewater treatment systems other than individual on-site systems prior to submitting applications for development approval. Wastewater treatment systems that are approved as part of Planned Development Zoning Districts, Form-Based Zoning Districts, and/or Development Agreements do not require amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan*; however, they may require amendments to the Charleston County and *BCDCOG 208 Water Quality Management Plans* (Charleston County became a Designated Management Agency in 2010).

LU17-Coordinate with Joint Base Charleston, the City of North Charleston, and BCDCOG to implement recommendations and guidelines for zoning identified in the *Air Installation Compatibility Use Zoning (AICUZ)* Study prepared by the Air Force in 2004 (as amended), as applicable.

LU18-Continue to cCoordinate with the BCDCOG and municipalities to identify locations for Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) along the proposed Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT) route and incentivize the development of affordable and workforce housing and employment centers in these areas.

LU19-Promote planning and zoning policies that adapt land development to water systems, including the use of green infrastructure (e.g., bioswales, porous pavements, rain gardens, etc.), in landscaping practices and stormwater management.

LU20-DELETE Investigate the feasibility of Change to: Limiting development in areas prone to flooding, when no vested rights exist, through downzoning

### 3.1.4 FUTURE LAND USE APPROACH

The approach to future land use includes a multi-tiered effort that incorporates recommendations for growth management, treatment of major planning efforts, specific land uses and densities within the Future Land Use Plan, and development quality and character through a series of guidelines for the Rural and Urban/Suburban Areas of the County, **ADD: with codified adherence to the Urban Growth Boundary**. Combined, these recommendations and the other elements of the Plan are the criteria against which all development proposals should be evaluated for conformance with the *Comprehensive Plan*.

### 3.1.5 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

One of the growth management tools implemented in this Plan is the Urban Growth Boundary, which clearly defines two distinct Growth Management Areas: the Rural Area and the Urban/Suburban Area. The Urban Growth Boundary implements the desired County policy to promote higher intensity growth in the Urban/Suburban Area where adequate infrastructure and services are in place, at the same time allowing for preservation of the rural character of the majority of the County. *Map 3.1.2: Growth Management Areas* shows the geographic boundaries of these two Growth Management Areas. All future land use and development quality recommendations are tied to these areas.

The City of Charleston and the Town of Mount Pleasant have both adopted Urban Growth Boundaries, as well; however, the locations of these Urban Growth Boundary ies adopted by the City of Charleston varies vary slightly from the location of the Urban Growth Boundary adopted by Charleston County. To be implemented effectively, cooperation with jurisdictions such as the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston, the Town of Mount Pleasant, and other service providers is needed. **ADD: The Urban Growth Boundary location, standards, and enforcement criteria need to be developed and codified in with the above entities and established communities adjacent to and near the Urban Growth Boundary. Cooperation**

~~regarding the location of the Urban Growth Boundary and criteria to change its location should be pursued.~~ More information regarding institutionalizing the Urban Growth Boundary is described in detail in *CHAPTER 3.9 PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION ELEMENT*.

### 3.1.6 MAJOR PLANNING EFFORTS AND PROJECTS

**(No comments)**

With each Review and Update of this Plan, County Council adopts Priority Recommendations, which consist of major planning efforts and projects that the County should undertake over the next five years. These specialized initiatives include projects in both the Rural and Urban/Suburban Areas of the County and often include multi-jurisdictional coordination. *CHAPTER 3.9, PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION ELEMENT* further details the major planning efforts and projects adopted as part of this Plan the 2018 Ten-Year Update.

As shown in Chapter 3.9, several projects were adopted as part of the 2018 Ten-Year Update 2013-2014 Five-Year Review Annual Work Plan. The following projects have been accomplished: ZLDR Comprehensive Review (adopted in 2021); adoption of overlay zoning districts for several historic African American Communities; adoption of an updated Historic Preservation Ordinance and the subsequent designation of several properties and communities on the Charleston County Historic Designation list; and continued implementation of several community planning efforts including the Parkers Ferry Community Plan, Sol Legare Community Plan, DuPont-Wappoo Community Plan, and ReThink Folly Road Plan. Adoption of a Development of County Significance, Development Agreement, and Form-Based Zoning District for the Spring Grove Development; DuPont | Wappoo Community Plan and Overlay Zoning District; Parkers Ferry Community Plan and Overlay Zoning District; and Charleston County Historic Resources Survey Update. See CHAPTER 3.9 for more information about these completed projects.

### 3.1.7 FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

**REMOVE: the doubled densities in AG-15, AG-10, AG-8, and RR**

**ADD: District Classifications**

Table 3.1.1: Future Land Use Residential Densities

Table 3.1.1: Future Land Use Residential Densities	
Future Land Use Categories	

The Rural Area	Conservation Management	Consistent with the Natural Resource Management (NRM) District contained in the <i>Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance</i>
	Resource Management <b>RM</b>	1 dwelling per 25 acres
	Wadmalaw Island Agricultural Preservation <b>AG-15</b>	1 dwelling per 15 acres <del>to 1 dwelling per 7 acres*</del>
	Agricultural Preservation <b>AG-10</b>	1 dwelling per 10 acres <del>to 1 dwelling per 5 acres</del> 1 dwelling per 10 acres on Edisto Island
	Rural Agriculture <b>AG-8</b>	1 dwelling per 8 acres <del>to 1 dwelling per 4 acres</del>
	Rural Residential <b>RR</b>	1 dwelling per 3 acres <del>to 1 dwelling per acre</del>
	Agricultural Residential - <b>AGR</b>	1 dwelling per 5 acres to 1 dwelling per acre
	Rural Cultural Community Protection	1 dwelling per 25 acres to 1 dwelling per acre Not permitted on Wadmalaw or Edisto Islands
Form-Based Zoning Districts	All Future Land Use Categories	See <a href="#">CHAPTER 3.1.7.C, Form-Based Zoning District Developments of County Significance</a>
Urban/Suburban Area	Urban/Suburban Cultural Community Protection	1 to 4 dwellings per acre

	<b>Urban/Suburban Mixed Use</b>	<b>4 or more dwellings per acre</b>
<p><i>* The area of a parcel in the Wadmalaw Agricultural Preservation designation within 1,000 feet of the OCRM Critical Line has a maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres.</i></p>		



Section 3.1.7 Future Land Use Recommendation - The map displayed as 3.1.4 Future Land Use is hard to discern among the various colors. Clarify the location of the Urban Use Boundary.

As a general comment, the maps and tables shown throughout the Comprehensive Plan are blurred and very difficult to read, even when displayed at the highest level of resolution, making it difficult to obtain accurate information.

Element 2. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT** - Maintain business climate: please add “in appropriate urban/suburban areas. 2. Mixed Use: Same as above, in urban/suburban areas 5. High quality Same concept - in appropriate high density and commercial areas.

**Contents:**

- 3.2.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.2.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.2.3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.2.4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

**3.2.1: OVERVIEW**

*Element Goal*

Charleston County will be an integral part of a strong, diverse, and growing regional economy, providing economic opportunities for its citizens and fostering fiscal health for County government services and facilities.

The County includes Economic Development as an Element to help balance business and employment growth with that of population, housing, transportation, and land use. A balance is necessary to ensure the community continues to thrive, **ADD: particularly within the Charleston County Urban Growth Boundary areas.** The County has an active Economic Development Department which liaises with the State, surrounding counties, and other entities. It has played a large-largely significant role in attracting industries and commerce to the County.

**(No further comments )**

**Purpose and Intent**

*Economic development is an essential important component of the Comprehensive Plan to tie business and employment growth recommendations ~~for business—and employment—growth~~ with the land use, transportation, and housing recommendations. The strategies for economic development should foster a stable and competitive business climate to draw business to the region and support the economic viability of existing industries. The strategies are also intended to encourage business start-ups, small business enterprises, minority-owned businesses, high-technology and knowledge-based businesses, and attract new targeted industry sectors. The Economic Development Department will continue to promote the development of a trained quality workforce, evaluate development opportunities, and support the other recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan.*

Date: 8/10/2023	Retail sales have steadily declined since reaching a peak in 2016 at \$36.2 billion, but remain relatively strong due to the visitor industry and air travel. According to the SC Department of Revenue, the Charleston region collected \$27 billion in retail sales. - What is the period being reported on as \$27 Billion?
Date: 8/10/2023	Charleston is listed as 9th in the State for Capital Investment - is this figure correct? it seems way too low...

**3.2.2 INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS (No comments)**

**3.2.3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT GOAL**

*Charleston County will be an integral part of a strong, diverse, and growing regional economy, providing economic opportunities for its citizens and fostering fiscal health for County government services and facilities.*

**Economic Development Element Needs**

Economic Development Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A unified economic development vision for the Charleston Region;



- Fostering a stable and competitive business climate, **ADD: in areas appropriate for business (e.g., in commercial zoning districts within the Urban Growth Boundary)**
- Encouraging connected, equitable strategies to help foster economic success for all businesses; and
- Supporting existing industries, encouraging new business start-ups, including small business enterprises and minority-owned businesses, and attracting new targeted sectors to Charleston County.

### 3.2.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND TIMEFRAMES

The following strategic actions should be undertaken by the County in support of the objectives of the various economic development agencies that promote and serve the County and in support of the strategies of the other elements of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. ED1.

Continue to Encourage and support local and regional initiatives and strategies (such as One Region: Opportunity for All) to maintain and improve the business climate **ADD: in appropriate Urban/Suburban areas.**

2. ED2.

Continue to encourage and support Charleston County Economic Development's Strategic Plan and its core business recruitment and expansion programs, industrial and office product development, workforce development, and foster a robust innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

3. ED3.

Continue to Encourage mixed-use developments with employment opportunities in proximity to neighborhoods and public transportation, **ADD: in appropriate, commercially zoned areas.**

4. ED4.

Continue to encourage and sSupport incentives for underutilized commercial centers for redevelopment and re-use that allow for mixtures of residential and non-residential uses.

5. ED5.

Continue to Encourage agri-tourism and other employment opportunities **ADD: and home based business** in the Rural Areas, **ADD: where commercially zoned, or where home occupations are allowed.**

6. ED6.

Continue to Promote the preservation and creation of high quality, affordable housing to attract and retain businesses, **ADD: in appropriate Urban/Suburban commercially zoned areas.**

7. ED7.

Continue to promote the development and maintenance of all infrastructure that supports economic development activities through capital improvement plans and coordinated priority investment.

8. ED8.

Continue to Encourage cooperation with other jurisdictions and agencies to further regional economic development.

9. ED9.

Increase the average hourly wages and salaries in the region paid by existing industries, encourage the recruitment of businesses and industries that pay the wages necessary to afford housing, and train residents to obtain higher paying jobs through coordination with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) and local Economic Development Departments.

### Element 3. NATURAL RESOURCES -

#### 3.3.1: OVERVIEW

##### Element Goal

To preserve, enhance, and revitalize natural resources, such as rivers, creeks, wetlands, aquatic and wildlife habitat, beaches and dunes, groundwater, forests, farmland soils, and air quality and take actions to mitigate potential negative impacts of growth and development.

Natural resources are included in this Plan because of: their significant contribution to the character and quality of life in Charleston County; their local value expressed through the public input process of this Plan; their ability to attract new residents; and because South Carolina State Law requires that a Natural Resources Element be included in the Comprehensive Plan. As a steward of natural resources, the County has a responsibility to coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies to minimize the impacts of growth on the natural environment.

A key component in protecting natural resources is the promotion of sustainable development practices and patterns. The concept of “sustainability” involves the ability of a community and society to meet the needs of the present population while ensuring that future generations

have the same or better opportunities. There are increasing concerns that, as a culture, we are using resources at a faster rate than we are replenishing them and are creating communities that are not sustainable in the long run. Charleston County seeks to progress in a manner that conserves natural resources and minimizes degradation of the natural environment.

One of the challenges in addressing sustainability in a community comprehensive plan is that many of the issues are global in nature – air quality, biodiversity, ozone and climate depletion, food production, and others and it is often difficult to identify how local planning policies can address these issues. It can be overwhelming for community leaders to address these issues, particularly when the community has its hands full with local development issues. However, the County believes it is important to act responsibly through the implementation of strategies to address these issues. The County aspires to “think globally, act locally,” while also recognizing that these efforts must be balanced with other local demands on government time and resources. To supplement the strategies of this Element, the County adopted an Energy Element in 2012, renamed as the Energy and Sustainability Element with the adoption of the Five-Year Review of the Plan in [add date here]. The Energy and Sustainability Element which includes additional strategies to promote sustainable development practices.

### **3.3.2 BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS (No additional comments)**

### **3.3.3: NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT GOAL**

*To preserve, enhance, and revitalize natural resources, such as rivers, creeks, **ADD: marshes, saltwater and freshwater wetlands, aquatic and wildlife habitat, beaches and dunes, groundwater, forests, farmland soils, and air quality and take actions to mitigate potential negative impacts of growth and development.***

#### **Natural Resources Element Needs**

Natural Resources Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Protecting and enhancing natural resources;
- Sustaining natural environments, habitats and wildlife;
- Promoting sustainable development practices;
- Promoting and protecting scenic corridors; and
  - Allowing compact land use patterns to help minimize the fragmentation of natural resources.

### 3.3.4: NATURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

The following strategic actions should be undertaken by Charleston County and cooperating agencies that promote and protect natural resources in the County. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. NR1.

Continue to Maintain the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)* to ensure that natural resources are protected prior to, during, and after development activities.

2. NR2.

Continue to Protect critical natural resource areas by designating them for very low intensity uses in the future land use recommendations and the ZLDR.

3. NR3.

Continue to Promote sustainable, low impact development practices including but not limited to stormwater management, green infrastructure, maintenance of vegetative cover, Critical Line buffers and setbacks, and conservation set-asides in development plans and the ZLDR.

4. NR4.

Continue to Concentrate high intensity development in the Urban/Suburban Area where public facilities and infrastructure exist and low intensity development in the Rural Area to protect sensitive and unique natural resources.

5. NR5.

Continue to Support the ~~as amended~~ *Comprehensive Greenbelt Plan*, as amended, and provide incentives for protection of natural resources using methods such as conservation easements to place land into permanent protection and provide development incentives such as density bonuses for land set-asides through land development regulations.

6. NR6.

Explore the feasibility of establishing a public/private/multi-jurisdictional transfer of development rights program.

7. NR7.

Incorporate standards into the ZLDR to protect rural residents from the danger of wildfires.

8. NR8.

Promote best management practices, including prescribed burning where appropriate, in forest maintenance, timber harvesting and agricultural production.

9. NR9.

Support local agricultural and timber operations through tax relief initiatives, ~~and explore adopting a Voluntary Agricultural and Forestal Areas (VAFA) program.~~

10. NR10.

Continue to Protect water quality through implementation of the NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Program.

11. NR11.

Continue to Support the BCDCOG and SCDHEC as they implement the Trident Area Groundwater Management Plan and consider integrating groundwater usage assessments into the review and approval process for large development plans.

12. NR12.

Continue to Encourage sustainable landscaping that includes attractive environments that are in balance with the local climate and minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides, while at the same time conserving water. **NR-12: ADD: Encourage electrical utility providers to remove brush from underneath power lines by hand or by mechanical means, instead of the usage of herbicides in rural areas where the main water sources are private wells and where groundwater is shallow.**

13. NR13.

Continue to Implement the *Charleston County Local Comprehensive Beach Management Plan*.

14. NR14.

As recommended in the *Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan*, expand the *Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)* created for the Awendaw Fire District area in the northeastern part of the County to be a county-wide plan.

15. NR15.

Continue to Iinvestigate programs such as Septic Maintenance Programs to protect water quality and provide clean and safe sewage systems to communities in the Rural Area, and educate residents in the Rural Area about well and septic system maintenance and the cost and implications of extending public water and sewer systems to rural areas. **ADD: Explain to community residents how water and sewer extensions stimulate growth and development and would impact the low-density character of rural communities that desire to have wells and septic tanks. Such extensions should cautiously be considered, based upon the desires and requests of rural communities in the County.**

16. NR16.

Continue to work with applicable agencies and jurisdictions to meet federal air quality standards.

17. NR17.

Continue to coordinate with the Charleston Resilience Network, the City of Charleston, Sea Grant Consortium, NOAA, South Carolina Aquarium, and other public and private organizations to develop policies that encourage resiliency towards the impacts of flooding and high water, including creating a Green Infrastructure Plan.

18. NR18.

Continue participation in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) to reduce flood risk in Charleston County and decrease flood insurance costs.

19. NR19.

Create a new element of this Plan that explains high water impacts and identifies a goal, needs, and strategies to ensure Charleston County is resilient to flooding and high water impacts in the future.

20. NR20.

Encourage local, sustainable agriculture through regulatory incentives, tax relief initiatives, partnerships with other agencies to provide education and technical support, and other programs and initiatives.

21. NR21.

Create a county-wide approach to reducing light pollution by working with adjacent jurisdictions to implement policies that limit light pollution, promote energy conservation, and regulate outdoor lighting fixtures, and educate residents regarding the benefits of such changes.

Element 4. **CULTURAL RESOURCES** - (No Additional Comments)

## CHAPTER 3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

Contents:

- 3.4.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.4.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.4.3: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.4.4: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

### 3.4.1: OVERVIEW

## Element Goal

Cultural, historic and archaeological resources, unique settlement patterns of traditional Lowcountry communities (such as historically African-American communities and family settlements), and traditional activities (such as Sweetgrass Basket Making) should be preserved and protected from potential negative impacts of growth and development.

Charleston County encompasses an area richly endowed with a legacy of historic properties, scenic roadways, and historic rural landscapes. In recent years, citizens, as well as many historic preservation professionals, have raised concerns that these resources are threatened by the changing character of the community. Efforts by public-private partnerships such as that to preserve the Morris Island Lighthouse, are important to protect the County's cultural resources. Today, there is a recognized need for more public awareness of the importance of history and natural beauty to the quality of life in Charleston County. In this sense, recognition and appreciation of the County's historic legacy is not just an issue of historic preservation, but is a key contributor to the local economy. It is at the heart of the vision for Charleston County which calls for preservation of rural community character, cultural resources, and traditional activities and historic communities lifestyles.

### 3.4.3: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT GOAL

*Cultural, historic, and archaeological resources, unique settlement patterns of traditional Lowcountry communities (such as historically African-American communities and family settlements), and traditional activities (such as Sweetgrass Basket Making) should be preserved and protected from potential negative impacts of growth and*

*development.*

## Cultural Resources Element Needs

Cultural Resources Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Preserving the County’s significant historic and archaeological resources and cultural heritage;
- Increasing public awareness of the historic character of the County; and
- Promoting public and private partnerships to preserve and protect cultural resources.

### 3.4.4: CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

Charleston County should take the following actions to promote and protect cultural resources in the County. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. CR1.

Continue to promote historic preservation and enhance the County’s historic preservation ordinance.

2. CR2.

Continue to Ppursue grant opportunities such as federal historic preservation grants to promote preservation of local historic communities, sites, and structures.

3. CR3.

Continue to Work with communities along the Gullah Geechee Corridor to establish ways ~~to~~ preserve the unique settlement patterns and community character, including historic property/district designations, community plans and overlay zoning districts.

4. CR4.

Continue to Maintain a database of archaeological resources, heritage corridors, and historic properties, roads, and landscapes.

5. CR5.

Continue to Require a historic and archaeological survey for all Planned Development and Form-Based Zoning District requests.



6. CR6.

Continue to Monitor inventories and studies conducted by other agencies which identify new or recently discovered historic or cultural resources.

7. CR7.

Continue to Protect rural historic landscapes by ensuring development is in character with inherent rural attributes.

8. CR8.

Continue to Maintain and update development standards that preserve scenic and historic roadways and vistas.

9. CR9.

Continue to Utilize coordinate with residents, adjacent jurisdictions, outside agencies, non-profit organizations, and others with expertise in historic preservation to implement planning, ~~and zoning,~~ and other techniques to protect historic communities and neighborhoods and other areas of cultural significance.

10. CR10.

Consider tax relief initiatives to owners who rehabilitate historically significant property.

11. CR11.

Encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of older buildings that complement historic development patterns.

12. CR12.

Continue to Implement the recommendations identified in the *2016 Charleston County Historic Resources Survey Update*, ~~including applying to become a Certified Local Government.~~

13. CR13.

Continue to Ensure protection of cultural resources by mitigating flood risks and high water impacts.

## Element 5. POPULATION ELEMENT

## CHAPTER 3.5 POPULATION ELEMENT

### Contents:

- 3.5.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.5.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.5.3: POPULATION ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.5.4: POPULATION ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

### 3.5.1: OVERVIEW

#### Purpose and Intent

*Analysis of historic, current, and future population trends included in this Element identifies the changing needs and preferences of residents of the County. This information is intended to help shape the Future Land Use Plan, and identify future service needs of the population which can be addressed through the Comprehensive Plan.*

### 3.5.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Element Goal

A Charleston County will strive to accommodate a socioeconomically diverse and growing population will be accommodated by Charleston County in an environmentally and fiscally sustainable manner with particular attention to low to moderate incomeresidents who earn less than 120% of the Area Median Income.

### 3.5.3: POPULATION ELEMENT GOAL

A Charleston County will strive to accommodate a socioeconomically diverse and growing population will be accommodated by Charleston County in an environmentally and fiscally sustainable manner with particular attention to low to moderate incomeresidents who earn less than 120% of the Area Median Income.

#### Population Element Needs

Population Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Monitoring population and cultural shifts and national trends;
- Developing policies to meet the needs of the County’s population; and
- Encouraging diversity within communities.

### 3.5.4: POPULATION ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

The County should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Vision and Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. P1.

Continue to Monitor population growth trends and demographic shifts to guide future updates to the *Comprehensive Plan* and to ensure the needs of the current population are being met.

2. P2.

Develop land use strategies and implementation measures for more resilient communities.

3. P3.

Continue to Support a diverse population through land development regulations that accommodate a range of housing, transportation, and employment opportunities **ADD: that will be compatible in density and use within existing zoning classifications.**

4. P4.

Adopt innovative planning and zoning techniques such as Form-Based Zoning and Multiple Use Overlay Zoning District regulations that encourage diverse communities and respect culture and history.

5. P5.

Continue to identify new mechanisms (such as social media outlets and innovative community workshops) to engage the citizens in the community planning process.

6. P6.

Identify and implement initiatives to retain residents and employees including, but not limited to, ensuring diverse housing options that are affordable to residents and providing training and other workforce development opportunities.

## CHAPTER 3.6 HOUSING ELEMENT

### Contents:

- 3.6.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.6.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.6.3: HOUSING ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.6.4: HOUSING ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

### 3.6.1: OVERVIEW

#### Element Goal

~~Quality housing that is affordable will be encouraged~~ Charleston County will prioritize the development of quality, diverse housing with efficient transit connectivity that is affordable for people of all ages, incomes, and physical abilities with special emphasis for those earning less than 120% of the Area Median Income.

Housing is included in the *Comprehensive Plan* to ensure policies are in place to promote safe and affordable housing in the County and provide housing options for residents of various demographic and economic backgrounds. As a desirable place to live, the demand for housing is high in Charleston County. The County's population increased ~~18~~ ~~13~~ percent (~~62,815~~ ~~40,240~~ residents) from ~~350,209~~ ~~309,969~~ residents in ~~2010~~ ~~2000~~ to ~~413,024~~ ~~350,209~~ residents in ~~2021~~ ~~2010~~. By ~~2035~~ ~~2030~~, the South Carolina Department of Revenue and Fiscal Affairs predicts that the County will reach a population of ~~448,125~~ ~~396,700~~. This growth will require additional housing units that are diverse in type, size, and affordability.

#### Purpose and Intent

*Charleston County includes the housing element in the Comprehensive Plan to comply with South Carolina State Law. Furthermore, the intent of this chapter is to promote a sufficient, diverse supply of housing with access to facilities and services and promote housing alternatives for low and moderate income households. The strategies for housing are meant to preserve existing housing stock and encourage community revitalization, while promoting a supply of safe and structurally sound homes. To further enhance the quality of life of County residents, the strategies encourage attractive land uses that promote community identity and support a wide range of housing needs with particular emphasis on promoting diverse and affordable housing opportunities.*

### 3.6.3: HOUSING ELEMENT GOAL

~~Quality housing that is affordable will be encouraged~~ Charleston County will

prioritize the development of quality, diverse housing with efficient transit connectivity that is affordable for people of all ages, incomes, and physical abilities with special emphasis for those earning less than 120% of the Area Median Income.

### Housing Element Needs

Housing Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Meeting the projected demand for a growing and diverse population;
- Promoting housing that is affordable to all residents; and
- Ensuring that all homes are safe and structurally sound.

### 3.6.4: HOUSING ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

The County should undertake the following action strategies in support of the Housing Goal and the other elements of this Plan. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. H1.

Continue to Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions, the SC Community Loan Fund, and other affordable housing agencies in pursuit of supplying housing that is affordable to all residents.

2. H2.

Continue to support funding for affordable and workforce housing agencies such as the SC Community Loan Fund and local housing authorities.

3. H3.

Continue to Maintain and develop incentives in the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance*, such as density bonuses, transfers of density, accessory dwelling units, and mixed-use development provisions to promote diverse housing options that are affordable to all residents and are located within walking distance to services, retail, employment opportunities, and public transportation. **ADD: Housing densities utilizing the incentives should be compatible with overall allowable zoning densities in the surrounding areas of the properties using incentives.**

4. H4.

Continue to Ssupport existing communities by maintaining the existing housing stock and ensuring that infill development preserves and enhances the character of communities.

5. H5.

Continue to enforce the Building Code and Beautification Section of the Charleston County Code of Ordinances (Ordinance #1227) and coordinate with other jurisdictions to maintain housing stock in a safe and habitable condition that meet all Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements.

6. H6.

Adopt innovative planning and zoning techniques such as Form-Based Zoning District regulations to encourage mixed-use developments with diverse housing options in walking distance to services, retail, and employment opportunities.

7. H7.

Continue to encourage provision of housing that is affordable to all residents and meets the needs of the diversifying population (e.g., rental apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and first-time home buyer initiatives).

8. H8.

Charleston County should be proactive in promoting housing that is affordable to all residents through incentives and removal of regulatory barriers.

9. H9.

Support the findings of local and regional housing studies and implement applicable strategies by adopting amendments to the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance* and coordinating with other County departments, outside agencies, non-profit organizations, and private businesses/industries. **ADD: Such newly implemented strategies will be consistent with the location, land use character, and the guidelines for the Rural and Urban/Suburban areas of the County.**

10. H10.

Implement the recommendations of the Charleston County *Housing our Future Plan*, when adopted, **ADD: provided the recommendations are consistent with current land uses, zoning, densities, and Rural Urban/Suburban standards.**

11. H11.

Investigate the feasibility of requiring new developments to provide affordable and workforce housing.

12. H12.

Identify and implement partnerships and initiatives that provide financial incentives for the development of affordable and workforce housing.

## Element 7. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT -

### CHAPTER 3.7 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

#### Contents:

- 3.7.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.7.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.7.3: TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.7.4: TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

#### 3.7.1: OVERVIEW

##### Element Goal

A **public** transportation system that is coordinated with land use patterns and community character **through a high level of interaction with the community, and includes a diversity of transit options, prioritizes pedestrian infrastructure, and is accessible and efficient for all residents.** The level of service should support economic development and a high quality of life **for all income levels.**

Transportation is an important *Comprehensive Plan* Element because it provides the strategies tying the movement of people and goods with the strategies of economic development and land use. Because roads are capital facilities maintained in part by the County, City, and/or State, they are linked to the strategies for capital facility improvements and the provision of adequate public facilities. The impact of new development on the roadways is often felt on a countywide level. As development in areas of the County intensifies, one of the first things long time residents and new residents notice is an increase in traffic and traffic congestion. Furthermore, the general health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and visitors to Charleston County are strongly influenced by the road network's ability to handle evacuations during severe weather and other emergencies.

#### Purpose and Intent

*The purpose of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to: present information and strategies that respect the scenic beauty, community character, natural resources, and cultural heritage of Charleston County in the provision and use of any transportation system; consider the impacts of proposed new development in the existing transportation systems during review of proposed developments; improve efficiency of the existing and planned transportation system by managing its supply and demand; encourage the provision of safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle systems; encourage public transit options in the County; promote intermodal transportation systems such as park and ride, pedestrian and bike ways, and bus rapid transit; and support and improve the existing emergency evacuation and transportation planning policies.*

A transportation system that offers a complete network of transportation choices, including, but not limited to, pedestrian and bicycle facilities as well as public transportation and mass transit options, is key to developing a sustainable community. The provision of transportation in the County should reflect the unique characteristics of the landscape and adhere to the character outlined in the development quality strategies of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Safe and adequate transportation options should maintain and enhance the rural character throughout the County.

Transportation systems are not confined solely to roads. In Charleston County, the transportation system includes: a large port system; the Intercoastal Waterway, along with the Atlantic Ocean and various rivers used for shipping purposes; several airports, both public and private; Joint Base Charleston; public transportation systems; and a network of local roads, collector roads, arterial roads, and highways. The economy of the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester region is dependent upon the viability and success of these diverse transportation systems. Therefore, a key strategy in this Element is to support these systems and ensure that they are balanced with land use recommendations.

### **3.7.3: TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT GOAL**

*A public transportation system that is coordinated with land use patterns and community character through a high level of interaction with the community, and includes a diversity of transit options,*



prioritizes pedestrian infrastructure, and is accessible and efficient for all residents.

The level of service should support economic development and a high quality of life for all income levels.

### Transportation Element Needs

Transportation Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following;

- Tying transportation needs with the strategies of housing, economic development, and land use;
- Encouraging alternative modes of transportation such as public transit and pedestrian/bicycle systems;
- Improving the efficiency of the transportation system;
- Ensuring transportation planning is coordinated with all jurisdictions; and
- Ensuring that evacuation routes are viable in the event of an emergency.

## 3.7.4 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAME

### 1. T 1.

Continue to Rrequire traffic impact studies consistent with the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance.

### 2. T 2.

Continue to Ccoordinate with residents, community groups, municipalities, surrounding counties and SCDOT on all major projects. **ADD: Require coordinating and hosting public meetings in various areas of the County to gather input from residents and community groups in areas considered for changes.**

### 3. T 3.

Adopt and administer standards, in accordance with the appropriate transportation agencies based on traffic impact studies **ADD: safety measures, and potential trip generation** and made as **a conditions** of approval for all proposed developments, zoning changes, ~~or~~and special use approvals, requiring provision of adequate transportation infrastructure including but not limited to:

#### 1. •

Connecting existing sidewalk and bicycle facilities to proposed road facilities.

2. •

Adding turn lanes at driveways and intersections.

3. •

Installing traffic signals; and

4. •

Widening roads and bridges.

4. T 4.

Create and adopt a major thoroughfare plan including functional classifications as defined by the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and the Charleston County Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance and identify planned right-of-way to be set aside for future roadways, sidewalks, and bicycle paths. The Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance should provide incentives to dedicate thoroughfares during the development approval process.

5. T 5.

Incentivize and preserve future transportation corridors and other rights-of-way to reduce future acquisition costs.

6. T 6.

Mandate that adequate transportation infrastructure be in place prior to, or concurrent with, additional development.

7. T 7.

Coordinate Base land use strategies, development decisions, and growth management policies on existing and planned transportation infrastructure and levels of service planning with growth management and land use strategies.

8. T 8.

Adopt "Complete Streets" policies to promote increased traffic safety along roadways, including but not limited to, separation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic from motorized traffic, intersection improvements, access management plans such as curb cuts, and lower speed limits.

9. T 9.

Continue to Ssupport and participate in Metropolitan Planning Organization functions, as designated by the Federal Highway Administration and SCDOT.

10. T 10.

Continue to monitor the status of population evacuation for emergency preparedness for natural or man-made disasters.

11. T 11.

Continue to administer the Charleston County Transportation Half-Cent Sales Tax Programs and identify additional ways of financing transportation improvements including through public/private partnerships.

12. T 12.

Continue to SSupport the functions of the Charleston County Transportation Committee (CCTC).

13. T 13.

Continue to Ppromote multi-transit opportunities, including the improvements at the Charleston International Airport/Air Force Base, State Ports Authority, maintaining the Intracoastal Waterway, and implementing and operating a bus rapid transit system.

14. T 14.

Continue to Ssupport the People 2 Parks Plan created by the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (CCPRC), the Walk+Bike BCD Plan currently being (May 2017) developed by the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Council of Governments, and associated municipal plans, to continue to develop the pedestrian and bicycle network in Charleston County.

15. T 15.

~~Encourage~~ Prioritize pedestrian infrastructure by requiring that pedestrian and bike access be incorporated ~~on~~ in all existing and planned public roadways, including bridges, and ~~explore exploring~~ potential funding sources for additional pedestrian and bike access projects, **ADD: including rural areas for those earning less than 120% of the Area Median income.**

16. T 16.

Support the recommendations of the Savannah Highway / Ashley River Bridges / Crosstown Congestion Management Study.

17. T 17.

Coordinate with CARTA, adjacent jurisdictions, and residents to ensure bus routes are consistent with land use and development patterns, to serve the maximum number of people to improve the efficiency of the bus system, enhance bus stops, and implement incentives and regulations that reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles including, but not limited to,

improving and enhancing the public transportation system, reducing parking availability in targeted areas, and improving pedestrian infrastructure.

**ADD:** This requires coordinating with residents and community groups in areas considered for changes, and to host public meetings for input from the residents and community groups. Additional parking may be needed in areas near public transportation in order to encourage the usage of public transportation.

18. T 18.

Design new publicly owned and maintained roadways to be in character with the Rural Area and ensure that they will not promote additional growth out of character with the rural landscape.

19. T 19.

Coordinate with the City of Charleston, Dorchester County, Town of Summerville, and the SC Department of Transportation on the potential extension of the Glenn McConnell Parkway.

20. T 20.

Monitor emerging transportation technologies such as personal rapid transit systems and implement as feasible.

21. T 21.

Coordinate transportation plans and projects with adjacent counties and municipalities in Charleston County.

## Element 8. **PRIORITY INVESTMENT**

### **CHAPTER 3.9 PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION ELEMENT**

#### **Contents:**

- 3.9.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.9.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.9.3: PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.9.4: PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES
- 3.9.5: IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVES
- 3.9.6. IMPLEMENTATION TOOLBOX

## 3.9.1: OVERVIEW

### Element Goal

Public infrastructure and planning projects **will** **shall** be prioritized **and implemented** through **active and open** coordination with **the community as well as with** adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.

In 2007, the *South Carolina Priority Investment Act* (The Act) was passed by The General Assembly to address affordable housing and transportation issues and to create a formal process for interjurisdictional coordination. The Act requires two new elements be included in Comprehensive Plans, Transportation and Priority Investment. It also expands the Housing Element to require counties (1) to analyze regulatory barriers that may impede the provision of affordable housing; and (2) to utilize market-based incentives to encourage development of affordable housing. The primary intent of the *Priority Investment Act* is to better coordinate the funding of necessary public facilities with available resources and adjacent jurisdictions through implementation strategies. The significant challenge in meeting the requirements of The Act is the multi-jurisdictional nature of planning and public service provision in the County. As detailed throughout this Plan, many jurisdictions and agencies are involved in the provision of services and growth management in Charleston County. The multitude of service entities operating in the County requires extensive coordination.

#### **Purpose and Intent**

*The Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element prioritizes the implementation actions for the County over the next ten years through strategies, implementation initiatives and an implementation toolbox. This Element provides guidance for implementation of strategies contained in the other Plan Elements by analyzing the potential federal, state, and local funds available for public infrastructure and facilities during the next ten years and prioritizing projects recommended for that funding. The strategies and implementation measures contained in this element: identify service providers, organizations and municipalities with which the County should coordinate provision of services; reference elements of this Plan to identify locations for improvements to public facilities; support the prioritization of County funds; lay groundwork for intergovernmental coordination; and provide the implementation tools to accomplish the strategies of the Plan elements.*

Since its adoption in 1999, the Charleston County *Comprehensive Plan* has included an Intergovernmental Coordination Element with the goal of promoting regional cooperation and coordination in areas of mutual concern for Charleston County, internal municipalities, and its neighbors. The Intergovernmental Coordination Element has been expanded to be the Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element. The approach to priority investment in Charleston County includes:

1. 1.  
Strategies for ongoing coordination with adjacent jurisdictions, service providers, and other agencies;
2. 2.  
Four major implementation initiatives: (1) Major Planning Efforts and Projects, (2) Capital Improvement Plan, Fiscal Impact Assessment, and Funding Options, (3) Interjurisdictional Coordination; and (4) Rural Preservation; and
3. 3.  
An implementation toolbox.

The four major initiatives for implementing this Plan prioritize the actions the County will take in an effort to coordinate land use, transportation, community facilities, and economic development. The primary components of these initiatives include the development of a Capital Improvements Plan and the coordinated provision of public services and facilities. The Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element will be an ongoing annual endeavor directed by County Council with adequate resources. As resources permit, the implementation should include a work program for land planning/growth management projects with a focus on coordinating with appropriate agencies and departments and adjacent jurisdictions, when applicable, strategies to consolidate services where appropriate, and maintenance strategies for County-provided services that protect the general health, safety, and welfare of the public such as 9-1-1 dispatch, EMS, fire, sheriff, detention center, drainage, stormwater, roads, and mosquito abatement.

### **3.9.3: PRIORITY INVESTMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND COORDINATION ELEMENT GOAL**

*Public infrastructure and planning projects ~~will~~ shall be prioritized and implemented through active and open coordination with the community as well as with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies.*

## Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element Needs

Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interjurisdictional coordination [including reinforcing the location of the Urban Growth Boundary through a mutually agreed-to process and criteria for amending the Urban Growth Boundary;](#)
- Annual planning work program for implementation of this Plan;
- Capital Improvements Programming, Fiscal Impact Assessment, and funding options;
- Encouraging intensification and infill within the Urban/Suburban Area while maintaining the character of the Rural Area; and
- Responding to changes by authorizing alternatives to conventional land use and development patterns.

The Priority Investment, Implementation, and Coordination Element prioritizes the actions for the County over the next ten years. The strategies contained in this Element together with the implementation initiatives that follow, are intended to lay the groundwork to meet the goals of this Plan. All of the strategies contain elements of the implementation initiatives. Those initiatives are explained in detail following the strategies listed below. Some of the strategies come from other elements of this Plan to be carried forward through implementation actions described in this element. Other strategies are aimed at interjurisdictional coordination and cooperation, which is another implementation action the County will take to meet the goals of this *Comprehensive Plan*. Additional tools the County can use to carry out the strategies of this Plan are included in the implementation toolbox, which is located in the appendix to the *Comprehensive Plan*. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

### 1. PI 1.

Prepare a Fiscal Impact Analysis to evaluate the cost of providing public services and infrastructure to serve new growth in the unincorporated County and across jurisdictions where the County is a major service provider.

### 2. PI 2.

Prepare and update a five to ten year Capital Improvement Plan that includes funding options and coordinates with the Land Use, Community Facilities, and Transportation Elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

### 3. PI 3.

Continue to Rregularly review and update the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance* to ensure these regulations reflect the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

4. PI 4.

Address specific planning issues involving Charleston County so that:

1. •

Land use plans, overlay zoning districts, and architectural standards are consistent among adjacent jurisdictions;

2. •

The goals and strategies contained in the *Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Housing Needs Assessment* and Charleston County Housing Our Future Plan are implemented; and

3. •

Transportation plans and projects are coordinated ~~There are transportation alternatives~~ among jurisdictions.

5. PI 5.

Seek agreements with water providers, Designated Wastewater Management Agencies, and agencies providing wastewater treatment that will:

1. •

Establish service area limits in support of the regional land use pattern adopted in the Charleston County *Comprehensive Plan*; and

2. •

Require that any wastewater treatment systems other than individual on-site systems in the Rural Area be approved by County Council as a *Comprehensive Plan* amendment and be approved by the BCDCOG as an amendment to the *Section 208 Water Quality Management Plan*. Wastewater treatment systems that are approved as part of Planned Development or Form-Based Zoning Districts, or Development Agreements do not require amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan*; however, they may require amendments to the *208 Water Quality Management Plan*.

6. PI 6.

Reinforce/**ADD: Codify** the location of the Urban Growth Boundary and establish **ADD: enforcement criteria for violations, and time period criteria, (e.g., during five or 10 year Comprehensive Plan updates), ~~to change~~ for economic, infrastructure, traffic, and related impact studies as to possible changes in** its location through coordination with the Cities of Charleston and North Charleston, the Towns of Mount Pleasant, Kiawah Island and Seabrook Island, and service providers.



7. PI 7.

Continue the *Comprehensive Plan* implementation initiatives included in this Element and adopted by County Council.

8. PI 8.

Coordinate with municipalities in the County to address mutually agreed-upon regional issues.

9. PI 9.

Continue regional coordination with Berkeley County, Dorchester County, and Colleton County to plan concurrently and compatibly, with particular attention to the regional implications of decisions regarding transportation system improvements, emergency planning, solid waste disposal, detention centers, and the extension of public sewer and water services.

10. PI 10.

Advocate for coordinated public facilities and services necessary to support the regional land use pattern adopted in Charleston County.

11. PI 11.

Continue coordinating with SCDOT and BCDCOG to support transportation [PLANNING IN CHARLESTON COUNTY](#) that is consistent with the goals of the Charleston County *Comprehensive Plan*, focused on the following:

1. •

Identification of roadway improvements in future updates of the *CHATS Plan* and the *Five-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)*;

2. •

Long-term planning for state highways;

3. •

Design of state highways; and

4. •

Funding implementation of the adopted CHATS Plan Actions to enhance transit use and funding implementation of the *CHATS Long-Range Public Transportation Plan*.

12. PI 12.

[Continue to C](#)oordinate land use planning with Charleston County School District.

13. PI 13.

Continue efforts to develop a regional database sharing Geographic Information System (GIS) data among municipalities, counties, the BCDCOG, state and federal resource management agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

14. PI 14.

Continue to Address resilience and sustainability in the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance*.

15. PI 15.

Encourage long-term public-private partnerships in land use, housing, economic development, and infrastructure planning.

16. PI 16.

Continue to work with residents and stakeholders to implement corridor and community plans adopted as part of this Plan

## Element 9. ENERGY ELEMENT

### CHAPTER 3.10 ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT

#### Contents:

- 3.10.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.10.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.10.3: ENERGY ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.10.4: ENERGY ELEMENT STRATEGIES AND TIME FRAMES

#### 3.10.1: OVERVIEW

### Element Goal

**Promote** Charleston County will emphasize and invest in

the use of alternative energy sources and energy conservation measures, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that benefit our communities and reflect our responsibility to steward our natural resources with future generations in mind.

The Energy and Sustainability Element includes information about energy use, available energy sources, and recommendations to help Charleston County become more energy independent to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Energy independence is vitally important for national security and economic stability because it minimizes reliance on imported fuel and sources of energy that have become increasingly scarce and costly to obtain. Ways to achieve energy independence include:

- Conservation;
- Efficiency;
- Utilizing Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources; and
- Utilizing Local Resources.

Reducing the use of fossil fuels as the County's primary energy source will also lead to decreased greenhouse gas emissions which contribute to increased temperatures and extreme weather events. Increased temperatures and extreme weather events can lead to significant impacts like sea level rise and hurricanes.

Energy plays an important role in the development of civilization. For centuries, the primary sources of energy came from human labor, domesticated animals, and biomass (wood related products). However, the primary source of energy over the past 150 years has increasingly shifted to fossil fuels. This shift has brought unprecedented growth and prosperity, changing every facet of human endeavor including transportation, medicine, agriculture, etc. In all levels of government, especially at a local level, energy consumption and conservation continues to be as a valid concern because of the impact fossil fuels have on the environment. despite fossil fuels remaining relatively inexpensive over the last several years. Integration of sustainable development through alternative energy planning into the comprehensive planning process at the local level is vital to achieving sensible growth in South Carolina.

#### **Purpose and Intent**

*The purpose and intent of the Energy and Sustainability Element is to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions through conservation and renewable energy. Additionally, Charleston County intends to lead by example. The strategies for energy conservation and renewability will aid in maintaining the character of scenic Charleston County without hindering business and employment growth of future generations.*

When energy expenses are reduced, there is more disposable income to spend on other priorities. Reducing energy use and investing in efficiency measures keeps more dollars circulating in the local economy, as well. Energy efficiency, demand-side management, and conservation need to be promoted, publicized, and encouraged. By improving our energy efficiency, we reduce the size and cost of renewable and alternative energy systems needed to power our homes and businesses. Conservation saves energy by changing attitudes and behavior to stop wasteful activities. The Energy [and Sustainability](#) Element underscores the significance of energy through an analysis of energy use and its sources and presents a series of strategies to promote alternative sources and conservation measures that can benefit our communities. The Energy [and Sustainability](#) Element is vital in this Plan as it both “sets the stage” and “reinforces” the concepts of most other Elements in the Plan.

### 3.10.3: ENERGY [AND SUSTAINABILITY](#) ELEMENT GOAL

*[Promote](#) Charleston County will [emphasize and invest in the use of alternative energy sources and energy conservation measures, and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that benefit our communities and reflect our responsibility to steward our natural resources with future generations in mind.](#)*

#### Energy [and Sustainability](#) Element Needs

Energy [and Sustainability](#) Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Promoting conservation of resources;
- Investing in renewable energies;
- Educating the public [and County employees](#) on [the importance of greenhouse gas emission reduction by using](#) alternative energy sources and [through](#) energy conservation; and
- Encouraging public and private partnerships to facilitate alternative energy sources and energy conservation.

### 3.10.4: ENERGY [AND SUSTAINABILITY](#) ELEMENT STRATEGIES, [ACTION ITEMS](#) AND TIME FRAMES

The following strategic actions should be undertaken by Charleston County and cooperating agencies in support of the Energy and Sustainability Element Goal. These implementation strategies will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

1. ES 1.

Coordinate energy reduction and sustainability-related efforts within the County and across jurisdictional boundaries, **ADD:** developed within current zoning allowances.

**Action Item:** Develop a Climate Action Plan the purposes of which include: setting a greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal; establishing a timeframe to meet that established goal; and listing activities that will be implemented to accomplish this goal. Form multiple stakeholder workgroups focused around topic areas like buildings, transportation, and waste management that include members from the 16 municipalities located geographically within Charleston County to help develop the Plan.

**Action Item:** Work with other jurisdictions on joint programs and activities as applicable, i.e., educational events, public charging stations for Charleston County residents, etc.

2. ES 2.

Identify energy reduction programs and activities the Charleston County government can implement to reduce the County's greenhouse gas emissions.

**Action Item:** Incorporate energy-reducing projects in the annual Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for existing and new buildings. This includes conducting an energy and water usage audit for all major County facilities to establish a baseline of energy and water use in order to recommend necessary reductions.

**Action Item:** Support departments who are interested in electric vehicles for fleet replacement.

**Action Item:** Develop a Sustainable Purchasing Policy that focuses on environmental considerations in Charleston County government purchasing along with the traditional concerns of price, performance, and availability.

3. ES 3.

Identify activities to reduce landfill emissions from the Bees Ferry Landfill.

**Action Item:** Promote and educate about the importance of recycling to Charleston County employees and residents through the Green Liaisons program and additional outreach efforts.

**Action Item:** Promote composting by providing Charleston County residents more access to drop-off composting and education about at-home composting.

**Action Item:** Explore opportunities for landfill gas capture projects.

4. ES 4.

Promote energy efficiency and use of alternative energy sources by:

1. a)

Education outreach, training and technical assistance;

2. b)

Utilizing existing state, federal and non-profit resources such as Carolina Energy Office, ENERGY STAR, public utility energy efficiency programs, and Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing;

3. c)

Conducting an energy audit for all County facilities (existing, undergoing renovation, and under design) and implement the recommended cost effective improvements; and

4. d)

Monitoring state and federal legislation that promotes energy efficiency and renewable or alternative energy resources such as net metering legislation.

5. ES 5.

Evaluate the impact on vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) for both County residents and employees through providing County services at satellite facilities, expanding online services and allowing telecommuting when it is a viable management work option.

6. ES 6.

Continue to Promote green building code standards and sustainable landscaping that aids in energy conservation.

7. ES 7.

Continue to support weatherization programs, such as the Weatherization Plus program implemented by the Sustainability Institute in Charleston, SC, and the Weatherization Assistance Program offered throughout the U.S. Department of Energy.

8. ES 8.

Amend the *Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance* to encourage local renewable energy generation and green building design, and provide standards for solar collectors, solar farms, and wind generators as accessory uses. **ADD: to ensure that there is public notice given for opportunities to give input, and the uses are not detrimental to the character of rural areas and surrounding**

communities.

9. ES 9.

Continue to Support those involved with local food production as a means to reduce energy by minimizing food transportation costs.

10. ES 10.

Adopt land use regulations that allow the establishment of electric vehicle charging stations where feasible.

11. ES 11.

Support tax incentives for properties that install/utilize alternative energy sources.

12. ES 12.

Coordinate with CARTA and adjacent jurisdictions to develop a more energy efficient mass transit system.

13.

Element 10. **RESILIENCE ELEMENT**

## **CHAPTER 3.11 RESILIENCE ELEMENT**

### **Contents:**

- 3.11.1: OVERVIEW
- 3.11.2: BACKGROUND AND INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
- 3.11.3: RESILIENCE ELEMENT GOAL
- 3.11.4: RESILIENCE ELEMENT STRATEGIES, ACTION ITEMS AND TIME FRAMES

### **3.11.1: OVERVIEW**

*Element Goal* 

Charleston County will prioritize resilience, including resilience to stormwater events and rising sea levels and protection of natural defenses such as wetlands, woodlands, and floodplains, in all County plans, policies, and regulations to ensure the long-term survival of the community.

*Resilience is the ability of a community to respond, adapt, and thrive under changing conditions, including, but not limited to, recurrent burdens and sudden disasters.*

In light of flooding events ~~over the past three years seen over the past decade~~, along with annual hurricane threats, the existence of a major fault line, and unprecedented growth creating stresses on essential services, infrastructure, development, and the environment, it has become overwhelmingly apparent that Charleston County and surrounding areas need to plan and proactively approach resilience now to be prepared for changes in the future. By committing time, effort, and funding now we can research, assess, and implement projects to protect our citizens and community for future generations.

#### **Purpose and Intent**

*The primary purpose of the Resilience Element is to identify strategies to make the County more resilient. Although flooding is a major concern and addressed throughout the Element, other areas of concern are also discussed, and Charleston County is dedicated to taking an all-hazards approach to resilience planning. This means when planning for resilience, the County is not planning around specific events, but rather taking a big-picture approach towards risk mitigation. Another purpose of the Resilience Element is to clarify the roles that government, the private sector, and individuals hold in regards to improving resilience.*

The need for a Resilience Element (Element) to be added to the Comprehensive Plan was identified after the 2015 flood event when [the County's](#) Planning Commission saw the need for study and action, and wrote a letter to County Council about their concerns. This need was further demonstrated after flood events in 2016 and again in 2017. [The](#) Planning Commission then determined that it would form a subcommittee containing different faces of the community so that several perspectives could sit at the same table. The end result is the formation of this Element, which contains goals and strategies to improve Charleston County's resilience, including, but not limited to, coordinated efforts with the jurisdictions within the County. The subcommittee worked for nine months to develop this Element, and then recommended it to the Planning Commission for approval. The Planning Commission reviewed it and recommended it to County Council for approval on October 14, 2019, and County Council adopted it as part of the Comprehensive Plan on March 10, 2020.



### 3.11.3: RESILIENCE ELEMENT GOAL

*Charleston County will prioritize resilience, including resilience to stormwater events and rising sea levels and protection of natural defenses such as wetlands, woodlands, and floodplains, in all County plans, policies, and regulations to ensure the long-term survival of the community.*

#### Resilience Element Needs

Resilience Element needs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Improving the County’s ability to handle and recover from sudden emergencies, as well as more persistent issues.
- Determining areas that are of the highest risk, evaluating development intensity regulations for these areas, and prioritizing projects in these areas.
- Strengthening partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions to combat issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- Educating the public about their role in building resilience and how to recover.
- Continuing to review Review and consolidate resilience-related efforts detailed in other Elements of this Plan during subsequent reviews and updates the next five-year update, which may include, but not be limited to, advanced study and audit of existing facilities and programs.

### 3.11.4: RESILIENCE ELEMENT STRATEGIES, ACTION ITEMS AND TIME FRAMES

The County should undertake the following strategic actions in support of the Vision and Goals of this Plan. These implementation strategies and action items will be reviewed a minimum of every five years and updated every ten years from the date of adoption of this Plan.

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#### 1. RE.1

*Coordinate resilience-related efforts within the County and across jurisdictional boundaries.*

**ACTION ITEM:** ~~Identify a~~Under the expertise of the Resilience Officer, continue to identify ~~and~~ resources to implement strategies, administer programs, pursue funding opportunities, and provide standards to coordinate resilience-related efforts of County

**ACTION ITEM:** Work with adjacent jurisdictions ~~to secure funding~~ to perform a regional vulnerability, risk, and resilience assessment and watershed assessment, ~~both of which should include~~ and implementation strategies.

Departments, municipalities and adjacent jurisdictions, applicable regulatory agencies, and regional partners.

**ACTION ITEM:** Continue to identify and pursue amendments to existing County policies and regulations including, but not limited to, the Floodplain Management Program, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Stormwater Ordinance, Building Ordinance, and Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance, to improve the County's resilience towards long-term stresses and acute disasters, using the best data available to inform decisions.

**ACTION ITEM:** Amend applicable County ordinances to address the Community Rating System (CRS) standards not currently addressed by the County, including, but not limited to:

1. • Requiring low-impact development design Best Management Practices such as non-structural flood protection techniques that can mimic natural hydrologic runoff characteristics and minimize the impact of land development on water resources in applicable areas;
2. • Increasing the freeboard in Special Flood Hazard Areas;
3. • Implementing freeboard requirements in X Zones;
4. • Increasing minimum lot size requirements in low density zoning districts (in the Rural Area);
5. • Prohibiting filling of land where determined to create or exacerbate flooding, whether the land is in a flood zone or not;
6. • Increasing OCRM Critical Line buffer

**ACTION ITEM:** Continue to amend County regulations and policies to implement the strategies of the regional vulnerability and watershed assessments.

**ACTION ITEM:** Continue to create, implement, maintain and assist in public information programs in order to educate citizens about resilience practices including, but not limited to, assisting business owners with developing Continuity of Operations Plans; educating the public, including children, about contributing factors related to flood risks, sea level rise, and ways to reduce environmental impacts; creating targeted messaging that is understood at all educational levels, ages and nationalities, so that the public can be better informed; and incorporating K-12 educational efforts to promote resilience, mitigation and disaster preparedness at the school-aged level.

**ACTION ITEM:** Continually monitor local, state, federal, and private initiatives and recommendations regarding resilience.

**ACTION ITEM:** Continue to coordinate with municipalities to reduce waste and duplication of efforts, and investigate diversion strategies in order to limit impacts on the environment.

**ACTION ITEM:** Utilize the knowledge gained from the COVID-19 Pandemic to maintain and enhance resilience towards health-related disasters.

**ACTION ITEM:** Investigate the feasibility of limiting development in areas prone to flooding.

requirements;

7. • Requiring additional review of flood hazards during the Site Plan Review process;
8. • Enacting transfer and/or purchase of development rights programs through Intergovernmental Agreements with other jurisdictions to provide incentives for low levels of development within the Special Flood Hazard Areas; and
9. • Requiring compensatory storage of stormwater in new development/re-development, where applicable.

## 2. **RE.2**

***Develop, adopt, and implement a Drainage Master Plan and sea level rise strategies that are coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions through the All-Hazards Vulnerability and Risk Assessment.***

**ACTION ITEM:** ~~Create an~~ Continually monitor the County's asset management plan to identify existing drainage easements and structures, including ownership, and ensure their maintenance and longevity.

**ACTION ITEM:** Identify additional Best Management Practices to be utilized in areas as specified by the Drainage Master Plan.

[https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/zoning-planning/files/comp-plan/Workshop\\_Boards.pdf?v=186](https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/zoning-planning/files/comp-plan/Workshop_Boards.pdf?v=186)